

Postgraduate Certificate in Teaching in Higher Education

PGCTHE

Student Handbook 2026

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Learning and Teaching Enhancement Unit

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**Table of Contents**

[General information and overview 3](#_Toc177547077)

[PGCTHE course team and contact details 5](#_Toc177547078)

[Entry requirements 5](#_Toc177547079)

[Welsh and English 5](#_Toc177547080)

[Getting started 6](#_Toc177547081)

[Mentors 6](#_Toc177547082)

[Continuing Professional Development (CPD) 7](#_Toc177547083)

[Reading list and resources 7](#_Toc177547084)

[Module 1 PDM0430 Professionalising your Teaching in HE 8](#_Toc177547085)

[Content 8](#_Toc177547086)

[Learning outcomes 8](#_Toc177547087)

[Assessment overview 9](#_Toc177547088)

[Patch 1 – Professional Values V1-2, V5 10](#_Toc177547089)

[Patch 2 – Community of Practice V1-2, A1-5 11](#_Toc177547090)

[Patch 3 – Teaching Observation V3, K1-2, A1-3, A5 12](#_Toc177547091)

[Patch 4 – Pedagogic Principles from CPD and Readings V3, K1-3, A5 13](#_Toc177547092)

[Patch 5 – Reflective Narrative V3, K1, A5 14](#_Toc177547093)

[Module 2 PDM0530 Action Research and Reflective Practice in HE 16](#_Toc177547094)

[Content 16](#_Toc177547095)

[Learning outcomes 16](#_Toc177547096)

[Assessment overview 17](#_Toc177547097)

[Action Research Project (ARP) V3, K3, A1-4 18](#_Toc177547098)

[Professional Values Statement V1-2, V4-5 21](#_Toc177547099)

[Teaching Practice Development K1-2, K4, A1-2 22](#_Toc177547100)

[Teaching Philosophy and CPD V3-4, K3, K5, A5 23](#_Toc177547101)

[Policies and procedures 25](#_Toc177547102)

[Registration and student account 25](#_Toc177547103)

[Privacy and data retention policy 25](#_Toc177547104)

[Late submission, deadline extensions, and special circumstances 25](#_Toc177547105)

[Referrals, fails, and appeals 26](#_Toc177547106)

[Withdrawal 26](#_Toc177547107)

[Assessment, exam board, and Fellowship award processes 26](#_Toc177547108)

[Research ethics 28](#_Toc177547109)

[Appendix 1 – PSF 2023 29](#_Toc177547110)

[Descriptor 1 of the PSF (achieved upon completion of Module 1) 29](#_Toc177547111)

[Descriptor 2 of the PSF (achieved upon completion of full PGCTHE) 29](#_Toc177547112)

[PSF 2023 Dimensions Checklist 30](#_Toc177547113)

[Appendix 2 – PGCTHE Learning Contract 31](#_Toc177547114)

[Appendix 3 – PDM0430 Assessed Teaching Observation Form 35](#_Toc177547115)

# General information and overview

The core of the PGCTHE (Postgraduate Certificate in Teaching in Higher Education) is reflection and learning about learning. The PGCTHE programme is a work-based qualification that covers all aspects of learning and teaching. The programme is designed to develop your confidence and competency in teaching at university level. Critical reflection and the use of pedagogic literature are central components. As an Aberystwyth University Masters-level qualification (Level 7), the PGCTHE requires participants to:

reformulate and use relevant understanding, methodologies and approaches to address problematic situations that involve many interacting factors. It includes taking responsibility for planning and developing courses of action that initiate or underpin substantial change or development, as well as exercising broad autonomy and judgement. It also reflects an understanding of relevant theoretical and methodological perspectives and how they affect their area of study or work. (quoted from [Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales (CQFW) Level descriptors](https://gov.wales/credit-and-qualifications-framework-cqfw-level-descriptors))

Our core aim is to help you deepen your pedagogic understanding and develop your practice in teaching in higher education (HE). Key principles that underpin the scheme include growth, reflective practice, community, and diversity. There is no ‘one right way to teach’, so we support you in bringing pedagogic theory and practice together to make informed decisions about what is best for you and your students. We encourage you to make development and reflection part of your professional practice throughout your career.

Everyone joining our scheme has their own prior knowledge and experience, so everyone has something valuable to contribute to our discussions. You will have plentiful opportunities to engage in a supportive community within the PGCTHE and form links with others in the HE sector who have shared interests.

The scheme’s excellence is evidenced in the significant contributions our graduates make through their teaching and engagement with the university community and beyond.

The PGCTHE’s values and methodology are based on the 2023 Professional Standards Framework (PSF 2023) – see the Appendix for the full text of the framework. The framework consists of two elements: Dimensions (Areas of Activity, Core Knowledge, and Professional Values) and Descriptors. The learning outcomes, taught content, assessment, and marking criteria are mapped against the framework. Starting from the needs analysis meeting, all provision including induction, CPD sessions, and consultations are built around the PSF to help you develop your knowledge and practice to meet the descriptor at D2 (Fellow in Advance HE) depth throughout:

D2 is suitable for individuals whose practice with learners has breadth and depth, enabling them to evidence all Dimensions. Effectiveness of practice in teaching and/or support of high-quality learning is demonstrated through evidence of:

* D2.1 use of all five **Professional Values**
* D2.2 application of all five forms of **Core Knowledge**
* D2.3 effective and inclusive practice in all five **Areas of Activity**.

The study scheme is a two-year programme consisting of two 30-credit modules accredited with Advance HE. Module 1 lays the pedagogic foundation for participants to carry out action research projects in their own teaching in Module 2. All coursework is aligned with the PSF, so Fellowship is awarded based on successful completion of coursework assessed against the framework as detailed in the marking criteria. The marking criteria are spelled out in the digital feedback using the descriptions in this handbook. This functions as a summative evaluation of attainment against the PSF.

Module learning outcomes are mapped to the PSF. We assess not only your final achievement but also your learning process. Assessments measure your achievement of PSF Descriptors and Dimensions as described in the marking criteria in this handbook. You must meet the marking criteria, including associated PSF elements, to get a passing mark on each assessment.

Each Dimension is explicitly assessed through the assessment tasks and must be evidenced in order to pass the assessment. We give you feedback through Blackboard and ensure that you meet the required elements of the PSF. At induction, we demonstrate the mechanism for accessing your feedback and checking that you have met the marking criteria including associated elements of the PSF. A recording of this demonstration is available in our Blackboard course as part of the Blackboard tour. You must pass all assessments in order to pass the module, because that is how we validate that you have met the learning outcomes and required elements of the PSF.

Our aim is to support you in developing your practice to evidence the breadth and depth of engagement with the Dimensions, as required for D2. Coursework is spread throughout the year, so the assessments provide multiple opportunities for you to evidence achievement against the Dimensions and Descriptors. You will have plentiful opportunities to receive and act upon formative feedback both informally through supportive dialogic tutorials and formally through assessed work.

To provide recognition in the Fellowship world for participants’ partial achievement midway through the scheme, D1 Associate Fellow status in Advance HE is awarded upon successful completion of Module 1. Descriptor 1 criteria require assessment of specific Dimensions, however, you will be assessed on these Dimensions at the depth required of D2, therefore contributing towards your Fellowship by the end of the programme. Successful completion of the PGCTHE as a whole leads to the Postgraduate Certificate as well as D2 Fellow status. For further details, see the section of this handbook on **Exam Board and Fellowship awards**.

This handbook gives guidance on the assessments and mechanics of both modules:

* **Module 1**: PDM0430 Professionalising your Teaching in HE (Associate Fellow)
* **Module 2**: PDM0530 Action Research and Reflective Practice in HE (Fellow)

## PGCTHE course team and contact details

The study scheme is run by the Learning and Teaching Enhancement Unit ([LTEU](https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/lteu/)), part of Information Services at Aberystwyth University.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
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| Neil Taylor SFHEA, Lecturer in Computer Science, Internal Moderator |  |
| Dr Edd Pitt SFHEA, Senior Lecturer in Higher Education and Academic Practice, University of Kent, External Examiner |  |

## Entry requirements

The PGCTHE is open to both full- and part-time staff from Aberystwyth University teaching at any level in HE. Many newly appointed tutors and lecturers are required to undertake this qualification as part of their probation. The course is also open to staff teaching at HE level at our partner colleges.

