

# CHALLENGING CONCEPTIONS OF TEACHING: SOME PROMPTS FOR GOOD PRACTICE

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In recent years, considerable attention has been paid to the quality of teaching in higher education, and indeed Governments and institutions, have channelled large amounts of money into improving practices. In 1999, HERDSA (a professional association dedicated to the improvement of teaching and learning quality) published [Checklist on Valuing Teaching](#) but its focus was on the responsibilities of institutions, rather than individual academics.

This present document has been prepared with the needs of individual teachers - mainly undergraduate lecturers, tutors and demonstrators - in mind. Based on a large body of research literature, and on considerable 'hands-on' experience in higher education institutions, this checklist consists of a number of self-check questions - or prompts - that can be used by individual teachers or by course teams and groups to think about their practice, not just in the classroom, but across the range of teaching-related activities. Not every question will be relevant to every situation, and even when they are relevant, they have to be interpreted in your particular context. Similarly, these questions cannot possibly be exhaustive; not only are there a variety of perspectives on good teaching but a lot more is known about effective teaching than can be conveyed in a few short pages.

Despite these reservations, the questions should pr



development. For such development to occur there needs to be a climate of mutual respect, trust and open communication in which ethical and personal beliefs can be examined without anxiety. Students need to be able to discuss concerns and misunderstandings with their teacher and with other students.

assessment allows for inappropriate learning, then some students will respond accordingly. Effective assessment strategies encourage students to engage deeply with the content material of the course. Such strategies need to provide constructive feedback to students as quickly as possible as well as being valid and reliable measures of achievement.

25. How do you help students develop habits of routinely assessing their own work?
26. What strategies do you use to provide immediate feedback to students to help them improve their performance?
27. Do you identify for students the specific strengths and weaknesses of their performance and offer precise feedback about how to improve?
28. In what ways do you ensure that your assessment methods accurately assess the learning outcomes that you intended?

## Evaluating teaching

Evaluation of teaching and subjects/course for purposes of development involves collecting information from a range of sources by a range of methods and using that information to make changes. The information collected should include more than outcome measures. since the quality of student learning is related to the way students learn, information from the students on their learning processes can be an important component of evaluation.

29. What forms of information about your teaching and your subjects do you collect on a regular basis?
30. How do you change your approaches to teaching and/or your design of your subjects in the light of the information obtained?
31. How do you find out about the approaches students take to their learning and the ways your teaching and/or your subject design affects that approach?
32. How do you use the information obtained?

