Teaching for Postgraduates at Aberystwyth University (TPAU)

Programme Handbook

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1   Introducing the Programme

Background

TPAU (Teaching for Postgraduates at Aberystwyth University) was developed as a teacher training programme to support postgraduate researchers (as well as staff supporting students) who contribute to teaching at the University. TPAU aims to provide you with a range of teaching skills, in settings ranging from tutorials and lectures to assessment. TPAU is accredited by Advance HE. Those who complete the programme will become an Associate Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (AFHEA). See section 3 and 4 of the handbook for guidance to explain the relationship between the Dimensions and the Descriptors for AFHEA. AU is a strong supporter of the postgraduate employment charter, and this programme addresses many of its recommendations.

You can take this qualification as a stepping stone to other development opportunities in your careers as Higher Education teachers, and to build on your Fellowships over time.

Aims and content

The programme aims to develop the teaching skills of postgraduate researchers who are already teaching in their departments. We aim to give you a grounding in the good practice of teaching and expand your knowledge and expertise across all areas of teaching and learning.

Entry Requirements and Application

The programme is open to postgraduate researchers who teach, as well as staff supporting students. Participants should have a minimum of 20 hours contact teaching time over the duration of the programme.

20 Hour Teaching Requirement
We recommend that participants are engaged in 20 hours of teaching during the year they undertake the course. You need to be engaged in enough teaching hours to have three peer observations of your teaching and able to reflect on your practice, and integrate suggestions from these and from your CPD back into your teaching. This requirement is in line with other institutions in the sector which run comparable programmes leading to the award of an AFHEA. TPAU has been accredited by Advance HE, is aligned to the Professional Standards Framework (PSF – see diagram below). TPAU is not designed to be a course for those completely new to teaching. Students need to have some experience of teaching before applying. The Graduate School run an introduction to teaching workshop. TPAU is a flexible and light touch professional teaching qualification aimed at postgraduate researchers who are already engaged in teaching.

TPAU Entry Competition

Entry to the TPAU programme is competitive – the number of places is limited and usually a large number of applicants, so application does not guarantee being given a place. The programme is aimed at PhD students, although AU staff engaged in supporting academic

provision are welcome to apply. Accredited by Advance HE, TPAU is designed to be a professional teaching qualification aimed at PhD students who have, and will continue to be, actively engaged in teaching at HE level. Applicants need to detail the HE teaching they have undertaken in the past and the teaching they are expecting to deliver in the coming academic year. The Application Panel looks for evidence of previous experience of such teaching and for enthusiasm in applicants for developing their existing teaching skills, and awards places to those who demonstrate this the most in their applications.

Welsh and English

The programme is committed to the [Aberystwyth University's Welsh Language Scheme](#). The assessed elements of the programme can be completed in Welsh, English or bilingually.

Current Information

For the latest versions of documents, forms and dates for the current and future programmes please see the website https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/lteu/tpau/, the Teams site and the BlackBoard site dedicated to this programme.

Programme Team and contact details

The programme is managed by LTEU but collaborates in all areas with the Graduate School. The programme is led by Annette Edwards and Ian Archer from LTEU. The TPAU team is shown in the below tables. You should contact the team immediately if there is any change to your circumstances which will prevent you from completing the programme in the time expected. You should also inform us if you need to change your Mentor for any reason.

TPAU email and office number	Pgr-tpau@aber.ac.uk Ext. 2117
Annette Edwards TPAU Coordinator (SFHEA)	aee@aber.ac.uk ext. 2386
Dr Ian Archer TPAU Coordinator	ina@aber.ac.uk ext. 1618
Prysor Davies Internal Moderator (SFHEA)	School of Education
Professor Simon Haslett External Examiner (PFHEA)	Principal Fellow, Pro Vice-Chancellor, Bath Spa University
Keziah Garratt-Smithson Administration	Ksg2@aber.ac.uk Ext. 2117