Participants should have a minimum of 40 hours contact teaching time over the duration of each module, from January through December. We will consider staff with other scenarios on a case-by-case basis, based on the teaching you anticipate doing over the course of the module.

You may skip Module 1 and go directly to Module 2 if you can provide evidence of Accredited Prior Learning (APL) via a certificate showing attainment of Associate Fellow status within the previous five years. In such a case, we will evaluate your prior knowledge and advise on how you can build on that foundation towards attaining full Fellow status within Module 2. Because Module 2 builds on the pedagogic theory and practice introduced in Module 1, we encourage you to either join the key pedagogic workshops from the Module 1 induction or attend equivalent workshops offered throughout the year for general teaching staff.

To apply for the programme, please contact the course team ([pgcthe@aber.ac.uk](mailto:pgcthe@aber.ac.uk)) first, and then follow the application instructions on the [PGCTHE website](https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/lteu/pgcthe/).

## Welsh and English

Aberystwyth University is required to conform with the [Welsh Language Standards](https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/cgg/bilingual-policy/). The PGCTHE is delivered primarily through the medium of English with Welsh medium support upon request. Key documents such as this student handbook are provided bilingually. Welsh-speaking participants are encouraged to make use of Welsh-medium materials through the [Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol](https://www.colegcymraeg.ac.uk/cy/).

For inductions, every effort is made to ensure that group activities can be conducted through Welsh, English or bilingually. We ask all participants to state your preferred language prior to the start of the module.

Work will be assessed in the language in which it is written. Where staff teach through the medium of Welsh, we arrange for a Welsh-speaking assessor to carry out the teaching observation. The needs analysis can be carried out through the medium of Welsh if desired. Please let the course team know in advance.

If you would like to have a Welsh-speaking mentor, please tell the PGCTHE course team.

## Getting started

Prior to the start of the module, the PGCTHE team will conduct a needs analysis meeting with you to complete a customised learning contract together, identifying your learning goals and areas for further development. In this process, we help ensure that you have sufficient coverage of the PSF. This is the start of your journey and is linked to CPD sessions that you undertake while on the course.

Each module has an induction in January, including interactive workshops in which learning and teaching methodologies are introduced and applied. The induction comprises a substantial part of our taught provision, so all participants are required to attend. Dates for induction are announced on the [PGCTHE web page](https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/lteu/pgcthe/).

## Mentors

You will be assigned a subject-based mentor by the head of your department. Mentors are experienced staff who will support you throughout the programme. Whenever possible, they will hold Fellow or Senior Fellow status and will have completed the PGCTHE within the past five years. The PGCTHE course team provides support for mentors in the form of a mentor handbook, Course Observer access to the relevant module in Blackboard, and training with special emphasis on the PSF. Mentors are invited to attend some of our PGCTHE induction sessions. We run training sessions to ensure that all mentors fully understand PSF 2023 and the requirements of the PGCTHE. Mentors receive the Student Handbook, the Mentor Handbook, and access to the Blackboard course for your module.

For Module 1, mentors observe your teaching to help you prepare for the course team’s assessed teaching observation. They advise you on your CPD plan and can look over assignments before submission.

For Module 2, mentors advise you on your action research project and CPD plan. This can include giving advice for the literature search and making sure that your project is feasible. We encourage you to ask your mentor to carry out an observation of your teaching.

## Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Each 30-credit module includes a minimum of 30 contact hours. For Module 1, this comprises 18 hours at induction plus 12 hours further CPD (training) sessions of your choice. For Module 2, this comprises 12 hours at induction plus 18 hours further CPD.

The LTEU offers a range of training sessions and recommends that staff be released from other duties where practicable to be able to take them. Many sessions offered by the PGCTHE course team and other LTEU staff are held online so that participants from partner colleges have equal access.

In order to count towards the CPD requirement for the PGCTHE, training sessions must include a discussion of **pedagogy for teaching at higher education level**. There are many options for meeting the CPD requirement:

* PGCTHE seminars (optional reading and discussion sessions offered monthly)
* Training sessions organised by the LTEU with a pedagogical element ([booking page](https://training.aber.ac.uk/))
* External webinars or podcasts about learning and teaching (see the [CPD Opportunities](https://trello.com/b/PwO5utD3/learning-and-teaching) section of our Learning and Teaching Trello board as well as the [Weekly Resource Roundup](https://wordpress.aber.ac.uk/e-learning/category/weekly-resource-roundup/))
* AU Teaching and Learning Conference
* CPD workshops at other institutions
* Attendance at learning and teaching-related workshops offered by Advance HE or other professional bodies
* External subject-specific conferences where learning and teaching are discussed
* Department or Faculty-based learning and teaching event
* Welsh medium courses or workshops about learning and teaching offered by [Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol](http://www.colegcymraeg.ac.uk/cy/), by university staff, or by professional bodies
* MOOC courses about learning and teaching

Work shadowing a colleague in a cognate department or another university or observations of experienced teachers are recognised as learning opportunities but do not count as CPD.

We require you to submit a non-assessed mid-year progress report so we can make sure you are getting enough appropriate CPD and making good progress towards meeting the PSF Descriptors for your module. This also helps us align our training provision with your needs as much as possible in the next round of sessions.

## Reading list and resources

See our [Aspire Reading List](https://aber.rl.talis.com/lists/47304D00-5934-CBAF-E726-8B2998A26023.html) for core texts and further resources, categorised by pedagogic area. Our Aspire reading list should be your starting point for any literature search.

Our [Learning and Teaching Trello board](https://trello.com/b/PwO5utD3/learning-and-teaching) has further online resources categorised by topic. The [Weekly Resource Roundup](https://wordpress.aber.ac.uk/e-learning/category/weekly-resource-roundup/) posts on the [LTEU blog](https://wordpress.aber.ac.uk/e-learning/) includes links to new and relevant publications and online events. We email participants whenever a new Roundup is released and recommend that you subscribe to the blog to receive email updates for all new posts from the team.

# Module 1 PDM0430 Professionalising your Teaching in HE

PDM0430 brings theory and practice together to help you make informed decisions about your teaching. The practice element comprises the things we do, such as designing learning, teaching, assessing, and supporting students. This is the ‘**What?**’ of learning and teaching. This module introduces a range of techniques and tips to help you develop your practice. The theory or pedagogic principles address the rationale behind those practices. This is the ‘**Why?**’ of teaching based on pedagogic literature. It is designed to help you use evidence-informed approaches to teaching. Why do scholars think these approaches would help students learn?

PDM0430 covers key principles of learning design, thus laying the foundation for the action research you carry out in PDM0530.

This module is mapped against PSF 2023. While the scheme is taught at D2 depth throughout, Module 1 ensures that participants meet Descriptors for D1 through assessed coursework. Authentication of practice is carried out through the assessed teaching observation and supported by evidence from the other assessments.

Upon successful completion of this module, staff who teach on an Aberystwyth University study scheme, whether based at the Aberystwyth campus or a partner institution, are awarded Associate Fellow status. For staff at partner institutions who do **not** teach on an Aberystwyth University study scheme, either their home institution or Advance HE would need to award Associate Fellow status.

## Content

* Individual needs analysis consultation to develop your learning contract.
* Induction (18 hours) at Aberystwyth University covering evidence-based pedagogic theory, learning design, and core principles of learning and teaching. Indicative topics include: aligned teaching (learning design, learning outcomes, learning activities, authentic assessment, meaningful feedback), active learning and student engagement, lessons from cognitive science about how students learn, detecting and preventing plagiarism, making teaching accessible, effective use of technology.
* 12 hours attendance at additional CPD events covering pedagogic theory and practice at HE level. These may be offered by Aberystwyth University or external.
* Observations of your teaching by your mentor (optional, non-assessed) and the PGCTHE team (assessed).
* Coaching sessions with your mentor and the PGCTHE team.
* Opportunities to participate in a community of practice and learn from peers.

## Learning outcomes

The learning outcomes are aligned with PSF 2023 (see appendix). For examples, see Advance HE’s Fellowship (D2) [Guide to the PSF 2023 Dimensions](https://s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/assets.creode.advancehe-document-manager/documents/advance-he/Guide%20to%20the%20PSF%202023%20Dimensions%20-%20Fellowship%20February%202023_1683714457.pdf).

