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# **Introduction**

Thank you for agreeing to mentor and support a colleague with their application for Advance HE fellowship. This handbook is designed to offer you support as it contains guidance and further resources to help you to think about what support you might provide and how you can provide it.

# **Background**

Advance HE (formerly HEA) is a nonprofit organization based in the United Kingdom that champions high quality learning, teaching and assessment in higher education. Advance HE also accredits initial and continuing professional development (CPD) programs delivered by higher education institutions. Accreditation provides external confirmation that institutional CPD provision is of an appropriate quality and aligned with the Professional Standard Framework (UKPSF). The Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF) is a globally-recognised framework that identifies components of successful teaching and learning. The goal of the UKPSF is to serve as a benchmark for evaluating success within HE teaching and learning support.

Utah Valley University has partnered with Advance HE to gain accreditation for its continuing professional development i.e the Teaching Excellence Program, the Advisor Training and a more general route called “the Experiential Route”. As an accredited institution, UVU can also recognises the professional status of Higher Education teaching/supporting learning of its faculty and staff by conferring the status of Associate Fellow, Fellow, Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy on those who can demonstrate that they have met the requirements of a relevant Fellowship Descriptor in the UKPSF (HEA, 2011).

To better support applicants for fellowship, the Office of Teaching and Learning has instituted the HEA Mentorship program. This program encourages the engagement of UVU AHE Fellows in the process of supporting the advancement of colleagues through gaining fellowship status and, thus in the betterment of the organisation and its teaching mission.

# **The role of a mentor**

**The main role of all mentors at UVU is to offer encouragement, guidance and advice, and provide critical peer review and formative feedback on fellowship applications.** Mentoring provides a mechanism for collegial learning support, to assist the applicant to achieve success with their fellowship application. The primary purpose of the mentoring relationship would be to decide upon a plan which would include goals and actions leading to the successful completion of an application.

As a first step toward becoming a mentor and to learn more about the mentoring process, you should enroll and complete the online self-paced course entitled “HEA Mentor and Assessor course”. The self enrollment link is available on the [OTL website](https://www.uvu.edu/otl/faculty/hea.html). The online course will introduce you to the concept of mentoring, help you become more familiar with the different fellowship categories, and allow you the opportunity to explore the assessment process.

# **What are the benefits of supporting colleagues with their applications?**

There are a number of benefits of supporting colleagues with their HEA Fellowship application including:

* Fostering deeper relationships with colleagues within and across departments.
* Learning from other people’s teaching/supporting learning practice which may give you some ideas to adapt for your own practice.
* Contributing to your continuing professional development in learning and  
  teaching.
* If you are considering applying for Senior Fellowship in the future, this type of  
  support could count towards your evidence.
* For those that already hold Senior Fellowship, supporting colleagues in this way  
  can showcase your ongoing ‘good **standing’** and continuing engagement with the UKPSF.

# **Is there a set process I have to follow when mentoring colleagues?**

## Step 1: learn about mentoring frameworks and processes

To get started as a mentor, knowledge about mentoring best-practices is valuable. You will find valuable and thorough information about developing effective mentoring skills in the “HEA Mentor and Assessor course”.

Upon successful completion of the course, you will be able to

* contrast mentoring with other supportive activities, such as coaching and training,
* identify benefits of mentoring for mentors and mentees, and
* articulate your mentoring philosophy to others.
* identify the core information you must elicit from your mentee during an initial meeting,
* apply qualities of excellent mentorship during the initial meeting, and
* structure a meeting agenda that efficiently and effectively uses time.

## Step 2: Help you mentee choose an appropriate fellowship category

As a mentor and a Fellow of Advance HE, you are familiar with the various Fellowship Descriptors in the UKPSF; namely, Associate Fellow, Fellow, and Senior Fellow. A key task to achieve during your initial meeting with your mentee is to help them identify the Fellowship category most appropriate for them. You can achieve this by asking them to use the [Fellowship Category](http://bit.ly/fellowshiptool) tool.

## Step 3: Help you mentee consolidate their choice of fellowship category

Once your mentee has gotten their personalized guidance using the Category Fellowship tool, you can have an **initial discussion** with them to help them understand **what the UKPSF means** in relation to their own practice focusing on the Descriptor Criteria and the Dimensions of Practice. At this stage, it might be helpful to review with your mentee the specific requirements for the chosen fellowship category and to discuss what evidence they will use to support their claim.

