Guide to addressing the criteria for accreditation 2017-18

<u>To be read in conjunction with two other key documents:</u>

- HEA accreditation policy 2017-18

- HEA submission template 2017-18

Introduction

Application for HEA accreditation is made via a documentary submission within the HEA accreditation submission template. The submission template was introduced in 2015-16 to support institutions in structuring their submission to present relevant information required to meet the criteria for accreditation and has been updated to reflect the annual revision to the accreditation policy for 2017-18.

The submission template includes five parts and requires an institutional commentary and the participant-facing guidance for each programme. The accreditation submission template requires an institutional commentary within Parts C and D of the template and participant-facing guidance within Part E.

Each programme/scheme is designed to suit the context and strategic priorities of each individual institution and the development needs of its different groups of staff. Therefore the guidance that participants receive on a programme (such as handbooks, etc.) will take many different forms. This 'Guide to addressing the criteria for accreditation 2017-18' document is designed to provide an overview of the type of information required to be provided within each programme's participant-facing guidance in order to fully address the four accreditation criteria.

Broadly, it is expected that:

- the design of the programme ensures that engagement with UKPSF will be central to the participant experience;
- participants will be appropriately supported to generate evidence of professional practice;
- the relevant UKPSF Descriptor forms the basis for the fellowship judgement. The review process is clearly defined and fully explained to participants.

In comparison, the information you provide within the institutional commentary for Parts C and D of the submission template explains the infrastructure which supports the programme(s) and the strategies/systems/processes which lead to a transparent and robust judgement about HEA Fellowship being reached.

Aim of this guidance document

The aim of this guidance document is to support institutions to produce a succinct submission which fully addresses the requirements of accreditation criteria 1-4 without duplication of information.

This guidance document is relevant to Parts C, D and E of the template:

- Part C: Accreditation criterion 1- institutional context;
- Part D: Accreditation criteria 2-4 - individual programmes;
- Part E: Participant-facing guidance and appendices.

This guidance document aims to identify what type of information should be provided to address the four accreditation criteria and where this information should be located in the submission, i.e. whether information should be included within the participant-facing guidance (Part E) or within the institutional commentary (Parts C and D).

Information should not be duplicated i.e. information provided within the guidance participants receive should not be repeated within the institutional commentary. **Clear signposting/cross referencing** will aid the reader to locate the relevant information easily, i.e. the accreditors will review the submission as a whole against the four criteria.

Tables are used throughout the rest of this guidance document to provide a clear comparison of which section of the template (Part D or Part E) should contain the relevant information.

Please refer closely to the **HEA accreditation policy 2017-18** and the **accreditation submission template (2017-18)** as you interpret the information within this document. Cross references to specific sections of the policy are indicated within the tables where appropriate.

Where appropriate, use diagrams/tables to present information succinctly throughout the submission.

Guidance for information to be include in Part C of the submission template

The purpose of this section is to provide the institutional context which underpins all the programmes submitted (accreditation criterion 1). Please **only include extracts of relevant institutional policy/strategy documents** at the appropriate point in the institutional commentary (Part C) to provide pertinent information/evidence. **Full policy/strategy documents are NOT required.** For example, **do not include** full policy documents/strategy documents/corporate plans/quality monitoring reports/QAA reviews/agendas or minutes of meetings/External reports, etc. Please **do not repeat any information**; cross reference back to the first instance if appropriate.

	Commentary for Part C
Brief outline of the institutional context *Cross reference to Policy Section 2.2 and Appendix 1 (Terms and Conditions)*	Provide a brief overview of key institutional details relevant to the submitted programme(s); these may include the institution's type/size and structure, number and types of staff and students, discipline specialisms, relationship of teaching/research, etc. If any programme is to be offered on different campus sites, either in the UK or overseas, please include full details of the location and employment status of the participant groups as well as the plans for delivery/management and infrastructure supporting the programme. The Terms and Conditions of accreditation enable HE Providers validating degree programmes at collaborative partner institutions to offer their accredited provision to staff employed at the partner institution, but this must be made explicit within the institutional submission. Accreditation does not cover provision that is for commercial sale. Please refer to HEA accreditation policy, Appendix 1 for the full Terms and Conditions applying to accreditation, which sets out the remit of accredited status and the requirements for operation at collaborative partner institutions. If collaborative partner institutions are included within the submission, **please present a clear**

