HEA@UQ Program

Statement of Support Guidelines

Contents

Acknowledgement of Country

The University of Queensland (UQ) acknowledges the Traditional Owners and their custodianship of the lands on which UQ operates. We pay our respects to their Ancestors and their descendants, who continue cultural and spiritual connections to Country.

The lands on which we teach, we learn, and we support the learning of others are lands which for thousands of years have been sites of teaching and of learning for Aboriginal people.

We recognise their valuable, ongoing contributions to Australian and global society.

Welcome!

If you are reading this guideline, chances are you have already been approached by an aspiring fellow who has asked you to provide them with a written statement of support to corroborate their application for HEA fellowship.

Thank you for considering this request carefully.

This guideline and the ensuing template have been designed to help you to structure your supporting statement. We have also included a little information about the function of the document, what it needs to address, and its relevance to the fellowship application, along with some additional guidance which we hope helps you to determine whether you're the right person for the job.

If you get to the end of this guideline and feel confident in supplying a written reference for your colleague, thank you for agreeing to do so. If you have further questions or would like to access the supporting mechanisms (including workshops) provided for applicants, we would like to encourage you to contact us for advice. You can email professional.learning@uq.edu.au or you can request a short consultation to talk it through with one of ITaLI's fellows.

Let's get to it.

What is the function of the supporting statement?

Firstly, and most importantly, the statement supporting an application for Fellowship is not the same as a job application reference. The award of HEA Fellowship is based on peer recognition of professional practice and as such you are being asked to advocate for the applicant and support their application as a valued peer who has expertise in teaching and learning in Higher Education (HE).

Your written statement will be used to corroborate—or authenticate—the claims made by the applicant in their application. You are being asked to speak about their professional practice, and on their recent roles and responsibilities as they relate to teaching and/or supporting student learning, or their leadership.

During the Fellowship review process, the two independent Supporting Statements provided by the referees will be used to confirm that the application presents a fair and accurate reflection of the applicant's higher education practice.

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

There are four main criteria that we hope that you will be able to fulfill. These are:

- You have current or recent experience working in Higher Education

- You have worked closely with the applicant, have first-hand knowledge of their HE professional practice and will be in a position to verify, comment on and substantiate the applicant's inclusive and effective practice within the context in which they teach and/or support learning.

- You can confirm that the applicant has represented their practice accurately and provide your opinion that they demonstrate the requirements for the relevant criteria of the Professional Standards Framework (PSF).

- You might also hold one of the four categories of HEA Fellowship, but this is not essential.

The application is based on current and recent practice, usually within the last 3 – 5 years. If you no longer work with an applicant, you should still be familiar with their recent and current practice.

Please note that supporting statements for applications for 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 should my statement of support address?

Aspiring fellows must demonstrate their understanding of specific aspects of effective teaching and/or learning support methods and student learning. An applicant's written application should provide evidence of successful engagement with the PSF. These standards are explained further in the sections that follow.

The Professional Standards Framework

What is the Professional Standards Framework

The Professional Standards Framework (PSF), (Figure 1) to which the HEA@UQ and the Graduate Teaching Associate programs map, was first established in the United Kingdom in 2003.

Revised in 2023, the PSF has two components:

1. **Descriptors**

A set of statements outlining the key characteristics of someone evidencing four broad categories of typical teaching and learning support roles within higher education.

2. **Dimensions**

A set of statements framed around:

a. a series of **Professional Values** that frame practice.

b. a series of higher education teaching and learning **Areas of Activity**;

c. an expectation of **Core Knowledge** that teachers have about the practice of those activities; and

