



University of Sussex

# Associate Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (AHEA) Pathway

THE SUSSEX HANDBOOK 2012-2013

**Teaching and Learning Development Unit**

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## **1 Introduction**

The Sussex Pathway to gaining Associate Fellow status of the Higher Education Academy (HEA) is a professional recognition scheme which is designed to be flexible and aimed at supporting you in the development of your teaching role.

It is linked to the introductory 'Starting to Teach' for new Associate Tutors (ATs) with less than 3 years Higher Education teaching experience. Because of this, you are normally required to complete the Starting to Teach before registering on the AHEA route. However, in some circumstances an equivalent route to the Starting to Teach will be sufficient.

The Higher Education Academy (HEA) will externally accredit your application which will enable you to become an Associate Fellow of the HE Academy (AFHEA). The AHEA Pathway is funded by the University so there are no charges to individuals or departments

## **2 Key Contacts**

The AHEA pathway is co-ordinated through the Teaching and Learning Development Unit (TLDU).

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### **3 Pathway design**

The Sussex Pathway has been designed to be work-based as well as to support you to develop and reflect on your teaching, develop a scholarly approach and meet the UK Professional Standards Framework at Standard descriptor 1 (see Appendix 1). It is envisaged that it will take an academic year (3 terms) from the time you register with the Starting to Teach course to the time you submit your AHEA application.

#### **3.1 Structure**

It is recommended that you register for the Pathway during the term following your attendance on the Starting to Teach. It is also expected that you will be teaching during this term.

Typically, the structure of the pathway will look like this:

##### **Term 1**

- Starting to Teach or equivalent

##### **Term 2**

- Undertake the observation process.
- Undertake a development activity (related to teaching and learning) of relevance to your own role, experience and current needs. This may involve reading suggested materials; use of on-line resources on e-learning or attending a TLD event. For further information on the TLD Events, visit the TLD Events webpage: <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/tldu/events/tldevents>
- Undertake a peer review or observation- the emphasis of this is on your learning. It could involve peer observing a colleagues' teaching session, or it could involve reviewing a colleagues' teaching plan or materials. You will be expected to produce a synopsis of what you learnt (in relation to your teaching) from the process and this will accompany your application for Associate Fellow status.

##### **Term 3**

During the 3<sup>rd</sup> term you will be able to start the application process. This involves putting together a case which will enable you to demonstrate how your teaching

aligns with the UK Professional Standards Framework at Descriptor 1, thereby meeting the HEA requirements.

You will be guided through the Pathway by an advisor from the Teaching, Learning and Development Unit (TLDU).

The application will be assessed by staff from the TLDU.

### **3.2 The observation process**

In line with the University's Peer Observation of teaching policy, there are three stages involved in the observation process:

- A pre-observation meeting
- An observation
- A post-observation meeting.

As a general guide, the meetings will take about an hour each. The observed session can be between 50 minutes -1 hour 30 minutes long. There will be an opportunity for you to arrange the dates and times for the above meetings with your advisor.

#### **Pre-observation meeting**

During this meeting you and your advisor will discuss how you prepared and planned for the session. There will also be an opportunity to discuss any specific feedback you'd like from the observation.

#### **The observation**

The underlying principle of the observation is one of a supportive, developmental approach which will encourage you to reflect on your teaching practice. It can also be an opportunity for you to identify areas or elements of your teaching that you would like to develop.

#### **The post-observation meeting**

This meeting will occur within a few days of the observed session. The emphasis of this meeting is to encourage you to reflect on the session- to identify your strengths and areas you'd like to develop.

## **4 Supporting the Pathway**

### **4.1 An advisor**

You will be allocated an advisor who will meet you individually to provide guidance and support during the observation process and in putting together your application.

### **4.2 Departmental Support**

Some participants have found it useful to arrange a mentor to support them during their participation. These can be colleagues who have previously completed the Pathway and/or colleagues from their department, for example course convenors and more experienced tutors.

### **4.3 Peer learning groups**

The accompanying Study Direct site consists of discussion fora, where you can share your ideas, discuss and reflect on issues arising from your teaching.

### **4.4 Study Direct (SyD)**

Further support is provided through the AHEA Pathway site. It contains reading lists, links and videos relating to teaching and learning as well as other documents you may find useful. The link for the site is here –

<https://studydirect.sussex.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=10753&rel=home>

## **5 Pathway learning outcomes**

Following successful completion of the pathway, you will be able to:

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the Core Knowledge and Professional Values as outlined in the UK Professional Standards Framework (Appendix 1)
- Engage with and address 2 Areas of Activity as outlined in the UK Professional Standards Framework (Appendix 1)

Learning outcomes are statements of what a learner is expected to know, understand and/or be able to do at the end of a period of learning. Achievement of learning outcomes is normally shown through assessed work. Learning outcomes indicate the threshold level needed to pass. This course is assessed on a pass/fail basis.

