Principal Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy

Guidance notes
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Introduction

Principal Fellowship of the HEA is awarded to professionals who demonstrate they meet the criteria of Descriptor 4 of the UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF) for teaching and supporting learning in higher education.

By applying to become a Principal Fellow of the HEA you will present a sustained record of effective strategic leadership in academic practice and academic development as a key contribution to high quality student learning. Individuals should be able to provide evidence of:

D4.I. Active commitment to and championing of all Dimensions of the Framework, through work with students and staff, and in institutional developments

D4.II. Successful, strategic leadership to enhance student learning, with a particular, but not necessarily exclusive, focus on enhancing teaching quality in institutional, and/or (inter)national settings

D4.III. Establishing effective organisational policies and/or strategies for supporting and promoting others (e.g. through mentoring, coaching) high quality teaching and support for learning

D4.IV. Championing, within institutional and/or wider settings, an integrated approach to academic practice (incorporating, for example, teaching, learning, research, scholarship, administration etc.)

D4.V. A sustained and successful commitment to, and engagement in, continuing professional development related to academic, institutional and/or other professional practices

By applying to become a Principal Fellow you will have the opportunity to:

• reflect on the effectiveness of your work in relation to strategic leadership in teaching and supporting learning in higher education;
• model academic leadership to other staff and be able to encourage and support them to seek recognition for their work in this area;
• demonstrate your sustained and effective record of influence and impact in teaching and supporting learning by gaining national and increasingly international recognition for your contribution within the higher education context.

The UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF) is central to the recognition of individuals as Principal Fellows. You will need access to and a working knowledge of its contents in order to prepare your application.

What are the main evidence requirements for Principal Fellowship?

There are three main elements to your application:

• Record of Educational Impact (REI)
• Reflective Account of Practice (RAP)
• Plus three Advocate Statements
PART ONE: RECORD OF EDUCATIONAL IMPACT (REI)

Please give an appropriate title to indicate the nature of each activity and indicate where it has been used within your Reflective Account of Practice (RAP). Please then elaborate on elements of this list in your RAP. Your subject research should only be included where it is focused on the pedagogy of your subject. Similarly, general managerial roles will be relevant only where they are related strategically to teaching and supporting learning. Use the REI to capture the key areas of influence you have had in relation to high quality student learning institutionally and beyond. Focus on the last five years, although earlier activities which continue to have an impact may be included.

Use the table below to complete your REI. Should you require more entries, insert your cursor into the final cell and press the ‘tab’ key to create a following row.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Title (or description of engagement)</th>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Used as evidence for Descriptor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>From</td>
<td>To</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>E.g. Royal College committee member</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>present</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When you have completed an initial draft of your REI go on to your RAP (see below). It is likely that you will amend the REI as you reflect on your practice. The REI is not a CV, nor does it require a complete list of individual publications and conference presentations.
PART TWO: REFLECTIVE ACCOUNT OF PRACTICE (RAP)

The HEA recognises there will be considerable variation in applications, reflecting differences in individual’s experience, their job roles and institutional contexts. A suggested word count would be no more than 7000 words for the Record of Educational Impact and Reflective Account of Practice (RAP) together but this is only a guide and the quality of the reflection is far more important than quantity. This word count includes references.

The structure of your RAP

Your account is divided into four sections based on D4.II – D4.V of the Principal Fellow Descriptors. The first element – ‘D4.I: Active commitment to and championing of all Dimensions of the Framework, through work with students and staff, and in institutional developments’ – functions as an overarching descriptor in that it should be demonstrated through the examples and reflections incorporated into the other four sections. Championing the Dimensions of the Framework includes being a role model and modelling the behaviours encompassed in the UKPSF through your own practice, setting up conditions in which staff and students can engage with learning, promoting a holistic view of learning, teaching and assessment which is underpinned by the dimension of UKPSF within the institution. Championing the UKPSF relates to the dimensions which make up the UKPSF, rather than the Framework as a whole, through the demonstration of professionalism in learning, teaching and assessment as evidenced in your practice and approach rather than merely the language of UKPSF. D4.I. can be evidenced through impact in institutional, national and international environments through your individual contribution. The evidence needs to be authentic rather than abstract or conceptual concepts.

Each of the four sections should be given substantive treatment though they need not be of equal length. Please note that the content of web links will not be considered in applications.