On completion of this module, you should be able to:

1. Apply Professional Values in your teaching practice. (**V1-3, V5**)
2. Implement an effective and inclusive learning experience that supports all students in learning. (**V1-2, A1-5**)
3. Carry out aligned learning activities so that learning outcomes, activities, and assessment work together gracefully to help students learn. (**K1-2, A1-3**)
4. Use insights from pedagogic literature and CPD to inform development of your practice. (**V3, K1-3, A5**)
5. Critically reflect on your learning goals and prior assumptions about teaching in order to develop your practice. (**V3, K1, A5**)

## Assessment overview

| **Patchwork assessment** | **PSF** | **Outcomes** | **Weighting** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Patch 1 – Professional Values**  A written reflection on how the Professional Values inform your practice. 1000 words +/- 10%. | **V1-2, V5** | 1 | 20% |
| **Patch 2 – Community of Practice**  Contribute to an online discussion about developing your teaching practice. 1000 words +/- 10%. | **V1-2, A1-5** | 2 | 20% |
| **Patch 3 – Teaching Observation**  Teaching observation carried out by a member of the course team. Includes pedagogic rationale and reflection. 1000 words +/- 10%. | **V3, K1-2, A1-3, A5** | 3 | 20% |
| **Patch 4 – Pedagogic Principles from CPD and Readings**  What have you learned from CPD and pedagogic  literature? List CPD showing you meet the required 12 hours beyond induction. 1000 words +/- 10%. | **V3, K1-3, A5** | 4 | 20% |
| **Patch 5 – Reflective Narrative**  Tie the patches together, reflecting on your learning journey. 1000 words +/- 10%. | **V3, K1, A5** | 5 | 20% |

**In order to pass the module, you must pass all assessments with a mark of at least 50%.** This policy is in place to authenticate your teaching practice for accreditation from Advance HE. See Blackboard for more details about the assessed elements of the module.

**Word count:** You must adhere to the word limit set for any assessed work. Work exceeding the word count by more than 10% will be penalised by deduction of 5 marks for every 500 words over the limit. Include a word count for each assignment. Word count includes everything except for appendices and reference list. Please note that text in figures and tables, as well as headings, are all included in the word count. If you use footnotes, any textual comments in the footnotes apart from citations are also included in the word count.

**AI statement:** For all written work, include a statement in the appendix about AI use:

1. Did you use AI in this assignment in any way? If yes, answer questions 2-4.
2. How did you use it?
3. How did you ensure it helped you learn and wasn’t a replacement for learning?
4. How did you check the output to make sure it was accurate, complete, unbiased, and fit for purpose?

**Referencing style:** Use [APA](https://apastyle.apa.org/) or Harvard referencing styles. You may use another style, providing that you identify what it is and include a link to authoritative online guidance. See the [LibGuide on Referencing and Plagiarism Awareness](https://libguides.aber.ac.uk/referencing) for examples.

**Customised feedback (optional):** If you would like feedback on something not listed in the Marking Criteria, please include an appendix (no more than 100 words) telling what you would like feedback on. This applies to all patches.

## Patch 1 – Professional Values V1-2, V5

A written reflection on how the Professional Values inform your practice. 1000 words +/- 10%. Worth 20% of your final mark.

During induction, we will hold an activity to help you get started on this assignment. What do the PSF 2023 Professional Values mean to you? How do you apply them in your own teaching context? Discuss V1, V2, and V5, giving a concrete example for each, showing how you use it in your practice:

* **V1** respect individual learners and diverse groups of learners
* **V2** promote engagement in learning and equity of opportunity for all to reach their potential
* **V5** collaborate with others to enhance practice

Please note that V3 is assessed in other assignments, so we are not assessing it in in this assignment.

### Marking criteria – Professional values

We are looking for evidence of how you use these Professional Values in your practice:

1. Respect individual learners and diverse groups of learners in your own teaching context **V1**
2. Promote engagement in learning and equity of opportunity for all students **V2**
3. Collaborate with others to enhance practice **V5**

We will assess your submission according to the following marking bands:

* **Distinction 70 and above** – You express deep understanding of V1, V2, and V5. You provide clear and detailed concrete examples to illustrate how you apply them in practice. Your insights are expressed at a professional level suitable to serve as an example for others.
* **Merit 60-69** – You express good understanding of V1, V2, and V5. You provide concrete examples for each value to illustrate how you apply them in practice. With some revision, this contribution could be used as an example for others.
* **Pass 50-59** – You express a basic understanding of V1, V2, and V5 with some gaps. You provide generalised or incomplete examples to illustrate how you apply them in practice. This contribution requires significant further revision to be used as an example for others.
* **Fail 49 and below** – A poor contribution in which some of the key elements are lacking or inadequate, inadequate understanding is evident, or which falls below the minimum word count. This submission would require a thorough rewriting and addition of key elements in order to be of use to others as an example.

## Patch 2 – Community of Practice V1-2, A1-5

Contribute to an online discussion about developing your teaching practice. 1000 words +/- 10%. Worth 20% of your final mark.

The Community of Practice discussion board is a place for you to reflect on your learning, ask and offer advice to your peers. In this activity, you will link theory and practice. There is no word count for individual posts, but the combined total of your contributions should be 1000 words +/- 10%.

You are welcome to carry on making posts after the deadline, but only the posts and responses received before 11:00 on the deadline will be marked.

### Marking criteria – CoP

We are looking for these items at least once somewhere in your posts and replies. You may address several items in one post, if desired:

1. Ask for advice on a teaching issue you face and offer advice to others.
2. Reflect on your learning, sharing insights from pedagogic literature and CPD (cite about 3-5 sources in total). **A5**
3. Give a concrete example showing how you implement a learning experience that supports all students in learning. **V1-2**
4. Give the rationale behind your decisions for designing, facilitating, supporting, and assessing learning that is inclusive and effective. **A1-4**

We will assess your submission according to the following marking bands:

* **Distinction 70 and above** – You provide strong evidence showing how you implement an effective and inclusive learning experience that supports all students in learning. You ask for advice and provide a thorough and helpful response to questions by your peers. You have clearly explained an insight you gained from pedagogic literature and CPD, with a concrete example and complete citations. Your posts are suitable to serve as an example for others.
* **Merit 60-69** – You show how you implement an effective and inclusive learning experience that supports all students. You ask for advice and offer advice to others. You have explained in general terms what you have learned from pedagogic literature and CPD. All marking criteria are explicitly addressed. With some revision, this contribution could be used as an example for others.
* **Pass 50-59** – There is some insight into learning and teaching evident, expressed clearly for the most part but with some problems of clarity and language. You provide generalised examples to illustrate how you apply them in practice. All marking criteria are addressed explicitly or implicitly but some elements require significant further revision to be used as an example for others.
* **Fail 49 and below** – A poor contribution in which some of the key elements are lacking or inadequate, inadequate understanding of the issue is evident, or which falls below the minimum word count. Your posts would require a thorough rewriting and addition of key elements in order to be of use to others as an example.

## Patch 3 – Teaching Observation V3, K1-2, A1-3, A5

Teaching observation carried out by a member of the course team. Includes pedagogic rationale and reflection. 1000 words +/- 10%. Worth 20% of your final mark.

You are required to organise one assessed observation of your teaching by the PGCTHE course team. If you are based at a partner institution and would like to have your mentor carry out the observation, please contact the course team so that we can liaise with your mentor for consistency of assessment. If you are supporting learning in other ways but not directly teaching in a module, please contact the course team so that we can identify the most suitable way for you to meet this requirement.

There are four steps in the feedback dialogue for the teaching observation:

1. You fill out Section 1 of the form, including the **pedagogic rationale** for your choices in the session, and have a **pre-teaching chat** with the course team. Support your rationale with about 3-5 pedagogic sources in this section.
2. The course team observes your teaching and provides formative feedback through a **post-teaching chat** and in writing in Section 2. If you wish to revise the pedagogic rationale, send it to the course team at least one working day prior to the post-teaching chat.
3. After the post-teaching chat, you write a **post-observation reflection** in Section 3.
4. The course team provides feedback in Section 4 and a **final mark** for the observation.

