

GTA Program | Information for Mentors



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Introduction

Thank you for mentoring a Graduate Teaching Associates (GTA) program participant. This experience is an important developmental opportunity for your more junior colleague; as part of the GTA program your mentee will be working towards recognition as an Associate Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (HEA).

For more information about the GTA program, you can visit the [GTA website](#).

For more information about the HEA@UQ program you can visit the [HEA@UQ website](#).

This handbook will:

- describe the role that a GTA Mentor is expected to play;
- outline the benefits of this role;
- provide an outline of UQ's expectations of GTA Mentors;
- give you a sense of the PSF (Professional Standards Framework for teaching and supporting learning in Higher Education) against which HEA recognition claims are made; and
- provide some useful tips and tools.

The role of a GTA Mentor

The mentoring role is not about telling the applicant how to teach their subject more effectively. Instead, you work with a participant to help them critically review and evaluate their learning and teaching practice against the standards and criteria for professional recognition; to help them select relevant examples of evidence for their application. You also can share tips and insights from your own experience of working with, and evidencing the standards. It is your familiarity with understanding the professional practice standards and how to evidence them that is important.

As a GTA Mentor, you will help GTA participants:

- compile a record of how they have made use of teaching-related professional learning;
- identify and evidence their effectiveness in teaching and supporting learning; and
- develop a statement of support or support your mentee in finding someone else who can do so.

You can do this by:

- arranging an initial meeting with your mentee to identify key areas in which they believe that they will need support (see Appendix 1 for a Mentor Log);
- agreeing with your mentee the kind of support that you can offer;
- helping your mentee to identify gaps in their teaching capabilities and identify professional learning opportunities that can help them address these gaps;
- recommending readings and other resources; and
- putting your mentee in touch with networks of supportive colleagues.

We ask you to:

- commit to mentor a minimum of one participant, up to a maximum of three GTA participants;
- keep in regular contact with your mentee/s and keep records of your contact with your mentee/s; you can use the Mentor Log as a tool to help you manage this contact;

- review the mentee's final portfolio and draft a statement of support, or help the GTA participant identify an appropriate person to do so (see Appendix 2 for Support Statement Guidelines);
- commit sufficient time to carry out the activities specified for the role (see What is the time commitment to be a GTA mentor? overleaf);
- provide feedback on draft lesson plans or learning resources if asked by the mentee;
- where the mentee's assessed portfolios is not a successful for recognition as an Associate Fellow of the HEA, assist the mentee in responding to the feedback received;
- contact the GTA Facilitators via hea@uq.edu.au if you have any questions or concerns.

Mentors are not expected to:

- compile any of the application (or re-submission) on behalf of your mentee;
- observe, review and provide feedback and advice on your mentee's actual teaching practice;
- proof-read or provide detailed corrections on applications or presentations; or
- give guidance on the use of Blackboard to complete the online modules or engage in group work.

Mentors must not:

- assess or be permitted to make final recommendations on their mentee's application; or
- mentor someone with which they have a close family relationship and should consider carefully whether mentoring someone with whom they have a close professional relationship would be difficult. Conflicts of interest must be declared; mentors are encouraged to err on the side of caution in assessing such conflicts.

What is the statement of support?

Each GTA participant is required to have their practice verified and their portfolio validated by an experienced member of UQ teaching staff.

What is the time commitment to be a GTA Mentor?

GTA Mentors can expect to commit to between four – five hours over the semester, divided up as follows:

- participating in up to three meetings with your mentee, generally of about one hour per each session; and
- spending between one – two hours drafting a statement of support.

Benefits of being a GTA Mentor

Becoming a mentor on the GTA Program provides evidence of your commitment to learning and teaching in higher education and of your willingness to share your experience, understanding and ideas with colleagues who are newer to teaching. You may wish to apply for Associate Fellowship, Fellowship, or Senior Fellowship of the HEA yourself; you can reflect on and write about your mentoring as part of your own submission.

Being a mentor for GTA participants can help you generate some evidence required for an HEA Senior Fellow application, as it helps you demonstrate your contribution to supporting the development of other people's practice. It can also assist to demonstrate that you are maintaining your good standing as a Fellow or Senior Fellow of the HEA and can be used as evidence, should you seek to gain confirmation or promotion.

For those already with senior positions, your involvement as a mentor of HEA applicants will provide evidence of your commitment to the development of staff across the university.

Most GTA mentors are the course coordinators of courses that the GTA participants are teaching into. Supporting your tutoring staff as they engage in the program can provide:

- high-quality, high-impact teaching relief for teaching and research academics;
- support with increasing student cohort size;
- a response to the need for succession planning and the “future community of the discipline”; and
- extra resources to help with integration of knowledge and use of new technologies.

Becoming a Mentor

Am I eligible to be a GTA Mentor?

UQ staff members are eligible to be a GTA mentor if you fill one or more of the following criteria:

- You are the course coordinator for whom the GTA participant is tutoring; OR
- You have proven experience in learning and teaching; OR
- You are a holder of a HEA Associate Fellow/Fellow /Senior/Principal Fellowship; OR
- You are a member of the College of Peer Reviewers.

What mentor training and support is available to me?

