



THE AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY



September 2021 | Issue: 5 |

QTL\_net creates an institutional teaching culture change

## Message from Professor Tashmin Khamis, Vice Provost Quality, Teaching and Learning



Dr Tashmin Khamis appointed as a member of the Global Teaching Excellence Award judging panel | The Aga Khan University News Universities the world over have confirmed their reliance on Teaching and Learning centres to support the transition to online learning that has accelerated during the COVID-19

pandemic. AKU mirrors this experience: the Network of Quality, Teaching and Learning (QTL\_net) responded to the need for ‘quaranteaching’ during the rapid transition to online course offering and subsequently to supporting faculty with designing and encouraging good practice for [online course delivery](#). The dedicated and seemingly tireless QTL\_net team engaged over 3000 participants, mostly faculty, who attended bespoke professional development sessions through the digital boot-camps, Ed tech lounges, online course design and instructional skills online workshops. With the Provost’s oversight, AKU is pioneering its Digital Learning Strategy - thank you to all those who have taken part in shaping the way forward in reimagining learning centred teaching in a COVID world. This is the theme of our exciting and innovative Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) UnConference – the first of its kind at AKU to be held on [29th and 30th of November 2021](#).

QTL\_net’s capabilities in quality enhancement, digital learning and professionalising teaching at the whole institution level is being recognised regionally and internationally. You will find details throughout this newsletter. The Network is increasingly impacting our institutional teaching culture as AKU continues to reward and recognise teaching excellence through the [TEACH Fellowships](#) that is an internationally recognised higher education teaching qualification. Teaching Dossiers that are now a requisite component for academic promotions with over 30 faculty who have participated; recognition of teaching excellence through the [AKU Teachers Academy](#); and now the first Award for Collaborative Practice in [SOTL \(ACPSOTL\)](#).

Such an institutional culture change needs the buy-in of all our faculty and today QTL\_net has reached 91% of our faculty globally with 75% repeat participants in our various programmes, however, sustained institutional change and impacting our evolution to

academic excellence requires support from the very top of the university. We, therefore, proudly and humbly acknowledge the unmitigated support and leadership of [President Firoz Rasul](#) and the whole senior leadership team as well as members of the Board of Trustees for their continued championing of QTL\_net's activities. It was under President Rasul's tenure and active participation of both him and Professor Saida Rasul in the inaugural event that AKU became the first Advance HE accredited institution in the developing world. This has enabled us to benchmark the quality of our teaching in higher education globally through the Higher Education Academy and its fellowship scheme. The principles set by our President of "Uncompromising Quality" to serving the Academy with "High Expectations" will continue to guide the work of QTL\_net.

## Global News

### **Academic Teaching Excellence Awards at the Convocation: How QTL\_net is Impacting a Cultural Change at AKU (1 min read)**



During the recent AKU virtual convocation 2021, the faculty awards to recognize teaching effectiveness and teaching excellence were granted for the first time at the graduation ceremony. 28 faculty members from SONAM, IED and Medical College Pakistan and East Africa were awarded certificates for gaining their Higher Education Academy (UK) Fellowship in 2020-21 through QTL\_net's TEACH scheme. 14 faculty members who represent the inaugural members of AKU Teachers' Academy were also recognized at the convocation ceremony, signaling the increasing significance of rewarding and recognizing teaching at AKU.

## New Higher Education Academy (UK) Fellows and Best University Teacher Award (BUTA)



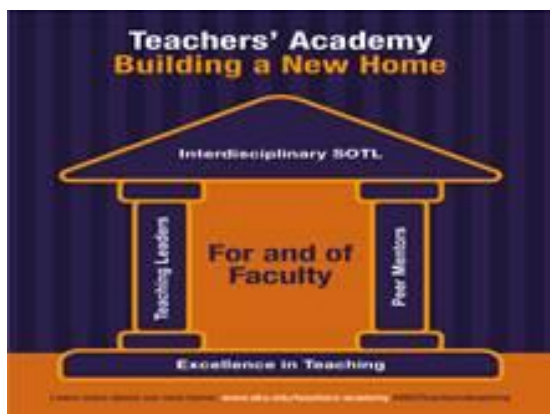
The Network of Quality, Teaching and Learning hereby congratulates the following Faculty who have recently gained their Fellowships Higher Education Academy (HEA) in the United Kingdom (UK) through AKU Teaching Enhancement Accredited Certification of the Higher Education Academy (TEACH) CPD Scheme.

