



INVITATION TO TENDER:
THE TEACHING-RESEARCH NEXUS IN THE HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES:
SCOPING EXERCISE AND SURVEY

Introduction

The British Academy would like to commission a scoping exercise and a survey to interrogate the relationship between teaching and research in higher education.

Rationale

The relationship between teaching and research in higher education is coming under intensified scrutiny around the world. Multiple studies have failed to show that there is a beneficial relationship between the quality of teaching and the quality of research, but have also not demonstrated any negative effect. Universities regularly make choices about their priorities in pursuit of prestige and in the face of limited resources. Research outputs often overshadow teaching expertise in the criteria for academic promotion. In the UK, current policy issues, including the evolution of the Research Excellence Framework (REF), the introduction of the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF), the new architecture of the Higher Education and Research Act (HERA), and ongoing debates about funding and student fees make this nexus a topic which continues to attract attention.

The British Academy is therefore undertaking a project which will seek to interrogate the relationship between teaching and research to identify whether this relationship is beneficial for either of these activities and to review comparatively the relationship in policy approaches in the UK and internationally to explore opportunities and challenges in current practice.

The objectives of this project are:

- To help stimulate a wide-ranging debate among the academic community about an important trend with growing national and international significance;
- To inform the broader policy context in view of the upcoming establishment of UK Research and Innovation and the Office for Students;
- To inform the practices of universities reacting to and accommodating this trend;
- To identify the risks a potential greater polarisation between teaching and research pose for the humanities and social sciences in particular.

Description of work

The Academy is seeking to appoint a researcher / research team to carry out the following:

- An initial scoping exercise which investigates whether literature exists further to that referenced in Nordic Institute for Studies in Innovation, Research and Education (2016) 'The relationship between research and education: typologies and indicators', relevant to the specific research questions of this study

- A survey of senior management and academic staff in UK universities about perceptions of and structures to support the relationship between teaching and research.

Definitions

The project will use the definition of “research” as adopted in the Research Excellence Framework (REF) in framing the scope and terms of reference of the project.

Research questions

The scoping exercise and the survey should be designed to address the following research questions:

- What is the impact of teaching on research?
- How does the relationship between research and teaching change at different stages within an academic career?
- What is the nature of the relationship between research and teaching in the humanities and social sciences in particular? Does the nature of the disciplines determine how research and teaching interact? What are the similarities and differences with the relationship in STEM disciplines?
- How do different types of students experience the relationship between research and teaching? For example, among undergraduate students, does prior educational experience or socio-economic background make a difference? How does the experience of undergraduate students differ from that of postgraduate taught and postgraduate research students?
- Does the relationship between research and teaching differ between types of university, and if so, how?

Research methodology

The research will be carried out by sourcing the data through the following qualitative research methods:

1. Desk research into any available literature not covered in the Nordic Institute review relevant to the specific questions of the study, and the production of a short literature review summarising findings.
2. Survey and analysis of responses focused on exploring the research questions. The survey should collect responses from senior management and academic staff at different career stages in UK higher education institutions of different types. Respondents may reflect the full disciplinary range, but the survey should be designed so that analysis can extract themes specific to the humanities and social sciences, and the sample may be biased towards these disciplines. The survey sample should be sized to enable broader conclusions to be drawn from the findings; the submission should indicate the sample size the researcher / research team intends to achieve.

The British Academy welcomes submissions which propose the collection of student views as an additional element, through a survey or other means, but this will not be a key criterion for selection.

Outputs

We expect outcomes from this project to include:

- A short literature review, suitable for publication on the British Academy's website
- A written report based on analysis of survey responses, suitable for publication on the British Academy's website
- Raw and summary data underpinning the report
- Standalone case studies (if appropriate)

Governance

The successful bid will be managed by the Higher Education and Skills Policy team at the British Academy. The work will be overseen and informed by the project Working Group, chaired by Professor April McMahon FBA, which reports to the Academy's Research and Higher Education Policy Committee.

Key criterion for selection

- The ability of the researcher / research team to access relevant communities and networks in order to source survey participants
- The sample size to be achieved and its breadth in terms of institution, discipline and academic career stages
- The experience of the researcher / research team in conducting studies using similar research methodologies
- Understanding of the existing literature on the relationship between research and teaching in higher education

Time line and budget

The project should begin as soon as possible, with interim findings to be presented by 23 March 2018 and a final report by 15 May 2018. The budget for the research is up to £15000, 50% payable on commission, 25% on acceptance of interim findings and 25% on completion. The Academy will cover all costs related to design and print of any outputs.

Response to this brief

Please submit your response to this brief by 3 January 2018. Your response should be no more than 4 sides of A4 (excluding CVs of the researcher / research team), and include:

- Your approach to undertaking this work
- Details of the communities and networks which you propose to access
- Any risks or difficulties that you foresee with this project, and any steps that might be taken to mitigate them
- Relevant experience that you have to undertake this work
- Your proposed timescales to undertake this work, including proposed number of days allocated, taking into account the timings of the academic year
- Break-down of estimated costs
- CVs of all individuals making a significant contribution to the commission

We welcome tenders from a range of organisations and individuals. The deadline for application is 5pm on **3 January 2018**.

For further information, or to express an intention to apply, email Chinara Rustamova, Policy Adviser, c.rustamova@britac.ac.uk