

# TEACHING AS PART OF YOUR CAREER PROGRESSION



# Teaching and employability

- the majority of students pursue a postgraduate degree to promote their prospects in the job market
- 70% of students cited gaining qualifications as their main motivation for postgraduate study, whilst 57% said that it was to improve their chances of getting a job (UNITE, 2005)
- teaching is key means for you to promote your own employability
- What is employability?
  - a set of skills, understandings and personal attributes that make you more likely to gain employment

>>> How can you enhance your employability through teaching?

# Teaching and employability

- hard skills = the knowledge or the ability to do something tangible
- soft skills = more generic and skills, such as
  - IT skills
  - communication skills
  - team-working skills
  - presentation skills
  - problem-solving
  - interpersonal skills
  - self-confidence
  - time keeping
  - flexibility

>>> teaching can help you hone these skills

# Teaching as a way to your career

- How does your own experience of learning prepare you for teaching and how can you map it in your CV in terms of professional development?

Discuss in small groups.



# Benefits of being involved in teaching

- in terms of a HE career, teaching while a PhD student builds up an understanding of the skills necessary
- experiences important as the beginning of the teaching part of your academic career

**BUT:**

- teaching is also recognised a key generic skill
- gives you the opportunity to develop professionally over time
- it serves to document that development for any employer
- employers are always keen to see the development of soft skills mapped in a CV

# Benefits of being involved in teaching

- track record of teaching and learning skills
- embedding of skills
- immediate application of skills
- sharing of research knowledge
- possibility of research into teaching (depending on the module taught)
- taking on responsibility
- taking on diverse roles

# Teaching roles and career progression

- What are these diverse roles?
  - ▣ teaching
  - ▣ research
  - ▣ engagement
  - ▣ administration
  - ▣ pastoral duties
- Taking seminars or tutorials is often the first, and usually the main, role given to postgraduate tutors.
- Lecturing is very different—in some ways it is easier because you do not have to interact with students at the same level as in seminars, but there are other challenges.

# Teaching as an opportunity for self-development

- self-confidence
- presentation skills
- dealing with nerves
- time management skills
- organisation skills
- Advantage of talking about your research with undergraduates, using examples from your own research.



# Teaching as an opportunity for self-development

- Remember that you are the authority on your topic as you are entrusted with communicating this to your students.
- You are not only teaching people about a particular topic, but also to think.
- Teaching is about facilitating a learning environment within or outside a formal lecturing context—this again relates to many of the soft skills identified, but also allows you to develop skills in terms of the challenges faced, for example:
  - ▣ Are you prepared to fail a weak student?
  - ▣ Are you prepared to receive criticism/feedback?

# Framing your professional development

- What engagement in teaching thus documents is your commitment to continued professional development.
- Explore opportunities to map it in a more formalised way:
  - ▣ Are there support programmes to help you learn how to teach and support learning?
  - ▣ Are there workshops?
  - ▣ Is there a shadowing system?
  - ▣ Is there a learning and teaching mentor?
  - ▣ What are the resources?

**>>> Make sure to constantly and consistently map that development in your CV!**

# Useful links

- <http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/>
  - the website of the Higher Education Academy
- <http://www.jobs.ac.uk/career-tools-and-advi>
  - career tools and advice from the UK's number one academic job search site
- <http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/section.asp?navcode=96>
  - career and teaching resources from the THE
- <http://www.h-net.org/>
  - h-net is a portal for scholars which includes a wealth of information on activities, teaching and networking
- <http://www.academia.edu/>
  - this platform is emerging as a useful networking and information hub for academics
- <http://www.guardian.co.uk/higher-education-network/2011/mar/14/welcome-to-the-guardian-higher-education-network>
  - the Guardian's brand new academic networking hub