	table in Part C of the submission template to indicate which programme(s)/categories of HEA Fellowship are to be offered at each collaborative partner institution and provide full details about the arrangements in place in each instance. During the review process the accreditors will then be able to interpret any differences in the design of the programme/scheme, mode of delivery, support in place for participants, observation of practice or the processes by which fellowship judgements are reached. NB. If an institution wishes to add an additional collaborative partner after accreditation is awarded, they should access the HEA major/minor change to accredited provision process.
Criterion 1 – institutional commitment **The institution can evidence a commitment to the continuous professional development of staff that teach and support learning**	
1a. Institutional strategies and approaches to the development of staff that teach and support learning align with the UKPSF. *Cross reference to Section 4.1 of policy*	Explain how institutional strategies and policies encourage and motivate staff to engage in opportunities for professional development related to teaching and supporting learning and to achieve HEA Fellowship. Use **selective evidence** extracted from institutional strategies and policies to illustrate the institution's approach to the development of staff that teach and support learning. This could include extracts to demonstrate how the institution is already explicitly utilising/interpreting the UKPSF to promote the development of teaching and learning. For example, you could use selective extracts from institutional mission statement/institutional vision/strategy/policy/ethos/principles, etc. and extracts from HR policies and processes related to teaching and supporting learning, such as workforce development strategy/recruitment/reward/PDR/promotion, or other relevant information as appropriate/relevant As HEA Fellowship requires a commitment to ongoing continuing professional development,

	outline the opportunities available to staff to engage in CPD relevant to their practice in teaching and supporting learning, post-fellowship. Where accredited provision is available to staff at collaborative partner institutions, outline any CPD opportunities available to these individuals post-fellowship.
1b. There is clear rationale for the proposed accredited programme(s) consistent with the institution's approach to learning and teaching.	Clearly identify the different programmes in the submission and explain how these articulate to provide optimum initial and on-going opportunities for the wide range of professional development needs of staff that teach and support learning within the specific institutional context (a diagram may be helpful to support the commentary). Where programmes have been previously accredited at the institution, it is expected that a thorough evaluation of the previous accreditation cycle will be part of the rationale presented.
1c. Quality assurance and enhancement of accredited programmes are monitored and managed at an institutional level.	Explain how institutional systems/processes will monitor and manage the quality of HEA Fellowship judgements, in line with HEA requirements and all aspects relating to quality enhancement across all accredited programmes. The HEA sets clear expectations that the programme team, internal reviewers and mentors will engage in initial training and ongoing development. This section asks you to explain how the institution will plan and manage appropriate development to ensure that fellowship judgements are reliable, valid and robust and to explain how the institution will monitor individuals' engagement in these activities. Please use a diagram of the systems/reporting structures to support the commentary.
1d. There are sufficient resources in place for each site of delivery to ensure effective and sustainable operation of	Provide information on the institutional capacity (structures, systems, resources, appropriate expertise, etc.) in place to deliver the programmes, support participants and to make sound fellowship judgements; both relating to provision aimed at participants employed by the institution across all sites and in relation to any offer to collaborative partner institutions.

the programmes appropriate to institutional strategy.	Outline the plans to maintain and develop this internal capacity to ensure sustainability for the programme(s) and to meet associated strategic objectives at the institution. If institutional targets are set for the number of Fellows at an institution, please set out plans which demonstrate how these targets will be met.

Guidance for information to include in the commentary (Part D) and participant-facing guidance (Part E)

The purpose of Parts D and E is for you to provide information to address accreditation criteria 2, 3 and 4 individually **for each programme presented** for accreditation.

The accreditors will take a participant-facing viewpoint when considering your submission; therefore, the guidance provided for programme participants (Part E) forms a key part of the submission, and will be reviewed as vital contributory evidence towards meeting accreditation criteria 2-4.

You will see in the guidance notes provided in the tables below that we indicate what is likely to be explained in the participant-facing documentation and what you may wish to include in the supporting commentary.

In general, the information you provide within the commentary provide rationale for the choices you have made and should refer to and signpost information within the documents (for example, using specific page references in handbooks) - **it should NOT duplicate this information and please cross-reference to participant guidance where applicable**.

NB. When referring to 'participant-facing documents', we include within this term key documents such as assessment pro-formas/feedback sheets (where these are not already embedded within the participant guidance), and guidance for other stakeholders such as internal and external reviewers, mentors, work-place supervisors and referees/advocates. Where guidance to participants is on-line, please collate this information in a logical order/use screen shots with an accompanying narrative to ensure that the information identified below is provided in full. **Tables/flow charts/diagrams, etc. are welcomed** and please use these to add clarity and aid understanding wherever appropriate.