2. Programme Content

Programme Aims

For nearly 20 years the Graduate School has been charged with addressing the broader skills of postgraduate researchers (PGRs) to meet the requirements of the Roberts agenda. From the outset it was clear that one of the most important strands of this was teaching development – if PGRs wanted to continue as academics, one of the most vital skills they should attain during their research degrees were teaching skills. And this would also open the door to other levels of teaching outside of academia (which has been addressed through initiatives such as The Brilliant Club). Introductory teaching development sessions and single-day courses have been offered to PGRs from the outset. LTEU's predecessor, the Centre for the Development of Staff & Academic Practice, already ran the PGCTHE at Aberystwyth, and eventually access to this was allowed for PGRs. But there was always the desire (backed up by feedback from PGRs) that something more specifically tailored to the needs of PGRs who were engaged in teaching was needed. Thus this programme aims to give PGRs a thorough grounding in contemporary teaching practice, give them the opportunity of structured observation of their practice, and the tools to constantly reflect on and improve their teaching. Further, the aim is to fit this into a timetable that is achievable around the conflicting demands of research demanded by full-time PhD study.

Programme Outcomes

Following on from this, the Recognition Scheme (now the ARCHE scheme) was an ideal opportunity to map PGR teaching skills and practice onto this national framework. The award of AFHEA was already being aimed at teachers like PGRs as well as staff supporting students. All of those who now complete the TPAU scheme achieve the AFHEA award. This links you into the clear teaching development structure of the PSF for your future career, and gives you a portable, nationally recognised award at the end of the programme. The structure of how TPAU fits into other Advance HE schemes is shown in the diagram below:

Fellowship Progression

3. TPAU Structure

This programme introduces you to the academic teaching environment. There is a focus on 'practice' and professionalisation in teaching. You will develop a practical tool kit to build confidence in a range of teaching and learning contexts in Higher Education. Upon successful completion of the programme you will be awarded the AFHEA

Content

The programme provides a broad introduction to teaching in Higher Education with a personalised programme to meet the needs of individual participants.

Content Overview	
1	**Needs analysis and CPD plan**
2	**3 day induction at Aberystwyth University**
3	**12 hours attendance at CPD events**
4	**Three observations of your teaching**
5	**3 Mentor meetings with Mentor & 2 Mentor meetings with programme team. (One of these meetings will be the needs analysis and CPD plan at the beginning of the programme).**

Reflective Needs Analysis

A member of the programme team will meet with you individually to carry out a needs analysis and background CPD plan mapped against Descriptor 1 (D1) of the PSF framework. The meeting will take place as soon as possible after the application process of the programme. The needs analysis is a living documents and you, in negotiation with your Mentor, will be expected to regularly update the form with examples of your work that can be aligned with D1. By completing this regularly you will be able to see what you have achieved and what still needs to be achieved for D1.

Induction

Induction will take place over 3 days and will provide a detailed introduction to the programme and to teaching. It will include:

- an outline of the requirements of TPAU and how D1, PSF is embedded into it.
- an introduction to reflective writing
- a workshop on 'How students Learn'
- The TPAU participant/mentor experience
- a workshop on 'Performance Techniques and Lecturing'
- an introduction to peer observation
- a workshop on 'Support in the Classroom'
- a workshop on 'Student Wellbeing'
- Panel of experts Q&A – student given opportunity to ask academics questions about teaching and supporting students.

Continuing Professional Development

You are expected to select appropriate CPD courses provided by LTEU, and those that are more discipline based within the University, which meet the needs outlined in your initial Needs Analysis. CPD events should be directly related to learning and teaching or supporting the student. You can register for any of the LTEU events through the web page https://training.aber.ac.uk/othl/f?p=168:30:1053118426931:::::

Shown below are a few examples of the workshops which will be available. Some external providers' training may be suitable, but please discuss with the programme team to make sure that it will be suitable for the programme.

- Small group teaching
- Interactivity in lectures
- Enhancing productivity & time management for academics
- Feedback & feedforward
- Groupwork in teaching
- Teaching in the classroom
- Meeting students' needs
- Researching your own teaching methodologies
- Learning environments & your personality preferences
- Technology enhanced learning in HE
- Practical lab teaching
- Know who you are, and understand your students

Alternative CPD options for the programme, (remember they need to related to learning and teaching issues):

• Webinars	• CPD workshops at any of the collaborative institutions in Wales
• Attendance at Advance HE workshops	• MOOC teaching and learning courses
• External subject specific conferences	• Learning and Teaching Conference
• Welsh medium learning and teaching courses	• Three Minute Thesis (3MT) competition

Peer Observation of Teaching

Peer observation is an established part of teaching practice within the University and allows you to receive feedback on specific areas of your teaching. Timely organisation of these observations with the programme team is imperative. Requests for last-minute observations with the team will not be available. Further guidelines on observation (both as an observee and an observer) can be found in Appendix B.

