Associate Fellowship

Applicant guidance notes
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1. Introduction

These guidance notes are for individuals wishing to make a direct application to Advance HE for Associate Fellowship. If you are applying for Associate Fellowship through an Advance HE accredited programme/scheme, then please refer to the guidance provided by your institution.

This document explains the requirements for Associate Fellowship and provides guidance to support you to develop your application.

By applying to become an Associate Fellow you will have the opportunity to:

+ Gain professional recognition for your higher education teaching and/or support for learning practice that is increasingly recognised by international institutions
+ Identify and celebrate your strengths and achievements through reflecting on your experience
+ Benchmark your practice against professional standards and sector expectations
+ Demonstrate your commitment to teaching, learning, and the student experience, through engagement in a practical process that encourages research, reflection and professional development

We recommend that prior to starting your application you use our free online Fellowship Category Tool (FCT). Answering the online questions about your work in teaching and learning should:

+ help you to check that Associate Fellowship is the best match for your current practice
+ prompt your thinking about different aspects of your practice as you plan your application.

The fee for a direct application for Associate Fellowship is on the Advance HE website and is subject to annual review.
2. The UK Professional Standards Framework 2011 (PSF)

The UK Professional Standards Framework 2011 (PSF) for teaching and supporting learning in higher education provides a general description of the main aspects of the role carried out by professionals that teach and/or support learning within the higher education environment. It is written from the perspective of the practitioner and can be used by individuals and institutions to recognise and benchmark teaching and learning support roles within higher education.

The PSF has two components: Dimensions and Descriptors.

The Dimensions of the Framework (p3, PSF) are a set of statements outlining the:

- Five Areas of Activity that you undertake when teaching and/or supporting learning within higher education;
- Six aspects of Core Knowledge that you need to carry out your learning and teaching activities at the appropriate higher education level;
- Four Professional Values that should inform and underpin your teaching and/or support of learning practice.

The PSF Descriptors (PSF, p4-7) are a set of statements (referred to as Descriptor ‘criteria’) outlining the key characteristics of someone evidencing four broad categories of typical teaching and learning support roles within higher education.

Advance HE operates the Fellowship scheme and aligns its fellowships to the PSF Descriptors as follows:

- Descriptor 1 (D1) aligned to Associate Fellow
- Descriptor 2 (D2) aligned to Fellow
- Descriptor 3 (D3) aligned to Senior Fellow
- Descriptor 4 (D4) aligned to Principal Fellow

An individual providing teaching and/or support for learning can be recognised by Advance HE depending on their professional practice and experience at one of four categories of fellowship. This guidance document is focussed on Associate Fellowship (Descriptor 1).
Higher Education and eligibility for Fellowship

The PSF sets out the professional standards for higher education. All the experience and evidence included in your application must relate to teaching and/or support for learning practice related to higher education provision such as:

- level 4 or above within the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, or equivalent;
- level 7 or above within the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) in Scotland on the Framework for Qualifications of Higher Education Institutions (FQHEIS) or equivalent;
- first cycle or above of the Qualifications Framework in the European Higher Education Area (QF-EHEA);
- level 5 or above of the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) or equivalent;
- level 5 or above of the New Zealand Qualification Framework or equivalent;
- other equivalent higher education frameworks;
- activity focused on supporting students within a Higher Education context, providing the student(s) are enrolled on a Higher Education Qualification may also be considered as evidence equivalent to the higher education frameworks above;
- delivery of non-accredited continuing professional development for academic and learning support staff may also be considered as evidence equivalent to the higher education frameworks.

In defining what constitutes HE teaching and learning within different international contexts, in order to determine eligibility for Fellowship, Advance HE uses UK NARIC (National Recognition Information Centre) information about international education frameworks and qualifications. Programmes will be defined as HE for the purposes of staff teaching and supporting learning on the programme being eligible for Fellowship if they are an integral part of a programme defined as higher education within the context of the country of study. The definition of what constitutes HE has been further defined for staff in UK and Australasia. If you are unsure whether the examples of practice within your application meets the eligibility requirements above, contact Fellowship@advance-he.ac.uk
3. Associate Fellowship and Descriptor 1

As explained above, Associate Fellowship is awarded to higher education (HE) teaching and learning professionals that can demonstrate they meet the requirements of Descriptor 1 (D1). You will need to keep referring to the PSF (see Section 2) as you progress with your application and make associations between your practice, specific PSF Dimensions and Descriptor 1 (PSF, p4).

To achieve Associate Fellowship, you need to evidence that your teaching and/or support of learning practice demonstrates the requirements of the six Descriptor 1 (D1) criteria, which are as follows:

- **D1.I** Successful engagement with **at least two of the five** Areas of Activity
- **D1.II** Successful engagement in appropriate teaching and practices related to these Areas of Activity
- **D1.III** Appropriate Core Knowledge and understanding of **at least K1 and K2**
- **D1.IV** A commitment to **appropriate Professional Values** in facilitating others’ learning
- **D1.V** Relevant professional practices, subject and pedagogic research and/or scholarship within the above activities
- **D1.VI** Successful engagement, where appropriate, in professional development activity related to teaching, learning, and assessment responsibilities

Associate Fellowship is typically the appropriate category of Fellowship for individuals able to provide evidence of effectiveness in relation to their professional role(s) which includes some specific teaching and/or learning support responsibilities, such as:

+ Early career researchers with some teaching responsibilities (e.g. PhD students, GTAs, contract researchers/post-doctoral researchers etc.);
+ Staff new to teaching (including those with part-time academic responsibilities);
+ Staff who support teaching or learning (e.g. learning technologists, learning developers and learning resource/library staff);
+ Staff who undertake demonstrator/ technician roles that incorporate some teaching-related responsibilities;
+ Experienced staff in relevant professional areas who may be new to teaching and/or supporting learning, or who have a limited teaching portfolio.

