

Dimensions of the UK PSF

Descriptor 1 - Associate Fellow of the Higher Education Academy should:

Demonstrate an understanding of specific aspects of effective teaching, learning support methods and student learning. Individuals should be able to provide evidence of:

- Successful engagement with Area of Activity A5 and at least two of the five Areas of Activity
- Successful engagement in appropriate teaching and practices related to these Areas of Activity
- Appropriate Core Knowledge and understanding of at least K1 and K2
- A commitment to all four Professional Values in facilitating others' learning

Individuals should provide evidence of effectiveness in relation to their professional role(s), which, typically, will include at least some teaching and/or learning support responsibilities. This teaching and learning role may sometimes be undertaken with the assistance of more experienced teachers or mentors.

Areas of Activity

A1 Design and plan learning activities and/or programmes of study

A2 Teach and/or support learning

A3 Assess and give feedback to learners

A4 Develop effective learning environments and approaches to student support and guidance

A5 Engage in continuing professional development in subjects/disciplines and their pedagogy, incorporating research, scholarship and the evaluation of professional practices

Core Knowledge

K1 The subject material

K2 Appropriate methods for teaching, learning and assessing in the subject area and at the level of the academic programme

K3 How students learn, both generally and within their subject/ disciplinary area(s)

K4 The use and value of appropriate learning technologies

K5 Methods for evaluating the effectiveness of teaching

K6 The implications of quality assurance and quality enhancement for academic and professional practice with a particular focus on teaching

Professional Values

V1 Respect individual learners and diverse learning communities

V2 Promote participation in higher education and equality of opportunity for learners

V3 Use evidence-informed approaches and the outcomes from research, scholarship and continuing professional development

V4 Acknowledge the wider context in which higher education operates recognising the implications for professional practice

The UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF) Dimensions of Practice with Guidance

Section A – Areas of Activity

Area of Activity	HEA Guidance
A1 Design and plan learning activities and/or programmes of study	<p>The evidence of Designing and Planning Learning Activities will normally be small scale for Associate Fellowship, typically individual activities and/or sessions. This would range from module design to a whole programme of study for Fellowship and those working towards Senior Fellowship. In all cases, one would expect the design to reflect developing knowledge and understanding of the Core Knowledge and Professional Values dimensions.</p>
A2 Teach and/or support learning	<p>In demonstrating the activities of teaching and supporting learning the evidence should demonstrate an increasing awareness of different approaches to and methods of teaching and supporting learning as well as a growing ability to choose the most appropriate approach for the achievement of curriculum aims.</p>
A3 Assess and give feedback to learners	<p>Clear differentiation of how this area is evidenced would be expected for the different levels. For example, for Associate Fellowship an understanding of the importance of assessment and feedback and of the criteria for making informed, formative judgments about work and the role this plays in supporting learning through activities such as tutorials, work placements, observations, and practical work would be appropriate. For Associate Fellowship and Fellowship there would be an increasing emphasis on the use of feedback and feed-forward approaches being routinely used to improve learning and develop learner autonomy. At Principal Fellowship the focus might be about a wider sphere of influence in policies and practices concerning assessment and feedback in supporting learning.</p>
A4 Develop effective learning environments and approaches to student support and guidance	<p>The definition of 'learning environments' has been widely contested and is open to diverse interpretation. Individual practitioners work beyond the local physical environment of the classroom, the laboratory, studio or work place or the distance learning or electronic learning environment. They take the nature of the learning environment, the learning culture being developed, the nature and extent of the support infrastructures into account and are able to distinguish between academic and pastoral interventions. Individuals also take the range of environments available to students into account as well as how they are enabled to access, understand and utilise them.</p>
A5 Engage in continuing professional development in subjects/disciplines and their pedagogy, incorporating research, scholarship and the evaluation of professional practices	<p>The framework provides a powerful means of articulating the varied aspects of role and the potential for development in all areas of the teaching and supporting learning endeavour. This Area of Activity is concerned with enhancement and comprises three elements integral to teaching and supporting learning roles. Whilst the three elements might be viewed holistically it is important the elements are understood and demonstrated, particularly at Associate Fellowship and Fellowship to ensure successful integration.</p> <p>The elements integral to teaching and supporting learning are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continuing professional development in subjects/disciplines and their pedagogy - Incorporating research and scholarship - The evaluation of (one's own) professional practices <p>Evidence could appropriately focus on the question: How might an individual demonstrate that they have become a better teacher through continuing professional development, research and the evaluation of their teaching and learning related practices?</p>

