

Chapter 3

Beyond performance in teaching excellence

Bruce Macfarlane

Introduction

'Teaching excellence' is a contested concept. It is variously interpreted as teaching behaviour that is interactive rather than didactic; modelling interpersonal skills; developing a collaborative relationship with students; possessing a repertoire of teaching skills; showing enthusiasm and energy; displaying creativity; demonstrating concern for 'weaker' students; and being committed to one's own professional development (e.g. Hillier and Vielba, 2001; Skelton, 2005: 95–97). These various characteristics may, in turn, be grouped by reference to different meta-understandings of what constitutes 'excellent' teaching (Skelton, 2005: 35). However, while a number of studies have elaborated different conceptions of 'excellence', less attention has focused on which types of teaching activity are being evaluated. What, in other words, do we mean by 'teaching'? In raising this question I am joined by others in this volume who also question whether there is a secure, shared understanding of what we mean by 'teaching' (see, for example, Chapter 4).

There are taken-for-granted assumptions and dominant understandings as to what constitutes 'teaching'. These often exclude a range of practices that occur outside the formal environment of the lecture theatre or seminar room. In this chapter, I will examine how schemes to reward teaching excellence interpret the range of activities which 'count' as teaching. This is an important area for analysis as I will argue that interpretations of excellence, and evidence used to support this claim, tend to favour more performance-related interpretations of teaching practice, influenced by a creeping culture of managerial control in universities (Deem, 1998; Skelton, 2005).

Performance and performativity

The notion of teaching as a 'performance' is powerfully embedded in interpretations of what constitutes good or excellent teaching. For example, videos of 'star' lecturers were proposed by government ministers in the early development of a scheme to reward university teaching excellence in the UK (Skelton, 2005).

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44

1 This understanding draws on the metaphor of teaching as theatre (Armstrong,
2 2003). Here, there is an emphasis on teachers replicating the skills and attributes
3 of the accomplished actor through dress, voice projection, body language, use of
4 props, memorising a script and convincing the audience that they are genuinely
5 passionate and knowledgeable about their subject. In this version of excellent
6 teaching it is essential to immerse oneself in a role and put on a bravura
7 performance in the lecture 'theatre'. The use of actors in educational and train-
8 ing provision for teachers and university lecturers serves to reinforce and, to
9 some extent, legitimise this metaphor.

10 'Performative' teaching implies something slightly different than teaching as a
11 performance. The former implies that teaching can be evaluated in terms of its
12 impact on enhancing economic performance and efficiency or satisfies measure-
13 ments of good teaching endorsed by audit and quality control procedures (Skelton,
14 2005). An example might be vocationally relevant teaching that helps to develop
15 students' work-related skills. While teaching as a performance is not necessarily the
16 same as performative teaching, the dominant methods we use to judge teaching
17 excellence are biased in favour of the dramaturgical metaphor. To demonstrate this
18 I will focus my analysis on teaching observation schemes and student evaluation
19 questionnaires. These instruments of evaluation are central to the evidence base
20 used to judge teaching excellence and tend to be biased in favour of evaluating
21 performance in the formal teaching environment. I will argue that less visible ele-
22 ments of teaching practice that take place 'offstage' need to play a more significant
23 role in informing judgements about teaching excellence. Many of these behind-the-
24 scenes activities are team-based, rather than about purely individual excellence,
25 contributing to an 'academic citizenship' (Shils, 1997; Macfarlane, 2007) that
26 maintains the infrastructure and broader moral foundations of university teaching.

27 28 **What counts as teaching?** 29

30 When I began working at a research-based UK university some years ago I
31 quickly realised that teaching was defined in very narrow terms compared to my
32 previous experiences at a less research-intensive institution. I asked a colleague
33 how many hours they taught on average each week. They replied that they did
34 no more than about six hours teaching. After initially commenting that this
35 commitment must leave a reasonable amount of time for research activities, a
36 different reality began to unfold. After further discussion I realised that my col-
37 league thought of 'teaching' as *only* the number of hours they spent giving a
38 formal lecture. His definition of teaching had omitted 'seminars' where he led a
39 small group of students in discussion and analysis based on the week's lecture,
40 one-to-one student advising and the supervision of postgraduates undertaking
41 research degrees. Time spent assessing student work, giving further feedback
42 electronically or at a distance or in preparing teaching materials was also
43 excluded. To my colleague, and many others at the university, teaching was
44 exclusively equated with giving a lecture.