Download the observation form from Blackboard, complete Section 1, and email the form to the [PGCTHE course team](mailto:thestaff@aber.ac.uk?subject=teaching%20observation) at least one working day before your pre-teaching chat.

### Marking criteria – Teaching Observation

We are looking for evidence of these items in your written work and live teaching session:

1. Carry out aligned learning activities so that learning outcomes, activities, and assessment work together to help all students learn. **A1-3**
2. Conduct your session in an inclusive manner, using effective methods to engage students and help them learn. **K1-2, A2**
3. Cite appropriate pedagogic sources (no more than 5 in total), showing what you learned and how these ideas informed your choices for this session. **V3,** **A1**
4. Reflect on your learning process, demonstrating a commitment to deepening your understanding of pedagogic principles and developing your teaching practice. **A5**

We will assess your submission according to the following marking bands:

* **Distinction 70 and above** – An excellent, inclusive teaching session in which a high level of pedagogic knowledge is applied to help all students engage effectively in learning. It is clear how you developed your practice and deepened your understanding. Your teaching is well aligned. The session would be suitable to serve as a role model for others to follow.
* **Merit 60-69** – A very good session in which most students are engaged effectively in learning and inclusive pedagogic methods are used. There is evidence that you have deepened your understanding and developed your practice. Your teaching is explicitly aligned. Some areas need minor further enhancement.
* **Pass 50-59** – A good session in which some students are engaged in effective learning and some inclusive teaching methods are used. There are indications that you have deepened your understanding and developed your practice, but this needs to be more explicit. Alignment is implied but not explicit. Some areas need significant enhancement.
* **Fail 49 and below** – A poor session in which inappropriate or ineffective methods are used and students are not engaged in learning. The session has serious issues with inclusive teaching. There is no evidence that you have deepened your understanding and developed your practice. There is no evidence of aligned teaching.

## Patch 4 – Pedagogic Principles from CPD and Readings V3, K1-3, A5

A written reflection on what you have learned from pedagogic literature and CPD so far. 1000 words +/- 10%. Worth 20% of your final mark.

Discuss one or two readings and one or two CPD sessions with concrete detail about what you learned and how you can apply the principles in practice. Use readings and CPD sessions relating to learning and teaching at university level. The CPD sessions must take place while our module is underway, starting from Induction.

### Marking criteria – Pedagogic principles

We are looking for evidence of these items in your written work:

1. Reflect on insights you have gained from one or two CPD sessions and one or two pedagogic readings since the start of our module. **V3, A5**
2. Based on an understanding of how students learn, make informed choices about approaches to teaching. **K1**
3. Provide brief concrete examples to make clear what the pedagogic principles look like in practice. **K2**
4. Use critical evaluation of pedagogic sources and of your students’ learning as a basis for effective practice. **K3**

We will assess your submission according to the following marking bands:

* **Distinction 70 and above** – An excellent reflection on both CPD and pedagogic literature that shows a considerable degree of critical evaluation. Significant insights are expressed at a professional level. Well-developed concrete examples are provided. You demonstrate a solid understanding of how students learn, showing how you apply this knowledge to inform your choices. Suitable to serve as an example for others.
* **Merit 60-69** – A good reflection on both CPD and pedagogic literature that shows a moderate level of critical evaluation. Insights and basic concrete examples are expressed clearly. You demonstrate some understanding of how students learn and how this knowledge informs your choices. Some minor points need further development. With minor revision, this could be used as an example for others.
* **Pass 50-59** – An acceptable reflection on CPD and pedagogic literature. Some of the required elements are only implicit, rather than explicitly stated. Needs significant revision to be used as an example for others.
* **Fail 49 and below** – A poor reflection in which some of the key elements are lacking or inadequate, inadequate understanding of pedagogic principles is evident, or which falls below the minimum word count. Requires a thorough rewriting and addition of key elements to serve as an example.

## Patch 5 – Reflective Narrative V3, K1, A5

Tie the patches together, reflecting on your learning journey. List CPD showing you meet the required 12 hours beyond induction. 1000 words +/- 10%. Worth 20% of your final mark.

Before you start writing, read over your previous patches and reflect on how your ideas have continued to develop since then.

In this final patch, connect your reflections to tell the story of your learning journey:

* Identify your **starting point**, prior assumptions and knowledge. When you started the PGCTHE, what did you want to learn? Why?
* Briefly narrate **two turning points** during the module when you deepened your understanding and developed your teaching practice. Refer to CPD and pedagogic literature as appropriate. Include both the pedagogic principles (**Why? factor**) and concrete examples showing what it looks like in practice (**What? factor**). In at least one of your concrete examples, demonstrate how you align teaching.
* What are your **next steps**? In one paragraph, tell what pedagogic ideas and practices you would like to develop further in Module 2, including any ideas you have for your Module 2 Action Research Project.
* In the **appendix**, include a reference list of sources cited and a list of CPD undertaken relevant to teaching and learning in HE during the course of our module. Give date, length of session, title, and PSF mapping. If it was a recorded session, make that explicit and give the date you watched or listened to the recording. You must attend at least 12 hours of HE-related CPD beyond induction in order to pass the module.

### Marking criteria – Reflective narrative

We are looking for evidence of these items in your written work:

1. Critically reflect on your learning goals and prior assumptions about learning and teaching. What have you learned from pedagogic literature and CPD? (cite about 3-5 sources in total). **V3, A5**
2. Tell how your understanding of how students learn has developed, with a concrete example illustrating the principles in practice and demonstrating alignment with specific learning outcomes. **K1**
3. The **appendix** includes a reference list of sources citedand a list of at least 12 hours CPD beyond induction, relevant to learning and teaching in HE. **V3, A5**

We will assess your submission according to the following marking bands:

* **Distinction 70 and above** – An excellent reflective narrative that shows independent critical thought, thorough use of relevant pedagogic literature, and considerable reflection on CPD and your own practice to demonstrate the turning points at which you deepened your understanding of how students learn and developed your own practice. Aligned teaching is thoroughly evidenced. Significant insights have been expressed at a professional level suitable to serve as an example for others.
* **Merit 60-69** – A good narrative that shows critical thought, use of pedagogic literature, and reflection. Insights into learning and teaching have been expressed clearly. Aligned teaching is explicit. With some revision, this narrative could be used as an example for others. Some areas need minor enhancement.
* **Pass 50-59** – An acceptable narrative that shows some critical thought, minimal use of pedagogic literature, and some evidence of reflection. There is some insight into learning and teaching, and it has been expressed clearly for the most part but with some problems of clarity and language. Aligned teaching is implied but not explicitly addressed. This narrative requires significant revision to be an example for others.
* **Fail 49 and below** – A poor narrative in which some of the key elements are lacking or inadequate. There is no evidence of aligned teaching. The narrative requires a thorough revision and addition of key elements to be used as an example.

# Module 2 PDM0530 Action Research and Reflective Practice in HE

PDM0530 builds on the foundation established in PDM0430 to enable you to apply pedagogic theory and develop your teaching practice. Through action research, you will devise a project to answer a research question based on pedagogic literature and the needs of your students. You make a change to your teaching or explore a new approach based on sound pedagogic principles and evaluate the impact on students. As with PDM0430, reflective practice is used throughout the module to help you deepen your understanding of how students learn and develop your teaching practice.

This module is mapped against PSF 2023. Descriptors for D2 and all of the Dimensions of the framework are assessed. Authentication of practice is carried out through the action research project and supported by evidence from a formative teaching observation.

Judgement of Fellow status is made at the PGCTHE level. If participants have started the programme directly with Module 2 based on Accredited Prior Learning (APL), then the judgement of equivalency is based on the needs analysis meeting and our evaluation that the APL is comparable to learning gained in Module 1.

Upon successful completion of the PGCTHE, Aberystwyth University staff and all staff based at partner institutions are awarded the Postgraduate Certificate. Staff who teach on an Aberystwyth University study scheme, whether based at the Aberystwyth campus or partner institution, are also awarded Fellow status. For staff at partner institutions who do **not** teach on an Aberystwyth University study scheme, either their home institution or Advance HE would need to award Fellow status.