The Advance HE Fellowship Category Tool should support you to determine that Associate Fellowship is the most appropriate category of Fellowship to suit your role and experience to date and the purpose of this guidance document is to support you in developing an application.
4. **Advance HE guidance available to support your application**

There are **two parts** to your direct application for Associate Fellowship:

+ **written Account of Professional Practice;** Context Statement and Reflective Account of Practice against two PSF Areas of Activity (see Section 5)
+ **Supporting Statements from two referees (see Section 8)**

This Associate Fellowship applicant guidance document should be read and used in conjunction with other Advance HE guidance documents; you will find these in the applicant ‘pack’ you downloaded or by following the web links below:

+ **UK Professional Standards Framework 2011 (PSF)** for teaching and supporting learning in higher education (see Section 2);
+ **Dimensions of the Framework guidance** documents: a series of guidance documents written to suit individuals engaging with the PSF Dimensions in different contexts. These guidance documents provide examples to illustrate different ways in which individuals might evidence their engagement with the PSF Dimensions as appropriate to each PSF Descriptor (see Section 2). The guidance should help you to make meaningful links between your own practice and the different PSF Dimensions:
  - Dimensions of the Framework
  - Dimensions of the Framework: staff in learning support roles
  - Dimensions of the Framework: doctoral supervisors
  - Dimensions of the Framework: college-based higher education
  - Dimensions of the Framework: music
  - Dimensions of the Framework: Digital lens on the UKPSF

We recommend that you access the most appropriate version(s) to suit your professional context and use the guidance to help you plan what evidence of your practice you might include within your application to indicate where this practice aligns with different Dimensions;

+ **Associate Fellow Application Template (in the applicant pack you downloaded)**; use this Word document template to draft your application offline prior to using our online application system to submit your application. The Associate Fellowship template also enables you to share the final version of your application with your referees.
5. Your Account of Professional Practice

Associate Fellowship is based on meeting Descriptor 1 (D1) of the PSF and your Account of Professional Practice is the core of your application. The Account of Professional Practice consists of a Context Statement (see Section 5.2) and a Reflective Account of Practice against two PSF Areas of Activity.

Your **Context Statement** provides a brief summary of your higher education roles, responsibilities and professional experience and your **Reflective Account of Practice (RAP)** should provide evidence that your professional practice meets the requirements of PSF **Descriptor 1**.

Higher education takes many forms and there is considerable variation in the different roles higher educational professionals carry out; for example, in experience, disciplinary background, job role, institutional context, etc. Your Account of Professional Practice is a personal account and its focus throughout should be on your own professional practice; make it personal to your specific, individual and distinctive practice. Your Supporting Statements will verify that what you write about in your Account of Professional Practice represents your practice in a genuine way (see Section 8).

It is important to note that you focus on evidencing your effective practice to date in your application. You might briefly mention future plans as part of identifying what has worked well and any changes you plan to make in future; however, your application will be judged on whether your evidence of current and recent practice meets the requirements of Descriptor 1.

In your **Reflective Account of Practice (RAP)**, you should include appropriate rationale for the approaches you take and evidence the success and effectiveness of your teaching and/or supporting learning practice. Your Reflective Account of Practice should be based around real examples from your practice and should make clear **what** you do, **why/how** you do it that way and **how you know** that this is effective.

Writing about ‘why’ you took each approach will enable you to include the ‘evidence-base’ that informs and underpins your practice within your RAP; (see Section 5.6). You also need to include the ways in which the professional development you have undertaken has influenced your personal practice (see Section 5.7).

Provide **selective** examples of practice in your RAP and ensure they have direct relevance to your claim for Associate Fellowship. The quality of the examples of evidence is much more important than the quantity. Examples should be drawn from current and recent practice (within the last 3 years) and must relate to higher education teaching and/or supporting learning. If you reflect on any historic professional practice as part of your evidence, ensure that you focus on how this now impacts on your current practice.

### 5.1 Your Account of Professional Practice is a personal account

Think of your application as a ‘claim’; you are making a claim that your work is effective and has a positive impact on student learning. Your application will be reviewed by two experienced peer reviewers and you need to show these reviewers that there is a clear rationale behind the way you work and the choices you make in your practice.
Write in the first person (use ‘I’) so it makes clear what you do/ have done. Try to avoid discussing teaching in general or abstract terms as this moves the application away from being about you and your own personal practice and will not help your personal ‘claim’ against Descriptor 1. If you want to include work you did as part of a team/with colleagues, you need to be clear what your personal contribution was.

Your application must be submitted in English (please refer to the Fellowship FAQ document for further information).

Please note that the Advance HE online application system only accepts plain text; it will remove any formatting from your text and will not accept diagrams, images, hyperlinks or any other documents/appendices such as curriculum vitae/resume.

5.2 Context Statement

A Context Statement (up to 300 words) is the first part of your Account of Professional Practice and you should briefly introduce yourself and outline your role(s) and responsibilities in teaching and/or supporting learning in higher education. The information in your Context Statement will help the reviewers to understand the nature of your work and the context in which you practice, before they look at the evidence you provide in your Reflective Account of Practice (RAP) against the PSF Descriptor 1; this section provides the background to your RAP and is not ‘assessed’ against Descriptor 1.

In no more than 300 words your Context Statement should:

+ Provide a brief summary of your teaching and/or support of learning experience, including the context in which you currently work, your current role and responsibilities in teaching and/or support of learning. Identify the type and location of institution(s) you work for, as this will help to set out the context for your work, but keep this brief and relevant to your role. Do not include details about the history and prestige of the institution(s), as your Account of Professional Practice is about you and your practice;

+ Identify the students that you work with; for example, the level of study (e.g. year of study, undergraduate, postgraduate, etc.), programme(s)/unit(s) of study, discipline/specialist area of work, number and types of learners, etc.;

+ Focus on your current or recent practice, which should be within the last 3 years. Please remember that your application for Associate Fellowship is based on your higher education practice; if you also work in other teaching or learning roles outside of higher education you should not include this in your application (please refer to Section 2 for further information about eligibility for Associate Fellowship).

As the Context Statement is not an assessed part of your application, you do not need to link this information to the PSF. The reviewers will not take account of the information in the Context Statement when they assess your application; therefore, it cannot be used to provide supplementary information that would add evidence of effective practice to your ‘claim’ for Associate Fellowship in your RAP (i.e. it cannot be used to extend the word limit of your RAP).
The two examples below illustrate the types of information that are useful to include in the Context Statement to set the background to your practice:

**Example 1:**

I am a PhD student in my third year at a research-intensive university. I have been involved in various teaching and support of learning activities over the last two years.