50 B. Macfarlane

This personal story is illustrative of taken-for-granted assumptions about the way in which teaching is often defined. While the use of active learning methods is now widely considered to be a central feature of ‘good practice’ (Chickering and Gamson, 1991), the lecture is still a dominant form of teaching across many subjects in universities. Ironically, despite the acknowledged limitations of the lecture in engaging learners interactively, this method has thrived in the age of mass higher education as a pragmatic means of teaching large groups of students (Apodaca and Grad, 2006). In an Australian study, it was found that ‘lectures remain the most common type of teaching reported in most disciplines, even in the context of exemplary and innovative practice’ (Ballantyne *et al.*, 1999: 243). While this bias may appear contradictory to contemporary expectations that equate active techniques with excellence, lectures provide a better match to the needs and expectations of the burgeoning culture of performativity. This is because they are a publicly accessible form of teaching that is easy to observe on the basis of lecturers conforming with a narrow set of behavioural expectations.

The growth of inspection regimes for educational provision in schools, further education colleges and universities in the UK, and elsewhere, has increased the pressure to identify ‘measurable’ outcomes for teaching activity often defined in terms of ‘standards’. These performative measures are necessary to justify inspection and regulation of educational provision (Avis, 2003). In a university context, workload planning models, a further concept imported from the business environment, identify the number of ‘teaching hours’ per faculty member during a week, term, semester or academic year. In a UK context, academics working at post-1992 universities have more detailed contracts in relation to teaching hours than lecturers working in ‘old’ (i.e. pre-1992) universities (Robson, 2006). In most post-1992 universities teaching hours do not normally exceed 18 hours per week or 550 hours in one academic year. Definitions of teaching hours include formal interactions with students such as lectures and seminars but normally omit informal interactions central to student learning such as personal tutoring responsibilities, assessment and feedback. These formal interactions with students are commonly evaluated through teaching observation and student course experience questionnaires. Hence, the performative culture quantifies and evaluates formal teaching environments, such as the lecture, but often fails to account for wider aspects of teaching practice that are harder to observe and measure. To return to the dramaturgical metaphor, teaching is defined as something that takes place ‘onstage’ rather than behind the scenes of such formal encounters in university life.

Teaching observation

The formal teaching and learning environment tends to be represented by the lecture and those teaching interactions that take place in seminars, workshops and laboratory situations involving a lecturer and a group of students. Interactions in such settings are the most easily observable compared with informal

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44

1 learning exchanges that take place through student advising (Gosling, 2002). In
2 these less formal environments observation can prove more challenging owing
3 to the less predictable format of the teaching and learning process and the fact
4 that the presence of an observer can be regarded as 'more intrusive' than in a
5 lecture (Staffordshire University, 2000). The language used in teaching observa-
6 tion forms is frequently based on the assumption that the focus of what will be
7 observed will be a lecture or a teaching situation suited to an evaluation of the
8 presentation skills of the lecturer. Phrases that guide observers to comment on
9 'delivery and pace', 'rapport', or 'use of audio-visual facilities' are examples of
10 the way teaching observation tends to focus on presentation skills as something
11 'worth' watching (Gosling, 2002). These phrases underscore that what is being
12 evaluated is the actors' on-stage performance.

13 The primary importance attached to the formal teaching environment is rein-
14 forced by reviews of the quality of higher educational provision by government
15 agencies and professional bodies across a number of national contexts. Such
16 reviews often seek to obtain a snapshot of teaching 'quality' through observation
17 of the formal teaching environment, such as UK subject review, conducted
18 during the early part of this decade (Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Edu-
19 cation, 2000). This bias is significant as observation records are commonly
20 invoked in schemes to evidence teaching excellence. This includes both institu-
21 tional schemes linked to promotion and national excellence awards. For
22 example, in the University of Warwick teaching profile, observation records are
23 seen as a basis for evidence that 'performance is demonstrably excellent' (Uni-
24 versity of Warwick, 2002: 8). In the UK National Teaching Fellowship (NTFS)
25 scheme 'feedback from peer observations' is specifically cited as constituting
26 one of four sources of evidence that might be used to support an excellence
27 claim (Higher Education Academy, 2006).