<u>Reminder</u>

- Please **do** submit participant handbooks/full participant-facing guidance (e.g. programme/module handbooks, etc.), reviewer proformas and information for mentors that provides the information identified below;

- Please **do not** submit additional information such as programme specifications, module descriptors, PowerPoint presentations, marketing materials, staff CVs, full strategy/policy documents, etc.

Please contact the HEA accreditation team if you have any queries (accreditation@heacademy.ac.uk or 01904 717500)

Criterion 2 - programme design The programme is designed to ensure participants utilise the UKPSF to both develop their practice and evidence their success		
Criterion element	**Participant-facing guidance (Part E)**	**Supporting commentary (Part D)**
2a. The design of the programme provides explicit opportunities for participants to make clear associations between the programme, their practice and the appropriate category of HEA Fellowship	The UKPSF is fully and accurately explained and the requirements of the relevant descriptor(s) made clear. There is support for participants to decide on the most appropriate category of HEA Fellowship and the optimum route for achieving this. The guidance is inclusive for all groups of staff who wish to apply for recognition. Participants will readily recognise how the programme has been designed and structured to enable the requirements of the relevant descriptor to be met. Opportunities for engagement with the UKPSF will be appropriately embedded within the design and it will be clear to participants where they will meaningfully engage with the framework throughout their experience. If there are different routes through the provision these will be clearly set out and explained to participants. There is emphasis on the importance of continuing professional development (CPD) to underpin a career in teaching and/or supporting learning beyond the award of	Outline the activities which will be used to introduce the UKPSF and explain the requirements of HEA Fellowship. If the programme is offered at different sites/to different groups of participants/by different modes of delivery, outline any differences in the design/structure of the programme and opportunities provided for participants (cross reference to information provided for institutional context in Part C). Outline activities/opportunities that articulate with the programme to offer supplementary development (where appropriate) and progression/CPD after completion of this programme.

	Fellowship. Further opportunities for CPD related to the UKPSF are outlined.	
2b. The programme accurately reflects the relevant category of HEA Fellowship *Cross reference to Section 4.1.2 and 4.4.1 of policy*	The requirements of the descriptor(s) are accurately portrayed and where more than one descriptor is included within the programme (e.g. credit-bearing programme leading to Fellowship with Associate Fellowship embedded as a first stage or experiential CPD scheme) there is appropriate and explicit differentiation within the design of the programme. Guidance enables participants to understand the requirements of the relevant descriptor(s) and how the programme is designed to enable them to meet these requirements within this programme.	Identify the types of participants expected on this programme and make clear that this programme leads to an appropriate category of HEA Fellowship for these individuals. Explain how it is ensured that participants enrolling onto the programme/applying through the scheme will have sufficient appropriate professional practice in teaching and/or supporting learning (at an appropriate HE level) to be able to make a full claim against the requirements of the relevant descriptor.
2c. The design of assessment ensures that participants will explicitly evidence effective practice to meet the criteria of the relevant UKPSF Descriptor	The requirements for assessment are fully explained, and it is made clear to participants how the design of assessment enables them to generate evidence of practice which meets the requirements of the relevant UKPSF Descriptor (which provides the assessment criteria for the award of HEA Fellowship). Where different forms of assessment are offered, the design of the assessment (e.g. written/dialogue/presentation/portfolio) and the stages in the assessment process are well-defined as well as the purpose of	Indicate how the assessment requirements demonstrate equivalence in terms of sufficiency, quality and evidence-based approach to those required by the HEA for each category of HEA Fellowship within the programme. (Section 4.4.1 HEA accreditation policy). Establish how the APL/APEL processes enable verification of practice that will subsequently contribute to the judgement process.

