# Recommendation Letter Guidance for Senior Fellows

Two letters of recommendation are required to corroborate an application for Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy. You have been asked to provide one of the letters of recommendation. The letter of recommendation is used to confirm that the application is fair and accurate in the professional practice to meet the criteria for Senior Fellow. Examples you use in your letter of recommendation should focus on teaching, supporting student learning, or supporting student success.

# Criteria for Senior Fellow:

D3.I Successful engagement across all five Areas of Activity

D3.II Appropriate knowledge and understanding across all aspects of Core Knowledge

D3.III A commitment to all the Professional Values

D3.IV Successful engagement in appropriate teaching practices related to the Areas of Activity

D3.V Successful incorporation of subject and pedagogic research and/ or scholarship within the above activities, as part of an integrated approach to academic practice

D3.VI Successful engagement in continuing professional development in relation to teaching, learning, assessment and, where appropriate, related professional practices

D3.VII Successful co-ordination, support, supervision, management and/or mentoring of others (whether individuals and/or teams) in relation to teaching and learning

The criteria reference the Professional Standards Framework (PSF), which is an internationally recognized description of the role of the practitioner in higher education. The PSF describes the role of those who teach or support learning across three dimensions: what practitioners do (i.e. Areas of Activity), what practitioners know (i.e. Core Knowledge), and what practitioners value (i.e. Professional Values).

The Professional Standards Framework

| Areas of Activity  | Core Knowledge  | Professional Values  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| A1 Design and plan learning activities and/or programs of study  | K1The subject material | V1 Respect individual learners and diverse learning communities  |
| A2 Teach and/or support learning | K2 Appropriate methods for teaching and learning in the subject area and at the level of the academic program | V2 Promote participation in higher education and equality of opportunity for learners |
| A3 Assess and give feedback to learners  | K3 How students learn, both generally and within their subject/disciplinary area(s) | V3 Use evidence-informed approaches from research, scholarship, and continuing professional development |
| A4 Develop effective learning environments and approaches to student support and guidance  | K4 The use and value of appropriate learning technologies | V4 Acknowledge the wider context in which higher education operates, recognizing the implications for professional practice |
| A5 Engage in continuing professional development in subjects/disciplines and their pedagogy, incorporating research, scholarship, and the evaluation of professional practices | K5 Methods for evaluating the effectiveness of teaching |  |
|  | K6 The implications of quality assurance and quality enhancement with a particular focus on teaching  |  |

# What to Include in Your Letter of Recommendation

The reviewers of the Senior Fellow application use the letters of recommendation to corroborate the application. Include examples of teaching, supporting student learning, or supporting student success. Examples should be within the last 3-5 years. In addition, your recommendation needs to support the applicant’s claim to “successful co-ordination, support, supervision, management and/or mentoring of others (whether individuals and/or teams) in relation to teaching and learning” (D3.VII). You may review the Senior Fellow application. You may refer to the PSF in your letter using PSF dimensions, as shown in the examples below.

## Example 1:

Poor

“I fully support Dr. Morris’ application for Fellow. He is one of the finest teachers in our department. I have collaborated with him on many research projects that have been published tier 1 journals. He is well deserving of this recognition.”

This example is too vague. The examples you use should clearly show how the applicant’s practice aligns with the PSF and criteria for Senior Fellow.

Better

“I fully support Dr. Morris’ application for Fellow. To better engage his students the content, he implemented Team-Based Learning pedagogy in his class (A1, A2, A3, A5, K2, V3). His students have shown a better grasp of the content and skills since he implement TBL. Furthermore, Dr. Morris lead the changes to our department’s introductory course including course redesign for different modes of delivery, and to include student support mechanism (A1, K3, V1). He published and presented at both disciplinary and teaching conferences on his work (A5, K1, K2, V3)…. He is well deserving of this recognition.”

This example is better because it focuses more on specific examples of teaching practice. The application is a reflection on teaching practice and this recommendation is corroborating the application better than the first example.

## Example 2:

Poor

“Dr. Morris is a valuable member of our department. Before joining UVU seven years ago, he published extensively in tier 1 journals and received over $85,000 in grant money. He is renowned scholar and worked at a R1 institution before coming to UVU. Since then he has received tenure and been promoted to associate professor.”

This example highlights career achievements but doesn’t corroborate Dr. Morris’ teaching practice. The reference letter is used to corroborate the claim about Dr. Morris’ teaching practice. This particular example doesn’t do that.

Better

“Dr. Morris is valuable member of our department. He dedicated to continuing his research and that has informed his pedagogy. He has changed his class to incorporate undergraduate research into teaching practice (A2, A4, K2). His students gain disciplinary skills and learn to think critically about the content of his course. Some of his students have presented at regional or national conference. A few of his undergraduate students have been published in disciplinary journals (A2, K2, V2).”

This is better because it is focused on Dr. Morris’ teaching practice. The letter writer has knowledge of this teaching practice and can corroborate the claim in the application. The assessors will have better evidence to make a judgement that Dr. Morris meets the criteria for Fellow.

# Recommendation Letter Format

The letter of recommendation should be a minimum of one page long but no longer than two pages. The letter of recommendation should address the criteria for Senior Fellow described below in Criteria for Senior Fellow. You may use the template on the following page; please detach it from the guidance notes before sending the letter of recommendation.

# Contact

For more information, contact Trevor Morris at 801-863-6361 or email trevor.morris@uvu.edu

# Letter of Recommendation Template for Senior Fellow

Your name:

Your email:

Applicant name:

Institution:

Relationship to applicant:

Sign and Initial Declaration:

*You are confirming that you wrote this statement in your own words for this applicant. If in question, the assessment team may contact the writer to confirm the veracity of the letter. If integrity of the letter is in question, the letter may not be accepted.*

Date:

Initials:

Instructions: In 1-2 pages, please provide a letter of recommendation below. Please refer to the Guidance for Reference Letters document on what to include in your Letter of Recommendation.