## Content

* Individual needs analysis consultation to develop your learning contract.
* Induction (12 hours) at Aberystwyth University covering action research, evidence-based pedagogic theory and practice, and reflective practice for learning and teaching. Indicative topics include: inclusive teaching, reflective practice, measuring the impact of a teaching intervention on student learning, designing and running an action research project, good academic practice, powering up your students’ learning, effective use of technology.
* 18 hours attendance at additional CPD events covering pedagogic theory and practice at the HE level. These may be offered by Aberystwyth University or external.
* Participation in self-organised peer support groups with other participants.
* Coaching sessions with your mentor.
* Consultations and group sessions with the PGCTHE course team to develop your action research projects and ensure they are conducted ethically.
* Formative observation of your teaching by the course team, your PGCTHE mentor, or a colleague in your department as part of the university [Peer Support of Teaching](https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/lteu/teaching/pot/) scheme.
* Formative presentation of your action research project plan.

## Learning outcomes

The learning outcomes are aligned with PSF 2023 (see appendix). For examples, see Advance HE’s Fellowship (D2) [Guide to the PSF 2023 Dimensions](https://s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/assets.creode.advancehe-document-manager/documents/advance-he/Guide%20to%20the%20PSF%202023%20Dimensions%20-%20Fellowship%20February%202023_1683714457.pdf).

On completion of this module, you should be able to:

1. Apply Professional Values in your teaching practice including collaborating with others in a supportive and constructive manner. (**V1-2, V4-V5**).
2. Carry out an action research project in your practice using critical evaluation and evidence-informed approaches to gain insight for ongoing development. (**V3, K3, A1-4**)
3. Teach in an effective and inclusive way that supports all students and demonstrates an informed choice for use of technology. (**K1-2, K4, A1-4**)
4. Critically evaluate pedagogic literature and CPD to develop your personal teaching philosophy and practice, building further on Module 1 and prior learning. (**V3,** **K3, A5**)
5. Reflect on QA and the wider context of HE, showing how that informs your teaching decisions. (**V4, K5, A5**)

## Assessment overview

| **Details** | **PSF** | **Outcomes** | **Weighting** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Action Research Project**  Carry out an Action Research Project in your own teaching. 2500 words +/- 10%. | **V3, K1-3, A1-4** | 2, 3 | 50% |
| **Professional Values Statement**  Written reflection on how you apply the PSF Professional Values in practice. 1000 words +/- 10%. | **V1-2, V4-5** | 1 | 20% |
| **Teaching Practice Development**  Reflect on the development of your teaching practice, including an observation of your teaching. Evidence inclusive and effective teaching. 500 words +/- 10%. | **K1-2, K4, A1-2** | 3 | 10% |
| **Teaching Philosophy and CPD**  Describe your teaching philosophy  based on readings and CPD sessions  showing how you apply the principles in practice. Include implications of QA for your teaching context. List CPD showing you meet the required 18 hours beyond induction. 1000 words +/- 10%. | **V3-4, K3, K5, A5** | 4, 5 | 20% |

**In order to pass the module, you must pass all assessments with a mark of at least 50%.** This policy is in place to authenticate your teaching practice for accreditation from Advance HE. See Blackboard for more details about the assessed elements of the module.

**Word count:** You must adhere to the word limit set for any assessed work. Work exceeding the word count by more than 10% will be penalised by deduction of 5 marks for every 500 words over the limit. Include a word count for each assignment. Word count includes everything except for appendices and reference list. Please note that text in figures and tables, as well as headings, are all included in the word count. If you use footnotes, any textual comments apart from citations in the footnotes are also included in the word count.

**AI statement:** For all written work, include a statement in the appendix about AI use:

1. Did you use AI in this assignment in any way? If yes, answer questions 2-4.
2. How did you use it?
3. How did you ensure it helped you learn and wasn’t a replacement for learning?
4. How did you check the output to make sure it was accurate, complete, unbiased, and fit for purpose?

**Referencing style:** Use [APA](https://apastyle.apa.org/) or Harvard referencing styles. You may use another style, providing that you identify what it is and include a link to authoritative online guidance. See the [LibGuide on Referencing and Plagiarism Awareness](https://libguides.aber.ac.uk/referencing) for examples.

**Customised feedback (optional):** If you would like feedback on something not listed in the Marking Criteria, please include an appendix (no more than 100 words) telling what you would like feedback on. This applies to all assignments.

## Action Research Project (ARP) V3, K3, A1-4

One action research project about a teaching intervention carried out in your own practice (2500 words +/- 10%). Worth 50% of your final mark.

The aim of this assessment is to give you a structured opportunity via action research to learn more about how students learn. In action research, a teaching intervention is something new that you do in your teaching in order to improve students’ learning and gain a deeper understanding of the principles behind learning and teaching, yourself. In order to answer your research question, you will assess student learning needs, implement a teaching intervention based on sound pedagogic principles to better meet those needs, and evaluate the impact of the intervention on student learning.

Lydia Arnold’s diagram from [HEA Action Research: Practice Guide](https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/knowledge-hub/action-research-practice-guide) reproduced below is a good illustration of the process (used with permission):

Figure 1 Action research cycle, adapted from Arnold (2016)

**Before you run your project:** During induction, we will hold an activity to help you get started on this part of the assignment.

Give a 10-minute presentation of your project plan to the PGCTHE course team and a small group of peers in the module. The presentation is required but not assessed for a mark. It has two aims:

* **Ethics approval** is required before you run your project. After each presentation, the course team will tell you if you have shown suitable ethics consideration for us to approve your request. If so, please apply through the [Online Ethics Approval Form](https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/rbi/support-services/ethics/ethical-research/). If not, we will arrange further consultation.
* **Formative feedback** from both your peers and the course team will be given to help you refine your project plan. You are required to address the presentation feedback in your assessed ARP report.

The presentation should include the following slides:

1. **Teaching issue** – What evidence shows you that an intervention is needed?
2. **Research question** – What do you want to learn by running the project?
3. **Pedagogic principle** – What pedagogic principle do you want to explore? What sources have you already read or plan to read? (at the stage, you only need to cite about 2-3 sources)
4. **Teaching intervention** – Give a brief description of the intervention. How will this be different from your previous practice?
5. **Desired changes in students** – What changes do you wish to bring about in your students? E.g. specific behaviours, motivation, skill development, etc.
6. **Evaluation and ethics** – What data will you gather to see if the intervention brought about the desired changes? Include one or two sample questions. How have you ensured that the project will be run ethically?

Use PowerPoint or an alternative format such as PDF. All participants must upload the PowerPoint or other file for the presentation via Blackboard by the due date. The dates of the presentation sessions will be arranged by the course team to accommodate participants’ availability.

**After you have run your project:** Submit a project report with the following sections. Please download and use the report template from the module Blackboard site.

* **Introduction and teaching issue:** Identify a teaching issue, opportunity, or challenge (e.g. critical incident) that you wished to address in your own teaching. What evidence do you have from your students that a change is needed? Include a paragraph outlining the general context of your teaching (type of module, level of students, etc). Identify your research question. **A1**
* **Literature review:** Identify useful case studies and pedagogic theory. Tell how insights from your reading have informed the design of your project. Define key pedagogic terms based on the literature. Cite about 8-12 sources. **V3**
* **Implementation:** Describe how the project was implemented. What change did you make in your teaching? Give concrete examples linked with the rationale behind your decisions. How did you ensure your teaching practice was ethical and effective? **A1-4**
* **Results and evaluation:** Provide the key evidence you collected and analyse the data. Tell briefly how you considered ethics in the design of the research project, e.g. how you collected data ethically, how you ensured the project was fair and equitable for all students (see **Ethics** section in the handbook). What do the results show us about good teaching practice and the impact of your intervention on student learning? **K3**
* **Reflection and conclusion:** Answer your research question based on the evidence. Show how you have challenged your prior assumptions, deepened your understanding, and developed your teaching practice. What did you learn about how students learn and how we can best teach them? How will you use these insights in the future? **V3**
* **Appendices:** The appendices do not count towards the word count.
  + **Reference list:** List all sources cited. **V3**
  + **Use of formative feedback**: Include a short appendix to discuss how you used formative feedback from the Presentation to improve this project and report. 150-200 words.
  + **Project documentation (optional):** This area is suitable for short items such as your survey questions, a sample handout or presentation screenshot, etc. For reasons of length, do **not** put your raw data in the appendix.
  + **AI statement**

### Marking criteria – ARP

We are looking for evidence of these items in your report:

1. Use evidence-informed approaches as a basis for effective practice. The teaching intervention is informed by relevant CPD and pedagogic literature, demonstrating insights into how students learn. The first time you use a key pedagogic term, you define it based on the literature. The reference list includes works cited. **V3**
2. Effective and inclusive practice demonstrated through appropriate teaching, learning, assessment, and support methods in the subject area or discipline. The teaching intervention is an advance over previous practice, improving student learning. **A1-4**
3. Critical evaluation as a basis for effective practice. You ask a research question and answer it based on evidence, including both qualitative and quantitative data. Your report shows insight into learning and teaching. **K3**
4. You have followed appropriate ethics procedures. You show how you used feedback from the presentation to improve your project.

