

Introduction to the National Teaching Fellowship Scheme

Hello, my name is Dr Diane Nutt, I'm a Higher Education Consultant who works with Advance HE and specifically with the awards team. What I'm going to tell you about today is the National Teaching Fellowship scheme. I'm going to give you a brief introduction to what the scheme is about that will cover three different areas. The first thing I'll talk about is a little bit of the background of the scheme, the second thing I'm going to tell you about is some of the application and judgment processes and then thirdly I'll tell you about some of the benefits for both institutions and individuals gaining National Teaching Fellowship.

What is the National Teaching Fellowship award?

Let's start with talking a little bit about the award. First and foremost the award began in 2000, that means it's been going for nearly 20 years. There are a number of National Teaching Fellowships around the country who can tell you all about their experience of being National Teaching Fellows. It's worth looking out these people as they're very important to higher education.

But why is the National Teaching Fellowship award important?

It's important because it recognises, rewards and celebrates individuals in higher education who are leading on learning and teaching, who are excellent in teaching and learning in a variety of ways. It has a huge impact on student outcomes and on the teaching profession and all those individuals who are National Teaching Fellows are individuals who are having that kind of impact.

Every institution in the UK can submit applications for National Teaching Fellowship. Every institution can nominate three members of staff; those three members of staff can be from academic backgrounds or professional services. Any member of staff who is likely to become a nominee for the National Teaching Fellowship should be spending time thinking about collecting evidence that show their reach, their value and their impact because those are the three areas that will be assessed and reviewed in their applications.

I'm now going to say a little bit about the application and review process.

Every institution has an institutional contact and the institutional contact manages all of the applications to the National Teaching Fellowship scheme. They're the ones who process the paperwork and submit it to Advance HE. As I said earlier, every institution can submit up to three people, those three people put in a claim; they're known as nominees and they make a claim. Their claim is against three criteria, those three criteria they can write up to 1,500 words per criteria, that's 4,500 words altogether to make their application. Around that application they also produce a context statement which is up to 300 words in which they explain the context of their work. This helps the reviewers to really make a good assessment of their practice and of the evidence that they're discussing. They can also include a reference section. Both the context statement and the reference section are not included in the scoring. When reviewers receive applications to review they score the three key criteria areas.

So when an application is submitted it will be reviewed by independent peer reviewers. These independent peer reviewers are learning and teaching professionals who are educated in teaching and learning and who work in often senior positions in teaching and learning. They will make their assessment against the criteria and they will score each criteria out of five. So they can give a score from nought to five for each of the criteria. Once the reviewers have made their scoring this information is pulled together by Advance HE and

sent to the awards panel. The awards panel is also an independent body which is made up from very senior people in higher education who will make the final decisions on awarding National Teaching Fellowship.

Each year the committee selects a maximum of 55 nominees to be awarded National Teaching Fellowship. This is an important and significant award for those people and for their institutions. What those 55 nominees have evidenced is the reach, value and impact of their work in learning and teaching and on student outcomes in the teaching profession.

The last area I want to talk about is the benefits of the National Teaching Fellowship award. For individuals those benefits can be enormous. Individuals get the reward and recognition of becoming a National Teaching Fellow. This gives them the chance to be recognised nationally, it can enhance their profile in teaching and learning, it introduces them to the opportunities to meet with other NTFs and other people who have been successful in a variety of areas of learning and teaching. They also get the chance to collaborate on the new Advance HE Connect platform. It gives them the opportunity to connect with other NTF award winners and to begin to really reach out and collaborate more widely.

For institutions the National Teaching Fellowship award has similar advantages and benefits. It can really raise the profile of an institution to have National Teaching Fellows in their staff base, it can give them an external profile and it can also open up opportunities for them to connect their staff with other opportunities and other events and other funding and can really give them the chance to connect with the wider sector in higher education. It's an important award which is recognised both nationally and to some extent internationally and institutions that have a number of NTFs are held in high esteem for their teaching and learning excellence.