

Students

Everything we do is aimed at improving the student learning experience. This focus will lead us to work on all aspects of the student learning lifecycle – including strategies for retention, the effective uses of e-learning, the development of enterprise capabilities, and support for excellent research training environments.

Summary

Founded in May 2004, we are an independent organisation funded by grants from the four UK funding bodies, subscriptions from higher education institutions, and grant and contract income for specific initiatives.

We engage in a wide variety of activities to support the Academy's mission and deliver its strategic aims and objectives. We have a range of leaflets which give more detailed information on different aspects of our work. You will find these and the Academy's strategic plan at www.heacademy.ac.uk/leaflets.htm

The Higher Education Academy



The
Higher
Education
Academy



Enhancing the student learning experience

The Higher Education Academy

Our mission is to help institutions, discipline groups and all staff to provide the best possible learning experience for their students.

Institutions

As subscribers, you can collaborate with us in many different ways. We provide tools, practical solutions and research evidence to help you improve your students' learning experience. You can join different network groups to exchange practices and ideas. You may have your staff development programmes accredited by the Academy. We liaise directly with institutions to identify priorities, needs and innovative practice. Examples of ways we engage are outlined below.

- The Network of Deputy and Pro-Vice-Chancellors and Vice-Principals allows senior managers to share experiences and discuss policy issues.

- Change Academy facilitates team-based learning and professional development while focusing on the strategic interests and needs of the participating institutions. Teams develop the skills needed to achieve complex institutional change.
- There are resources, advice and support available for specific groups and areas such as External Examiners, e-learning, e-portfolios, institutional research and employability.
- Our consultancy service provides senior level expertise, facilitation and brokerage as you develop or change strategies, policies and structures.
- Research literature reviews and surveys provide evidence-informed approaches to policy and practice and explore different reviewing methodologies.

- We offer a continuing professional development accreditation scheme and support you in developing your own CPD frameworks.
- The project strand of the National Teaching Fellowship Scheme presents opportunities to work with National Teaching Fellows to build on current expertise for your institution's benefit.

Disciplines and subjects

Practitioners, subject departments and discipline communities are supported through the Academy's Subject Network of 24 Subject Centres. There are a wide variety of activities.

- Subject-specific information and resources including databases, knowledge banks, case studies, question banks, journals and guides.
- Events, departmental workshops, teaching and student awards.



Our strategic aims and objectives

1. To be an authoritative and independent voice on policies that influence student learning experiences
2. To support institutions in their strategies for improving the student learning experience
3. To lead, support and inform the professional development and recognition of staff in higher education
4. To promote good practice in all aspects of support for the student learning experience
5. To lead the development of research and evaluation to improve the quality of the student learning experience
6. To be a responsive, efficient and accountable organisation.

- Brokerage and collaboration activities include mini-project funding, establishing partnerships and special interest groups.
- Interdisciplinary collaborations address common areas of concern.
- Subject specific support for assessment, e-learning, employability and enterprise.
- Help subject communities respond to the challenges posed by emerging policy issues.

Individual staff

Individuals have access to advice, support, networking opportunities, professional recognition and development.

- The Subject Network recognises that most networking and exchange for individual academic staff takes place at this level.
- We developed a national standards framework for professional recognition of staff involved in supporting learning and a new system for recognising individual commitment.

- You can take part in number of networks on different themes such as supporting external examiners, part-time staff, imaginative curriculum, personal development planning and quality enhancement.
- We are looking at how standards frameworks and continuing professional development (CPD) frameworks can be structured to allow greater transferability across the different educational sectors.
- The individual strand of the National Teaching Fellowship Scheme recognises and rewards teachers and learning support staff in higher education for their excellence in teaching.



Organisations and associations

Professional associations and bodies work closely with us to ensure we do not duplicate efforts but collaborate to increase efficacy and impact.

- We facilitate and support collaborative activities such as joint conferences and events.
- We have established a number of corporate agreements and Memoranda of Understanding with key national bodies to ensure common approaches.
- We work with the sector to help build its capacity for evidence-informed activities designed to improve the student learning experience.
- The Subject Centres also work closely with subject associations and professional bodies.

Governments and funding bodies

Governments and funding bodies can draw on our expertise to assist with the development and implementation of policy that influences the student learning experience.

- We engage with policy issues such as widening participation, the implications of competition and the global market, and the changing expectations of industry and the professions.
- We are well represented in the main and sub-panels for the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise (RAE), ensuring that subject-specific pedagogic research will be included.
- Our close interaction with many different levels of the higher education sector helps us provide a voice for the sector which is of value to Governments and funding bodies.

www.heacademy.ac.uk

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