1. Dr Tasneem Anwar, Assistant Professor, Institute for Educational Development, Pakistan.
2. Dr Nusrat Fatima Rizvi, Assistant Professor, Institute for Educational Development, Pakistan.
3. Dr Zehra Jamil, Assistant Professor, Biological and Biomedical Sciences, Medical College, Pakistan.
4. Dr Nancy Matillya, Senior Instructor, Department of Family Medicine, Medical College, Tanzania, East Africa.

QTL\_net would also like to congratulate Dr Tasneem Anwar, Assistant Professor, Institute of Education Development Aga Khan University, Karachi, who has been selected as the winner of the HEC Best teacher award 2020 under the field of “Social Sciences and Humanitarian.”

For those who are interested in knowing more about TEACH CPD Scheme, they can [register](#) for the upcoming TEACH Webinar scheduled on Thursday, September 16th, 2021. Contact [teach.tlnet@aku.edu](mailto:teach.tlnet@aku.edu) for more details.

## Second Call for Membership to the Teachers ‘Academy is Now open (1 min read)



“I am honoured to be an inaugural member of the Teachers Academy and excited to work with and learn from others.” (Dr Kulsoom Ghias, MC, PK)

Second Call for Membership to the Teachers' Academy is NOW OPEN.

You are invited to apply for its membership if you are interested in becoming a member of group of outstanding teachers at AKU and also want to be recognized for your excellence in teaching. For further details, visit our [website](#).

## Aga Khan University Digital Learning Strategy (1 min read)



QTL\_net and the Rapid Online and Remote Teaching Coordinating Group (RORTCG) are supporting the development of an Aga Khan University wide Digital Learning Strategy to address any gaps and issues, while maintaining the benefits and successes from last year's experiences of online teaching and learning. In order to ensure that all stakeholders were heard, 21 Focus group discussions were held with faculty members, support staff from academic entities, staff from supporting entities and students from Pakistan, East Africa and the UK. Currently, we are also interviewing senior leadership members. Once the data is collected we will

be analysing it to create a comprehensive digital learning strategy.

## NTV Coverage of Quality, Teaching and Learning Practices in AKU at the new University Centre opening in Kenya(1 min read)



Professor Tashmin Khamis, Vice Provost Quality, Teaching and Learning shares on National TV how QTL\_net supports faculty in teaching and learning in an innovative way at the new University Centre opening and AKU gaining charter in Kenya. [Find out more about QTL\\_net](#)

## SoTL Events for Faculty

## Application Open for the Collaborative Practice in Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (ACPSoTL) Awards (2 min read)



This year at the SoTL UnConference to be held on November 29 and 30, 2021, QTL\_net will award the first recipients for Collaborative Practice in Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (ACPSoTL). The ACPSoTL Award aims to encourage local models of interdisciplinary practices around teaching and learning that are collaborative, evidence-based and involving students. For more information about the ACPSoTL Award Application [Read More](#)

## 4th Biennial SoTL UnConference 2021 | Open call for Submissions



QTL\_net is inviting submissions for Pecha Kucha and Quarantine Teaching Bloopers from faculty, academic staff, and students. Presenters are expected to prepare for the specified sessions to the highest professional standards for an international, academic conference audience. The submission and review process will be designed to accept only those proposals which are about important aspects of SoTL as related to the UnConference theme and are equally innovative, engaging, and model evidence-based teaching. Collaborative presentations with students, fellows, residents, and others are highly encouraged. Submission Deadline: Friday, October 8, 2021, [read more about](#)

[SoTL here](#)

## Quality, Teaching and Learning: Partnerships and Outreach

### Professor Tashmin Khamis speaks at the University of Nairobi (2 min read)



Professor Tashmin Khamis, Vice Provost Quality, Teaching and Learning was invited to speak at the University of Nairobi to talk about policies for quality assurance of online learning. Talking from her experience at AKU, she said: “Faculty come into higher education from all around the world because of their content expertise but require support on how to teach to better engage the learner,” [Read More](#)

### Dr. Jane Rarieya, Appointed to Advance HE’s Expert Advisory Group (1 min read)



Dr Jane Rarieya, Director Teaching and Learning QTL\_net has been appointed to Advance HE’s Expert Advisory Group on Fellowship and Accreditation.