Figure 1. The Professional Standards Framework 2023
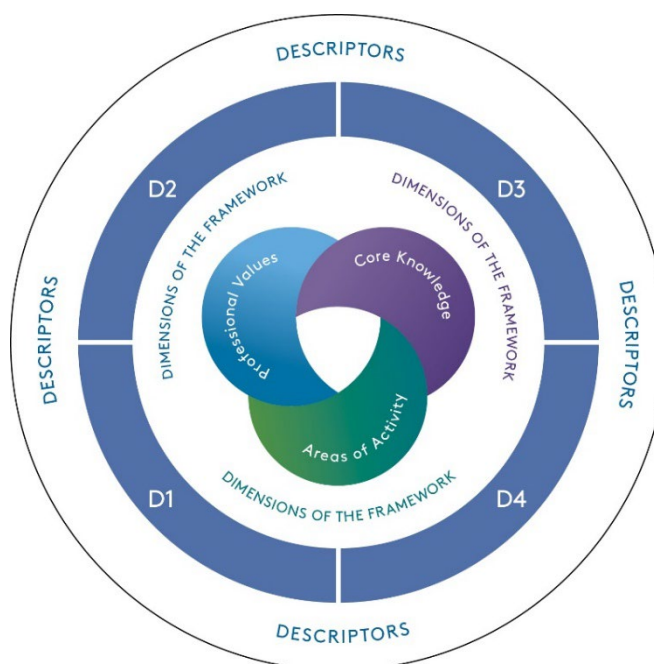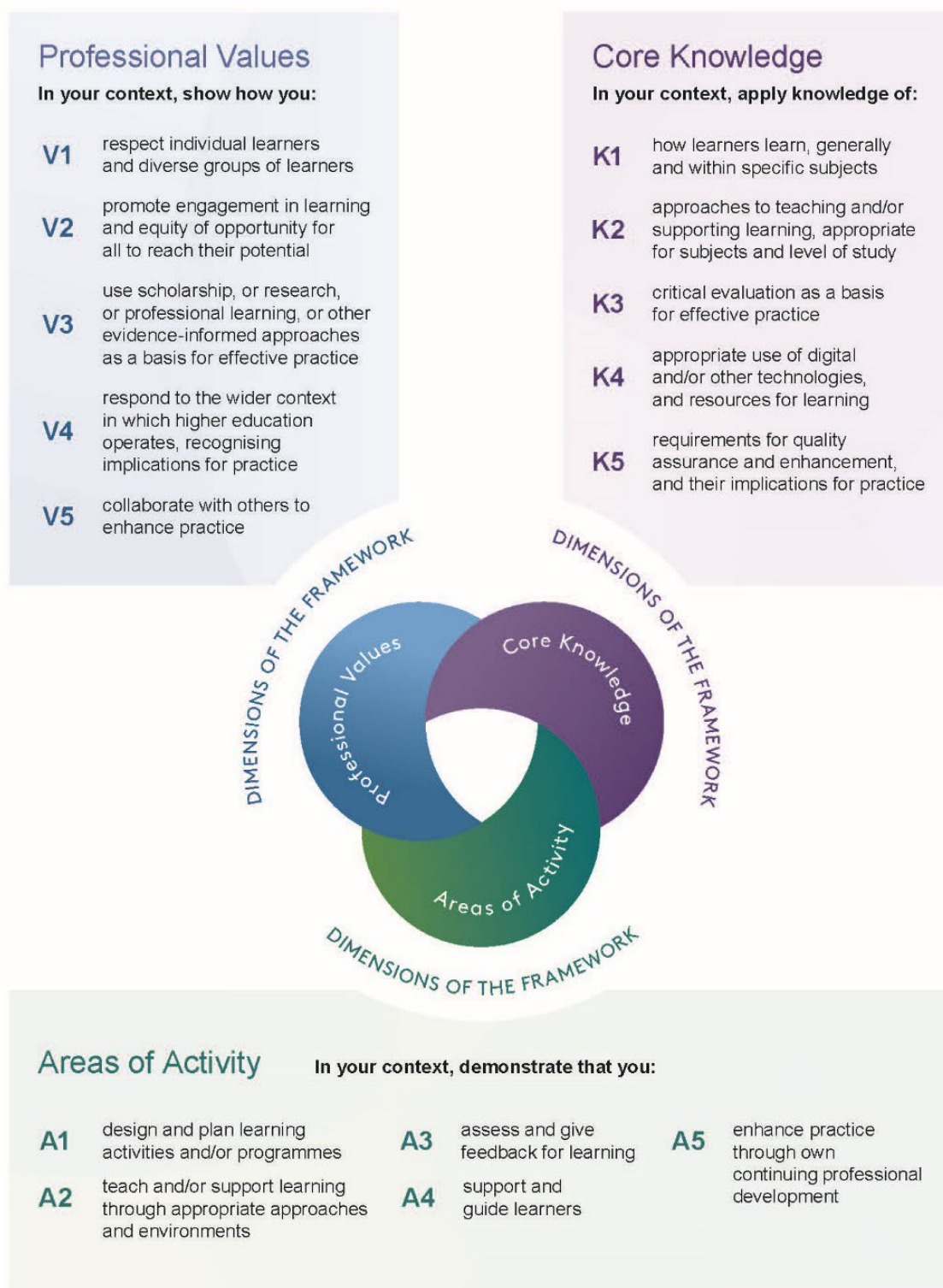
The Dimensions are the skills, knowledge and practices that university educators are expected to exhibit or develop so that they can exhibit these attributes. These 15 statements inform and describe essential practice, identifying what professional in Higher Education do to enable high-quality teaching and/or support of learning. Figure 2 sets out all Dimensions in detail.

