



Associate Fellowship – Supporting Statement Guidance and Template

Supporting Statement Guidance – Associate Fellowship

Thank you for agreeing to provide one of the two supporting statements required 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 to provide the information required by the HEA, as explained below.

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).

During the Associate Fellowship review process the two independent supporting statements provided by the referees will be used to confirm that the submission 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?

You will be expected to have current or recent experience of working in Higher Education and 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 [UK Professional Standards Framework \(UKPSF\)](#).

The application for Associate Fellowship (AFHEA) is based on current and recent HE practice (usually within the last years). If you no longer work with the applicant, it is important that you are familiar with their recent practice. You are required in the template to indicate how long you have worked together.

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.

Individual role requirements of Descriptor 1 of the UK Professional Standards Framework

The applicant is required to provide evidence of effectiveness in relation to their HE professional role(s) and experience, which 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.

HE teaching and learning is defined as:

- level 4 or above within the [Framework for Higher Education Qualifications \(FHEQ\)](#) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland;
- level 7 or above within the [Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework \(SCQF\)](#) in Scotland on the Framework for Qualifications of Higher Education Institutions (FQHEIS);
- first cycle or above of the [Qualifications Framework in the European Higher Education Area](#) (QF-EHEA);
- level 5 or above of the [Australian Qualifications Framework](#);
- level 5 or above of the [New Zealand Qualification Framework](#);
- delivery of non-accredited continuing professional development for academic and learning support staff may also be considered as evidence equivalent to the higher education academic frameworks.

Typically, those likely to be able to evidence Descriptor 1 include:

- > Early career researchers with some teaching responsibilities (e.g. PhD students, GTAs, contract researchers/post-doctoral researchers etc.);
- > Staff new to HE teaching (including those with part-time academic responsibilities);
- > Staff who support academic provision (e.g. learning technologists, learning developers and learning resource/library staff);
- > Staff who undertake demonstrator/technician roles that incorporate some teaching-related responsibilities;
- > Experienced staff in relevant professional HE areas who may be new to teaching and/or supporting learning, or who have a limited teaching portfolio.

For your information, the Descriptor 1 criteria of the UKPSF are set out below:

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

- I. **Successful engagement with at least two of the five Areas of Activity (A1-A5)**
 - 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
- II. **Successful engagement in appropriate teaching and practices related to these Areas of Activity**
- III. **Appropriate Core Knowledge and understanding of at least K1 and K2**
 - 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
- 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**

Therefore, for the award of Associate Fellowship, the applicant must demonstrate that their HE practice evidences **two of the five** Areas of Activity, aspects of Core Knowledge (which must include **K1 and K2**), and **appropriate** Professional Values of the UKPSF.

Preparing to write your supporting statement

The applicant needs to first provide you with their Account of Professional Practice (APP). Please read this account before you begin to write your supporting statement to verify its accuracy. You may also wish to refer to the HEA [website](#) for more information about the HEA and/or specifically about becoming an [Associate Fellow of the HEA](#).

Format of the supporting statement

A template is provided for you to complete your supporting statement. A copy of the template is included in this guidance booklet for your information. The template is available as a [Word document](#) and should be completed in this format. Scanned documents or those with a scanned image cannot be accepted.

In addition to Descriptor 1 criteria, as a guide, it is important that you comment on the following in your supporting statement:

- > your own experience of the applicant's recent HE practice;
- > 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.

If English is not your first language and you are not able to provide the supporting statement in English, the HEA will accept a certified English translation of your statement. It is your responsibility to provide the certified translation for the applicant and you will be required to agree and accept the Validation Statement upon completion.

After completing your supporting statement

Once you have completed the supporting statement template, please return it to the applicant in Word format. The applicant will upload the two supporting statements from each of their chosen referees through MyAcademy.

HEA Quality Assurance Process

As part of the process you will be asked to confirm that you have written the supporting statement yourself and that the information you have provided has been written specifically for this applicant.

As part of the HEA's ongoing quality assurance process, the HEA routinely checks references for individual authenticity by means of textual review in Turnitin.com. In addition to the use of anti-plagiarism software, some individuals will be contacted to confirm that the supporting statement submitted by the applicant through MyAcademy is the statement that they have prepared and completed.

If the professional integrity of the supporting statement is in question, the statement will not be accepted.

Supporting Statement Template – Associate Fellowship

Name	
Institution/organisation/other	
Job Title	
Email address	
Your HEA Fellowship Status (if appropriate)	
Relationship to Applicant	
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 in the following section. You are required to comment on the applicant's recent higher education practice, providing examples to support your statement wherever possible.

A single page statement will normally be sufficient for this category of Fellowship.