Dr Rarieya is the second AKU faculty member to provide guidance and expertise to Advance HE. In 2020, Professor Tashmin Khamis, Vice Provost Quality, Teaching and Learning, was appointed to

Advance HE's Global Perspectives Strategic Advisory Group which works in consultation with members to shape the future direction of the organization.

## UNSW and QTL\_net Conduct a Professional Development Session for Teacher Academy Members and AKU Faculty (1 min read)



QTL\_net hosted a professional development session in collaboration with the University of New South Wales (UNSW), Sydney, Australia. The session was open to the Teachers' Academy members and a few other faculty members interested in applying for the Senior Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy (SFHEA). We look forward to more of such collaboration with UNSW as well as other institutions.

## Committed to Quality in Education: Meeting the Higher Education Commission Requirements in Pakistan (3 min read)



In the 2nd Quarter of 2021, QTL\_net in collaboration with Aga Khan University's entities conducted two important exercises to meet the Higher Education Commission (HEC) compliance requirements in Pakistan. Primarily, this exercise involves the review of progress and actions taken in preparation for the improvement areas identified by the Institutional Performance Evaluation (IPE) in response to Higher Education Commission (HEC) requirements in Pakistan. Despite the pandemic, respective programmes and support units made definite progress since July 2019 to 2021. Secondly, AKU for the first time conducted the self-graduate programme review in addition to AKU's Quality Assurance reviews of programmes that follow the [AKU Quality Assurance Framework](#) (policy 030).

## QTL\_net presents at the INQAAHE Conference 2021: 'Rethinking Quality through Online Learning: An Opportunity within a Crisis' (1 min read)



Professor Tashmin Khamis Vice Provost Quality, Teaching and Learning and Director Blended and Digital Learning Azra Naseem presented at the INQAAHE Conference 2021 about their experience at AKU of leading the move to e-learning through capacity building of faculty and students to ensure continuity in education. To many

in academia, the novel COVID-19 virus has presented an unprecedented crisis, an obstacle to the conventional didactic mode of teaching. However, higher education institutions now have the catalytic opportunity, with regular self and peer assessment of their programmes, to

engage in more blended and online learning and to develop more effective and responsive learning opportunities by using information technology.

### **Director Blended Digital Learning, Azra Naseem presents at Advance HE**



Azra Naseem, Director Blended and Digital Learning QTL\_net was invited by Advance HE (UK) to contribute in a virtual global webinar on “Best Practices for Online Learning in Life and Health Science Programmes” hosted on May 13, 2021. A recording of the webinar can be [viewed here](#). Based on QTL\_net experiences of supporting online transition, Azra has successfully developed an open source manual with our AKF CADEX consultant Kevin Pitts,

with the aim of helping faculty transition to better online course design which can be [downloaded here](#).

## **Regular Features: Professional Development**

### **Dr Pammla Petrucka’s Session in the QTL\_net Teaching and Learning Series: Becoming a ‘SUPER’visor (1 min read)**



To support AKU faculty develop a shared understanding of good supervision practices and address some of the key challenges they experience as supervisors, QTL\_net hosted a webinar on 'Becoming a SUPERvisor' on May 26, 2021. The webinar unpacked some of the best practices in graduate supervision that could encourage and promote an enriched and collegial work environment to pursue knowledge and academic inquiry. The session was facilitated by Professor Pammla Petrucka, who is currently serving at the University of Saskatchewan and is visiting faculty at AKU’s School of Nursing and Midwifery, Pakistan. Having supervised or co-supervised more than 50 graduate students in four continents, Dr Petrucka shared her 'global' lens on graduate supervision. The webinar was attended by 93 faculty members drawn from all AKU campuses. The development of the Graduate Supervision Manual is currently underway. The manual will serve as a guide and resource for graduate students, faculty members, supervisors, and administrative staff who are involved in graduate education.