28 Records of teaching observation, or extracts from records that put the appli-
29 cant in a positive light, may be used to support claims to teaching excellence
30 across a range of promotion and award schemes. Such evidence, though, may
31 reflect very different models of teaching observation. Some teaching observation
32 schemes are predicated on a peer review model whereby teachers observe one
33 another, feedback is constructive and non-judgemental and the relationship
34 between the parties is based on mutuality as professional peers. Others adopt a
35 development model where educational developers or other acknowledged expert
36 teachers observe novices often in the context of a certificated university pro-
37 gramme for new academic staff (Gosling, 2002). While educational developers
38 are generally committed to teaching observation as a means of encouraging indi-
39 vidual reflection, the expert-novice relationship implied by the development
40 model can also be used as a performative tool to make a summative judgement
41 regarding whether someone is a 'competent' teacher.

42 Determining competence is the unambiguous purpose of the evaluation
43 model. In this third model of teaching observation, the observer will be a senior
44 member of staff with either managerial responsibility or an obligation to report

their judgement to others as part of an appraisal process (Gosling, 2002). It is premised on a concern about ‘quality control’ seen by critics as inappropriate and of limited value in a higher education context (Knight and Trowler, 2001) given that the relationship between student and teacher is more complex than a simple market analogy. The evaluation model is also linked to making teaching ‘teacherproof’ (Bruner, 1996) by seeking to standardise the skills and behaviour of lecturers in formal settings. ‘Consistency’ in processes that impact on students such as teaching or assessment is one of the principles in the implicit evaluative framework of quality assurance (Ottewill and Macfarlane, 2004). This means, for example, that some lecturers are cast in the role of replicating the lessons of others where students on large undergraduate programmes are divided into a series of parallel seminar groups. Here, the McDonaldised lecturer (Ritzer, 1998) must keep to the script if teaching is to conform to performative expectations.

These sharp differences in the principles underpinning teaching observation schemes mean that evidence is at best difficult to compare. While they rely on different sources of expertise to judge teaching excellence – peers, professional developers and line managers, respectively – they are rarely designed to recognise less visible forms of teaching. Regardless of the model of teaching observation, it needs to be understood that the credibility of the observers may be called into question. Frequently observers are assumed to possess the expertise based on their seniority or level of experience and do not receive training to carry out the function (Gosling, 2005). This means that evidence of teaching excellence derived from the comments and judgements of untrained observers may simply perpetuate ingrained practices within the teaching of the discipline (Wentzel, 1987). Even external peer reviewers working for government agencies are not necessarily sufficiently expert to pass reliable judgement. Peter Milton, commenting on the operation of the UK Quality Assurance Agency Programme Review scheme which he directed, stated that ‘some of those doing the assessing probably had as much to learn about classroom presentation as those being judged’ (Milton, 2002: 1).

Student evaluation questionnaires

Teaching excellence schemes hold great store by evidence of (positive) student evaluation. Much of this evidence is derived from student evaluation questionnaires (SEQs) that have long been the dominant means by which students are asked to evaluate the quality of teaching, especially in the US (Clouder, 1998; Brennan and Williams, 2004). The massification of higher education outside North America has resulted in SEQs becoming a standard feature of the evaluation of teaching across many national contexts and appears to be increasingly linked to the evaluation of teaching performance for reward and promotion purposes (Apodaca and Grad, 2006). In Canada, the 3M Teaching Fellowship programme expects applicants to submit a ‘copy of the instrument used to evalu-

1 ate the nominee's teaching' in addition to the data derived from SEQs over
2 several years (Society for Teaching and Learning in Canada, 2006). In similar
3 vein, nominees for the UK NTFS are asked to base their excellence claim on
4 evidence from student feedback and evaluations. The Carrick Awards for Aus-
5 tralian University Teaching, launched in 2006, has gone even further. This
6 scheme has developed its own standardised SEQ and has stipulated that nomi-
7 nees must use this form to obtain and submit feedback from 30 students in
8 making a claim for excellence (The Carrick Institute for Learning and Teaching
9 in Higher Education, 2006).