## Step 4: Support your mentee in the process of gathering evidence to support their claim.

An essential element for a successful application is writing a compelling account of professional practice that provides evidence of engagement with the required dimensions of the UKPSF. In this context, mentoring provides a mechanism for collegial support, to assist the applicant to achieve success with their fellowship application.

As a mentoring activity, reflective dialogue is ‘reflection-with-another’ that promotes learning. Reflective dialogue provides supportive challenge on aspects of practice that may otherwise be taken for granted, makes the tacit explicit and may create new insights. As fellowship applications are deeply reflective narratives, through reflective dialogue UVU mentors help applicants to examine and describe their practice in a non-hierarchical, non-judgmental way.

A combination of dialogue skills and strategies can be used by mentors including: genuine sharing of thoughts, feelings, attitudes and beliefs; modelling appropriate self-disclosure; using I statements; active listening which includes restating the mentee’s words, paraphrasing, summarising or reflecting feelings; asking enabling questions (i.e. open questions that enable the mentee to reflect on their experiences, reconsider their perspective, consider other possibilities, and question their assumptions); providing feedback in a way that the mentee can accept, understand and use; and using supportive and non-adversarial challenging. Below, you will find examples that may assist you to engage in reflective dialogue as you mentor colleagues.

# **Questioning**

Different sorts of open questions can be used to mentor applicants to 1) describe an experience; 2) reflect on the experience and 3) reflect on their own learning as a result of the experience.

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| **Focus** | **Example questions** | **Used to prompt** |
| To better **describe the experience** | what was involved, what skills did you develop, how was the experience based on the literature you had read | an analytical reflection to explain the situation, identify significant elements, link theory to practice |
| To better **reflect on the experience** that is being described | what went well, what was the outcome, in what way was the experience helpful/useful | an evaluative lens to reflect on and assess the experience and make judgements |
| To better **reflect on their own learning and development** as a result of the experience | why did you do it this way, what did the experience tell you about yourself as a teacher/your values/your practice | a transformative lens to reflect on lessons learned for the future – to examine assumptions and taken for granted, identify abilities and learning needs, demonstrate learning, reframe thinking and behaviours |

**1) Questions that elicit or clarify information to better describe an experience**

o Could you explain about …?

o Tell me more about …

o Can you give me an example of ...?

o Do you mind if I ask about …?

o What do you mean by …?

## 2) Probing questions that prompt greater reflection on an experience described in the application

o What was the outcome? /What were your intended and actual outcomes?

o Why did you choose this approach? What was your reason for doing this?

o What does this offer students?

o How do colleagues’ benefit?

o How did you go about …?

o To what extent did you achieve your aims?

o What evidence of impact do you have?

o Did the experience tell you anything about your practice?

o What questions do you now have?

o What did you learn? In what way did your understanding change?

o Feeling domain

* How did you feel the approach worked? How did you feel at the time/afterwards?
* What did the experience tell you about your values?

o Thinking domain

* What surprised you?
* What was different?
* How has your thinking changed?

o Action domain

* What changes did you make the next time?
* What are you now doing differently?

## 3) Probing questions that prompt reflection on an applicant’s own learning and development

o What did you discover about yourself as a teacher?

o What do you now know about learning and teaching that you didn’t know before?

o How has your understanding changed?

o How has your new understanding influenced your beliefs and actions?

o What do you need to consider or do as a result?

o What did you realise about your own learning and development?

o How will this influence your future practice?

While mentoring your colleague and in case you identify a gap in evidence i.e your mentee is unable to supply evidence for a specific area of activity, an aspect of Core knowledge, or a Professional Value you can refer them to [OTL](mailto:otl@uvu.edu) to discuss what specific CPD they can engage in to meet the needed requirement/s.

## Step 5: Review drafts

You can read and review up to two drafts of a Fellowship application, or parts of an application. Colleagues are likely to find this the most valuable guidance you can offer. Draw on your experience of reviewing the mock applications at the “Advance HE Assessors and Mentors Course”.

This task can be approached in a number of ways: you might request a copy of the draft to make comments on, either in hard copy or electronically; or you may prefer to discuss the draft application face to face. Whichever way you choose to approach this task, there are some general things to look out for such as the common reasons for referred applications; namely, lack of reflection, lack of scholarship, and lack of discussion of individual practice

Please refer to the checklist at the end of this document for further support.