I lead seminars for groups of between 10-15 undergraduate students studying Spanish in years 1 and 2. Seminar topics cover Spanish culture, history and politics. These normally last between one and two hours, and provide the opportunity to discuss particular topics in more detail. Although the seminar schedule and topics are set, I develop my own seminar materials with support from the academic team. I use the University’s VLE platform to host resources and activities.

I also teach the module Mandarin for Beginners, which is offered to all second year undergraduate language students; this involves a weekly lecture to around 40 undergraduate students and four tutorials a week to groups of 4-5 students.

**Example 2:**

I am an experienced, professionally qualified librarian at the University of X with specific responsibility for supporting students in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, whilst also helping to deliver the library’s academic skills agenda. I have worked at the University for three years and am part of a small team of four library staff within the faculty. The University is a large modern university with four faculties and around 20,000 Undergraduate and 8,000 Postgraduate students. My faculty attracts a high proportion of international second-language students.

My main teaching is face-to-face in-class timetabled sessions with groups of 20-30 first year undergraduate students in their first semester. I work closely with academic staff and design my sessions to fit alongside their programme objectives. My sessions are usually up to 1.5 hours in length.

I also design and deliver face to face self-sign-up sessions with small groups of undergraduate and postgraduate students at our main site and students in our two overseas campuses via video link.

I am currently involved in a University-wide project to identify correlation between skills workshop attendance and attainment, especially for traditionally underperforming groups.

### 5.3 Structuring your Reflective Account of Practice (RAP)

The written Reflective Account of Practice (RAP) is structured into two sections; you write about your practice in relation to two of the five PSF Areas of Activity. You should choose to write about the two Areas of Activity that are most appropriate to your own practice (see Section 6 below for further guidance).
As well as covering two Areas of Activity, to address D1.III you also need to make sure that across the two sections of the RAP you include evidence that you are effectively using Core Knowledge 1 (K1); the subject material and Core Knowledge 2 (K2); appropriate methods for teaching, learning and assessing in the subject area and at the level of HE provision.

In addition to K1 and K2, in providing examples of your practice in each section of your RAP, you are likely to also identify some aspects of other Core Knowledge (K3-K6) that you are applying to your work. Where this is the case then make clear why and how you apply these.

Descriptor 1 requires you to demonstrate your commitment to appropriate Professional Values in facilitating others’ learning’ (D1.IV). Think about which of the Professional Values you use to inform your practice and include examples that demonstrate your use of these values within your RAP.

You will see that Sections 6 and 7 below keep referring to the Advance HE Dimensions of the Framework guidance as this guidance should really help you to make appropriate links between your practice and the PSF Dimensions and to identify relevant evidence to include in your application.

As you provide evidence against the Dimensions, you should highlight this where applicable. One way to do this is to refer to the Dimension in your text, e.g. (V2) or (K1) etc. Ensure that you only link to the most relevant Dimensions in each case (e.g. one or two that you have engaged with in a meaningful way in that specific example of practice) and avoid producing long lists of links to Dimensions (e.g. K1, K2, K4, V1, V2, V3) as this will not demonstrate your meaningful engagement with the Dimensions.

When deciding which examples of practice you are going to use for each of the two Areas of Activity, try to use different examples in each Area that best demonstrate your engagement with specific Dimensions. It is important that you don’t rely on the same examples in each of the two Areas of Activity as this is unlikely to provide sufficient evidence that your practice meets all the requirements of Descriptor 1. However, select your examples carefully as too many examples will restrict your ability to demonstrate your successful and effective practice against each Area of Activity in order to make a strong ‘claim’ against Descriptor 1.

Within the limited words available you will not be able to write about everything you do and must be selective about the examples you choose to write about. Select examples that best exemplify your work in each chosen Area of Activity and which also allow you to demonstrate the specific elements of the Core Knowledge and Professional Values required (see Section 5.4 below related to word limit).

### 5.4 RAP word limit

The overall word limit for the Associate Fellow RAP is **1,400 words plus citations (200 words); overall maximum 1,600 words.** Please note that the Advance HE online system will not exceed this limit.

Although you can choose how to spread the balance of the word limit across your RAP, we recommend that you should aim to use around 700 words in each of the two sections plus citations.
5.5 Reflect on your practice throughout your RAP

Developing your RAP requires you to identify/gather and consider evidence of your practice, reflecting on the impact you have made on student learning. When writing your RAP, you should avoid long descriptions of what you ‘do’ and take a reflective stance so that it is clear what you do, how/why you do it that way, how you know this is effective and what you will do in future as a result.

A simple reflective model for you to use throughout your RAP could be to clearly explain:

+ **What** you do (be selective with the examples you choose to include – see Section 5.3);

+ **Why** you do it in this way; clearly explain your approach and justify your choices and decisions (e.g. drawing on Professional Values to guide planning, use of an appropriate evidence base to inform your approach, etc.);

+ **How** you carry out this approach (e.g. including any specific challenges or practical issues you have overcome);

+ How you evaluate the effectiveness of what you do (explain the kinds of ‘information’ you use to review and evaluate your work including the impact this has on your students’ learning);

+ **What changes** you have made as a result of evaluating your effectiveness (for example, you might have modified a session in response to student/ peer feedback and then evaluated the effectiveness of the change you implemented);

+ How you ensure that you continue to develop and enhance your practice; for example, engaging in peer review, developing your evidence-base (D1.V) or engaging in professional development (D1.VI), etc. and applying this learning to enhance your practice (use examples to illustrate).

5.6 Refer to the evidence-base that informs and underpins your practice (D1.V)

You will need to refer to relevant professional practices, subject and pedagogic research and/or scholarship within your application (D1.V) to explain how/why you have chosen the approaches you have taken. How you evidence this will depend on the context in which you are working, the nature of the subject, discipline or profession in which you teach and the context/expectations of the institution in which you work.

