

## **Educational Leadership in Higher Education**

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### **Abstract:**

One of the more interesting aspects of the higher education scene over recent years, nationally and internationally, has been the way in which the nature of the core business—teaching and learning—has been subject to a thoroughgoing process of reassessment and re-evaluation. This has led in turn to a reassertion of the importance of good teaching and effective learning in attracting and retaining students, as well as in optimising their prospects of employment and career progression.

This renewed emphasis on the importance of teaching is sometimes presented as a counterweight or alternative strategy to the increasing focus on research output in maintaining and enhancing the reputation of the university in the eyes of staff, students, employers, government and a range of professional communities. But these twin emphases, on teaching and research, are more accurately seen as twin aspects of the same process, by which higher education is having to reassert its value and authority to an audience increasingly bombarded with alternative sources of information and educational content.

In that context, the importance of leadership in teaching and learning has assumed a significance that it had not necessarily been accorded in the past. Good teaching relies on (a) enthusiasm and commitment on the part of the individual staff member (b) sound collegial processes of curriculum oversight and quality assurance and (c) robust structures for the management of resources and priorities. Ensuring the compatibility and mutual support of these three components has proved to be crucial in reinforcing the centrality of the teaching enterprise, and in the provision of effective educational leadership.