

## ASET Viewpoints

### Higher Education Academy Recognition for Placement Professionals

The Higher Education Academy (HEA) supports Higher Education Providers and individuals who work in Universities and Colleges to seek recognition in relation to the UK Professional Standards Framework for Teaching and Supporting Learning in Higher Education (UKPSF).

Professional recognition is not only available for those in lecturing roles; the UKPSF is inclusive of all roles in Higher Education which involve teaching and/or supporting student learning. At ASET we have always been pleased to work with the HEA on our shared goals of improving the quality of the student learning experience, and would encourage colleagues to think about applying for professional recognition from the HEA. The UKPSF has descriptors at four levels; these are a set of criteria for the key characteristics of typical teaching and learning support roles expressed at **Associate Fellow, Fellow, Senior Fellow and Principal Fellow**. Full details of these descriptors and the UKPSF can be found on the HEA website at:

[www.heacademy.ac.uk/recognition-accreditation/hea-fellowships](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/recognition-accreditation/hea-fellowships)

Many Universities in the UK have recently developed their own recognition schemes that have been accredited by the HEA, so you may be able to make an application internally at your own Institution, alternatively you can apply directly to the HEA. Recognition by the HEA is fast becoming an essential criteria in many job vacancies in Higher Education, and becoming a Fellow (or above) of the Academy is a gateway to many of their activities including the ability to bid for Academy funds, for example with the Teaching Development Grants. There are many ways in which the professional standing and ongoing development of placement professionals can be recognised, but we at ASET feel that it is important to consider HEA recognition because of its increasing profile in the sector. It is important to ASET that placement professionals are recognised for their excellent support of learning within the same schemes as teaching staff.

#### Who might be eligible?

The UKPSF gives examples of the typical roles that might be suited to application at each level; we have tried to find specific examples that relate to the world of supporting placement learning:

**Descriptor 1 Associate Fellow** - for those very new to placement support, those whose role may be very specific within placement support - for example administration or employer liaison, or for those in industry or practice with significant experience of supporting students on placement.

**Descriptor 2 Fellow** - for those reasonably experienced in supporting placement learning, those whose role covers the full range of placement support including advising on applications through to assessment guidance.

**Descriptor 3 Senior Fellow** - for those whose role involves some team leadership in relation to placement learning, moving away from directly working with students and more likely to be supervising or mentoring staff working in placement learning.

**Descriptor 4 Principal Fellow** - for those whose role is cross-institutional and whose work is strategic in terms of leadership, policy and direction. May also be for those who are working at a national or international level in the field of placement learning.

Submissions for recognition require that applicants meet the criteria for whichever descriptor intended, and that there is evidence that all of the dimensions of practice of the UKPSF are met. The table overleaf gives an indication of the types of activities, expertise and attitudes that might be typical for a placement professional in relation to the dimensions of practice.





	Dimensions	Example from supporting placement learning
Areas of Activity	A1 Design and plan learning activities and/or programmes of study	Writing modules and teaching activities / materials for placement preparation and assessment
	A2 Teach and/or support learning	Delivery of workshops / sessions designed for placement preparation, ongoing support whilst on placement e.g. through the virtual learning platform
	A3 Assess and give feedback to learners	Providing feedback on applications, CVs, mock assessment centres or final assessments - can be informal, doesn't have to be coursework or exams
	A4 Develop effective learning environments and approaches to student support and guidance	Processes associated with ongoing support whilst students are on placement - recall days, visits, or through the virtual learning platform
	A5 Engage in continuing professional development in subjects/disciplines and their pedagogy, incorporating research, scholarship and the evaluation of professional practices	Any CPD activities that you engage in related to placement - for example ASET Conference or staff development workshops, discussions with colleagues or internal training
Core Knowledge	K1 The subject material	You may have a discipline specialism or you may see your subject as being employability, experiential learning or work based learning - these are all good
	K2 Appropriate methods for teaching, learning and assessing in the subject area and at the level of the academic programme	Ideas around activities designed to develop employability skills, designing different assessment for different types of placement, e.g. understanding what is different about first year to postgraduate students.
	K3 How students learn, both generally and within their subject/disciplinary area(s)	Showing that you understand the value of learning through experience
	K4 The use and value of appropriate learning technologies	Demonstrate which technology you use; could be in workshop settings, managing and monitoring placements, keeping in touch or in assessments
	K5 Methods for evaluating the effectiveness of teaching	What student feedback do you get about the support that you provide, and how do you ask for it?
	K6 The implications of quality assurance and quality enhancement for academic and professional practice with a particular focus on teaching	What objective data is there about the support you provide? Might be student performance, employer feedback, conversion rates for optional placements or feedback from colleagues through peer observation
Professional Values	V1 Respect individual learners and diverse learning communities	Show how you work with individuals but also have an awareness of diversity issues
	V2 Promote participation in Higher Education and equality of opportunity for learners	How do you encourage take up, and equality, in relation to placement learning?
	V3 Use evidence-informed approaches and the outcomes from research, scholarship and continuing professional development	What do you do to keep up to date with developments in the field of placement learning? Don't forget ASET events, our e-Bulletin and LinkedIn discussions
	V4 Acknowledge the wider context in which Higher Education operates recognising the implications for professional practice	Employability is all about the bigger picture of Higher Education; what do you do to keep your vocational understanding up to date?

ASET encourages all of its members to think about applying for professional recognition, and provides opportunities to discuss your applications both at our annual conference and through our online forum at LinkedIn. For more information on these, please contact the ASET Office.

To get further details on applying for HEA recognition, please look at the Higher Education Academy website at [www.heacademy.ac.uk](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk)

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**For more information please contact:**