As you will be writing about your approach to teaching and learning in your RAP, you should cite/refer to the ‘evidence-base’ you use to inform your practice where appropriate within your RAP. For example, you might cite scholarly literature such as journals (e.g. Smith, 2019), publications, books, websites, etc. or refer to evidence from professional bodies, industry or your discipline (your ‘professional knowledge’ base). Where you do cite a reference, it has to be apparent how this has influenced your practice (i.e. the citation is not just ‘dropped in’). For example, you could explain how you were inspired by a particular text or journal article to plan your learning environment in a certain way.

Where you cite in the text of your RAP, you need to include the full reference in a list at the end of the relevant section of your RAP. Your word limit includes up to 200 words for your reference list. We ask you to provide a full list of all the references you directly cite so that
reviewers are clear about which sources have influenced your approach to learning and teaching and to provide appropriate credit to an author/organisation that has inspired any areas of your practice. Please note that the online application system can only accept plain text (i.e. footnotes will not be accepted).

This short excerpt of an Associate Fellowship application illustrates how the applicant uses their evidence-base to inform their practice (D.V) and demonstrates this in their application:

‘When it came to designing my own lecture I was heavily influenced by Burgstahler’s (2015) theory of universal design. Rather than retrofitting accessibility into teaching (as I had done for my first seminars) I had the opportunity to build accessibility in from the start (DV, V2).

Reference List for excerpt


5.7 Engagement in professional development activity related to teaching, learning, and assessment responsibilities (D1.VI)

Engagement in ongoing professional learning is integral to your role as an educator. Your RAP should reflect your engagement in ongoing professional development relevant to your teaching and learning role and responsibilities and make clear how the learning you have taken from this development has been applied to and/or enhanced your practice. Evidence of your engagement in professional development activities is required for addressing D1.VI and Dimensions V3 and A5 for example.

You may attend formal events such as courses/workshops/symposia/conferences but ‘professional development’ activities can also include formal/informal learning opportunities. For example, learning from colleagues (e.g. peer review/ mentoring/ curriculum development/ blogs, etc.), from students (students as partners work/ focus groups/ action research, etc.), from scholarly theory, experience in the profession/industry, etc.

An example to illustrate how you might integrate evidence of D1.VI into your application:

If you are teaching on an accountancy degree, you might include your attendance at an event on new tax regulations. You could then discuss how this new professional learning has impacted on your practice through, for example, updating of the curriculum (A1/K1) and/or revision of the resources (A4/K1/K2) you provide for your learners.
6. Evidencing the required PSF Dimensions for Descriptor 1

Although the RAP for Associate Fellow applications is structured around two of the five Areas of Activity this does not mean that the Areas of Activity are more important than the Core Knowledge or Professional Values PSF Dimensions; the Dimensions will be inter-dependent and integrated within your professional practice; put simply, the Areas of Activity are what you do, the Core Knowledge is what you need to know to effectively carry out this work and the Professional Values should inform and underpin your work.

Across the 1,400 words of your RAP, as well as evidencing two Areas of Activity, you need to ensure that you evidence a minimum of Core Knowledge 1 and 2 (K1 and K2) and appropriate Professional Values as required for Descriptor 1.

Example to illustrate how the Dimensions are inter-dependent and integrated:

Designing and planning a learning activity successfully (A1) requires you to use the appropriate level of subject knowledge (K1) and select appropriate teaching and learning methods (K2). You also need to consider the needs of individuals within your student group (V1) and plan appropriately so that your students will all have opportunity to fully engage in the learning activities you are planning (V2).
The Dimensions of the Framework guidance provides you with some typical examples to help you to identify where you use PSF Core Knowledge and Professional Values within your practice. In each of the two Areas of Activity, choose to evidence just the aspects of the Core Knowledge and Professional Values that are particularly relevant to your work in that Area.

Example to illustrate how Professional Values inform planning of session activities (A1):

Ade attended a University workshop about supporting learners on the autistic spectrum in order to better understand the challenges that one of his students faces (V1, D1. VI). He later read an article recommended by the workshop facilitator that was highly relevant to his disciplinary context. He explains how he now approaches the planning of his session activities and the learning environment to ensure that all his students can fully engage in the learning (K3, A4, V2).

Section 7 below focuses on each of the five Areas of Activity. After each Area of Activity, an example is provided to further support you to understand how you might evidence the required PSF Dimensions when writing against two Areas of Activity in an application for Associate Fellowship.
7. Evidencing two Areas of Activity

Deciding which two Areas of Activity to base your RAP around is an important stage in planning and developing your application. You might like to consider all five Areas of Activity and then make a choice when you have mapped out your likely evidence against each one and so can see which Areas of Activity will make the strongest claim against Descriptor 1. Alternatively, it may be very clear to you immediately that your evidence is associated with two specific Areas of Activity because of the nature of your specialist practice.

The guidance below further explains each of the Areas of Activity. As you consider each Area of Activity below, you should also refer closely to the Dimensions of the Framework guidance document(s) as you consider what examples of practice you might choose to write about.

Remember that across both Areas of Activity you must also evidence Core Knowledge 1 and 2 (K1 and K2) and appropriate Professional Values as a minimum to meet Descriptor 1; as well as demonstrate your effective engagement with scholarship (D1.V) and professional development (D1.VI).

**Evidencing Area of Activity 1: Design and plan learning activities and/or programmes of study**

Area of Activity 1 refers to what you do to design and plan learning activities, whether face-to-face or in a virtual learning environment.

The focus of Area of Activity 1 (A1) is the preparation you do for your engagement with learners. The focus is therefore not on your actual teaching practice or the learning environment, which are covered by A2 and A4 (although there may be overlaps between A1 and these Dimensions). Although Area of Activity 1 is all about design and planning of learning activities, you will need to demonstrate that your planning and design has been effective; i.e. you are reflecting on the effectiveness of practice that has taken place and not practice that you have planned for the future.

The evidence of designing and planning learning activities will vary depending on the context of your work and there are many different types of evidence against Area of Activity 1 that Associate Fellows might evidence. The Dimensions of the Framework guidance will provide you with a range of typical examples that applicants use as evidence against Descriptor 1. Depending on your role and context you may be designing and planning individual learning activities and/or sessions in modules, courses and programmes but you might have input to the design and planning of a whole programme of study.