## **6 Achieving Professional Recognition**

Completed application forms will be assessed by advisors from the TLDU. Following this, the TLDU will notify the HEA and the HEA will post the certificates to participants.

The assessors will look for evidence of:

- significant experience of the areas of professional activity, as aligned to the UK Professional Standards Framework
- your use of core knowledge and professional values
- your awareness of pedagogical issues, both generally and within your own discipline
- your ability to choose, adapt and apply methods and approaches to learning and teaching that are relevant to the context in which you work
- your informed understanding of pedagogy to explain and justify your examples of practice
- creative ways you approach your teaching and support your students' learning
- where you have adopted different approaches or adapted according to the different needs of particular student groups
- the way you integrate scholarship, research, and professional activities with teaching and supporting learning
- synergy between research, scholarship and professional activities with your teaching and your students' learning experiences
- your ability to demonstrate that evaluation and continuing professional development inform your practice

If the assessors do not feel that your application demonstrates that you have met the criteria for Associate Fellow status, your application will be referred back to you with an explanation of the reasons for referral and a request for further additional information to support your application.

Please see the HEA web pages for further information about professional recognition:

<http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/professional-recognition>

## **7 Resources and links**

Resources and links are provided through the SyD AHEA site. Participants are encouraged to read generic and subject specific material. A good starting point could be a chapter from O'Neill, G, Moore, S & McMullin, B (eds.) 2005. *Emerging issues in the practice of University Learning and Teaching*. This is available on the AHEA SyD site.

## **8 Progression to higher awards**

On successful completion and if your teaching role is continuing and expanding, participants are encouraged to register their interest in the Postgraduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education (PGCertHE) course. The PGCertHE is a professional qualification for staff at the University of Sussex. The route to the qualification is flexible, work-based. It is normally completed on a part-time basis over 2 years. It is essential to have ongoing teaching activity covering a range of responsibilities over the duration of the course.

The PGCertHE is externally accredited by the Higher Education Academy (HEA). Members of staff who gain the qualification will therefore be eligible to apply to become a Fellow of the HE Academy (FHEA).



## Appendix 1

### **UK Professional Standards Framework**

The UK Professional Standards Framework for teaching and supporting learning in Higher Education was launched by the Higher Education Academy in 2006 and revised in 2011. It provides a nationally recognised benchmark for institutions and individuals. The framework is made up of four levels of descriptors which are related to areas of activity, core knowledge and professional values.

(<http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/assets/documents/ukpsf/ukpsf.pdf> (accessed 1/8/2012))

The AHEA Pathway is mapped against **Descriptor 1**. Individuals are required to demonstrate an understanding of specific aspects of teaching, learning support methods and student learning and provide evidence of:

- I. Successful engagement at least two of the five Areas of Activity
- II. Successful engagement in appropriate teaching practices related to the Areas of Activity
- III Appropriate Core Knowledge and understanding of at least K1 and K2
- IV. A commitment to appropriate Professional Values in facilitating others learning
- V. Relevant professional practices, subject and pedagogic research and/or scholarship within the above activities.
- VI. Successful engagement where appropriate in professional development activity related teaching, learning, and assessment responsibilities.

### **AREAS OF ACTIVITY**

A1 Design and plan learning activities and/or programmes of study

A2 Teach and/or support learning

A3 Assess and give feedback to learners

A4 Develop effective learning environments and approaches to student support and guidance

A5 Engage in continuing professional development in subjects/disciplines and their pedagogy, incorporating research, scholarship and the evaluation of professional practices

## **CORE KNOWLEDGE**

K1 The subject material

K2 Appropriate methods for teaching and learning in the subject area and at the level of the academic programme

K3 How students learn, both generally and within their subject/ disciplinary area(s)

K4 The use and value of appropriate learning technologies

K5 Methods for evaluating the effectiveness of teaching

K6 The implications of quality assurance and quality enhancement for academic and professional practice with a particular focus on teaching

## **PROFESSIONAL VALUES**

V1 Respect individual learners and diverse learning communities

V2 Promote participation in higher education and equality of opportunity for learners

V3 Use evidence-informed approaches and the outcomes from research, scholarship and continuing professional development

V4 Acknowledge the wider context in which higher education operates recognizing the implications for professional practice