10 There are numerous, well-known criticisms of SEQs. These include chal-
11 lenges to the reliability of some statistical techniques, the inappropriateness of
12 assigning students a status as expert consumers together with their 'conservat-
13 ive' expectations in judging what constitutes good teaching, the 'halo effect'
14 whereby teacher popularity rather than expertise is being tested and the danger
15 that some lecturers can give students an 'easy ride' in return for better evalua-
16 tions (e.g. Piercy *et al.*, 1997; Elton, 2001; Lyon and Hendry, 2002). These and
17 other criticisms of the SEQ fall outside the scope of this analysis. What is perti-
18 nent though is that, in parallel with teaching observation forms, SEQs often
19 focus on the performance element of teaching. While they may appear to give
20 students more of a voice in the evaluation of teaching, the kind of judgements
21 called for are often narrowly framed around issues of technical competence
22 (Rowland, 2000).

23 SEQs tend to be written on the assumption that students are evaluating a
24 formal teaching context by asking questions that privilege the assessment of pre-
25 sentational skills over 'softer' skills associated with building relationships. Even
26 where SEQs avoid reference to formal teaching environments the manner in
27 which they are administered (often in-class) can privilege this context. Their
28 extensive use is symbolic of the 'replacement of the informal with the formal' in
29 UK higher education (Brennan and Williams, 2004: 9). They have become a rit-
30 ualised facet of the teaching exchange and do not represent a genuine opportu-
31 nity for students to enter into an open dialogue with their tutors (Rowland, 2000).

32 Part of this formality is the way SEQs seek to gain an impression of student
33 satisfaction with respect to a range of 'levels' beyond the control of the indi-
34 vidual lecturer. These can include the module, the year of study, the programme,
35 the subject, the department, the faculty and the institution (Brennan and
36 Williams, 2004). Here, students are frequently asked to comment on the quality
37 of rooms and facilities and learning resources such as laboratories, studios,
38 clinics and libraries. Other questions connected with the appropriateness of
39 assessment tasks and course materials may further relate to aspects of pro-
40 gramme design beyond the remit of the deskilled 'McDonaldized' lecturer
41 whose role is to 'deliver' materials prepared by other more senior or experienced
42 colleagues (Ritzer, 1998). Where SEQs seek student feedback on 'learning
43 support' this can refer to specialised units in areas such as library and informa-
44 tion services, student skills, dyslexia support and careers guidance.

54 B. Macfarlane

While it is important to get students to think about teaching in a broader sense than ‘onstage’ performance, SEQs may more negatively infer that lecturers play little or no role beyond the formal teaching context in offering support to learners. This supports an ‘unbundling’ of the academic role that is beginning to erode the responsibility of lecturers for the teaching of students ‘offstage’.

Unbundling

Teaching observation and SEQs are illustrative of the way that evidence used to support claims to teaching excellence conform to a diminished sense of what it means to be a teacher in modern higher education. This type of evidence privileges formal teaching contexts but, with more subtlety, narrows the focus of what ‘counts’ as teaching. The contemporary extension of student support services has led to a withering of the pastoral role of the academic to that of a referral agent for specialist counsellors, careers professionals, subject librarians, student debt officers, disability advisors, numeracy and literacy specialists and international student officers. Concerns about making teaching more ‘efficient’ has legitimised the erosion of contact time between academic staff and students. The drive for efficiency means that contemporary university environments encourage larger student groups, less contact time for individual learners and less available or approachable tutors (Christie *et al.*, 2004). New research indicates, for example, that the replacement of the lecturer’s office with open plan working arrangements in some universities is making it practically more difficult to find appropriate private space for personal tutoring (Bradford, 2006). There is evidence that institutional pressures on academic staff to be more research-active encourages a culture that ‘distances’ the tutor from the student (Brown, 2002).

Underpinning the increasing detachment of tutors from broader elements of teaching and learning support, such as personal tutoring, is the phenomenon known as ‘unbundling’. This term refers to the way that academic work is being subdivided into specialist roles such as ‘teacher’, ‘researcher’, ‘instructional designer’, ‘specialist tutor’ and ‘skills advisor’. Kinser (1998) uses the term ‘unbundling’ in describing the way the various elements of the ‘all-round’ academic role had been subdivided by the University of Phoenix, the largest private, for-profit university in the world. However, this trend is also widely apparent in public universities and was recognised in the UK Dearing report on higher education as a significant future trend that would result in a smaller proportion of staff being ‘core’ employees (NCIHE, 1997). Unbundling is now reflected in a growing number of university appointment and promotion policies that differentiate a variety of academic roles. Edith Cowan University in Australia, for example, details five roles in addition to the ‘standard academic role’ of teaching and research scholar (Edith Cowan University, 2005).