Figure 2: PSF Dimensions

Professional Values

In your context, show how you:

V1 respect individual learners and diverse groups of learners

V2 promote engagement in learning and equity of opportunity for all to reach their potential

V3 use scholarship, or research, or professional learning, or other evidence-informed approaches as a basis for effective practice

V4 respond to the wider context in which higher education operates, recognising implications for practice

V5 collaborate with others to enhance practice

Core Knowledge

In your context, apply knowledge of:

K1 how learners learn, generally and within specific subjects

K2 approaches to teaching and/or supporting learning, appropriate for subjects and level of study

K3 critical evaluation as a basis for effective practice

K4 appropriate use of digital and/or other technologies, and resources for learning

K5 requirements for quality assurance and enhancement, and their implications for practice

DIMENSIONS OF THE FRAMEWORK

DIMENSIONS OF THE FRAMEWORK

DIMENSIONS OF THE FRAMEWORK

Professional Values

Core Knowledge

Areas of Activity

Areas of Activity

In your context, demonstrate that you:

A1 design and plan learning activities and/or programmes

A2 teach and/or support learning through appropriate approaches and environments

A3 assess and give feedback for learning

A4 support and guide learners

A5 enhance practice through own continuing professional development

The Dimensions of the PSF, in turn, map to the four Descriptors illustrated in Figure 3. The Descriptors define the key characteristics of four broad categories of practice. Incorporating the Dimensions, each Descriptor identified the extent of practice required to meet it and recognising the variety of practice and roles undertaken by those who teach and/or support learning. These are what the application must address and are the criteria against which the application will be assessed.

Figure 3: PSF Descriptors

Associate Fellowship (D1) is suitable for individuals whose practice enables them to evidence some Dimensions. Effectiveness of practice in teaching and/or support of learning is demonstrated through evidence of:

D2   D3

D1.1
use of appropriate Professional Values, including at least V1 and V3

D1.2
application of appropriate Core Knowledge, including at least K1, K2 and K3

D1.3
effective and inclusive practice in at least two of the five Areas of Activity

D1   D4

Fellowship (D2) is suitable for individuals whose practice with learners has breadth and depth, enabling them to evidence all Dimensions. Effectiveness of practice in teaching and/or support of high-quality learning is demonstrated through evidence of:

D2   D3

D2.1
use of all five Professional Values

D2.2
application of all five forms of Core Knowledge

D2.3
effective and inclusive practice in all five Areas of Activity

D1   D4

Senior Fellowship (D3) is suitable for individuals whose comprehensive understanding and effective practice provides a basis from which they lead or influence those who teach and/or support high quality learning. Individuals are able to evidence:

D2   D3

D3.1
a sustained record of leading or influencing the practice of those who teach and/or support high quality learning

D3.2
practice that is effective, inclusive and integrates all Dimensions

D3.3
practice that extends significantly beyond direct teaching and/or direct support for learning