### **The Future of Assessments (1 min read)**



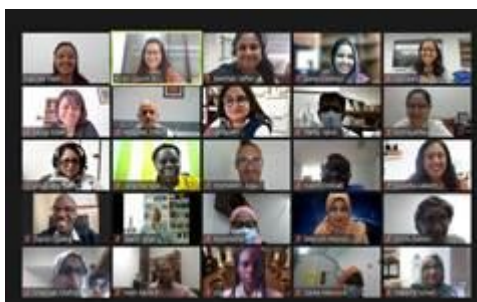
Given the emerging but urgent need to rethink assessments in higher education, especially during the pandemic, QTL\_net organized a Teaching and Learning webinar on the Future of Assessment for AKU faculty on Tuesday, July 27, 2021. The webinar aimed to unpack the future of assessment and discuss some of the best practices to make assessment smarter, fair and more effective as well as address the common challenges around assessing students’ learning. 64 faculty members and academic support staff participated in the webinar across AKU Pakistan, East Africa, and the UK.

### Reflection of RTT Workshop (2 min read)



QTL\_net offered the seventh Rethinking Teaching (RTT) workshop from June 21 to July 2, 2021, with the aim to encourage faculty to (re)design their courses so as to provide deep and meaningful learning experiences to students. 20 faculty members and academic support staff from different disciplines participated in the synchronous, asynchronous, and independent learning activities spread over six days. [Read More](#)

### TEACH Workshop (1 min read)



QTL\_net offered a two-half-day TEACH Writing Workshop to 28 faculty members and staff involved in faculty development on June 3 and 8, 2021. This was the highest number of participants since QTL\_net started this scheme in May 2018. The workshop enables the participants to apply for an appropriate category for HEA Fellowship and gains recognition for teaching effectiveness through benchmarking their practice against UK Professional Standard Framework (UKPSF) for teaching and learning in Higher Education. [Read more about AKU TEACH](#) here if you would like to apply for the HEA Fellowship in the forthcoming cycles.



## A tribute to President Firoz Rasul on Behalf of the Network of Quality, Teaching and Learning (QTL\_net)



### A President and A Professor

They stand for Quality  
That is their reality  
Modeling to those that they lead.  
They listen and learn,  
Our respect they have earned  
Sustaining our Network's need.

Leadership is an Action  
Not just a position  
Which the President and Prof demonstrate.  
Support from the Top  
Meant that resistance couldn't stop  
The path of QTL\_net.

Today they depart  
Having given with their heart  
And made us more powerful.  
You've empowered what we do  
With your support of AKU  
Khuda Hafiez, Firoz and Saida Rasul.

On Behalf of the Network of Quality, Teaching and Learning (QTL\_net)  
By Prof. Tashmin Khamis, Vice Provost Quality, Teaching and Learning

### Upcoming Events – View our full Calendar [here](#)

Ed Teach Lounge	Every Month's 2 <sup>nd</sup> Wednesday
Digital Boot Camp	Every 3 <sup>rd</sup> or 4 <sup>th</sup> Thursday of the Month
VLE Assistants Workshop	September 24 <sup>th</sup> , 2021
SoTL Grants (Call, Webinar and Outcome)	October 30 <sup>th</sup> , 2021
Teaching and Learning Enhancement Workshop (TLEW)	October 25 <sup>th</sup> to 29 <sup>th</sup> , November 1 <sup>st</sup> to 5 <sup>th</sup>
Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) UnConference	November 29 <sup>th</sup> to November 30 <sup>th</sup> , 2021
Introduction to teaching via VLE workshop (FOTL)	December 6 <sup>th</sup> and December 9 <sup>th</sup> , 2021

One to One consultations are available for faculty. Please make an appointment with our team

[Contact Us](#)

Follow our website for more details...

**Network of Quality, Teaching and Learning**

QTLnet@aku.edu | [www.aku.edu/ctl](http://www.aku.edu/ctl)