Notes from Sally Brown and Ruth Pickford drawing upon discussions from the HEDG, SEDA and ANTF mailbases.

**Strengths**

* Potential to provide more information for students, parents and other stakeholders about the quality of teaching;
* Increased focus on teaching's importance in counterbalancing current prioritisation of the REF (if the right metrics are used);
* Reinforcement of the importance of training to teach in higher education and academics ongoing CPD.

**Opportunities**

* Potential to use existing data from NTFS, UKPSF and pedagogic publications as ready measures of commitment to excellence;
* The chance to use a panel review process as currently used in the REF and in NTF review panels;
* The potential to move further towards professionalising teaching in higher education;
* Possibility of taking into account views not just of final year students but of first year students, second year students, pre-degree students and postgraduate students;
* Chance to enhance teaching through more research and evidence-based approaches and to capture excellence in pedagogic scholarship;
* The potential for good alignment with new Quality frameworks;
* The potential to strengthen the student voice in enhancing teaching;
* A good chance that more people will take the UK Professional Standards Framework seriously, particularly on the matter of remaining in good standing;
* The potential to focus on student engagement not just student satisfaction;
* A chance to use something like the University of Sydney scoring system to give points to highly valued activities and outcomes;
* If they are taken into account as a metric, more staff may be likely to engage in staff development activities.

**Weaknesses**

* Cynicism and fear that the ultimate purpose of the process is that Oxbridge and Russell group universities must win;
* It's not easy to measure good teaching using simple, cheap metrics. The process is likely to be a highly nuanced one and quantitative processes need to be input adjusted;
* Any TEF process will use up institutional and individual staff time energy and resources that could otherwise be directed towards improving the student experience;
* No convincing metrics have been offered so far on how to measure added value without involving time consuming pre-and post tests.

**Threats**

* There are widespread and genuine worries that the wrong metrics will be chosen. For example if graduate salary measures are used without taking into account disciplinary differences then there is likely to be skewing of outcomes;
* Current metrics under discussion are very likely to reinforce (at exit) existing privilege of students (on entry);
* Any TEF may have perverse outcomes which actually lead to a reduction in teaching quality;
* The UKPSF could be hijacked as a metric, devaluing the reflective element of the current scheme;
* Trying to make the TEF process serve too many conflicting purposes (such as guiding decisions on fee increases and rewarding excellent teaching) is likely to prove impossible;
* If the HEAR and Grade-Point Averages form part of the metrics there is a possibility that HEIs will adopt them rapidly without thinking them through properly;
* If the process is not demonstrably fair it could lead to time consuming and judicial review.

Our key points are:

1. Don't use raw employment and first destination data unless a granular approach is adopted to take account of subject and HEI mission differences. For example, on employment destinations arts schools and music conservatoires will never have the employment outcomes expected of institutions that primarily cater to professional disciplines;
2. Do take into account National Teaching Fellowships and UKPSF Fellowships but consider different levels of fellowship, not just raw percentages of how many staff have achieved them at any level;
3. TEF data should be reported at course level rather than at institutional level (as is KIS data currently). This would even out some of the problems identified above.