D1   D4

Principal Fellowship (D4) is suitable for highly experienced individuals whose practice involves a sustained record of effectiveness in strategic leadership of high-quality learning. Their impact is extensive. Individuals are able to evidence:

D2   D3

D4.1
sustained and effective strategic leadership of higher education practice, with extensive impact on high-quality learning: within or beyond an institution, or across a discipline or profession

D4.2
development and implementation of effective and inclusive: strategies, or policies, or procedures, or initiatives, to enhance practice and outcomes for learners

D4.3
active commitment to, and integration of, all Dimensions in the strategic leadership of academic or professional practices

D1   D4

For your information, the criteria for each descriptor (D1 – 3) accredited at UQ is outlined in the pages that follow. You can find a copy of the Professional Standards Framework 2023 here.

Associate Fellow

D1.1. Use of appropriate Professional Values, including at least V1 and V3

- *V1: respect individual learners and diverse groups of learners*
- V2: promote engagement in learning and equity of opportunity for all to reach their potential
- *V3: use scholarship, or research, or professional learning, or other evidence-informed approaches as a basis for effective practice*
- V4: respond to the wider context in which higher education operates, recognising implications for practice
- V5: collaborate with others to enhance practice.

D1.2. Application of appropriate Core Knowledge, including at least K1, K2 and K3

- *K1: how learners learn, generally and within specific subjects*
- *K2: approaches to teaching and/or supporting learning, appropriate for subjects and level of study*
- *K3: critical evaluation as a basis for effective practice*
- K4: appropriate use of digital and/or other technologies, and resources for learning
- K5: requirements for quality assurance and enhancement, and their implications for practice.

D1.3. Effective and inclusive practice in at least two of the five Areas of Activity

- A1: design and plan learning activities and/or programmes
- A2: teach and/or support learning through appropriate approaches and environments
- A3: assess and give feedback for learning
- A4: support and guide learners
- A5: enhance practice through own continuing professional development.

Therefore, for the award of Associate Fellowship, the applicant must demonstrate that their practice evidences two of the five Areas of Activity, appropriate Professional Values (which must include V1 and V3) and application of appropriate Core Knowledge (which must include K1, K2 and K3) of the PSF 2023.

Fellow (D2)

D2.1 Use of all five Professional Values

- V1 Respect individual learners and diverse groups of learners
- V2 Promote engagement in learning and equity of opportunity for all to reach their potential
- V3 Use scholarship, or research, or professional learning, or other evidence-informed approaches as a basis for effective practice
- V4 Respond to the wider context in which higher education operates, recognising implications for practice
- V5 Collaborate with others to enhance practice

D2.2 Application of all five forms of Core Knowledge

- K1 how learners learn, generally and within specific subjects

- K2 approaches to teaching and/or supporting learning, appropriate for subjects and level of study

- K3 critical evaluation as a basis for effective practice

- K4 appropriate use of digital and/or other technologies, and resources for learning

- K5 requirements for quality assurance and enhancement, and their implications for practice

D1.3 Effective and inclusive practice in all five Areas of Activity

- A1 Design and plan learning activities and/or programmes

- A2 Teach and/or support learning through appropriate approaches and environments

- A3 Assess and give feedback for learning

- A4 Support and guide learners

- A5 Enhance practice through own continuing professional development

Therefore, for the award of Fellow, the applicant must demonstrate that their HE practice evidences all Professional Values, Core Knowledges and Areas of Activity of the PSF 2023.

Senior Fellow (D3)

Senior Fellow applications broader the focus beyond the classroom and students to outline how applicants impact learning through their influence on the teaching practices of other educators and should demonstrate:

D3.1 A sustained record of leading or influencing the practice of those who teach and/or support high- quality learning

D3.2 Practice that is effective, inclusive and integrates all Dimensions

Professional Values

- V1: respect individual learners and diverse groups of learners.

- V2: promote engagement in learning and equity of opportunity for all to reach their potential.

- V3: use scholarship, or research, or professional learning, or other evidence-informed approaches as a basis for effective practice.