Mentoring Sessions

These meetings will follow up themes from your initial Needs Analysis and offer an opportunity for further support. Further guidelines on the role of your Mentor can be found in Appendix A.

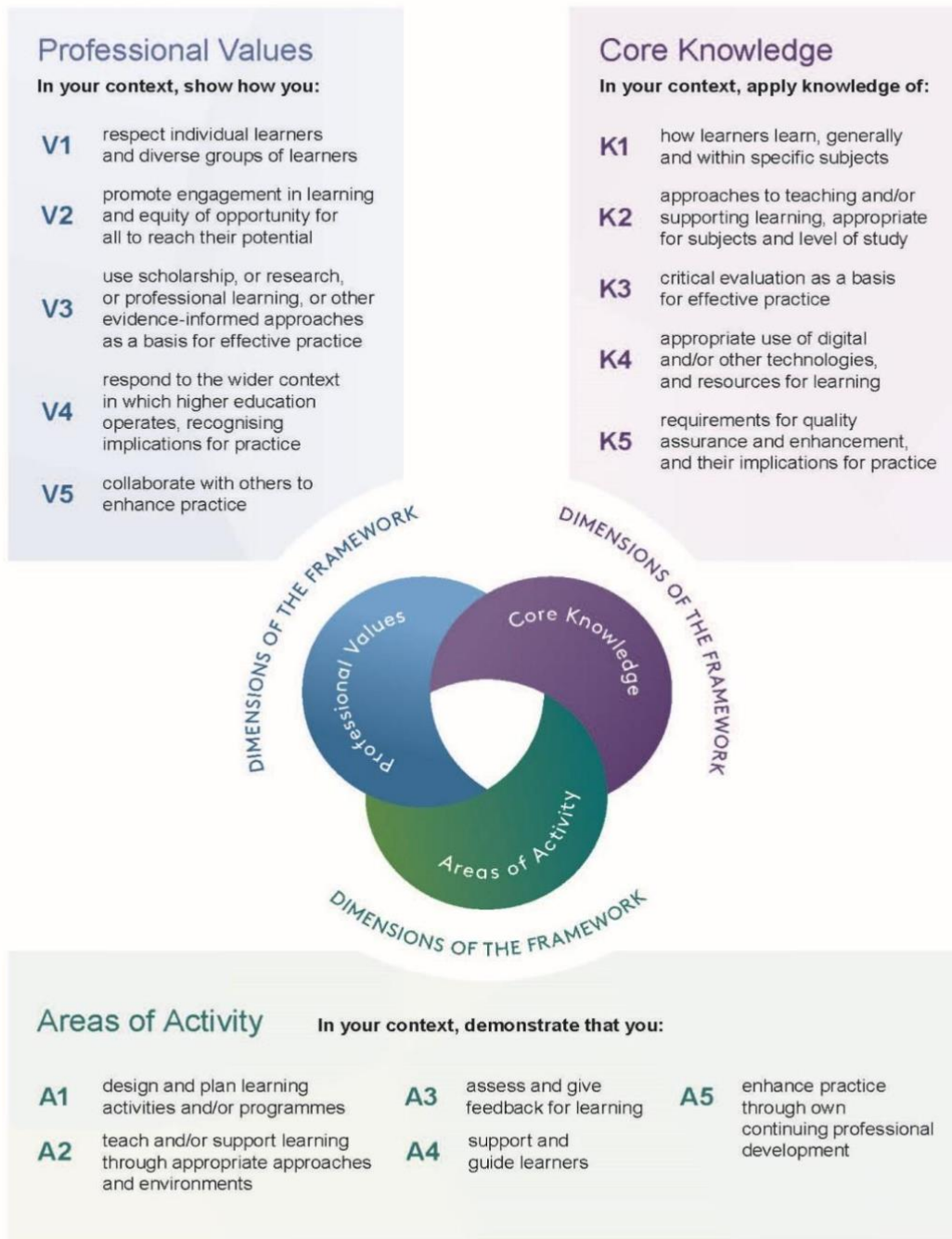## Expert Teacher Observation

We also recommend that during your time on TPAU you try to observe a more experienced teacher. This may be your own supervisor or mentor. Or it could be one of the teachers registered on the Open Door Teaching programme. In either case, try to approach it in the same way as you would your peer observation of a colleague on the programme.