Universities are now employing a growing number of language and study skills staff, a trend that mirrors the growth of less well qualified or well paid

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44

1 'para' professional staff in other public professions (Robson, 2006). In the UK,
2 healthcare assistants in nursing, community support officers in policing and
3 teaching assistants in schools all serve as examples. Unbundling is apparent
4 through growing use of graduate teaching assistants (GTAs), who routinely
5 assess and grade undergraduate student work and teach seminars or tutorials
6 (Park and Ramos, 2002). Again, this allows academics to spend more of their
7 time on research and postgraduate tuition (Shannon *et al.*, 1998). It is another
8 example of a practice that has spread from North America to Europe in the wake
9 of massification and increased competition for government research funding in
10 some contexts, especially the UK and Australia.

11 Unbundling is a significant phenomenon because it assigns teachers a dimin-
12 ished set of responsibilities and institutionalises a deskilling process whereby
13 some lecturers are reduced to little more than curriculum delivery operatives
14 with minimal student contact outside the formal teaching environment. During
15 the first five years of the UK NTFS, between 2000 and 2005, the unbundling of
16 the academic role was recognised through a separate category for nominees in
17 'learning support' roles. In similar vein, the Carrick Awards for Australian Uni-
18 versity Teaching has created a series of categories separate from 'teaching excel-
19 lence'. These comprise citations for 'contributions to student learning' and
20 awards for 'programs that enhance learning' with seven categories including
21 assessment and feedback, innovation in curricula, learning and teaching, and
22 services supporting student learning (Carrick Institute for Learning and Teach-
23 ing in Higher Education, 2006). Such schemes reinforce the legitimacy of
24 unbundling and mean that those recognised as 'excellent teachers' may play a
25 limited, and often highly specialised, role in relation to university teaching.

26 27 **Different phases of teaching**

28
29 As I have sought to illustrate, much of the evidence base that underpins claims
30 for teaching excellence is performative data. Even if we are to assume that this
31 captures formal teaching contexts adequately, it leaves other elements of teach-
32 ing practice under-represented. One way of seeking to develop a more compre-
33 hensive understanding of teaching is to detail different stages or phases
34 connected with teaching activities. For example, 'instruction' is just one of five
35 elements identified by Newble and Cannon (1995). Here, it is important to repre-
36 sent activities that are not easily subjected to performative evaluation. In pursuit
37 of this objective, a simple distinction can be made between pre-performance,
38 performance and post-performance teaching helping to capture a more holistic
39 picture of professional practice (see Table 3.1).

40 Pre- and post-performance teaching activities take place almost exclusively
41 out of the spotlight of the performative culture. They are activities central to
42 teaching and student learning but are often carried out by a lecturer working on
43 their own (e.g. planning a lesson) or on a one-to-one basis (e.g. student advising
44 or personal tutoring). Pre- and post-performance teaching activities are not,

56 B. Macfarlane

Table 3.1 Phases of teaching activity

Phase	Examples
Pre-performance ('offstage')	programme design; lesson planning; developing teaching materials; establishing learning opportunities in the workplace or community; reflection and review; research into teaching
Performance ('onstage')	lectures; group seminars or tutorials; workshops; experiments; practical sessions
Post-performance ('offstage')	student advising/personal tutoring; mediating on-line discussions; assessment and feedback; reflection and review; research into teaching

generally, easily observable phenomenon like watching a lecture or seminar and are similarly difficult to evaluate or gather evidence of in respect to their 'impact'. Nor would observation alone necessarily provide a reliable understanding of the complexity of these activities and relationships. This does not mean, though, that they do not contribute as significantly, if not more so, to the student experience than performance elements.