Different factors will affect the way you plan and prepare your learning activities, for example; the HE level of the students, the learning outcomes for a module/ programme of study or learning support activity. You need to show that you understand that what you have planned is appropriate for your learner/s. In all cases, your design and planning should reflect your knowledge and understanding of relevant Core Knowledge and be informed by appropriate Professional Values.
Write about:

1. The main ways in which you design and plan learning activities/ sessions/ modules/ units/ courses (as appropriate to your practice);

2. The reasons for your choice of:
   a. subject material;
   b. approaches/ methods used;
   c. learning activities/technologies/resources included in your plan.

3. How you make choices to facilitate learning to suit the needs of your learners and the learning aims/ level/ subject area/ curriculum, etc.;

4. How and where you have incorporated relevant Core Knowledge and Professional Values within the examples of your practice you discuss;

5. How effectively your design and planning has resulted in a good learning experience for your all students.

The example below is included to help you to understand how practice related to Area of Activity 1 might be evidenced and link to engagement with other Dimensions.

**An example to support thinking about A1: Designing a short series of study skills workshops**

Hassan has recently run a short series of study skills workshops for first year undergraduate students and decides to use this as one of his examples of evidence towards A1.

In this example, Hassan explains how he used his knowledge of study skills in the design and planning of the workshops (K1). He discusses the particular needs of his first year group of undergraduate students and how he considered the diversity of their previous learning experiences and individual learning needs in planning his approach (K2, V1). He outlines the challenges that other tutors have previously encountered in delivering these workshops, discusses how he planned to overcome these and explains why he felt this was the best approach to take with this group (V3).

Hassan explains how he designed the learning activities to link with the students’ particular discipline (K2), drawing on two articles he read which included research on learning in this field (K3, V3).

Hassan evaluated the sessions by getting the students to give feedback after the final session. He then reflects on what worked well and what didn’t, what he learned from the experience and how he plans to change aspects of next year’s workshop series as a result (K5).
Evidencing Area of Activity 2: Teaching and/or support learning

This Area of Activity is about your direct engagement and interaction with learners whether in groups or individually, face to face or remotely. Depending on the context in which you teach and/or support learning, your practice might be based in formal, timetabled sessions or it might be outside of scheduled classes and more informal in nature.

Depending on the nature of your practice, your evidence for Area of Activity 2 could include teaching or support for learning activities such as lecturing, tutorials and seminar work, studio, clinical, laboratory, supervision, workplace-based teaching or mentoring, online learning and the use of virtual learning environments, etc. The Dimensions of the Framework guidance gives some typical examples of teaching and/or support for learning activities evidenced by Associate Fellows.

The examples you choose to include in your application should demonstrate your awareness of different approaches and methods of teaching and/or support for learning appropriate to your context and explain how you chose the most appropriate approach to meet the needs of your learners and the achievement of the learning aims.

Write about:

1. The main ways in which you teach and/or support learners;
2. The activities or techniques you use and the rationale for this choice. How your teaching/support for learning is influenced by your student group(s) and the learning aims/objectives?
3. Why you think your teaching and learning activities/techniques have been successful in supporting student learning. Are there any changes you plan to make in future and why?
4. How you incorporate other Dimensions of the Framework such as:
   + relevant Core Knowledge that you used;
   + relevant Professional Values that you used to inform your practice.
The example below is included to help you to understand how practice related to Area of Activity 2 might be evidenced and link to engagement with other Dimensions.

**An example to support thinking about A2: Demonstrating in a practical laboratory session**

Mia, an early-career researcher, has been demonstrating chemical analysis techniques to a group of second year undergraduate students and supporting them to use these techniques in a series of practical laboratory sessions. Mia uses this as part of her evidence towards Area of Activity 2.

Mia knows that second year students find the theoretical knowledge around her subject challenging and understands how useful practical experiments are in supporting them to develop a greater understanding of the subject. She discusses how she used her discipline knowledge (aligning with her research area in this particular case) which underpins the experiment (K1) and refers to relevant pedagogic literature on how learners develop practical skills in her discipline (V3, K2). As this practical lab series is far more advanced than basic first year lab sessions, Mia discusses how she breaks the practical sessions down into clear stages so that she can assess individual students’ engagement and their understanding of the experiment as she works with them, adapting her guidance accordingly (K2).

Mia has considered the diversity of the learning group and discusses how she ensures that all students can participate fully. Some students are mature, some came directly to university at 18, a number of students are from other countries and some of these have difficulties understanding some of the complex language of the discipline. One student has a hearing impairment. Mia provides notes that are available to all students via the VLE about the experiment in advance of the session; these are particularly useful for the students who are working in a second language and the student with a hearing impairment (V1 and V2). Mia knows that providing material in advance is important for a variety of students because she attended a CPD workshop on inclusivity, which she found both interesting and useful. As a result of attending this workshop Mia is exploring ways that she can further adapt her teaching practice to ensure that all students are able to engage fully (V1 and V2).

**Evidencing Area of Activity 3: Assess and give feedback to learners**

Area of Activity 3 requires you to think about how you use assessment and feedback to promote and support learning. Area of Activity 3 does not require the summative marking of student work for academic credit but can relate to informal formative assessment of learners within the HE setting.

You may use formative and/or summative, formal and/or informal assessment methods. Your feedback could be delivered face-to-face, written, or using electronic means such as podcasts and social media. As assessment and feedback are not always ‘formal’ and ‘summative’, where relevant to your practice you might include work with research students, colleagues and peers and activities relating to learners in learning support contexts; however, they must relate to HE provision.
As an Associate Fellow you may not be setting or writing assessment criteria, but you will need show that you understand the important role that assessment and feedback plays in supporting your students’ learning and demonstrate your effective use of assessment and feedback/feed-forward approaches. You should explain how you choose the most appropriate approach for the achievement of your learning aims and use criteria to make informed, formative and/or summative judgements about learners’ work, providing constructive, supportive and actionable feedback.