Cross reference to Sections 4.4.1 and 4.5 of policy	each stage made clear. If the overall assessment has a number of elements, there is a well-designed plan of how each component enables participants to gather specific evidence that culminates in a holistic submission to meet the requirements for the category of HEA Fellowship.	For programmes which bear academic credit, explain how the programme is designed to either integrate/disaggregate academic credit and the requirements for HEA Fellowship.
	If the programme is credit-bearing (e.g. PGCert/module) the relationship between the achievement of academic credit and the award of HEA Fellowship is clearly explained.	
	Where taught programmes have an initial/interim award of Associate Fellowship (D1) prior to Fellowship (D2), the design of assessment at both D1 and then D2 will be clearly explained. Guidance will make clear the process by which D1 will be assessed and awarded at the interim point. Guidance will also make clear how the programme is designed to evidence the 'broad understanding' required for Descriptor 2; this will also support participants to consider whether progression on to the second part of the programme or a step off point at D1 is most appropriate.	
	The format and process in place for a resubmission for each form of assessment is explained.	
	Where it is possible to accredit prior learning within programmes, guidance will make clear how this will operate with respect to the requirements of the relevant descriptor; i.e. participants will align their prior learning with the requirements of the descriptor. It will be clear, both to participants and those assessing, how this prior learning will	

	combine with evidence generated on the rest of the programme to fully meet the requirements of the descriptor by the end of the programme. Guidance will also make clear how practice will be authenticated.	
2d. Assessment includes a mechanism to authenticate practice *Cross reference to Sections 4.2 and 4.5 of policy*	There is explicit information for participants on how their professional practice will be authenticated as part of assessment on the programme. For example, where a formal observation of practice provides the means for authenticating practice, there is clarity on the process and its contribution to the programme assessment. Alternatively, where supporting statements by referees/advocates are required to authenticate professional practice, guidance is provided on the choice of appropriate referees/advocates. There should also be specific guidance on the role that these supporting statements play in the overall claim for HEA Fellowship as well as the expected format, required content and process for submitting these. The process of submitting an assessment/application must embed the requirement for participants to confirm that they are submitting their own work. The institution should also explain to participants the measures they have embedded to protect academic integrity.	Explain how authentication of practice forms part of the assessment process. Formal observation involves a member of the programme team or mentor/expert peer who has current knowledge and understanding of the requirements of the relevant category of HEA Fellowship. A wide range of practice may be observed as appropriate to the context of the individual and category of Fellowship; this is not limited to 'teaching' student groups but should reflect genuine practice and not be a 'simulated' session. Whilst peer to peer observation provides valuable opportunities for development on a programme, this is not accepted as authentication of practice in this instance. For online delivery, formal observation may involve a video recording. Note: where formal observation is used to authenticate practice, please identify in criterion 4b the training and support in place for those carrying out observations. Where supporting statements are required to

| | | authenticate practice, explain how referees/advocates will be supported to understand the requirements of the UKPSF and the role their supporting statement plays in authenticating practice.

As referees verify the evidence presented within an application and discuss the participant's practice in line with the requirements of the relevant descriptor, the process developed must include opportunity for referees to review the full evidence presented; for example, opportunity to review the final written application or to review the evidence which forms the basis of an oral assessment process (such as a dialogue).

Where programmes enable accredited prior learning, the mechanism for this must include details about how practice will be authenticated; for example, if it is possible to accredit the first part of a PGCert and the formal observation(s) takes place only in this part of the programme, then the mechanism for accredited prior learning to be approved must either include a formal observation or two references to authenticate practice. |
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Criterion 3 – support and guidance		
The support and guidance provided will enable participants to utilise the UKPSF to develop and evidence their practice		
Criterion element	Participant-facing guidance	Supporting commentary in template
3a. Participants are supported to make clear associations between their professional development opportunities, their practice and the appropriate category of Fellowship	There is clear guidance for participants to recognise the opportunities for meaningful engagement with the dimensions of the UKPSF (as appropriate to the requirements of the relevant descriptor) whilst on the programme. Guidance should support participants to make explicit links between their practice, the UKPSF and their professional development at the appropriate category of HEA Fellowship. The HEA Dimensions of the Framework guidance documents should be useful when writing participant guidance appropriate to Descriptors 1-3. The mechanisms in place to provide support to participants (such as a mentorship system/work-place tutoring/peer networks) are explicit, as are the means of accessing these.	Outline any strategies which will be implemented to support participants to make links between their development on the programme, their practice and the appropriate category of HEA Fellowship. For example, this could include the format of mentoring or work-place support provided. Confirm that support mechanisms offer equivalent help for participants on all sites/modes of delivery (where appropriate).