## Step 6: Give constructive feedback

In your role as mentor, you should give feedback to your mentee after reviewing their draft. When doing so try to follow these best practices

* Be collegial in your approach and appreciative of your colleague’s contribution
* Critique the story not the storyteller
* Start with and build on the positives, and highlight the strengths of the application
  + You did a great job with the teaching philosophy …
  + I like the way you …
* Clarify what is required in the context of the UKPSF dimensions and requirements of the Fellowship scheme
* Identify areas for improvement and ways improvements can be made
* Facilitate critical reflection
* Be honest and encouraging
* Be clear and specific
* Prioritise key concerns if there is a lot to discuss
* Check for understanding and agree on next steps

## Step 7: Support your mentee in the application process

Once your mentee is ready to submit their application, you can direct them to the OTL website to [submit their application](https://www.uvu.edu/otl/faculty/advancehe_app.html).

# **How will mentors be recognized?**

Mentoring is a valuable professional development activity for both the mentor and the mentee. Mentees, especially at their early career stages, can benefit from the experience, insight and guidance provided by the mentors. While mentors have the opportunity to develop leadership and interpersonal skills. They engage in self reflection and thus in continuous development and growth.

Additionally, HEA mentors are provided with a service letter to attest to their continuous support of university mission and commitment to student success.

The Office of Teaching and Learning also tallies the number of mentees each mentor has supported and displays it in the Faculty Development Dashboard as a way to recognise this valuable contribution.

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# **Additional resources**

## Suggested questions to encourage reflection

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| **Areas of Activity – what you do to support learning** | **Think about …** |
| **A1 Design and plan learning activities and/or programs of study** | How and why did you choose subject material, activities and learning approaches? How and why did your design build in appropriate learning approaches for the subject area and level of the student? Evidence your knowledge and application of pedagogy and learning theories. How did your plan respond to any constraints eg. professional body requirements? K1, K3, K6 could be considered here plus appropriate PVs |
| **A2 Teach and/or support learning** | What approaches did you take to specific activities and why? What influenced your decision to use certain approaches? How do you know they worked and why did they work? What was the impact on student learning? On your practice? K1, K2, K3, K4 could be considered here plus appropriate PVs |
| **A3 Assess and give feedback to learners** | What range of assessments do you use and why? How do you align an assessment to meet the intended learning outcomes? How and when do you give feedback? How do you know it's effective and encourages learning? K4, K5 could be considered here plus appropriate PVs. |
| **A 4 Develop effective learning environments and approaches to student support and guidance** | What environments do you teach in? How do you make them effective? What forms of support and guidance do you offer (eg resources, one-to-one, handbooks etc.) and how are they delivered (face to face, VLE, email etc)? How do you make them accessible to all students? |
| **A5 Engage in continuing professional development in subjects/disciplines and their pedagogy, incorporating research, scholarship and the evaluation of professional practices** | How do you keep up to date? How do your CPD activities contribute to your practice and impact on the student experience? How does disciplinary research and scholarship inform your teaching (including content and methods)? Reflect on what you have gained from your activities and how you have applied it to your professional practice. |

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| **Core Knowledge – what you know that enables you to carry out activities appropriately** | **Think about …** |
| **K1 The subject material** | How do you keep up to date with developments in your discipline or subject area (links to A5)? Examples might be publication or research; external examining; professional body membership etc. How does the nature or culture of the discipline influence and inform the design, planning and delivery (A1, A2) of your learning and teaching activities, assessment and feedback? (A3) |
| **K2 Appropriate methods for teaching, learning and assessing in the subject area and at the level of the academic program** | Think about the teaching and learning support strategies you use. Are they specifically influenced by your subject? How? Why? Are some pedagogic approaches more appropriate than others? Give examples. Demonstrate how your approaches are underpinned by scholarship. How and why do your learning and teaching activities differ according to the level of the program? (Links with A2, A3, A5 and K5) |
| **K3 How students learn, both generally and within their subject/disciplinary area(s)** | Demonstrate how you address issues such as the student demographic (mature learners, recent school leavers, workplace learners) and achieve inclusive practice? How are you meeting their needs in the context of learning and teaching? What strategies do you employ and are they particularly relevant for and influenced by your subject discipline? (Links with A1, A2 and K1) |
| **K4 The use and value of appropriate learning technologies** | Examples could be: audio-visual media; VLE; social media, Blogs, webcasts, online tutorials, subject specific software. Explain how your use of learning technology contributes to student learning. Identify some learning and teaching needs and the technologies you used to meet these eg assistive technologies for learners with disabilities. (Links with A2, A3 and A4) |
| **K5 Methods for evaluating the effectiveness of teaching** | How do you know your teaching approaches/modules/resources are effective? Explain how you gather this data. Examples could be formal or informal feedback from learners, peer observation, pass rates or similar data, end of module evaluation, student surveys (internal and external referenced), external overview reports, peer observations, etc. Demonstrate how this feedback has impacted on your practice. |
| **K6 The implications of quality assurance and quality enhancement for academic and professional practice with a particular focus on teaching** | Demonstrate your awareness and understanding of relevant legislation or policy eg including formal University policies. How do you work within your institutional Quality Assurance framework, your professional and statutory body requirements? (Links to A1, A2, A3, V1 and V2) |