Student Progression Timeline

Professional Standards Framework for teaching and supporting learning in higher education

Professional Values

In your context, show how you:

V1 respect individual learners and diverse groups of learners

V2 promote engagement in learning and equity of opportunity for all to reach their potential

V3 use scholarship, or research, or professional learning, or other evidence-informed approaches as a basis for effective practice

V4 respond to the wider context in which higher education operates, recognising implications for practice

V5 collaborate with others to enhance practice

Core Knowledge

In your context, apply knowledge of:

K1 how learners learn, generally and within specific subjects

K2 approaches to teaching and/or supporting learning, appropriate for subjects and level of study

K3 critical evaluation as a basis for effective practice

K4 appropriate use of digital and/or other technologies, and resources for learning

K5 requirements for quality assurance and enhancement, and their implications for practice

DIMENSIONS OF THE FRAMEWORK

Professional Values — Core Knowledge — Areas of Activity

Areas of Activity

In your context, demonstrate that you:

A1 design and plan learning activities and/or programmes

A2 teach and/or support learning through appropriate approaches and environments

A3 assess and give feedback for learning

A4 support and guide learners

A5 enhance practice through own continuing professional development

https://s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/assets.creode.advancehe-document-manager/documents/advance-he/PSF%202023%20-%20Screen%20Reader%20Compatible%20-%20final_1675089549.pdf

4. Assessment Requirements

TPAU's values and methodology are based on the Professional Standards Framework (PSF) – (see above which also has a link to the full text of the framework).

The framework consists of two elements: dimensions of practice (areas of activity, core knowledge, and professional values) and descriptors. As it is a practical programme to professionalise your teaching, TPAU has been designed to exceed the requirements of a direct route AFHEA application. When we designed TPAU we included engagement with peer observation of teaching and engagement with CPD and educational literature as essential elements of the programme. That means that students will easily cover **A2 and A5.**

Your TPAU submission, as a whole, **must demonstrate that your practice with learners is effective and inclusive** within your higher education context as demonstrated through evidence of meeting the following three Descriptor 1 criteria statements:

D1.1 Use of appropriate Professional Values, including at least V1 and V3
D1.2 Application of appropriate Core Knowledge, including at least K1, K2 and K3
D1.3 Effective and inclusive practice in at least two of the five Areas of Activity

Each element should be mapped against the PSF to show all D1 requirements have been achieved. Each application will be judged against these criteria.

Teaching Philosophy (300 words)

This is a reflective statement on your practice, showing your own personal guiding principles for teaching. This is usually underscored by engagement with literature and CPD that aligns with your methods.

Reflective Journey (1000 words)

This is the major part of your submission. You will show how over time you have developed your learning and teaching skills through self-analysis, CPD sessions and reflection on your teaching and supporting the learning of others. Again, it can also refer back to literature that you have used to develop your teaching methods.

Peer Observations of teaching (200 words x 3)

You will be observed once by your Mentor, once by a fellow TPAU student and once by the TPAU programme team.

These reflective pieces should show how, as a result of the observation, you have implemented changes or developed your teaching as a result of the constructive feedback given by the observer. Try not to repeat merely what your observer has said, but reflect on how you have used their observations in your subsequent teaching.

Engagement with the literature should also be interwoven into these written pieces. **Each observation MUST be of separate observation opportunities.**

Reflective practice is the cornerstone of the TPAU programme. We would expect you to be reflecting on your teaching throughout the scheme and guidance on your own teaching, through the peer observations (peer or expert), would be a theme throughout the reflective pieces. There will be a scheme form that would need to be used with the peer observations. After each of your 3 peer observations it would be expected that you would have a follow-up meeting to receive feedback. Further guidelines on this role can be found in Appendix B.