3b. Guidance relating to assessment supports participants to evidence their professional HE practice in line with the requirements of the relevant UKPSF Descriptor *Cross reference to policy Sections 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4*	Participants are clearly informed on how to provide appropriate evidence of their practice through the assessment process to meet the requirements of the relevant descriptor; the descriptor criteria must be embedded in the guidance and assessment proformas. If assessment on the programme combines different elements, participants have clear guidance about the role and purpose of each element and about which aspects of their practice to evidence in each element, so that evidence will combine to cumulatively provide sufficient appropriate evidence to achieve fellowship. A planning tool, may be included if one is used to enable participants to self-plan and track progress but guidance must make clear how this is to be used and how it will contribute towards the final assessment. Participants progressing towards Associate Fellowship should be provided with specific support in how to select which two Areas of Activity to evidence (along with K1 and K2 plus associated Professional Values). Any detail of an alternative assessment format for any participants with specific needs is provided.	Indicate ways in which participants are supported to make clear links between their practice, the programme and the requirements of fellowship. This should include support for different formats of assessment/different sites/ different modes of delivery, etc. For example, there may be opportunity for formative feedback, mentoring support, peer review, etc.
3c. Those with responsibility for the management and	Information regarding staff fellowship status may be listed in participant-facing programme handbooks.	Identify the members of the core programme team. The HEA requires the programme team to hold at least the same

operation of the programme hold an appropriate category of HEA Fellowship and can demonstrate continuing development in relation to HEA Fellowship *Cross reference to Section 4.1 and 4.4 of policy*		category of Fellowship as the programme awards; outline the Fellowship status of key staff managing and operating the programme. Confirm the mechanisms in place which ensure that the programme leader and team members (including those who teach on other sites) engage in appropriate CPD activities to ensure that participants are supported by staff with appropriate current knowledge and understanding of the UKPSF and requirements of the relevant Descriptor(s).
3d. Those with responsibility for supporting participants can demonstrate current knowledge and understanding of the requirements for the relevant category of HEA fellowship. *Cross reference to Section 4.1 of policy*	Where there is a mentoring handbook/guidance, please include the sections that relate to support for participants to achieve fellowship within Part E.	Outline the approach taken to selecting appropriate mentors/others who support participants (e.g. those undertaking formal observations) and the CPD opportunities/training programmes/updating activities, which ensure that these individuals remain current in their understanding of the requirements of the relevant category of HEA Fellowship as appropriate to their role (link to criterion 1c).

Criterion 4 – fellowship judgements

The processes through which Fellowship judgements are made are reliable, valid and robust and embed the criteria of the relevant UKPSF Descriptor(s)

Criterion element	Participant-facing guidance	Supporting commentary in template
4a. Judgements are made against the relevant UKPSF Descriptor criteria *Cross reference to Sections 4.4, 4.5 and 4.6 of policy*	Each stage in the review/assessment process is clearly articulated so that participants will understand how the requirements of the relevant descriptor are applied to the evidence of practice they submit in order to reach a judgement about fellowship. The role of the External will be included in this explanation. **It is highly recommended that a diagram of the assessment/review process is included which clearly defines each stage in the fellowship judgement process** and the timeline involved. Guidance includes details of the expected timeline and mechanisms for feedback as well as possible outcomes. Where participants do not initially meet the requirements for fellowship, the process and support in place for resubmission is fully explained. Where a D2 programme has an interim/exit award at D1, it will be clearly explained how the requirements of Descriptor 1 are applied at that point and the steps by which Associate	Fully explain each stage in the process by which the evidence of practice presented by participants is reviewed against the requirements of the descriptor to reach a final judgement about fellowship. If the programme is offered at different sites or to different groups of participants or by different modes of delivery, please give full details of the review process for each of these (as above). Explain the process in place to enable participants to make a resubmission (if necessary) and explain how this will be reviewed.

	Fellowship is awarded. The requirements for progression to D2 will be made clear and full details about how any evidence provided to accredit prior learning builds into meeting the requirements for fellowship by the end of the programme will be provided.	
4b. All individuals involved in the Fellowship judgement process: • hold an appropriate category of HEA Fellowship; • are suitably trained to make fellowship judgements for the relevant category of HEA Fellowship; • can demonstrate current knowledge and understanding	Please include handbooks/guidance on assessment processes for assessors/reviewers within Part E. The guidance articulates the mechanisms in place to ensure that those making fellowship judgements are free from any reciprocal external relationships and conflict of interest. There is a coherent process for ensuring that the mentors/coaches are not involved in the final fellowship judgements of individuals they have supported.	Outline the Fellowship status of assessors/reviewers and the number of assessor/reviewers making fellowship judgements (for all formats of assessment offered). Outline training programmes, updating activities and mechanisms for ensuring that the programme team remains current in their knowledge and understanding of the UKPSF and the requirements for fellowship. Confirm the mechanisms in place which ensure that assessors/reviewers engage in appropriate CPD activities to ensure that fellowship judgements are reached on the basis of current knowledge and understanding of the requirements of the relevant category of HEA Fellowship. This must include those assessing practice as part of the formal observation process.

