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Dennison, Paul Henry (2017) *The professionalisation of teaching in higher education in the UK: perceptions and understandings*. EdD thesis, University of Greenwich.



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## Abstract

Since the foundation of the Higher Education Academy (HEA) in 2003, professionalisation of teaching in Higher Education (HE) has had a championing organisation, whose remit includes the accreditation of initial teacher education qualifications and institutional professional recognition schemes, the two routes by which teaching academics achieve the HEA's fellowship credential, FHEA.

This thesis uses a staged research process to explore the perceptions of teaching academics about the impact and equivalence of the two routes into "the profession", and what they understand by "being [a] professional".

In stage one, a group of teaching academics at University of Greenwich were interviewed and their contributions analysed thematically. One area of consensus – what they understood by "being [a] professional" – suggested a framework of orientations that teaching professionals have "responsibility for" and "duty towards". This, in turn, suggested a congruence with the motivations that obtained when the professions developed as clerical specialisations, during the Middle Ages, and which emerge in new but recognizably related forms ever since. The concept(s) of professionalism are re-emergent. They are socially robust.

In stage two, the study was widened to include interviews with educational developers at three other Higher Education Institutions from diverse mission groups revealing notable variation in the way professionalisation was implemented across the sector. The framework of orientations crystallized as a model for the "logic" of an ideal-type individual professional, consistent with Freidson's (2001) "third logic" of collective professionalism.

In stage three, key outcomes were critically evaluated in a free-text questionnaire to norm circles of teaching academics, experienced in implementing the two routes, and also to the original interviewees. The results lend considerable warrant to the model for the "logic" of an ideal-type professional. Other research outcomes have implications for the increased governmentality in the HE sector brought to bear through the (2016) Teaching Excellence Framework.

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Studying at higher education in the United Kingdom always leads to degree level education. The UK boasts institutes that are amongst some of the best with Oxford and Cambridge universities being the first to come to mind when considering studying there. With 164 higher education institutions in the UK, students applying to go to university are given the choice and opportunity to study wherever they wish so long as they reach the entry requirements of their university offer. Recently, it has become a more favorable option for students to move away from home to go and study for their degree. Non The structure of higher education in Great Britain is very complex. The main sources of higher educational institutions are: universities, teacher-training colleges and polytechnics. There are more than 60 universities in the U.K. They greatly differ from each other in date of foundation, size, history, tradition, general organization, methods of instruction and way of student life. The 2 intellectual eyes of Britain – Oxford & Cambridge Universities – date from the 12 & 13 centuries. Local Education Authorities are responsible for the budgets of the Polytechnics. Their work is planned and financed by the Polytechnics and Colleges Funding Council. Most degrees in Polytechnics are awarded by a national body called the Council for National Academic Awards. Higher education in

the UK called Higher Education and consists of 3 levels. Levels of higher education of Britain, mostly equivalent to the Russian higher educational levels – undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate. Level 1: Bachelor is the first higher education in Britain. In the UK the first higher education called the undergraduate. If in Russia and in Kazakhstan, this level of training was officially introduced only in the 1990s, and a two-tier system of higher education – bachelor degree + master's degree was adopted in 2002, in British universities, such a system exists for seven... the curriculum (Taught programmes); programs focused on research activities (Research programmes).