Mentor Summary Comments – Overall statement showing alignment with D1

This is a statement **from your Mentor** on the journey you have taken through the TPAU programme in relation to learning and teaching issues. It is recommended that your mentor reads your TPAU/AFHEA Submission **before writing their statement**. The peer observation by your mentor will be noted in this statement, as it will **act as a mechanism to authenticate your teaching practice**. The Needs Analysis, that you will be adding to throughout the TPAU programme, should also be referenced in this statement.

TPAU/AHEA Submission process

The TPAU/AFHEA Submission Form can be found on the Blackboard and Teams sites. You must submit your form via Turnitin by the specified date: **Wednesday 30th April 2025 at 11:59am.** The Submission should be clearly aligned against the PSF.

TPAU/AFHEA Reviewer Form
The TPAU/AFHEA Reviewer Assessment Form can also be found on the Blackboard and Teams sites. This is the form that each reviewer will be marking your reflective pieces on. Please take note of the requirements from the form, as this will give you clear understanding of how your work is marked.

PSF Descriptor 1

Descriptor 1

D1 is suitable for individuals whose practice enables them to evidence some Dimensions. Effectiveness of practice in teaching and/or support of learning is demonstrated through evidence of:

D1.1

use of appropriate Professional Values, including at least V1 and V3

D1.2

application of appropriate Core Knowledge, including at least K1, K2 and K3

D1.3

effective and inclusive practice in at least two of the five Areas of Activity

D2   D3   D4   D1

Descriptor 1 aligns with Advance HE recognition as Associate Fellow.

https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/fellowship/associate-fellowship

5. Assessment Information

Requirements from Students

It is your responsibility to complete all course and assessment elements of the programme within the given deadline. It is your responsibility to inform the TPAU team if you have any concerns about completing the programme by the deadline or if you are having difficulties

with your mentor. Not all mentee-mentor relationships work, so the TPAU team could offer an alternative mentor, if necessary.

Reviewers and Judgement on Submissions

The TPAU co-ordinator is first Reviewer and an academic member of staff will be a second Reviewer. Please note: both Reviewers will be native Welsh speakers so are able to read any Welsh, English or Bilingual applications. The second Reviewer will have achieved at least FHEA. All reviewers involved with TPAU will have training on this role by the TPAU team before they can review any applications.

The co-ordinator has extensive experience of the PSF and has acted an external examiner for other schemes in Wales, run workshops for other universities on the requirements of the different HEA fellowships and reviewed HEA schemes, CATE and NTFS. The judgement process in outlined in the diagram below.

The Reviewers, Internal Moderator and External Moderator together with the TPAU panel have extensive understanding of learning and teaching in Higher Education and the PSF. They have a clear understanding of the requirement for D1 and will judge appropriately.

Internal Moderator (IM)

The Internal Moderator has an excellent knowledge of the PSF. They have achieved their own Senior Fellowship of the HEA (SFHEA) and have a thorough understanding of the requirements of the programme. Further guidelines on this role can be found in Appendix D.

External Moderator (EM)

All External Moderators should be familiar with the PSF standard expected of students in the relevant fellowships and with sector knowledge and expertise of appropriate professional body requirements. The external moderators should be a SFHEA or PFHEA and have an expert knowledge of the PSF. Further guidelines on this role can be found in Appendix E.

