



## What does it mean to be a S.C.H.O.L.A.R.? Or, why a good teacher is no different from a good researcher

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## What does it mean to be a S.C.H.O.L.A.R.? Or, why a good teacher is no different from a good researcher

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### **Sceptical** (of any knowledge claim)

The critical evaluation of knowledge claims is the defining characteristic of a genuinely 'higher' education. It is what distinguishes it from school-level education. No claim to knowledge should be treated as sacrosanct. All claims should remain open to challenge and question on the basis of reason, research evidence and open discussion.

### **Collaborative** (in advancing knowledge for the common good)

The desire to advance knowledge in the pursuit of truth is at the heart of the common project for all academics. The glory of individual discovery is secondary to the importance of making a contribution upon which others can build, critique or, perhaps, reject. This is why sharing work-in-progress through discussion and publication is an ethical imperative.

### **Humble** (in acknowledging intellectual debts and precedence)

All scholarship is developed through building on the work of other scholars and this intellectual debt should always be acknowledged. It is about a respect for the intellectual property of others, part of the honour code of being a scholar. This is why it is wrong to plagiarise the work of others.

### **Open-minded** (in the face of persuasive evidence or reasoned argument)

Being prepared to change your mind, and acknowledge this, is an academic virtue, not a character flaw. Being open to new ideas, theories and evidence is vital for individual growth as a scholar and benefits the advance of research and scholarship more broadly. It further enables academics to mature in their own thinking over time and recognise that knowledge is supplantive – cognitively and emotionally – not just additive.

### **Learned** (through ongoing engagement with scholarship and research)

A scholar continues to learn through life both through teaching and independent enquiry. Both activities involve learning from and with others. This unity of teaching and research gives academics continuing legitimacy as teachers in higher education by better enabling them to help their students to understand that knowledge boundaries are fluid, not fixed.

**Authentic** (to personal beliefs and values)

All scholars should assert their independence of thought and belief. This is about being true to oneself no matter how popular or unpopular, profitable or unprofitable, such expressions of beliefs or values might be. The privileges of academic freedom need to be lived out in practice but can demand personal courage especially working in an environment where academic freedom is not formally protected.

**Reasoned** (in reaching a critical judgement)

Reason has been the basis for scientific and intellectual advances since the enlightenment. It involves a respect for reasoned debate based on logical argument and empirical evidence as the basis for the search for truth. A scholar should always be able to justify their method of investigation and analysis, whether empirical or conceptual.