We will assess your submission according to the following marking bands:

* **Distinction 70 and above** – An excellent action research project report that shows critical evaluation, effective and inclusive practice, thorough use of relevant pedagogic literature to inform the project, and considerable reflection expressed clearly. Your research question is meaningful and answered based on the evidence with significant insights into learning and teaching. Ethics are addressed thoroughly. The report is of high enough quality to serve as the basis of a publishable case study.
* **Merit 60-69** – A good report that shows critical evaluation, effective and inclusive practice, use of pedagogic literature, and reflection. You ask a research question and answer it based on the evidence. Insights into learning and teaching have been expressed clearly. Ethics are addressed clearly. With some revision, there is potential for using this report as a case study. Some areas need minor further enhancement.
* **Pass 50-59** – An acceptable report that shows some critical evaluation, a satisfactory experimental design, minimal use of pedagogic literature, and some evidence of reflection. The research question is superficial or not fully answered by the evidence. Some insight into learning and teaching is expressed, but with problems of clarity and language. Ethics are addressed briefly but without detail. This report requires significant revision to be an example for others.
* **Fail 49 and below** – A poor report in which some of the key elements are lacking or inadequate. The research question is lacking or not answered by the evidence. Ethics are not addressed. The report requires a thorough rewriting and possibly redesigning the teaching intervention for reimplementation to use as a case study.

## Professional Values Statement V1-2, V4-5

Written report about how you apply the PSF Professional Values in practice. 1000 words +/- 10%. Worth 20% of your final mark.

Consider the Professional Values V1-2 and V4-5. What do they mean for your own teaching context? How do you use them in a meaningful way? Give one concrete example for each Professional Value. Please note that V3 is assessed in other assignments, so we are not assessing it in in this assignment.

### Marking criteria – Professional values statement

We are looking for evidence of how you understand and use each of these values in your own teaching context, with one concrete example for each:

1. Respect individual learners and diverse groups of learners. **V1**
2. Promote engagement in learning and equity of opportunity for all to reach their potential. **V2**
3. Respond to the wider context in which higher education operates, recognising implications for practice. **V4**
4. Collaborate with others to enhance practice. **V5**

We will assess your submission according to the following marking bands:

* **Distinction 70 and above** – An excellent Professional Values statement showing a strong commitment to all four values. Demonstrates thorough understanding of each value with clear concrete examples showing how you apply them in your own context. Written at a professional level suitable to serve as an example for others.
* **Merit 60-69** – A good Professional Values statement showing a commitment to all four values. Demonstrates explicit understanding of each value with concrete examples showing how you apply them in your own context. With minor revision, this statement could be used as an example for others.
* **Pass 50-59** – An acceptable Professional Values statement showing a basic commitment to all four values. Understanding and associated concrete examples are overly general or implicit for some of the values. This statement requires significant revision to be an example for others.
* **Fail 49 and below** – A poor Professional Values statement in which some of the key elements are lacking or inadequate. The statement requires a thorough revision and addition of key elements to be used as an example.

## Teaching Practice Development K1-2, K4, A1-2

A short report in which you reflect on the development of your teaching practice, including an observation of your teaching. Evidence inclusive and effective teaching. 500 words +/- 10%. Worth 10% of your mark.

Write a brief report reflecting on how you have developed your teaching practice since the start of the module.

**In the first half** of the report, reflect on a non-assessed observation of your teaching during our module. The observation can be carried out by a colleague in your department, your mentor, another PGCTHE participant, or the PGCTHE course team. You may use the [Peer Support of Teaching](https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/lteu/teaching/pot/) observation if you wish. What pedagogic insights did you learn from the observation? How are you developing your practice subsequently? In your discussion, tell how you make your teaching effective and inclusive. **(A1-2)**

Include the full teaching observation report in the appendix. The teaching observation itself does not count towards the word count.

**In the second half** of the report, give one concrete example for each of the following Dimensions, showing how you apply this Core Knowledge in your practice:

* **K1** how learners learn, generally and within specific subjects
* **K2** approaches to teaching and/or supporting learning, appropriate for subjects and level of study
* **K4** appropriate use of digital and/or other technologies, and resources for learning

### Marking criteria – Teaching practice development

We are looking for reflection on how your practice has developed since the start of the module:

1. **Teaching observation**: Reflect on how you have developed effective and inclusive practice in teaching and supporting students as appropriate to your context. **A1-2**
2. **Core knowledge**: Provide one concrete example for each of these Dimensions, showing how you apply them in practice. **K1-2**, **K4**

We will assess your submission according to the following marking bands:

* **Distinction 70 and above** – An excellent report that shows considerable reflection. You clearly demonstrate how you have developed inclusive and effective practice in your teaching. Your concrete examples for the three Dimensions of Core Knowledge show sound practice and deep understanding. The report is of high enough quality to serve as an example for others.
* **Merit 60-69** – A very good report that shows good reflection. You demonstrate how you have developed inclusive and effective practice in your teaching. Your concrete examples for the three Dimensions of Core Knowledge show good practice and understanding. With some revision, there is potential for using this report as an example for others. Some areas need minor further enhancement.
* **Pass 50-59** – An acceptable report that shows some evidence of reflection. You demonstrate a basic application of inclusive and effective practice in your teaching. Your concrete examples for the three Dimensions of Core Knowledge include some elements that are implicit or very general. This report requires significant revision to be an example for others.
* **Fail 49 and below** – A poor report in which some key elements are lacking or inadequate. The report requires a thorough rewriting to serve as an example for others.

## Teaching Philosophy and CPD V3-4, K3, K5, A5

Describe your teaching philosophy based on readings and CPD sessions with concrete detail showing how you apply the principles in practice. Include implications of QA for your teaching context. List CPD showing you meet the required 18 hours beyond induction. 1000 words +/- 10%. Worth 20% of your mark.

The teaching philosophy gives you a chance to reflect and synthesise what you have learned, building further on your prior knowledge since you started the course.

What matters to you as a teacher?

Construct your own personal teaching philosophy, including both **what** you do and **why**. Describe your teaching practice with the pedagogic principles that underpin it. This is about your growth and ability to make informed choices in your own context.

In the **body** of the report, tell what you have learned and how you use it to make your teaching as effective as it can be. Tell how you:

* Use evidence-informed approaches (e.g. What pedagogic principles from your reading are most important to you? How do you use them?) Cite about 3-5 sources.
* Enhance your practice through continuing professional development (e.g. What was your biggest insight from CPD sessions? How do you apply it?)
* Use critical evaluation to teach effectively (e.g. Having run an ARP, what will you do in future to evaluate the effectiveness of your teaching?)
* Assure and enhance the quality of your teaching (e.g. How do you apply QA practices in your context?)
* Respond to the wider context for HE (e.g. How does your teaching meet key agendas in the sector?)

In the **appendix**, include a list of sources cited and list CPD undertaken since starting our module. Give date, length of session, title, and PSF mapping. If it was a recorded session, make that explicit and give the date you watched or listened to the recording. You must attend at least 18 hours of HE-related CPD beyond induction in order to pass the module.