Feedback on assessment is an example of a teaching activity that is undervalued in performative terms and yet contributes significantly to a student's learning experience and their retention (Yorke, 2001). As Boud has argued while students may be able to survive poor teaching they cannot escape the impact of poor assessment practice (Boud, 1995: 35). In the UK, the standard and consistency of feedback provided to students has been the subject of particular criticism in Quality Assurance Agency reviews of the quality of teaching provision across many subject areas (Ottewill and Macfarlane, 2004). This has resulted in institutional quality units attempting to 'teacherproof' written feedback through the use of standardised tick-box style forms. However, while the adoption of such forms may have increased the consistency of teacher feedback 'justified' in relation to assessment criteria, filling a form full of tick-boxes decreases the space available for students to receive constructive and more individually oriented comments. This is an example of the impact of the performative culture on summative assessment and feedback practice. Such prescriptions treat assessment as a mere postscript to teaching and learning (Orrell, 2006) and marginalise still further the role of formative assessment. The modularisation of the curriculum in the UK has also left little scope for formative feedback on student work in the abbreviated time that tutors have before summative assessment becomes necessary (Yorke, 2001). Relationships with students, through which an understanding of their academic strengths and weaknesses may be gained, is further curtailed in a modular system with courses lasting a maximum of 15 weeks rather than a whole academic year.

Like feedback on student work, personal tutoring can make an important contribution to the student learning experience but one that is hard to evaluate or

1 judge in purely performative terms. Personal tutoring is difficult to even define
2 and may be interpreted in a variety of ways. At Oxford and Cambridge universi-
3 ties, the 'tutorial' is connected with a discussion between a lecturer and the
4 student on the basis of the latter's written work (Robbins Report, 1963: 185).
5 However, in broader terms, a 'tutorial system' is one in which 'the pupil comes
6 into personal contact with his teachers, and he feels he can bring his difficulties
7 and problems to them, and that his progress is a matter of sympathetic concern
8 to them' (Robbins Report, 1963: 186–187). The newer English universities
9 mimicked the Oxbridge tradition leading to a personal tutor who, apart from
10 teaching, was expected to act as a 'guide, philosopher and friend to a given
11 number of students' (Pashley, 1974: 179).

12 The principle of the 'personal tutor' may still be espoused by many
13 contemporary institutions. However, in a mass system with large student groups
14 one-to-one tutoring is an expensive use of teaching resource that few institutions
15 can afford to maintain. In the context of a research-intense US university student
16 advising 'is generally unstressed by university officers, unenforced by chairs,
17 unrecognized by peers, and unrewarded by the institution' (Rhodes, 2001: 77).
18 In a British context, the 'open door' policy of academic staff has been largely
19 replaced by tutor availability for as little as one hour per week (Brown, 2002).
20 Personal tutoring is simply not seen as a cost efficient use of a scarce resource
21 (i.e. the lecturer's time) when alternative use of that time might be devoted to
22 performative outcomes in relation to research. In the UK, where institutions are
23 formalising the personal tutoring role this is largely in response to the require-
24 ments of a government policy initiative, called personal development planning,
25 that focuses on developing the employment-related skills of students rather than
26 their emotional or moral growth (Clegg, 2004).

27 Research, however, has indicated that personal tutoring does play a signific-
28 ant role in student retention, a matter of central concern to universities and col-
29 leges in an age of mass higher education and economic and social commitment
30 to widening participation. While social and academic factors help explain reten-
31 tion (Tinto, 1993), the tutor is a key figure in the process of student integration
32 (Gibbs, 2004). Students are more likely to drop out in their first year of study
33 and this is where academic guidance can be crucial (Barefoot, 2004). The
34 decline of personal tutoring, though, means that students often experience
35 modern higher education as an impersonal, uncaring environment in which they
36 are likely to remain largely anonymous (Barefoot, 2004).

37 Unbundling means that many elements of pre- and post-performance, such as
38 the pastoral care of students, are now seen as the 'business' of those fulfilling
39 specialist learning support roles. In the pre-performance phase instructional
40 designers now play an increasing role in developing on-line learning materials.
41 In the post-performance phase GTAs are acting as assessors while specialist
42 counsellors, skills and careers advisors fulfil tutoring and pastoral responsibil-
43 ities that have formerly been seen as central to the academic role. Curiously, the
44 use of GTAs in the context of assessment of student work and managing

58 B. Macfarlane

seminar discussions is sometimes justified on the basis that what they are asked to do is not really 'teaching' in the sense that they are not delivering a lecture (Rhodes, 2001). This brings us back to the personal story I related at the beginning of this chapter as to how a colleague narrowly defined teaching in a research-based university.