Depending on the nature of your practice, your evidence for Area of Activity 3 could be drawn from a wide range of activities such as teaching sessions, one to one tutorials, practical work, examinations, assignment marking, presentations, live performance, group work, diagnostic assessment in learning support activities, online tests, etc. The Dimensions of the Framework guidance gives further examples of the types of activities where you might assess and give feedback to learners. This guidance also provides some typical examples of the ways in which Associate Fellows evidence how they assess and feedback to students in their applications.

**Write about:**

1. The main types of formative and/or summative assessment that you use with learners, whether formal or informal;
2. How and why you choose these particular approaches and methods;
3. How you ensure your assessment is reliable and the standards you apply are appropriate;
4. How you give feedback to learners and ensure that it supports and improves their understanding of the subject, their performance and/or their development as learners;
5. How you incorporate other Dimensions of the Framework for example:
   - relevant Core Knowledge that you used;
   - relevant Professional Values that inform your practice; for example, how you ensure that your assessment and feedback practices are fair and accessible to all your students.
The example below is included to help you to understand how practice related to Area of Activity 3 might be evidenced and link to engagement with other Dimensions:

**An example to support thinking about A3: Assessing students in a blended learning context**

Anton is a post-doctoral researcher with some teaching responsibilities. He is supporting a group of students on a module that is part of a blended learning programme in Art and Design. One of the key aspects of his role is assessing students’ work, particularly formatively, and providing feedback to help them prepare for their summative assessment which ends with a ‘show’. The majority of study on the programme is online, with students attending campus for a one block of learning on a termly basis. Anton uses this as part of his evidence towards Area of Activity 3.

Anton sets the context for his assessment practice and explains the approach he takes to providing formative feedback on the students’ work, relating this to the requirements of the module and the final end of year summative ‘show’ (K2). In doing this, he refers to pedagogic literature he has read on assessment and providing appropriate feedback (V3). He discusses the importance of his work in providing timely and supportive formative feedback to enable students to develop their work prior to the final summative assessment.

Anton explains how he works with the challenges and advantages of an online environment to provide his students with appropriate support and guidance (K4, K2). He refers to an interesting article he read about online feedback and explains how this has influenced the way that he now works with students at a distance (V3, K4).

This flexible approach to study has attracted some part-time mature students and Anton provides some specific examples of how he has supported the needs of part-time mature students, newly back into study (V1 and V2).

Anton then discusses his role in the summative assessment at the end of year show and the way in which he works as part of a team to make assessment judgements on the students’ work (K2). He has taken part in a team development workshop for all tutors on this programme; he identifies what he learned at this session and explains how he now applies this learning when doing the summative assessment at the end of year show (A5). He also discusses some things he intends to do differently next year, based on student progress and mid-module feedback, and why he thinks these changes will enhance learning on the programme (V3, K5).

**Evidencing Area of Activity 4: Develop effective learning environments and approaches to student support and guidance**

Area of Activity 4 is about how you effectively use formal and/or informal learning environments to facilitate learning and how you meet the needs of your learners for educational support and guidance. Area of Activity 4 therefore consists of two elements: the learning environment (formal and/or informal) and student support/guidance; both academic and pastoral aspects of your work.
It includes how you:

+ utilise and manage a range of physical or virtual learning environments so that they are appropriate to your learners’ needs. The ‘learning environment’ includes the physical environment (e.g. lecture theatre, online platform, workplace, etc.). It can also include the learning ‘culture’; for example, context, discipline, institutional culture, ways of behaving, ways of interacting, ethos, etc. Use examples from your practice that evidence your contribution to the learning environment that ensured it was effective for your learners;

+ work with learners, possibly in collaboration with other support services, to ensure that your learners can access and use a broad range of learning opportunities. Support might include activities such as personal and academic tutoring, supporting additional learning needs, one-to-one advice, counselling, developing practice to meet the individual needs of learners and supporting diverse learning communities.

The examples you might use will be personal to your practice and depend on the physical and virtual environments in which you teach and/or support learners, the nature of the subject or discipline and the types of learner/s. The emphasis should be on your understanding of the importance of the learning environment/s, acknowledging the different ways of learning that take place in them; environments could include physical and virtual learning spaces, visual, written and practice-based learning, etc. Learning activities might refer to differentiated support to ensure equity of opportunity and appropriate level of challenge, one-to-one advice, counselling, supporting learners with specific learning needs, etc.

The Dimensions of the Framework guidance gives some typical examples of how Associate Fellows evidence Area of Activity 4.

Write about:

1. The main types of learning environments/spaces in which you practice and how the different environments impact on your learners (and on you);

2. What you do to develop an effective learning environment for your learners and why;

3. What kinds of support and guidance you give to your learners (formal and/or informal);

4. Why you choose these particular approaches/strategies and how well they have worked in the examples you discuss. How you ensure your practice is inclusive;

5. How you incorporate other Dimensions of the Framework, for example:
   + Relevant Core Knowledge you used and why;
   + Relevant Professional Values that inform your practice.
The example below is included to help you to understand how practice related to Area of Activity 4 might be evidenced and link to engagement with other Dimensions:

An example to support thinking about A4: Work-place mentoring

Chen is in a professional role in a clinical setting, but is also employed by a university to provide mentoring for undergraduate students in practice. She decides to address Areas of Activity 2 and 4 in her application, focussing on her support for a small number of students in a placement setting to translate the learning from their coursework into practice with clients/patients for Area of Activity 2. In this example she focuses on how she supports student learning in the clinical context as part of her evidence towards Area of Activity 4.

Chen discusses her role in mentoring students. She refers to literature on evidence-based practice that underpins both her own clinical work and the students’ work-based learning (K1). She also discusses the training for mentors she attends at the university and explains how she is using some of the examples from those training sessions (A5, V3) to help her provide guidance for some final year students in the clinical setting. Chen discusses how she creates an environment in which students feel supported, appropriately challenged, and valued within this clinical context (V2).