of the requirements for the relevant category of HEA Fellowship. *Cross reference to Sections 4.4 and 4.6 of policy*		Explain the procedure(s) in place to recognise and avoid a potential conflict of interest in the judgement process, i.e. perception/possibility of anyone receiving an inappropriate advantage through compromised objectivity.
4c. All judgement processes are clearly defined and supported by clear and transparent documentation *Cross reference to Sections 4.3, 4.4 and 7.3 of policy*	Guidance for participants will fully explain all the stages in the process by which assessment is reviewed and the award of fellowship made. Use of a diagram for clarity is recommended (as mentioned above in 4a). Use of feedback from external reviewers/moderators in formulating judgement decisions should be included. Assessment criteria/reviewer proformas are included within the guidance to participants and these embed the descriptor criteria so that it is clear how the relevant descriptor criteria will be applied by assessors/reviewers to reach the fellowship judgement. Explicit information on the timeline for application/submission, review process, outcome and feedback should be included. Participants will have guidance about the process in place should a resubmission be required which also includes	Judgement processes and decisions are documented clearly for all modes of assessment; there are mechanisms in place for archiving written applications/recording oral/dialogical assessment in order to facilitate sampling for internal and external review/moderation. Participants are informed about archiving of personal data and how they might access this during the archive period. APL/APEL arrangements support the evidencing of practice at the appropriate descriptor. Participants are clearly sign-posted to the appropriate appeals/complaints procedure.

	information about mechanisms for support.	
4d. Fellowship judgements are appropriately quality assured. *Cross reference to Sections 4.4 and 4.6 of policy*	Internal and external moderation processes will be explained including how they influence the final judgement decision.	Internal/External moderation processes should be explicit. Identify any cross-programme assessment/review moderation for recognition judgements. Detail processes for monitoring the quality of judgements within institutional assessment committee processes/appropriate quality management meetings, etc. (diagrams are helpful to clearly define the reporting structure/QA process). Outline how participation in external events contributes to quality assurance e.g. HEA internal panel decision-making event.
Terms and Conditions *Cross reference to Appendix 1 of policy*	The full terms and conditions of accreditation are set out in Appendix 1 of the HEA accreditation policy 2017-18. Accreditation is available for programmes that are offered for the professional development of an institution's staff that teach and support learning. It does not cover programmes that are offered for commercial sale.	Please ensure that the full Terms and Conditions applying to accreditation as set out in Appendix 1 of the HEA accreditation policy 2016-17 are referred to throughout the planning process and closely adhered to within the submission.

Staff employed by collaborative partner institutions are entitled to access accredited provision but will need to pay an additional fee for fellowship to the HEA if they are not employed by a subscribing institution when they complete the programme. This fee is 50% of the direct application fee and this needs to be highlighted within the guidance participants receive. This fee also applies to medical/clinical educators, who are also entitled to access accredited provision (please refer to Appendix 1, HEA accreditation policy). There is advice for external participants within handbooks and marketing materials regarding the additional fee for which they will be liable.	

Any queries

Please contact the Accreditation Team by email at accreditation@heacademy.ac.uk or by phone on 01904 717500 if you have any further queries.

Appendix: Summary of some common conditions set by accreditation panels in academic years 2015-16 and 2016-17

The table below sets out some of the conditions set by accreditation panels during the academic years 2016-17 and 2015-16. We hope that this information may help to focus attention on some key areas for consideration.