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| **Professional Values – your integrity and commitment as a practitioner** | **Think about …** |
| **V1 Respect individual learners and diverse learning communities** | Explain how you have designed activities and/or resources to respond to the needs of different groups of learners e.g. provision of online resources, use of webinars and video conferencing. Have you supported particular groups such as international students, professional and other non-traditional students, students suffering from lack of confidence or academic difficulties? How do you communicate and interact with them effectively? |
| **V2 Promote participation in higher education and equality of opportunity for learners** | How do you ensure fair access to resources and support? How do you implement fair and equitable procedures to all your learners? How does the design and delivery of your teaching cater for accessibility? Give examples of how you have supported students with learning contracts or those learners from under-represented or underachieving groups. |
| **V3 Use evidence-informed approaches and the outcomes from research, scholarship and continuing professional development** | What informs your decisions about teaching and learning? What sources of information do you draw on? This could include reading appropriate literature and publications, experts at conferences or workshops, your institution’s course/module statistics, evaluations etc. How do you use these data to improve learning? |
| **V4 Acknowledge the wider context in which higher education operates recognising the implications for professional practice** | How have you addressed changes in the external environment? For example: professional regulations; accreditation requirements; social media and use of technologies in professional practice; Globalisation and internationalisation; widening access and participation; student engagement and inclusive practice. |

## Suggested checklist for reviewing draft applications

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Questions to think about** | **What to look for** | **What to suggest to applicants** |
| *Is it a* ***personal*** *account?* | It is written in the first person?  It is about their own (personal) practice and experiences?  If they are reflecting on collaborative activities, are they clear what their contribution was? | Look at the exemplar applications on the OTL website.  Be clear what their own role was in collaborative practice. |
| *Is it* ***reflective****?* | Is the account reflective or is it a description of practice and/or a list of achievements and activities?  Does it explain:  The rationale behind using specific strategies and methods? (Why)  How do they evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies they use?  Do they elaborate on what worked, what didn't work–and why? | Use the 4-point reflective model:  o **What** did you do?  o **How** did you do it?  o **Why** did you do it that way?  o **How Do You Know It Worked ?** (What impact did it have on student learning?) Provide the evidence. |
| *Is it* ***scholarly****?* | Does the application include references to pedagogic literature and it informs practice?  Is it clear how the concepts/ideas have been applied? | Cite subject-specific pedagogic research.  Explain how and why any literature cited has been used |
| *Is it* ***evidence- based****?* | How do they evaluate their own practice? What evidence is used? | Use multiple evidence sources: student feedback, evaluations and performance data; feedback from peer observations |
| *Is it* ***aligned*** *to the UKPSF?* | Are there lists of Dimension references e.g. (A1, K1, K5, V1, V2) but it is not clear how these cited Dimensions are being met?  Are all Dimensions covered in appropriate depth? | Avoid long lists of Dimensions at the end of a section (e.g. K1, K2, K3, K4, V1, V3). Instead provide one or two strong examples for each.  Map out where each Dimension is discussed and check for omissions. |
| *Is the account* ***current*** *and* ***sufficient****?* | Does it cover practice within the last three years?  If non recent practice is referred to, has it been connected to current activities?  Are the activities too recent so it is hard to evaluate impact? | Consider more recent examples – so long as impact can be evaluated. If discussing historic experience, ensure it is fed into how it influences current activities. |