Reflecting on the APP

Critical to your claim for Principal Fellowship is the demonstration of a sustained record of effective strategic leadership in academic practice and academic development as a key contribution to high quality student learning. You are required to provide evidence of a sustained and effective record of impact at a strategic level in relation to teaching and learning, as part of a wider commitment to academic practice. This may be within your institution or wider (inter)national settings. Use the elements of the Areas of Activity, Core Knowledge and Professional Values (the Dimensions of the Framework) as the basis for thinking about the range of activities you have chosen from your REI. An example of how you might illustrate your understanding, use and value of the UKPSF might include how you have used the Framework, as a whole or elements, to shape and develop policy, strategy and schemes within your organisation.

Evidencing the Principal Fellow Descriptors

You must provide evidence that you meet the five Descriptors of the Framework on which Principal Fellow is based. The term ‘Framework’ is used within the UKPSF as a shorthand reference to the whole document. In summary the Descriptors are:

D4.I Championing the Framework, which should be embedded within the whole application;
D4.II Strategic leadership to enhance student learning;
D4.III Policies and strategies;
D4.IV Integrated academic practice;
D4.V Continuing Professional Development.
Use the four sections of the template below to complete your APP prior to entry into MyAcademy. Further guidance is provided for each Descriptor.

**D4.II Strategic leadership to enhance student learning**

Use this section to evidence how you have provided successful, strategic leadership to enhance student learning. Your main focus should be on how your leadership has enhanced teaching quality in institutional, and/or (inter)national settings.

You are required to demonstrate how you have led the development of aspects of learning, teaching and assessment, helping to meet the institutional objectives and mission statements which impact on student learning and the quality of teaching. Your influence could have inspired others to develop and enhance their teaching quality. This could include enabling of relevant research into learning, teaching and assessment. The impact of this leadership should be across the whole institution or beyond with learning, teaching and assessment. The key to this section is strategic leadership and impact on student learning institutionally and beyond.

Choose relevant examples from your REI and draw on the Dimensions of the Framework to think about and explain how you provided this leadership. Consider how your impact can be evidenced or measured. Ensure that where you were working with others to provide leadership you make clear your specific contribution in that context.

Use this box to indicate which REI entries you have referred to in this section.

Begin writing your account of D4.II Strategic leadership here ...

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**Maximum word count for this section is 2000 (overall word count should not exceed 7000)**

References
**D4.III Policies and strategies**

Use this section to evidence how you have established effective organisational policies and/or strategies for supporting and promoting others.

In this section you need to explain how you have exercised influence on learning, teaching and assessment through effective organisational policies. Leadership through chairing staff development committees, instigating policies on staff performance, performance review, reward and recognition which promote others in delivering high quality teaching and supporting learning. As such your impact on learning, teaching and the student experience will be indirect, although evidence of impact is still required.

The key to this section is the establishment of policies and strategies for supporting and promoting others (e.g. through policies and strategies on staff mentoring, coaching, etc.) in delivering high quality teaching and support for learning.

Choose relevant examples from your REI and draw on the Dimensions of the Framework to think about and explain how you contributed strategically to establishing these policies and strategies. Ensure that where you were working with others you make clear what your specific role was in that context.

Use this box to indicate which REI entries you have referred to in this section.

Begin writing your account of D4.III Policies and strategies here ...
D4.IV Integrated academic practice

Use this section to evidence how you have championed an integrated approach to academic practice (incorporating, for example, teaching, learning, research, scholarship, administration etc.). This may be within institutional or wider settings. Teaching in higher education takes place in a complex environment where you may have a multiplicity of roles in which you need to integrate teaching, management, leadership, mentoring, research, administration and various forms of service to the HE community. This is the basis of the integrated approach to academic practice that is expected of Principal Fellows.

Choose relevant examples from your REI and draw on the Dimensions of the Framework to think about and explain how you promote an integrated approach to academic practice. Ensure that where you were working with others you make clear your specific contribution in that context.

Use this box to indicate which REI entries you have referred to in this section.

Begin writing your account of D4.IV Integrated academic practice here ...

Maximum word count for this section is 2000 (overall word count should not exceed 7000)

References
D4.V Continuing professional development

Use this section to evidence your sustained and successful commitment to, and engagement in, continuing professional development related to academic, institutional and/or other professional practices. You should also include your academic (post-secondary) and professional qualifications in this section. Choose relevant examples from your REI and draw on the Dimensions of the Framework to think about and explain how you engage in sustained CPD. The emphasis on ‘a sustained and effective record of impact’ means that it will not be acceptable for Principal Fellowship to be evidenced solely on the basis of completing a programme or course. However, completion of a relevant programme or course, (in leadership for example) can constitute part of your evidence. Examples of CPD might include contributing to other external organisations and professional bodies in relation to learning and teaching.