Chen demonstrates her understanding of the learning outcomes students are required to fulfil to pass this particular placement (K2) and explains how she and other placement mentors have worked with the module tutor at the university to align the academic elements with the practice context (A4). She provides examples of the kinds of prompt questions she uses with the students to help them think critically about their clinical practice (K1, K2). Chen also encourages students to take histories from patients and then present these so that she can give them some verbal feedback on how they could improve on this and make it more effective (A3, K3).

Chen also considers the particular learning needs of this group of students in comparison to first year students she has mentored in a different setting previously (K2). She discusses the relevance of this particular experience to the students’ future employability and how she ensures that they are clear about how the Professional Body requirements apply to their work in this clinical context (V4).

Evidencing Area of Activity 5: Engage in continuing professional development in subjects / disciplines and their pedagogy, incorporating research, scholarship and the evaluation of professional practices

Being a professional HE educator involves keeping up to date with the context in which HE is operating, the evolving needs of students, advances in the discipline, current research and scholarship, technological advances, innovations in pedagogy, etc.; a commitment to ongoing professional learning is key to the role. Area of Activity 5 is about how you maintain and develop your capability to perform your teaching and learning support roles. These activities are likely to be wide ranging, incorporating both formal and informal approaches to continuing professional development.
You should discuss your ongoing engagement in formal or informal professional learning and the positive ways in which this learning has impacted on your practice and how you know this (through evaluation of your practice).

Refer here to any activities you have undertaken to update yourself on aspects of teaching and learning, for example staff development activities, conferences on learning and teaching or participation in projects to develop learning methods. The Dimensions of the Framework guidance includes some typical examples of professional development that Associate Fellows refer to in their applications.

Activities you undertake as part of a group or team are valued as much as individual activities. You may carry out your own research but as an Associate Fellow you might typically be more likely to use others’ research (subject or pedagogy-related) to inform your practice.

Indicate how your teaching and learning support is influenced by different types of scholarly and/or professional activity.

Explain the ways in which you gather information and evaluate your own practice to ensure that you are delivering a high quality learning experience and that the students are learning from the process.

**Write about:**

1. How you engage with and use your ongoing professional learning activities to enhance your practice;
2. How you incorporate subject and pedagogic research and/or scholarship within your practice;
3. How you gather information and evaluate the effectiveness of your own professional practice;
4. How you incorporate other Dimensions of the Framework for example:
   - relevant Core Knowledge that you use;
   - relevant Professional Values that inform your practice.
The example below is included to help you to understand how practice related to Area of Activity 5 might be evidenced and link to engagement with other Dimensions:

### An example to support thinking about A5: part-time tutor working within industry and as part of a programme team

Alex is a part time tutor on a postgraduate programme in Film Production. She also works within the industry. She discusses the impact of both her (i) industry-related and (ii) teaching-related professional development on the learning experience she provides for her students.

**(i) Industry-related example:**

Alex discusses how her professional development in industry supports her role as a tutor on the programme; she remains up to date with current trends in equipment and software through reading professional journals, attending professional development events and working with other professionals. As well as being expert on her own specialist area, Alex explains how her work on film sets across the world enables her to collaborate with other professionals and how she uses the knowledge and insight gained to help her teach from a wider industry-based perspective (K1, V3). She discusses how this impacts on her students' learning experience and their readiness to work in the global industry (K3, V4).

**(ii) Teaching-related example:**

Alex discusses her commitment to teaching and learning-related professional development. All members of the programme team actively engage in peer-review of teaching and Alex provides several examples of how observing her colleagues and being observed by experienced peers has influenced her approach to her own teaching practice. As a result of these experiences, she has also started to read more about how students learn in her discipline and is drawing on this new knowledge in her teaching practice (K2, K3).

The programme team hold regular meetings and Alex explains how these help her to understand where her sessions fit into the rest of the module and programme (K2, K1). She also discusses what she has learnt about the effectiveness of different methods of teaching from her colleagues' discussions at the meetings and from the feedback provided by the student representatives that attend (K5, V3).
8. Supporting Statements

Your application for Associate Fellowship must be endorsed by Supporting Statements from two referees. These will be used to confirm that your application presents a fair and accurate reflection of your Higher Education practice.

The two Supporting Statements endorse your claim and will not contribute towards the outcome of the review process; i.e. the reviewers will need to see sufficient evidence of effective practice in your Account of Professional practice to meet Descriptor 1 for them to award Associate Fellowship.

Your two referees should work, or have recently worked, closely with you and have first-hand knowledge of your practice so that they are in a position to comment on and endorse your application. Please note that Supporting Statements should reflect professional relationships; i.e. not be from family members or based on personal friendships.

Referees will be expected to have current or recent experience of working in Higher Education and will normally hold one of the four categories of Fellowship, although this is not essential. All referees need to be familiar with the PSF.

It is important that you read the Supporting Statements your referees provide as they may refer to aspects of your practice that could strengthen your application; if this is the case then you could revise parts of your application and ask your referees to check that they are happy to endorse the changes you have made before you submit. When you have received your Supporting Statements, save them so that they are ready for uploading in MyAdvanceHE.

Guidance for referees

Provide your referees with a copy of the Associate Fellow Supporting Statement Guidance and the Supporting Statement template; both of these documents will be in the applicant pack you downloaded.

In their Supporting Statement, each referee will need to confirm that you have represented your practice accurately and fairly. Therefore, your referees need to be provided with the final version of your application to enable them to provide an effective reference. In their Supporting Statement each referee will confirm that in their professional opinion, you demonstrate the requirements of Descriptor 1 and should be awarded Associate Fellowship.

Referees will be asked to confirm that they have written the supporting statement themselves and that the information they provide has been written specifically for your application. They are asked to save their Supporting Statement as a pdf file and send it to you so that you can upload these with your application.

Advance HE reserves the right to contact your referees for clarification so please ensure that both Supporting Statements include verifiable contact details (e.g. name, job title, email address, institution). As part of Advance HE’s ongoing quality assurance process, Advance HE routinely checks references for individual authenticity by means of textual review in Turnitin.com. In addition to the use of anti-plagiarism software, some referees will be contacted to confirm that the Supporting Statement submitted by the applicant through the online MyAdvanceHE application is the same statement that they have prepared and completed. If the professional integrity of the Supporting Statement is in question, the statement will not be accepted which may result in the application being failed.
9. Submitting your Associate Fellowship application via MyAdvanceHE

Once you have finalised your application offline using the Associate Fellowship application template and you have your two Supporting Statements, you are ready to submit your application.

