Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy

Guidance notes for referees, to support an application for Senior Fellow

This guidance note answers the following:

1. Who is this guidance for?
2. What is the function of the reference?
3. What information do I need to provide?
4. Is there a standard reference format?

Thank you for agreeing to provide a reference.

1. Who is this guidance for?

The guidance below is designed to help you prepare your reference for a Senior Fellow applicant. You should be a Fellow, Senior Fellow, or Principal Fellow of the HEA, or an appropriate experienced member of staff working for a higher education provider. All referees need to be familiar with the UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF).

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the professional recognition team at the Higher Education Academy (HEA) on (+44) 01904 717500 or email recognition@heacademy.ac.uk.

2. What is the function of the reference?

The function of the reference is to provide an informed peer review of the applicant’s work using your knowledge of their professional experience. You should be in a position to comment and substantiate the applicant’s evidence of a sustained record of effectiveness in relation to learning and teaching. This evidence may incorporate, for example, the organisation, leadership and/or management of specific aspects of learning and teaching provision.

If possible, please comment on the applicant’s most recent role and responsibilities. To write an appropriate reference, please take time to read the applicant’s Account of Professional Practice and comment directly on its content.

You may also wish to refer to our website for more information about becoming a Senior Fellow. Please note that it is particularly important for referees to confirm that applicants who work overseas are working at a level equivalent to higher education.

3. What information do I need to provide?

Your reference should primarily refer to the applicant's experience and achievements in learning and teaching and should refer to his/her research record only in so far as this directly informs their teaching. Please use your knowledge of his/her work to comment on how the applicant meets the Dimensions of The UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF) for teaching and supporting learning in higher education at Descriptor 3 (D3).
Your reference should support any claims made in relation to leadership and/or the management/organisation of specific aspects of learning and teaching provision within the context of the applicant’s role(s).

Provide practical examples to support your comments wherever possible. Similarly, please comment on any innovative practice, mentoring, contribution to developments in learning and teaching at team/departmental/institutional level. Similarly, please comment on any innovative practice, contribution to developments in organising and leading learning and teaching within the applicant’s discipline.

The HEA expects all the Dimensions – Areas of Activity, Core Knowledge and Professional Values – of the UK Professional Standards Framework for teaching and supporting learning in higher education (UKPSF) to underpin the practice of those recognised by the HEA. Please provide examples, if appropriate, of where and how this underpinning is presented in the account.

4. **Is there a standard reference format?**

There is no standard form for references but you may find it helpful to comment under the Dimensions of the UKPSF identified in the application. The Dimensions of the UKPSF are listed overleaf.

Please provide an electronic copy of your reference to the applicant and ensure that it includes verifiable information: your name, job title, organisation (including department where applicable), email address and preferably your signature.

It is the applicant’s responsibility to collect the reference from you. The HEA recognises that this is a different kind of reference from one that is normally required for promotion or a job appointment, as we are looking for evidence of the applicant’s commitment to effective practice in teaching and/or supporting learning, rather than general academic achievement. We may contact you to clarify points in your reference.

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The Higher Education Academy’s Professional Recognition for Senior Fellow aligns to the Dimensions of *The UK Professional Standards Framework* and focuses on Descriptor 3:

An individual working in this category demonstrates a thorough understanding of effective approaches to learning and teaching support as a key contribution to high quality student learning. Individuals should be able to provide evidence of:

- successful engagement across all five Areas of Activity;
- appropriate knowledge and understanding across all aspects of Core Knowledge;
- a commitment to all the Professional Values;
- successful engagement in appropriate teaching practices related to the Areas of Activity;
- successful incorporation of subject and pedagogic research and/or scholarship within the above activities, as part of an integrated approach to academic practice;
- successful engagement in continuing professional development in relation to teaching, learning, assessment, scholarship and, as appropriate, related academic or professional practices;
- successful co-ordination, support, supervision, management and/or mentoring of others (whether individuals and/or teams) in relation to learning and teaching.