Emeritus Professor Denise Chalmers
University of Western Australia

Denise Chalmers was awarded an OLT National Senior Teaching Fellowship in 2015 and an Australian Award for University Teaching Citation in 2014. For over 25 years she has demonstrated leadership and innovation in higher education.

Fellowship title: Recognising and rewarding teaching: Australian teaching criteria and standards and expert peer review

Year completed: 2019

Expertise key words: Quality, indicators, standards in teaching and learning

What did you achieve?: The program engaged with the Australian tertiary sector to support institutions to implement and embed criteria and standards in policy and practice. International interest in the framework and the fellowship program enabled the concepts to be trialled across several countries and cultural settings. The Fellowship program demonstrated that university teaching could be enhanced, rewarded and recognised in a manner that sustains a focus on teaching that delivers quality student learning experiences. The Fellowship program has been timely, judging by the interest in Australian and international higher education institutions to engage in conversations about policies, processes and practices related to rewarding and recognising teaching. There is now considerable evidence that higher education institutions – whether research intensive or teaching intensive, public or private – are increasingly recognising that they need to engage in root and branch changes to their recruitment, mentoring and development and particularly their promotion policies and practices to ensure that excellent teaching is fostered, developed, recognised and rewarded. The outcomes of the Fellowship have contributed to the Australia tertiary sector’s engagement in an evidence and standards-based approach to rewarding and recognising teaching and informed international initiatives.

What does the sector need now?: Teaching is a key pillar of all higher education institutions. Recognising and rewarding quality teaching must be embraced by university leaders at every level and demonstrated consistently.