- You might choose to participate in one of the induction sessions provided for HEA@UQ Mentors.
- You will be receive regular mentor updates.
- Review the UQ [Mentoring Policy](#) which:
 - outlines the objectives of a mentoring policy;
 - provides definitions of informal and organised mentoring;
 - defines mentoring and how mentoring is different to supervising; and
 - outlines the role of the mentor and the role of the mentee.

Contact Details

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact any of the GTA Team in ITaLI by emailing hea@uq.edu.au

A-1 GTA Mentor Contact Log

**Mentee
Name:**

Meeting	When	Potential meeting topic	Insert date of meeting	What did you (the mentor do) to support the applicant? What advice was given	What did the applicant do?
1	After Workshop One.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduction• Identify key areas for support• Agree support to be provided			
2	Approximately two months prior to the submission deadline.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review and discuss academic portfolio and its inclusions			
3 (OPTIONAL)	Following decision by the GTA Assessment Team being conveyed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review and discuss incorporation of GTA Assessment team feedback in the academic portfolio			

A-2 Supporting Statement Guidance – GTA Program

Thank you for agreeing to provide a supporting statement to corroborate an application for Associate Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy (HEA). This guidance and the template have been designed to help you structure your supporting statement.

What is the function of the supporting statement?

Please note that the statement supporting an application for Associate Fellowship is not the same as a job application reference. The award of HEA Associate Fellowship is based on peer recognition of professional practice and as such you are being asked to support this application as a valued peer who has expertise in teaching and learning in Higher Education (HE).

Am I the right person to provide a supporting statement for the applicant?

You will be expected to have current or recent experience of working in Higher Education.

You will normally hold one of the four categories of HEA Fellowship, although this is not essential.

You will have worked closely with the applicant, have first-hand knowledge of their HE professional practice and will be in a position to comment on and substantiate the applicant's record of effectiveness within the context in which they teach and/or support learning. You should be able to confirm that the applicant has represented their practice accurately and provide your opinion that they demonstrate the requirements Descriptor 1 criteria of the [Professional Standards Framework](#) (PSF).

Please note that supporting statements for applications for Associate Fellowship should reflect professional relationships; i.e. not be from family members or based on personal friendships. The statement will be your independent and authentic account in support of the application.

If you feel, having read this guidance that you are not in a position to give a supporting statement then you should decline the request.

What criteria am I offering a statement of support about?

Applicants must demonstrate an understanding of specific aspects of effective teaching and/or learning support methods and student learning. GTA participants' portfolios should be able to provide evidence of:

- I. Successful engagement with the following Areas of Activity
 - A2 Teach and/or support learning; and
 - A4 Develop effective learning environments and approaches to student support and guidance
- II. Successful engagement in appropriate teaching and practices related to these Areas of Activity
- III. Appropriate Core Knowledge and understanding of
 - K1 The subject material
 - K2 Appropriate methods for teaching, learning and assessing in the subject area and at the level of the academic programme
- IV. A commitment to appropriate Professional Values in facilitating others' learning.
 - 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
- V. Relevant professional practices, subject and pedagogic research and/or scholarship within the above activities
- VI. Successful engagement, where appropriate, in professional development activity related to teaching, learning and assessment responsibilities

Your statement will provide commentary as to whether, in your view, the GTA participant's portfolio reflects the above. In addition to addressing the Descriptor 1 criteria, please comment on the following in your supporting statement:

- if you have been involved in peer observation of the applicant's teaching and/or support of learning, please draw on examples from this;
- any good or innovative practice and/or contribution to developments by the applicant in teaching and/or supporting learning within his/her discipline as appropriate;
- your perspective on the practical examples provided within the application to illustrate the Associate Fellowship requirements.

Format of the supporting statement

A template is provided for you to complete your supporting statement. A copy of the template is included for you to complete. The template should be completed in MS Word format. Scanned documents or those with a scanned image cannot be accepted.

Once you have completed the supporting statement template, please return it to the applicant in Word format. The applicant will submit the statement of support as part of their final portfolio submission. The portfolio will be submitted for assessment via Turnitin.

If the professional integrity of the supporting statement is in question, the statement will not be accepted and you will be contacted to confirm that the supporting statement submitted by the applicant is the statement that you have prepared.

A-2-1 Supporting Statement Template: GTA Program

Name	
Institution	
School and Faculty	
Job title	
Email address	
Your HEA Fellowship Status (if appropriate)	
Nature of relationship with Applicant (course coordinator, GTA mentor, PhD supervisor etc.)	
How long have you worked with the applicant (insert dates)	
Declaration	<p>Please check the box below to indicate that you have read and agree to the following statement:</p> <p><i>In submitting your supporting statement, you are confirming that the applicant's submission relates to their Higher Education professional practice and that your statement is your own work and has been written specifically for this applicant. If the professional integrity of the supporting statement is in question, it will not be accepted.</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I have read and understood the declaration</p> <p>Date:</p>

Supporting Statement

Please provide your statement to support the applicant's submission for Associate Fellowship of the HEA. Your statement should include address the guidelines above. A single page statement will normally be sufficient.



Contact details

HEA and GTA Administration

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