### Marking criteria – Teaching philosophy

We are looking for evidence of these items in your teaching philosophy:

1. Tell what you do in your teaching practice and why, using evidence-informed approaches as a basis for effective practice. **V3**
2. Reflect on continuing professional development to enhance your practice, meeting the module CPD requirement. **A5**
3. Use critical evaluation as a basis for effective practice. **K3**
4. Apply knowledge of requirements for quality assurance and enhancement, and their implications for practice. **K5**
5. Respond to the wider context in which higher education operates, recognising implications for practice. **V4**

We will assess your submission according to the following marking bands:

* **Distinction 70 and above** – An excellent teaching philosophy that shows independent critical thought, thorough use of relevant pedagogic literature, and considerable reflection on CPD and your own practice. Significant insights into learning and teaching have been expressed at a professional level suitable to serve as an example for others.
* **Merit 60-69** – A good teaching philosophy that shows critical thought, use of pedagogic literature, and reflection. Insights into learning and teaching have been expressed effectively. With some revision, this could be used as an example for others. Some areas need minor enhancement.
* **Pass 50-59** – An acceptable teaching philosophy that shows some critical thought, minimal use of pedagogic literature, and some evidence of reflection on CPD. There is some insight into learning and teaching with evidence of reflection. This teaching philosophy requires significant further revision to be used as an example for others.
* **Fail 49 and below** – A poor teaching philosophy in which some of the key elements are lacking or inadequate. The narrative requires a thorough rewriting and addition of key elements in order to serve as an example.

# Policies and procedures

## Registration and student account

In order to complete your registration for the PGCTHE modules, you will need to activate your student account and complete the online registration process via your student record. There is a second registration that takes place in September, because our modules bridge two academic years. We will send you details about these processes in advance.

It is essential that you keep your student account active. If your student account is locked for any reason, you won’t be able to log onto Blackboard and complete the assignments. The university sends important messages to your student email account, so it is your responsibility to monitor these messages.

## Privacy and data retention policy

In accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Aberystwyth University will hold your data securely on university systems. The [Student Privacy Statement](https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/academic-registry/about/data-protection-information/data-protection-notice-applicants/) on the university admissions page gives details about how your admission documentation and student record information is held. In addition, the PGCTHE course team holds your assignment submissions and feedback securely and confidentially in the Blackboard courses for each module for five years from the start of each module. Only members of the course team are able to view this information for purposes directly associated with your participation in the PGCTHE programme. These include, for example: moderation of marks at exam board, reporting marks through the Student Record system, and recording your achievement with Advance HE so that they can issue certificates when you complete each module of the programme (Associate Fellow for successful completion of Module 1, and Fellow for successful completion of the PGCTHE). If successful completion of the PGCTHE programme is part of your probation, the PGCTHE course team will notify HR once you have completed the study scheme successfully.

Aberystwyth University has a legitimate interest under the General Data Protection Regulation in processing the information for this purpose and it will only be used for administration associated with your participation in the PGCTHE programme. For more information about your rights, please see the university page on [Data Subjects’ Rights](https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/infocompliance/dp/data-subject-rights/).

## Late submission, deadline extensions, and special circumstances

Please see the [Academic Quality Handbook](https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/academic-registry/handbook/) for details of university policy and procedures that apply to the PGCTHE. If university policies and procedures change after this handbook is published, we will update the handbook to reflect the changes.

* **3.3 Submission of Coursework** – ‘Work submitted after the deadline will be awarded a zero’.
* **3.8 Special Circumstances and Reasonable Adjustments** – To request consideration of special circumstances (e.g. medical or family emergency that interferes with your ability to complete coursework), download the Special Circumstances form from the [Academic Quality Handbook](https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/academic-registry/handbook/taught-schemes/) and send it to the [PGCTHE course team](mailto:thestaff@aber.ac.uk) with documentation. Tell how the special circumstances impacted your study, including the dates when the special circumstances began and ended or are expected to end. Participants who are granted Special Circumstances are allowed to resit the failed or missing coursework for an uncapped mark. If you require reasonable adjustments, please tell the [PGCTHE course team](mailto:thestaff@aber.ac.uk) directly at the earliest opportunity.
* **3.9 Coursework Extensions** – ‘Extensions can only be granted where there are clear medical/personal circumstances (supported by independent documentary evidence) that have affected a student’s ability to submit coursework on time’. To request an extension for up to two weeks, download the form from the [Academic Quality Handbook](https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/academic-registry/handbook/taught-schemes/) and send it to the [PGCTHE course team](mailto:thestaff@aber.ac.uk)at least three days before the assignment deadline.

## Referrals, fails, and appeals

Where assessors judge that an element does not meet the requirements to achieve a pass, that element is referred. Referred elements will be read by the internal moderator and external examiner. Where the referral is agreed by the Examination Board, the candidate will be given guidance concerning what needs to be done to demonstrate performance of the learning outcomes.

Referred elements must be submitted by the next submission date. Referred elements can be resubmitted no more than twice before the candidate is deemed to have failed the module. Participants who are referred and who have not been granted Special Circumstances will be allowed to resit for a mark capped at the passing level, 50%.

In the event of a candidate’s failing the module, there is a right of appeal in accordance with AU practice for postgraduate study. Please see [12. Academic Appeals](https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/academic-registry/handbook/appeals/) from the Academic Quality Handbook for details of the procedure.

## Withdrawal

Those who want to withdraw from Module 1 or Module 2 for any reason, including leaving University employment, should contact the course team as soon as possible. See the [Withdrawal from University](https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/academic-registry/students/ug-issues/other-info/withdrawal/) page for full details and instructions for requesting a withdrawal via the online student record system.

If you wish to withdraw temporarily and continue the programme at a later date, please indicate this clearly on the form. Please note that for technical reasons, **students taking a temporary withdrawal are not able to withdraw during the exam periods**.

## Assessment, exam board, and Fellowship award processes

The Associate Fellow and Fellow awards are issued based on successful completion of module coursework, which assesses the relevant Descriptors and Dimensions. The PGCTHE programme follows standard university procedures for credit-bearing academic programmes, such as exam boards and reporting of marks, detailed in the diagram below.

Figure 2 Diagram of processes

Coursework is marked and second marked by PGCTHE course team members who hold Senior Fellow status.

The main PGCTHE exam board meets once a year in February to approve module marks. Supplementary exam boards are held in June or August/September if needed for resits or students completing coursework after returning from temporary withdrawal.

The PGCTHE Exam Board is chaired by the PGCTHE Coordinator and consists of:

* PGCTHE Coordinator
* External Examiner
* Internal Moderator
* Other members as needed

Prior to the PGCTHE exam board, the internal moderator and external examiner read a selection of submissions across the marking range and have access to all assignments, feedback, and marks. The sample comprises:

* The work of at least 10 students or at least 10% of the total number of students, whichever is greater
* The work of all students awarded a ‘Fail’ overall due to poor performance
* A proportional sample of the work of students in other degree classifications

In their reports, both the internal moderator and external examiner comment on the compliance of Module 1 with PSF D1 and Module 2 with PSF D2.

After the PGCTHE exam board, results are submitted to Academic Registry and validated at the university’s Senate Exam Board. The LTEU then enters the details of successful candidates into the Advance HE Fellowship database. You will then receive a message from Advance HE with instructions for downloading your certificate.

The LTEU then reports names of staff who attain Associate Fellow or Fellow to the university Human Resources office and partner institutions as appropriate. Names of successful candidates are also reported to Academic Enhancement Committee and the ARCHE panel. Participants who withdraw or are referred are not named in those reports.

For those progressing from Module 1 to Module 2, please note that the Exam Board takes place after the Module 2 induction. This means that your progression to Module 2 is provisional upon final validation of a passing mark for Module 1 at the exam board.

## Research ethics

When working with human participants, particularly student cohorts, it is important that you consider and apply relevant research ethics guidelines when designing teaching interventions for the PGCTHE. Key issues that you may need to consider include:

* Working in a dual role
* Obtaining informed consent
* Offering confidentiality and anonymity
* Ensuring that vulnerable groups are appropriately supported

With the support of your mentor and the PGCTHE Coordinator, you must ensure that have read the [Research Ethics Policy](https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/rbi/support-services/ethics/) at the design and planning stage of your research. It is also important that you also observe any departmental or discipline-specific ethical practices (e.g. BPS or BERA guidelines).

Participants in PDM0530 are required to [request Ethics approval](https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/rbi/staff-students/ethics/#step-:-complete-an-assessment) for your action research project before you run it. In order to approve your request, we need a clear understanding of what you intend to do and how you plan to address ethical issues. Therefore, you are required to discuss your action research project plans with the PGCTHE Coordinator prior to submitting your Ethics approval request. If your presentation provides sufficient evidence of ethical consideration, the course team will tell you immediately after the presentation so you can submit your request straightaway. If not, we will schedule a consultation.