Your application is submitted via the Advance HE online submission process in your MyAdvanceHE account. The screens in the online system guide you through the process and your application will be saved as you progress so you can save sections and return to finally submit it at a later date.

Application submission process:

1. Check you can sign into your Advance HE’s MyAdvanceHE account/create an account ready to apply;
2. Prepare and write your APP in the Associate Fellowship application template offline;
3. Obtain two Supporting Statements from appropriate referees; have these ready to upload as pdf files;
4. When you have all your application documents and payment arrangements ready to progress, follow these steps to submit your application for review:
   4.1 Sign in to your MyAdvanceHE account;
   4.2 Choose the tab for ‘Fellowship’;
   4.3 Click on the link to ‘Fellowship applications’;
5. Select ‘new Associate Fellow application’ from the menu and follow the instructions which will take you through to the online template to complete;
6. Copy and paste the text from the final version of your offline application template onto this online application template;
7. Upload your Supporting Statements;
8. Pay the fee requested.

Payment for your application

When you upload your application and choose to submit, you will be asked to pay the application fee. Once the fee is paid, your application will be allocated to the next available review panel.

Payment is required by debit or credit card when you submit your application in MyAdvanceHE. You can pay this yourself at the time you submit or, if you are receiving financial support from your institution, there is an option for someone else to pay on your behalf (please see below).
The fee for a direct application for Associate Fellowship is on the Advance HE website and is subject to annual review. Employees of Advance HE Member institutions will be charged a subsidised rate. If you are unsure of your institution’s Advance HE membership status, please check the list of Advance HE member institutions on the Advance HE website. If you are still unsure, please contact Advance HE’s fellowship team, fellowship@advance-he.ac.uk.

Please note that if an Advance HE Member institution chooses to make participation in an institutional Advance HE accredited programme or scheme contractual, any individual wishing to apply directly to Advance HE should choose 'self-employment' as their employment status and use a personal email address. They will be required to pay a full fee for the application; i.e. the fee will not be subsidised by the institutional membership.

If your institution is paying on your behalf

If your institution is paying for your application, you will be able to select that ‘someone else is paying on your behalf’ at the payment stage. A reference code will be provided and you should give this code to your contact at your institution. Whoever is responsible for making the payment from your institution can sign into MyAdvanceHE and make a payment on an institutional credit/debit card using the reference code you have passed to them.

If your institution is paying for several applicants, they can enter reference numbers for multiple individuals at once; however, please note that the number of payments may be restricted depending on the debit/credit card limit.

Some institutions pre-pay for multiple applications in advance. If your institution has pre-paid for your application in this way, the contact at your institution should notify Advance HE when you are ready to submit. This will enable the Advance HE team to confirm payment and allocate your application for review.
10. How will your application be reviewed?

Your application will be reviewed by two independent reviewers (called a ‘panel’) as part of a peer review process.

Reviewers are selected for their experience of external review and their understanding of the PSF, as well as for their knowledge and experience of learning and teaching in higher education, including in international settings. The Advance HE reviewer pool includes education specialists and practitioners from a range of disciplines across the higher education sector.

Advance HE reviewers undertake an annual cycle of professional development and regular standardisation activities to ensure that their review of your application is based on their up-to-date knowledge and understanding of the requirements of the PSF and fellowship.

How do the reviewers reach their judgement?

The reviewers will be looking for evidence that your practice meets the requirements of Descriptor 1 across your RAP and will check that the two Supporting Statements provide appropriate endorsement for your application. They will assess your application against each of the Descriptor 1 criteria.

Each reviewer will read your application and will apply the Descriptor 1 criteria to reach an initial independent judgement. The two reviewers then reach a combined consensus judgement.

Guidance notes and review grids for our reviewers are provided, explaining how they are expected to make professional judgements on Associate Fellowship applications.

Possible review outcomes

Accept

If the reviewers’ consensus judgement is that your application meets the requirements of Descriptor 1 then you will be awarded Associate Fellowship. You will receive a congratulatory email which will explain how to download your Associate Fellowship certificate from within your MyAdvanceHE account. You will also be entitled to use the post-nominal AFHEA.

Refer

Should your application be judged as providing insufficient evidence for meeting Descriptor 1, then you will be provided with feedback from the reviewers in a Panel Outcome and Feedback template. This feedback will indicate which of the six Descriptor 1 criteria your application has met and explain how your application needs to be strengthened to provide the evidence of the remaining Descriptor 1 criteria.

You will be offered one opportunity to resubmit within four weeks, without further charge. In this instance, you will be provided with a template for your resubmission and asked to highlight any changes you make to your original application. Once you submit your revised application,
the same reviewers will make a final judgement to either award Associate Fellowship or that the application is unsuccessful.

**Unsuccessful**

If the reviewers judge that despite revisions, the resubmission does not fully meet the requirements of Descriptor 1 then the final judgement is ‘unsuccessful’. In this instance, further feedback in **Section 4 of the Panel Outcome and Feedback template** will explain the unsuccessful judgement. This is the end of the review process; any future application would incur a full fee. Please note that any appeal would need to be related to Advance HE process not being adhered to and not the review outcome.

Figure 2: Associate Fellowship application review process. ‘1’ indicates first resubmission process; ‘2’ indicates ‘unsuccessful’ outcome for resubmission

**How long will the review process take?**

An application for Associate Fellowship can be made at any time during the year. The length of time it will take to process your application is dependent on the dates of our review panels. Advance HE holds regular review panels each month to accommodate demand and typically you will be notified about the outcome of your application within 10-12 weeks. You can check the status of your application by logging into “Fellowship” in MyAdvanceHE
11. What if I have other questions?

If you have further questions or require further assistance, in the first instance please see our Frequently Asked Questions in your Information Pack. Alternatively, please email fellowship@advance-he.ac.uk and one of our team will be able to assist you. You can also call us on (+44) 01904 717500.
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