As noted earlier, many teaching excellence schemes reflect the effects of unbundling by recognising separate categories for awards that often distinguish 'teaching' from support for student 'learning'. The latter category is intended often implicitly or even explicitly for those 'learning support staff' in areas such as library, careers, welfare, counselling and other specialist roles to claim excellence. While, in many respects, it is laudably inclusive to recognise these specialist support professionals, it also establishes a boundary that divides the work of 'teachers' from 'learning support staff'. It suggests that many pre- and post-performance responsibilities are largely someone else's responsibility rather than that of the lecturer.

Research into teaching may be associated with potentially pre- or post-performance teaching activities (see Table 3.1). However, such work is increasingly seen as a specialised activity. In the UK, the NTFS formerly treated research inquiry into practice as integral to a claim for teaching excellence whereby nominees would submit a project plan as part of their application. A review of the NTFS resulted in this inquiry element being decoupled from the scheme from 2006. This has reduced the cash value of a NTF award by four-fifths financing a separate stream of funds for investigative projects open for collaborative bids, including at least one National Teaching Fellow. This decoupling is significant because it formally separates scholarly inquiry from individual teaching performance (see Chapter 14 in this volume). It implies that expert teachers may not necessarily reflect on their practice or intellectualise the basis of why their practice 'works' (Blackmore and Wilson, 2005). It is yet another indicator of unbundling that is institutionalised in English higher education through the division between research and teaching funding.

Some teaching excellence schemes, such as the Carrick Awards for Australian University Teaching, enable teams of teachers to apply. Overwhelmingly, though, the dominant emphasis of both institutional and national schemes alike is to reward individuals whose teaching is deemed as excellent. This bias toward individual achievement overlooks the importance of team work in the pre- and post-performance phases of teaching. Examples of unheralded work of this nature include giving students formative feedback on their work, counselling, helping a student to prepare for a job interview, establishing a work placement opportunity or writing academic references. Activities that support the teaching of colleagues such as mentoring, second marking or sharing teaching materials are also undervalued by the performative culture and, together with supporting students outside class, are constituent elements of what it means to be a good 'academic citizen' (Shils, 1997; Macfarlane, 2007).

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44

Conclusion

At face value, the dramaturgical metaphor is attractive: 'teaching is just like acting'. Or is it? At root, teaching, especially in higher education, is about authenticity. This is about encouraging students to speak with their own voice and to have the courage to develop their own critical perspective on propositional or professional knowledge (Barnett, 1990; Nixon, 2004b). To be authentic demands courage on the part of the teacher as well as the student; to try to teach in different ways that promote dialogue, to be honest about their own ideological or theoretical perspectives and to engage with students as co-learners (Macfarlane, 2004). This is not about acting. It is about building a relationship with students based on trust and respect.

Surveys of excellent teaching consistently point to the overriding importance of the interpersonal qualities of teachers (e.g. Ballantyne *et al.*, 1999; Hillier and Vielba, 2001). These qualities are about building authentic relationships rather than stage craft and mean that we need to assign far more significance to pre- and post-performance teaching. Such interactions need to find space to grow beyond the confines of formal teaching environments that are so often the source of attention in evaluating teaching excellence. Where pre- and post-performance teaching is recognised in excellence schemes there is a growing tendency to support performance management systems that dictate that such work is undertaken by learning support professionals rather than academics as part of their teaching role. This trend undermines understanding of the importance of teaching as about building relationships rather than simply 'delivering' formal curriculum content.

Some might argue that what should be measured is student performance as opposed to teacher performance. Attempts to judge the excellence of teachers in compulsory education are increasingly linked to the extent to which students perform well in examinations, for example. In contrast with teachers in the compulsory sector, though, many higher education lecturers both teach and set the assessment requirements for their own courses (Entwistle, 1992). This means that basing judgements about teaching excellence in higher education on student performance may place lecturers in an invidious position that threatens their objectivity as assessors. Where such performative measures exist an excellent teacher may be one with the integrity to resist temptations to inflate student grades as opposed to one who succumbs to such pressures. While such moral temptations have always existed there is a need to build a more sophisticated understanding of 'good', rather than 'excellent' teaching. This is a teaching practice that is about being committed to the virtues of what it means to be a 'good' lecturer, such as respectfulness toward students or courage to innovate in the classroom (Macfarlane, 2004). This can only be achieved if we develop a more critical understanding of what it means to be a teacher and value what goes on 'offstage' as well as 'on'.