Section B – Core Knowledge

Core Knowledge	HEA Guidance
K1 The subject material	This area is effectively evidenced with reference to the Areas of Activity or other areas of Core Knowledge. Evidence should fundamentally relate to how an understanding of the nature of the subject is used to inform the design and planning of learning activities and programmes of study, the teaching strategies, the assessment and feedback. This would normally make reference to the distinctive nature, or culture, of the discipline and the particular expectations of teaching; the issues or challenges arising from the context in which teaching takes place, and the appropriate methods of delivering the subject at different levels (e.g. first year undergraduate to masters level).
K2 Appropriate methods for teaching and learning in the subject area and at the level of the academic programme	This is concerned with pedagogic approaches that are distinctive and/or characteristic of the subject, or what makes the teaching or supporting of the learning in the subject different to the teaching of another one. It is also concerned with acknowledging that some approaches may be more appropriate than others given the nature of the learning desired, the level of the material being taught and the readiness of students. This is clearly linked to demonstrating Core Knowledge 1 with its focus on an understanding the subject material, but is specifically concerned with the strategies and approaches used to teach or support the learning of the subject.
K3 How students learn, both generally and within their subject/disciplinary area(s)	How students learn might be evidenced through demonstrating how an understanding of the characteristics of different learners (such as mature students, recent school leavers or workplace learners) impacts on how their needs might be met in the context of learning, how this might reflect on the learning environment, teaching approaches and practices. Reference could be made to different theories of, or approaches to, learning and how these are evidenced by the use of different strategies for teaching and supporting learning. This might relate specifically to the nature of the subject (K1).
K4 The use and value of appropriate learning technologies	Evidence needs to demonstrate how and why specific technologies, of all types and ages are used appropriately to support learning. Evidence will address what the learning and teaching needs are and why particular technology is used to address them. Evidence is likely to be linked to other areas of Core Knowledge, for example; how and why technology is used within a specific discipline, professional or vocational areas; for specific groups of learners; in specific learning contexts or environments.
K5 Methods for evaluating the effectiveness of teaching	An essential part of work in Higher Education is ensuring the effectiveness of teaching practices. This focuses on the methods (formal or informal) employed to gather information and data about the impact of teaching, how they are used and the impact of their use on developing practice.
K6 The implications of quality assurance and quality enhancement for academic and professional practice with a particular focus on teaching	Quality assurance and quality enhancement are deeply embedded in higher education through procedures such as programme validation, monitoring and review. These processes shape academic practice and are implicit in what individuals do. Key to evidencing this area is how an individual might demonstrate engagement with feedback to enhance practice and the student learning experience. This might include an account of how they seek opportunities to obtain feedback other than relying on the institutional procedures already in place. For those working outside higher education institutional policies and practices, they will need to evidence a personal interest, understanding and commitment to quality assurance and enhancement procedures established and embedded within their practice. This will include knowledge and understanding of the quality assurance frameworks at a national level and how these are manifested at an institutional level.