Referred Submissions

All failed elements may be resubmitted. All unsuccessful Submissions will receive detailed feedback and be offered consultancy before resubmission. Referred work must be submitted at the next submission date. Work may be resubmitted on one occasion before the candidate is deemed to have failed the programme. In this latter case, candidates will be referred to AFHEA through the ARCHE Scheme, and mentoring through this will be provided by the TPAU team. The judgement process is shown in the diagram below
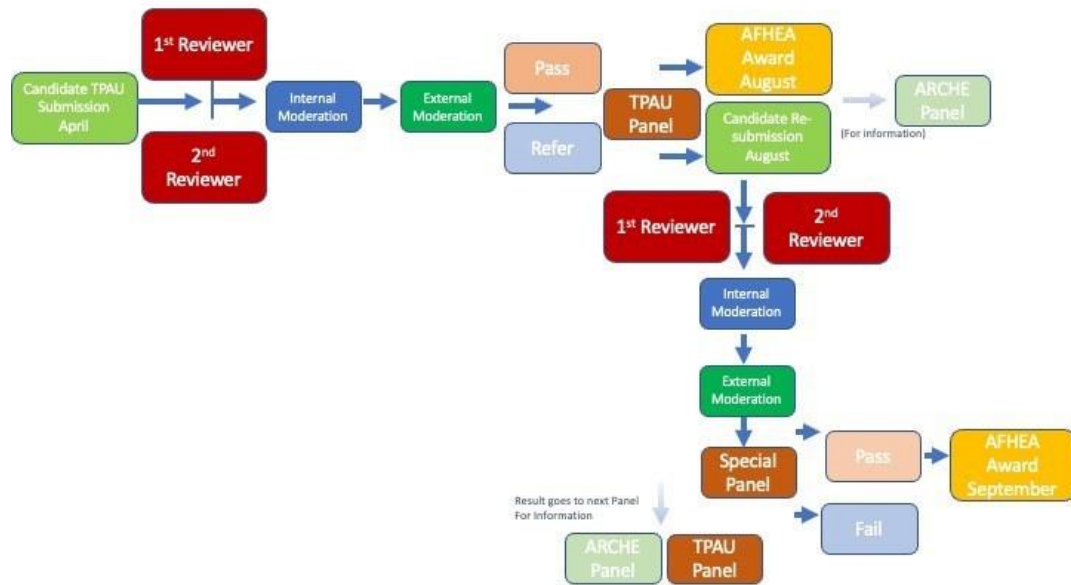
Appeal

If participants fail the programme they will be entitled to appeal in accordance with Aberystwyth University's Postgraduate Studies Guidelines.

TPAU Panel

The panel currently meets once a year to determine the results from the Review team for each participant. The TPAU Co-ordinator informs the Panel of the results. Please note: the Panel is not involved in any decisions on the results, as all decisions are made by the Reviewers and both Moderators. The terms of reference for this panel are to ratify decisions and to discuss more generally teaching developments for PGRs in the University. The External Moderator will read a selection of the Submissions. The TPAU Panel consists of:

- Pro Vice Chancellor Learning and Teaching (Chair)
- TPAU programme leaders
- 2nd Reviewer
- Head of the Graduate School
- External Moderator (either in person or via Teams)
- Internal Moderator
- TPAU Mentor
- Faculty Directors of Learning & Teaching
- Academic Registry representative

Withdrawal

Those who want to withdraw from the programme should contact the TPAU team as soon as possible. If students want to withdraw from the programme they must complete the AU on-line process which we now require all students who want to withdraw to complete.

Exit Points

After completion of the TPAU programme participants will achieve AFHEA, with a certificate from Advance HE which is recognised by other Universities in the UK. We offer a workshop to all those who complete in which we explain the fellowship progression options.

Leaving Aberystwyth University
If a student intends leaving the university during the period of registration, the TPAU team should be informed immediately. A withdrawal form should be completed if the individual 'permanently' withdraws from the programme.

Results

The results, from the program, will feed into relevant committees in the university such as AU ARCHE panels, Research Development Committee, School of Education Learning & Teaching Committee and Research degrees committee. The programme will be embedded into the learning and teaching structure of the University.

You can contact Academic Registry at any point to have a TPAU transcript. This details all the elements of the scheme that you have completed. For example, this may be required by future employers, or if you go on to teach at another university and they need proof of exemption from part 1 (Descriptor 1) of any PGCTHE equivalent scheme. Please contact aocstaff@aber.ac.uk to request a transcript.

6. Resources

Shown below is a list of recommended readings for the programme.

Programme reading

Race, P. (2010) *In a the Deep End – starting to teach in higher education*, Leeds Metropolitan University

Butcher, C., Davies, C. and Highton, M. (2019) Designing Learning: From Module Outline to Effective Teaching. 2 ed. London: Taylor & Francis Ltd.

Exley, K., Dennick, R. and Fisher, A. (2019a) Small group teaching: tutorials, seminars and workshops. Second edition. London: Routledge.

Kahn, P. and Anderson, L. (2019) Developing your teaching: towards excellence. Second edition. London: Routledge.