No.	Issue	Information required to meet criteria for accreditation
1	Lack of clarity about assessment processes leading to fellowship judgements on credit-bearing programmes at D1 and D2	Conditions set generally relate to a lack of clarity about how the criteria of the relevant descriptor are being applied during the assessment process to reach a fellowship judgement. Programme/module handbooks may focus on the award of academic credit and it may not be clear to participants how the fellowship 'element' will be assessed; whereas the focus of the accreditation process is on that element. For programmes which bear academic credit, you will need to make clear whether the programme is designed to either integrate or disaggregate the requirements for academic credit and the requirements for HEA Fellowship; either option works as long as the programme has been designed to operate in this way and this is clearly articulated throughout the programme documentation. For example, in some programmes assessment is designed so that the requirements for academic credit and HEA Fellowship are both met simultaneously and the judgement decision made by the examination board (integrated). Alternatively other programmes are designed so that assessment for credit and fellowship are judged separately with a specific judgement process for Fellowship awards (disaggregated). Whichever option is chosen, processes must be made clear to all concerned and information needs to be fully integrated into the guidance around assessment rather than included as a 'mapping' requiring interpretation. Two alternative examples are given below to further illustrate this important point:

- Example 1 - the assessment on the programme is designed so that the requirements for academic credit and fellowship are both met simultaneously and the fellowship judgement made by the programme examination board (credit and fellowship judgements integrated). In this example, the requirements for the relevant descriptor are embedded throughout assessment across the programme. In order to assess both credit and fellowship simultaneously, the grading criteria must visibly embed the requirements of the descriptor. In this example, therefore, it is not possible to achieve credit without fellowship and vice versa. The External will operate at examination board level and will apply a 'UKPSF lens' to the programme to both moderate assessment and to formally report on QA and QE related to fellowship judgements made;

- Example 2 – academic credit is awarded at the programme examination board and the fellowship judgement is made subsequently through a separate process, such as an internal recognition panel/board (credit and fellowship judgements disaggregated). In this example, the fellowship judgement is usually based on an additional element *in conjunction* with assessment across the programme; for example a reflective mapping tool may be used alongside the assessment tasks, which enables participants to plan and collate evidence towards meeting the requirements of the descriptor. The fellowship judgement is made (separately to the decision about credit) by the recognition panel/board (on the basis of reflective tool plus course assignment work). The External will moderate fellowship judgements and report on QA and QE via the recognition panel/board.

The model adopted will be chosen to suit the context of the institution, nature of the programme/participant group, etc. Institutions may also wish to consider how the timing of the assessment process (e.g. examination board/recognition panel meeting) fits with HR processes such as probationary period, period of employment, etc.

| 2 | Lack of information about the award of D1 and D2 on a credit-bearing programme and insufficient differentiation between the requirements of the two descriptors | Conditions set have generally been as a result of programme information focusing on engagement with each of the UKPSF dimensions of the framework without the requirements of the descriptor being clearly articulated. Guidance should make clear the requirements of the relevant descriptor, as this is the basis for the award of HEA Fellowship.

Descriptors 1 and 2 are different to each other in nature and programmes should reflect this distinction; D1 asks for specific engagement with two areas of activity only (plus K1, K2 and associated values). This may be evidenced by someone whose practice is expert but does not cover the full range of the UKPSF (e.g. some experienced professional services staff) or fairly early practitioners who are still developing practice (e.g. postgraduates that teach). In comparison, D2 asks for a 'broad' understanding of engagement with all dimensions of practice, which indicates both a wider range of practice and a spiralling of expertise. Guidance which makes the distinction clear will also help participants to identify whether their practice is likely to meet the requirements of D2; i.e. whether progression on the programme towards D2 or step off point at D1 is appropriate for them.

Although D1 is often embedded as an interim point on a D2 credit-bearing programme, in order to be accredited this element of the programme must also address accreditation criteria 2-4 and the process for judging and awarding Associate Fellowship must be clear. |
| 3 | Descriptor criteria not explicit in assessment criteria/pro-formas | Frequent conditions were set in 2016-17 relating to the UKPSF Descriptor criteria not being explicit in the assessment criteria/reviewer pro-formas. |
| 4 | Lack of clarity about assessment processes leading to fellowship judgements on | From conditions set at Panel, queries from institutions encountering issues when operating review processes and from some HEA visits to internal panel meetings, it appears that the judgement processes within accredited CPD schemes may sometimes be over complicated or unclear. All processes must be clearly defined and transparent documentation (e.g. completed reviewer pro- |