Use this box to indicate which REI entries you have referred to in this section.

Begin writing your account of D4.V Continuing professional development here ...

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Maximum word count for this section is 2000 (overall word count should not exceed 7000)

References

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Advocate Statements

The role Advocate, through knowledge and understanding of the your work, is to support and recommend you for Principal Fellow.

Between your 3 Advocates they should meet the following criteria:

- Be a Fellow (or Senior or Principal Fellow) of the HEA;
- Comment on the ways in which you have directly influenced their own practice;
- Be external to your institution (if you are employed as opposed to self-employed);
- Be from a higher education provider.

Advocate statements should be uploaded into the recognition application system in MyAcademy. The HEA reserves the right to contact your Advocates for clarification.
Applying for Principal Fellowship via MyAcademy

The online recognition application will guide you through each stage of the process. Your application will be saved as you progress and is structured around the REI and RAP. You can save drafts of your application and return to complete it at a later date.

Once you have completed your application, uploaded your Advocate statements, paid the appropriate fee and submitted your application it will then be subject to review by a recognition panel made up of three accreditors.

An application for Principal Fellow can be made at any time during the year. The length of time it will take to process your application is dependent on the dates of our review panels. The HEA holds regular review panels each month to accommodate demand and typically you will be notified within 6-8 weeks.

Upon the successful attainment of your Principal Fellowship you will be able to download your certificate from within MyAcademy.

What do you need to do to apply?

In summary, to apply you need to:

1. Prepare and write your REI and RAP
2. Obtain three advocate statements
3. Register your details with the HEA’s MyAcademy and complete the online recognition application
4. Upload your Advocate statements
5. Pay the appropriate fee

Paying for your application

Employees of subscribing institutions can apply for a subsidised rate. If you are from a subscribing institution the fee is £500. If you are from a non-subscribing institution or independent the fee is £1000. If you are unsure of your status please see further details in our terms and conditions for professional recognition and a definition of employment.

Payment will be requested via debit or credit card when you submit your application in MyAcademy. You can pay this yourself at the time you submit or if you are receiving financial support from your institution there is an option for someone else to pay on your behalf. In both instances you will be sent a reference code to make your payment.

Institutions and bulk payments

If an institution is paying for a number of applicants, each applicant will be able to select at the payment stage that another is paying on their behalf. A reference code will be provided and the applicant should give their institution this reference code. The institutional Finance Officer (or equivalent) logs onto MyAcademy and makes a payment, via credit/debit card, using that reference code (or multiple codes if paying for more than one individual). An institution may enter reference numbers for multiple individuals but the number may be restricted depending on the debit/credit card limit.
How will your application be reviewed?

Your application will be reviewed by a panel of three independent accreditors as part of a peer review process. Accreditors are selected for their experience of external review, their understanding of the UKPSF, as well as for their knowledge and experience of teaching and learning in higher education. The accreditor pool includes education specialists and practitioners from a range of disciplines across the higher education sector. The accreditors will review your application looking for evidence that your approach to teaching/supporting and managing learning is grounded in an understanding of how learners develop knowledge and practice within your discipline or role. Your evidence should therefore be reflective, not just descriptive. Accreditors will also look for indications of how you evaluate your effectiveness and how you develop your approach in the light of your experience and continuing professional development. A holistic approach to reviewing your application will be adopted and accreditors will seek evidence from across your application.

In rare cases HEA staff will act as arbitrators in cases for example where there is a discrepancy or conflict of interest.

Should your application be judged to provide insufficient evidence for meeting the criteria, it will be referred back to you with constructive advice to revise your application and evidence. In some instances it may be that you would be encouraged to reapply for a different category of Fellowship. You will be offered one opportunity to resubmit without further charge, after which if your application is unsuccessful, you have the option of reapplying.

You are able to check the status of your application by logging into “My Recognition” in MyAcademy.

Appeals and complaints

Should there be a case for you to complain or seek appeal about your application, please refer to the terms and condition set out in our appeals policy.

What if you have more questions?

If you cannot find the information you need or require further assistance, please email recognition@heacademy.ac.uk and one of our team will be able to assist you. You can also call us on (+44) 01904 717500.
Contact us

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