Section C – Professional Values

	Professional Values	HEA Guidance
V1	Respect individual learners and diverse learning communities	This focuses on the way teaching and supporting learning incorporate activities, actions and approaches, which respect individual learners. It depicts the ways we communicate and interact with individuals and different communities in the context of teaching and supporting learning. The term 'diverse learning communities' might include campus-based groups of students, electronic communities, work based communities, or be defined on the basis of ethnicity, faith, social class age etc. The practitioner needs to be able to demonstrate that they value and can work effectively with and within these diverse communities.
V2	Promote participation in higher education and equality of opportunity for learners	The focus here is on providing evidence of how a commitment to participation in Higher Education and equality of opportunity for learners underpins practice related to teaching and supporting learning. There is potential to cover a broad spectrum of activities, approaches and behaviours linked to all the Areas of Activity and Core Knowledge. Evidence should ideally indicate wide and pervasive approaches to ensuring equality of opportunity.
V3	Use evidence-informed approaches and the outcomes from research, scholarship and continuing professional development	<p>This focuses on the use of evidence informed approaches, the ability to draw on and contribute to many sources of evidence and to use them to inform teaching and learning practice. It is about using the outcomes from research, scholarship and professional development to make principled, informed and considered judgments, which enhance practice and the learning experience. This value advocates the importance of direct professional involvement in enquiry (in teaching and learning) to support the individual's own professional development and to enhance their teaching or learning support activities.</p> <p>Evidence might include consideration and application of the findings from studies, reading, personal enquiry of (for example) teaching, learning, learners, the subject, the environment etc to enhance practice and the student learning experience. Using one's own discipline based research to enhance the curriculum should be informed by reading or research about curriculum design, the nature of the subject itself and the learners in order to provide a rationale for the design of the curriculum and its delivery.</p>
V4	Acknowledge the wider context in which higher education operates recognising the implications for professional practice	This is concerned with being alert to the issues that may impact on institutional missions and/or which might have an influence on curriculum design and/or personal and collective professional practice. This might for example, may include how an individual has responded to the current demands of the Disability Discrimination Act, the employment agenda, or the widening access and participation agenda. Current agendas include; sustainability (the practice of sustainability and education for sustainability), and student engagement.

The ASPIRE Associate Fellowship Descriptor

To become an ASPIRE Associate Fellow, you will provide evidence of effectiveness in relation to your professional role(s), which, typically, will include at least some teaching and/or learning support responsibilities. This teaching and learning role may sometimes be undertaken with the assistance of more experienced teachers or mentors.

Description	Typical role/career stage	Typical activities
<p>Demonstrates an understanding of specific aspects of effective teaching, learning support methods and student learning. Individuals should be able to provide evidence of:</p> <p>Successful engagement with A5 and at least two other of the five Areas of Activity</p> <p>Successful engagement in appropriate teaching and practices related to these Areas of Activity</p> <p>Appropriate Core Knowledge and understanding of at least K1 and K2</p> <p>A commitment to appropriate Professional Values in facilitating others' learning</p> <p>Relevant professional practices, subject and pedagogic research and/or scholarship within the above activities</p> <p>Successful engagement, where appropriate, in professional development activity related to teaching, learning and assessment responsibilities</p>	<p>Early career researchers with some teaching responsibilities (e.g. PhD researchers, PTAs, contract researchers/ post-doctoral candidates etc.)</p> <p>Staff new to teaching (including those with part-time academic responsibilities)</p> <p>Staff who support academic provision (e.g. learning technologists, learning developers and learning resource/library staff)</p> <p>Staff who undertake demonstrator/technician roles that incorporate some teaching-related responsibilities</p> <p>Experienced staff in relevant professional areas who may be new to teaching and/or supporting learning, or who have a limited teaching portfolio</p>	<p>Undertaking (sometimes limited) teaching and /or mentoring responsibilities as a team member within an established programme</p> <p>Assisting in assessment-related activities and undertaking, (possibly under supervision), specified assessment tasks</p> <p>Providing constructive feedback (formative and summative) to students as part of teaching duties</p> <p>Contributing to skills development of learners/students, e.g. introducing the use of techniques and/or equipment</p> <p>Contributing to the development of learners in relation to e.g. professional codes of conduct</p> <p>Developing teaching and learning materials, resources, methods and approaches</p> <p>Using a range of technologies to support the learning of others and one's own professional development in relation to teaching</p> <p>Critically evaluating the support offered to learners</p> <p>Establishing an initial appreciation and knowledge of HE quality assurance processes, including the role of external examiners</p>