	experiential schemes	formas and committee meeting notes) must be in place to support the judgement made. **It is highly recommended that a process diagram, which explicitly sets out each stage in the assessment process, is included within the participant guidance for each programme/scheme submitted.** This will ensure clarity for all stakeholders (e.g. participants, reviewers, mentors, External, etc.). This diagram can also show timelines, possible outcomes and opportunities for resubmission, etc. By drawing out the review process in full, the details and the purpose of each stage will be made clear. The accreditation policy sets out the minimum number of reviewers for each category of HEA Fellowship, the role of the External and the requirements for QA and QE relation to criterion 4d at programme level and 1c at institutional level. Review pro-formas need to embed the relevant descriptor criteria. Submissions need also to articulate how reviewers and mentors will be kept up to date with the requirements of the relevant category of HEA Fellowship and how reviewers will be trained to assess in the format(s) offered to reach robust fellowship judgements.
5	Unclear structure in dialogic assessment	Several conditions were set by Panels in 2015-16 and 2016-17 around different elements related to dialogic assessment. A new report about use of dialogue in Fellowships has been written for the HEA by Dr Ruth Pilkington and is intended to support institutions to develop and operate best practice in dialogic assessment. Dialogic assessment should involve presentation of evidence prior to the dialogue and a summary guide from the participant about how this evidence aligns with the requirements of the relevant descriptor. Guidance will support participants to understand what types/forms of evidence may be appropriate to make their claim against the relevant descriptor. Referees will validate this evidence prior to the dialogue.

		Full details about the nature of the dialogue itself will be given; for example, participants will be aware of how many reviewers will be present, the types of questioning likely and that the dialogue will be recorded (oral or video – please refer to Section 7.3 HEA accreditation policy). The requirements of the dialogue for each category should be differentiated and must display equivalence with HEA direct applications (Section 4.4 of HEA accreditation policy). Resubmission processes need to be set out; for example, opportunity to submit an additional piece of written evidence presented to the original Panel could be offered if requirements are almost met or a full dialogue to a new Panel at a later point if more substantive evidence is required. Submissions will make clear how participants are supported to prepare for a dialogic assessment and how reviewers will be trained to review dialogue. If there is more than one element to the assessment (e.g. written application plus professional conversation) it must be clear purpose the dialogic assessment plays in the overall assessment. The process diagram will help to make this clear.
6	Issues relating to the distinctive nature of Descriptors 3 and 4	Frequent conditions have been set by accreditation panels related to the distinctive nature of Descriptors 3 and 4 being misrepresented in participant guidance/assessment requirements (e.g. format of application/assessment proformas used in the review process, etc.). Applicants at D3 must be able to provide evidence "successful co-ordination, support, supervision, management and/or mentoring of others (whether individuals and/or teams) in relation to teaching and learning" (D3.7 of UKPSF, 2011). The lens of D3.7 is applied throughout the claim for Senior Fellowship and requirements are distinctly different to those of Descriptor 2; it is not a 'top-up'. 'D3-ness' relates to successful influence on the practice of others that has had a positive impact on student learning and/or engagement; it may include direct work with students but must go beyond that. The demonstration of 'success' implies that individuals relatively new to leadership/mentoring, etc. are unlikely to be able to draw on sufficient evidence at that point to make a claim. The format of the application for Senior Fellowship should enable applicants to make a holistic claim against D3 which demonstrates their breadth of work and achievements ('thorough expertise'), as well as

exploring aspects of practice in depth. It must also meet the HEA requirement for equivalence to direct application. Equally, the review proformas need to reflect the holistic requirements of the descriptor.

Similarly, conditions set by Panels often reflect a misrepresentation of D4 or the lack of internal capacity in place to support and review applications. D4 is a challenging and distinctive category of fellowship. It requires a different approach to the other descriptors; applicants at D4 are likely to be highly experienced academics able to provide evidence of a sustained and effective record of impact at a strategic level in relation to learning and teaching, as part of a wider commitment to academic practice. This may be within their own institution or in wider (inter)national settings. Institutions accredited at D4 will be able to demonstrate that sufficient capacity is in place to both support and review D4 without an actual or perceived conflict of interest arising. Support at D4 is more likely to involve one to one coaching/mentoring than attendance at a workshop.

One common challenge institutions have in reviewing at D4 involves maintaining a consistency of decision-making across panels when only a few internal applications are made.

| 7 | Reference to outdated versions of the UKPSF/inconsistencies in documentation | Panels frequently noted some inconsistencies/inaccuracies in programme level documentation that had been missed by proof reading. Frequent examples included references to the wrong descriptor in participant handbooks, probably as a result of copying and pasting information between guidance for each category. It is strongly recommended that documents are carefully proof read and cross checked to ensure accuracy and consistency of information. |