



The UK Professional Standards Framework

for teaching and supporting learning

in higher education

Information Note



The UK Professional Standards Framework for teaching and supporting learning in higher education

This information note answers the following questions:

- What is the Framework?
- How has it changed?
- Who does it belong to?
- What is it for?
- How does the HEA use the Framework?
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What is the Framework?

The UKPSF provides a general description of the main dimensions of the roles of teaching and supporting learning within the HE environment. It is written from the perspective of the practitioner and outlines a national framework for comprehensively recognising and benchmarking learning and teaching support roles within higher education.

The Framework has two components:¹

The Descriptors:

These are a set of statements outlining the key characteristics of someone performing four broad categories of typical learning and teaching support roles within higher education.

The dimensions of practice:

These are a set of statements outlining the:

- 1 Areas of Activity undertaken by teachers and supporters of learning within HE
- 2 Core Knowledge that is needed to carry out those activities at the appropriate level
- 3 Professional Values that someone performing these activities should embrace and exemplify

How has it changed?

There have been a number of enhancements to the Framework following the recent consultation. These are described in a separate information note. Two key changes are revisions to Descriptor 3 and the addition of Descriptor 4.

¹ For the full document go to www.heacademy.ac.uk/ukpsf

Who does it belong to?

The Framework has been developed by the HEA on behalf of the sector as a whole and so it is the property of all of those with a direct interest in the HE sector.

How does the HEA use the Framework?

The HEA offers a recognition and accreditation service. This enables staff providing learning and/or teaching support to be recognised, depending on their role and experience, as an Associate Fellow, Fellow, Senior Fellow or Principal Fellow of the Academy, corresponding to Descriptor 1,2,3 or 4 respectively.

What is it for?

The Framework's central purpose is to help those seeking to enhance the learning experience of their students, by improving the quality of their learning and teaching support. It has a wide range of uses, but could, for example, be used to:

- Promote the professionalisation of teaching and learning support within the HE sector;
- Foster creative and innovative approaches to learning and teaching;
- Enable HE staff to gain recognition and reward for developing their capabilities as teachers and supporters of learning;
- Facilitate and support the design and delivery of initial and continuing education development programmes and activities;
- Demonstrate to students and other stakeholders the professionalism that staff and institutions bring to teaching and support for student learning;
- Support senior staff seeking to;
 - develop policies and systems for the recognition and reward of teaching and learning support staff;
 - promote a strong culture of teaching and learning support.

How can you use the Framework?

The Framework has been designed to cover all aspects of learning and teaching support. If you have a substantive role in the education of students or staff, it will be relevant to your situation.

Depending on your specific role, you can use it to become an Associate, Fellow, Senior Fellow or Principal Fellow. This will give you national recognition as a higher education educator. Review the descriptors to see which is appropriate for you. You don't have to start as an Associate and work through to Fellow, Senior Fellow and Principal Fellow. You can gain recognition appropriate to your current role and recent experience.

You can use the Framework to plan and guide your continuing professional development (CPD) in the area of learning and teaching. There is a natural progression through the Framework as the scope of your learning/teaching support role widens and deepens. The Framework can help you at whatever your stage and whatever your goals are in learning and teaching.

If you are involved in the training and development of teaching and/or learning support staff, you can use the Framework to design and structure your development programmes. You can also make use of the accreditation service provided by the HEA. Successful participants in HEA accredited programmes and schemes are automatically entitled to gain the relevant recognition for the Descriptor of accreditation. So this is a valuable means of enabling your staff to gain HEA recognition.

If you have a senior managerial role, you can use the Framework to help you enhance the quality and prominence of the learning and teaching activities within your remit. There are many ways it can be used. Two examples are:

- its requirements can be included in job descriptions for posts with substantive teaching requirements;
- it can form the basis for policy statements with regard to teaching and learning.

Want to know more?

The HEA has developed Guidance Notes to support the effective use of the framework; these will be extended and amended over time. The HEA is also collecting case studies of good practice in the application of the Framework. If you would like to know more, please go to <http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/professional-recognition> for further information.

Alternatively you can contact the Teacher Excellence team directly on at ukpsf@heacademy.ac.uk or by calling 01904 717 500.

The Higher Education Academy
Innovation Way
York Science Park
Heslington
York
YO10 5BR

+44 (0)1904 717500
enquiries@heacademy.ac.uk

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