O'Leary, M. and Cui, V. (2023) Developing excellence in teaching and learning in higher education through observation. Abingdon, Oxon, England: Routledge

Rossi, V. (2023) Inclusive learning design in higher education: a practical guide to creating equitable learning experiences. New York, NY: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.

Stromberg, E. (ed.) (2023) Trauma informed pedagogy in higher education: a faculty guide for teaching and learning. New York, NY: Routledge.

Recommended reading:

Survival guides

Mortiboys, A (2010) *How to be an Effective Teacher in Higher Education.* Open University Press.

Brown, S and Race, P (2002) *Lecturing: a Practical Guide* London: Routledge.

Race, P (2006) *The Lecturer's Toolkit: 3rd Edition* London: Routledge.

Race, P (2006) *In at the deep end – starting to teach in higher education* Leeds: Leeds Metropolitan University.

Race, P (ed.) (1999) *2000 Tips for Lecturers* London: Routledge

Ramsden, P (2003) *Learning to Teach in Higher Education*. Routledge.

Academic Infrastructure

Biggs, J (2006) *Teaching For Quality Learning at University: What the Student Does* (Society for Research into Higher Education) [Paperback]

Fry, H, Ketteridge, S and Marshall, S (2009) *A Handbook for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education: Enhancing Academic Practice* . Routledge, NY.

Subject-specific teaching

HEA Subject centre resources: http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/disciplines

Peer observation

Seda Paper 124. Beyond the Peer Observation of Teaching Edited by David Gosling and Kristine Mason O'Connor

Technology-enhanced learning

NEXUS: http://nexus.aber.ac.uk/xwiki/bin/view/Main/

Reflective practice

Moon, J (2006) *Learning Journals: A Handbook for Reflective Practice and Professional Development.* London. Routledge.

Moon, J (2000) '*Reflection in Learning and Professional Development: Theory and Practice*'. London. Routledge.

Schon, D (2001) 'The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action' Ashgate.

7.   Glossary of Terms

3MT	Three Minute Thesis Competition – run each year by Vitae, each university nominates one PhD student, after a local competition, to go to the national competition
AFHEA	Associate Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy
ARCHE	Aberystwyth Recognition of Continuing Professional Development in Teaching and Supporting Learning in Higher Education – AU's scheme for encouraging and judging applicants for the various Fellowship levels
Areas of Activity	One of the 3 Dimensions of Practice in the PSF, these are the most common activities undertaken by teachers (for example, carrying out assessments)
Core Knowledge	One of the 3 Dimensions of Practice in the PSF, this is the knowledge needed to carry out teaching activities at HE level.
CPD	Continuing Professional Development training and activities
D1	Descriptor 1 – the Descriptors are a set of statements outlining the key characteristics of someone evidencing typical teaching within Higher Education. Descriptor 1 is aligned to the Associate Fellowship and is aimed at early career researchers (including PhD students carrying out teaching) and staff supporting academic provision (including library staff).
DPGS	Director of Postgraduate Studies – within the Department or Faculty
EM	External Moderator
FHEA	Fellow of the Higher Education Academy
Fellowships	Accredited by the HEA, a scheme to recognise the commitment to professionalism in teaching, awarded to those meeting the standards enshrined in the PSF
HEA	Higher Education Academy – now part of Advance HE, the national body encouraging teaching standards in the sector
IM	Internal Moderator

Learning and Teaching Conference	Annual conference, organised by LTEU, highlighting teaching best practice and innovation at AU
LTEU	Learning and Teaching Enhancement Unit, part of the university's Information Services department
MOOC	Massive Open Online Courses – free courses available for anyone to enrol onto
Pedagogy	The theory and practice of learning and the act of teaching
Peer Observation	When a teacher observes another teacher in order to develop their classroom practice. It is a two-way process that can benefit both the observer and the teacher being observed
PGR	Postgraduate Researcher – PhD or MPhil student
Professional Values	One of the 3 Dimensions of Practice in the UKPSF, these are the values that someone teaching in HE should embrace and exemplify
PSF	Professional Standards Framework 2023 – a general description of the roles of teaching and supporting learning within Higher Education. It is written from the perspective of the practitioner. It outlines a national framework for recognising and benchmarking teaching in HE
SFHEA	Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy
TPAU	Teaching for Postgraduates at Aberystwyth University / 1980s band