So Where Am I In My Professional Development?
Devising an ELT Standards Matrix As A Self-diagnostic Tool

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Chalmers and Hunt (2016) postulate that the evaluation of university teaching should be carried out holistically and informed by evidence drawn from four sources, namely student feedback ratings, student performance, feedback from colleagues on curriculum, and classroom teaching, and self-assessment. These four sources are framed by the critical elements of the teacher, teaching, the learner and learner, as shown below in Figure 1.
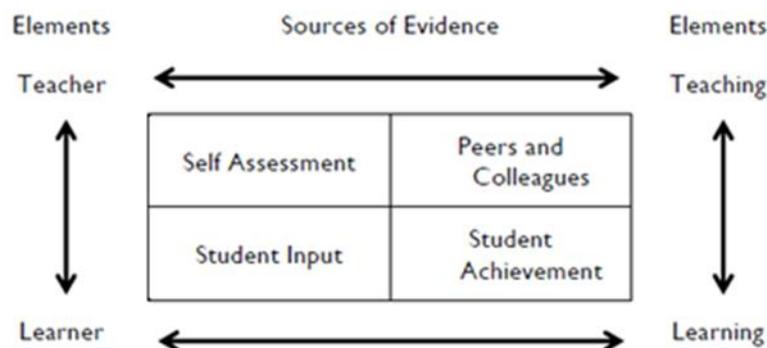

Figure 1. Framework for evaluating teaching (Chalmers & Hunt, 2016)

The aspect that is possibly the most "subjective" is self-assessment, which is essentially a critical reflection about learning and teaching. How can one be as objective as possible in making claims and providing evidence of one's teaching in a given year or indeed, over a number of years? Alternatively, if colleagues were starting on a teaching career, how might they draw up a systematic plan for their own professional development, so as to guide their plan of action?

In order to align to the local context of the National University of Singapore (NUS), one could use the criteria spelt out in the NUS Educator Track (ET) document (NUS Office of Human Resources, 2017) instead. However, the ET criteria are designed to be general criteria applicable for all faculties. Though "broad enough to satisfy disciplinary nuances", it leaves specific disciplines to "formulate their own principles" (Geertsema, Chng, Gan, & Soong, 2018, p. 138), since teaching quality is specific to context and discipline (Gibbs *et al.*, 2008; Gunn & Fisk, 2013).

At the NUS Centre for English Communication (CELC), where the courses are uniquely different from those offered in other content disciplines, such "principles" have yet to be formulated. Therefore, this current project aims to draw up a teaching standards framework that is specific to the context of CELC that is focused on English Language Teaching (ELT) and communication skills.

We begin by examining the Australian University Teaching Criteria and Standards (AUTCAS, n.d.) and NUS ET for the general criteria of teaching and learning for higher education. Then we use competency frameworks such as those developed by the British Association of Lecturers in English for Academic Purposes (BALEAP, 2008), the Murdoch communication skills framework (Johnson, Veitch, & Dewiyanti, 2015), and other frameworks nearest to our discipline (Edinburgh University, 2016; UKPSF, 2011) to derive some exemplars of quality teaching standards and criteria that are specific to the CELC context. These exemplars will serve to fine-tune the more general framework to form a tool we call the ELCTCS (ELT Criteria and Standards) matrix. We hope this resultant matrix will help us as individual teachers at CELC to self-assess across a range of courses and to make a plan of action for professional development.

Keywords

Self-assessment, academic professional development

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