- V4: respond to the wider context in which higher education operates, recognising implications for practice.

- V5: collaborate with others to enhance practice.

Core Knowledge

- K1: how learners learn, generally and within specific subjects.

- K2: approaches to teaching and/or supporting learning, appropriate for subjects and level of study.

- K3: critical evaluation as a basis for effective practice.

- K4: appropriate use of digital and/or other technologies, and resources for learning.

- K5: requirements for quality assurance and enhancement, and their implications for practice.

Areas of Activity

- A1: design and plan learning activities and/or programmes.

- A2: teach and/or support learning through appropriate approaches and environments.

- A3: assess and give feedback for learning.

- A4: support and guide learners.

- A5: enhance practice through own continuing professional development.

D3.3 Practice that extends significantly beyond direct teaching and/or direct support for learning

Therefore, for the award of Senior Fellow, the applicant must demonstrate that their HE practice evidences all Descriptor 3 criteria.

Preparing to write your supporting statement

The HEA@UQ program aims to support applicants to develop an application that provides evidence of the expertise in the Dimensions related to Core Knowledge, Professional Values, and the Areas of Activity.

Before you commence drafting, be sure that the applicant has shared their application with you to verify its accuracy. Your statement will provide commentary as to whether, in your view, the applicant's higher education practice reflects the relevant Descriptor.

In addition to addressing the Descriptor for the relevant fellowship category, please comment on the following in your supporting statement:

- Your own personal experience of the applicants' recent, effective and/or inclusive practice (as appropriate to the relevant descriptor)

- Examples drawn from peer observation of the applicant's teaching and/or support of learning that you have been involved in, if applicable;

- Any inclusive practice and/or contribution to developments by the applicant in teaching and/or supporting learning within their context as appropriate to the Descriptor; and

- Your perspective on the practical examples provided within the application to illustrate the requirements of the relevant Fellowship category.

- For applicants for Senior Fellowship, focus in on the way(s) in which the applicant has effectively influenced or led other colleagues' practice.

Format of the supporting statement

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

The template has 2 sections: a short section providing information about you and your relationship with the application and a longer section where you can:

1. Highlight any examples where you have observed the applicant teaching or supporting learning, describe what they did and the impact this had on student learning.

2. Include some specific examples of good practice demonstrated by the applicant in teaching and supporting learning and the context within which they work.

3. Outline, from your perspective, how the examples of evidence, provided within the written narrative, illustrate how the applicant has contributed to teaching and supporting learning in higher education, and met the requirements for the relevant descriptor.

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 application, which will be submitted for assessment via Turnitin.

You can access a template for the statement of support here: TEM_HEA@UQ Statement of Support Report.dotx.

There is no set word length for statements of support, but, for applications for Associate Fellow (D1) and Fellow (D2) reviewers will expect 1 – 2 pages and for Senior Fellow (D3) reviewers would expect a minimum of 2 – 3 pages.

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.

The Scheme's reviewers may contact you to discuss your statement.

Some additional tips

Ask the applicant if there is anything of their professional practice, they would like you to highlight.

Be sure you know the timeline for writing your statement so that the applicant can meet their intended submission deadline.

Once completed, email your advocate statement to the applicant as a PDF (Portable Document Format) document so they may include this evidence as part of their application.

Templates

Please use the templates provided in the below links to complete your Supporting Statement:

*   Associate Fellow: SS TEM_Associate Fellow.docx

*   Fellow: SS TEM_Fellow.docx

*   Senior Fellow: SS TEM_Senior Fellow.docx

Questions?

If you have any questions related to the statement of support that have not been answered within, please contact us (professional.learning@uq.edu.au).

Contact details

The HEA@UQ Program

The University of Queensland is proud to foster a bright and engaged community of HEA Fellows. If you are not a fellow and have questions about whether HEA Fellowship is right for you, please reach out.

Institute for Teaching and Learning Innovation (ITaLI)

E   professional.learning@uq.edu.au
W   itali.uq.edu.au

The HEA Community at UQ Team Site