It is not envisaged that Research Ethics Panel (REP) approval will be required for PGCTHE activities. However, if the activity falls outside the scope of this document or if you simply require further advice, please contact the Research Ethics team via [ethics@aber.ac.uk](mailto:ethics@aber.ac.uk), who will be happy to assist you in setting up your chosen project. Please see the [Research Ethics](https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/rbi/support-services/ethics/) page for further guidance.

# Appendix 1 – PSF 2023

The PGCTHE is accredited at Descriptor 1 (Module 1) and Descriptor 2 (completion of the PGCTHE) by Advance HE. The scheme is based on PSF 2023. For examples and expanded explanations, see Advance HE’s Fellowship (D2) [Guide to the PSF 2023 Dimensions](https://s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/assets.creode.advancehe-document-manager/documents/advance-he/Guide%20to%20the%20PSF%202023%20Dimensions%20-%20Fellowship%20February%202023_1683714457.pdf).

## Descriptor 1 of the PSF (achieved upon completion of Module 1)

Participants who successfully complete Module 1 will be awarded Associate Fellow status.

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**

## Descriptor 2 of the PSF (achieved upon completion of full PGCTHE)

Participants who successfully complete the PGCTHE including Module 2 will be awarded Fellow status.

D2 is suitable for individuals whose practice with learners has breadth and depth, enabling them to evidence all Dimensions. Effectiveness of practice in teaching and/or support of high-quality learning is demonstrated through evidence of:

* D2.1 use of all five **Professional Values**
* D2.2 application of all five forms of **Core Knowledge**
* D2.3 effective and inclusive practice in all five **Areas of Activity**

## PSF 2023 Dimensions Checklist

**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

**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

# Appendix 2 – PGCTHE Learning Contract

Please fill out as much of this form as you can and send it to the [PGCTHE course team](mailto:thestaff@aber.ac.uk) prior to our needs analysis meeting. We will work through the form together during the meeting.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **PGCTHE Module** | PDM0430 / PDM0530 |
| **Student name** |  |
| **What name do you prefer to be called?** |  |
| **How would you like your name to appear on your Fellowship certificate? What email would you like Advance HE to use when notifying you about your certificate?** |  |
| **What pronouns do you use?** |  |
| **Are you currently undertaking another study scheme?** | No / Yes, PhD / Yes, other (please specify)  If yes, give expected completion date: |
| **Other information about your background** (if on a fixed-term contract, please give dates) |  |

**Your teaching context at university level**

The PGCTHE is customised to your needs. Please tell us about the university-level teaching you expect to do over the course of the module (delete or add as needed).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Level** | Foundation / UG / PGT / PGR / other |
| **Department / study scheme** |  |
| **Main topics taught** |  |
| **Teaching mode** | On campus / Bespoke DL / other |
| **Approximate total hours** |  |
| **Typical class size** | **Large** (>100) / **Medium** (30-99) / **Small** (10-29) / **Tutorial** (<10) |
| **Class types** | Lecture / Seminar / Practical / Tutorial / other |
| **Home institution** | Aberystwyth University / Coleg Cambria / other |

**Your prior knowledge**

Everyone has a unique starting point based on your prior knowledge and experience. What do you already know about pedagogy? How did you learn it?

| **Area of pedagogic knowledge** | **How you gained that knowledge** |
| --- | --- |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

**Your learning goals**

What do you want to learn while on this module? Please list your learning goals in the table below. During our needs analysis meeting, we will refine your list together.

| **Your learning goals** |
| --- |
|  |

**What you can expect from the course team**

The list below describes what we offer for all participants. What else can we do to support your learning? During our meeting, we will discuss the support you need.

| **For all participants, the course team will:** |
| --- |
| * Treat you honestly, fairly, and with respect * Keep you informed about useful resources and CPD opportunities * Respond to emails within two working days * Design activities and materials that are as accessible and inclusive as possible * Mark according to the marking criteria * Provide feedback on strengths and areas for future focus * Return feedback within 15 working days * Schedule consultations upon request * Support you in your specific teaching context |
| **What else can we do to support you (include any support through the medium of Welsh)?** |
|  |

**What the course team expects of you**

This list below describes our expectations of all participants. Please tell us what you are willing to commit to your study. We will discuss this during our meeting.

| **The course team expects all participants to:** |
| --- |
| * Treat the course team and other participants honestly, fairly, and with respect * Keep in contact with the course team, especially if you have difficulties or issues * Read emails from the Course Team, and respond as appropriate * Visit the Blackboard course regularly * Read the [Weekly Resource Roundup](https://wordpress.aber.ac.uk/e-learning/category/weekly-resource-roundup/) to identify CPD sessions and pedagogic literature that are useful for your teaching context * Attend the induction and carry out any associated preparation tasks * Read relevant pedagogic literature throughout the module, using our [Aspire reading list](https://aber.rl.talis.com/lists/47304D00-5934-CBAF-E726-8B2998A26023.html) as a starting point * Allocate enough time to complete the coursework by the deadline (contact the course team as soon as possible if you cannot meet a deadline) * Follow the assignment briefs, citing all sources appropriately * Contact the course team if you have any questions about the coursework, CPD, or the module in general |
| **What are you willing to commit to your study?** |
|  |

**PSF 2023 Dimensions**

During our needs analysis meeting, we will discuss the Dimensions together to identify which areas you need to develop further, keeping in mind that the Areas of activity require evidence of effective and inclusive practice.

Please tick the items where you want to learn more.

**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

**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

**Sign-off**

The staff member and student agreed to this learning contract on the date below.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Student** | **Staff member** |
|  |  |  |

Aberystwyth University has a legitimate interest under the General Data Protection Regulation in processing the information for this purpose and it will only be used for administration associated with your participation in the PGCTHE programme. For more information about your rights, please see the university page on [Data Subjects’ Rights](https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/infocompliance/dp/data-subject-rights/).

# Appendix 3 – PDM0430 Assessed Teaching Observation Form

**Section 1 Participant’s information**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name of Participant** | **Date** |
| **Name of Observer** | **Number of students in class** |
| **Module** | **Location** |
| **Topics:** | **Start Time**  **Finish Time** |
| **Learning outcomes for this session** | |
| **Pedagogic rationale for the methods used in this session. Support your rationale with about 3-5 pedagogic sources. Include provision you have made to make learning materials accessible. (500 words)** | |
| **In what areas would you like to receive advice and feedback?** | |

**Section 2 Observer comments and feedback**

| Marking criteria and feedback from observer | Distinction | Merit | Pass | Fail |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1. Carry out aligned learning activities so that learning outcomes, activities, and assessment work together to help all students learn **A1-3** |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Conduct your session in an inclusive manner, using effective methods to engage students and help them learn. **K1-2, A2** |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Cite appropriate pedagogic sources (no more than 5 in total), showing what you learned and how these ideas informed your choices for this session. **V3,** **A1** |  |  |  |  |

**General comments**

|  |
| --- |
| **Strongest aspects of this teaching session** |
| **Future areas of focus** |

**Section 3 Participant’s post-observation reflection (500 words combined)**

Your answers to these questions will provide useful material for your reflective narrative and for practical application in your teaching.

|  |
| --- |
| **What insights into pedagogic principles (the Why? of learning) did you gain from this observation?** |
| **Going beyond the feedback given to you by the course team, what developments are you considering making to your teaching practice based on what you have learned?** |

**Section 4 Observer feedback on post-observation reflection**

| Marking criteria and feedback from observer | Distinction | Merit | Pass | Fail |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1. Reflect on your learning process, demonstrating a commitment to deepening your understanding of pedagogic principles and developing your teaching practice. **A5** |  |  |  |  |

|  |
| --- |
| **Further comments on post-observation reflection:** |

**Marking bands**

* **Distinction 70 and above** – An excellent, inclusive teaching session in which a high level of pedagogic knowledge is applied to help all students engage effectively in learning. It is clear how you developed your practice and deepened your understanding. Your teaching is well aligned. The session would be suitable to serve as a role model for others to follow.
* **Merit 60-69** – A very good session in which most students are engaged effectively in learning and inclusive pedagogic methods are used. There is evidence that you have deepened your understanding and developed your practice. Your teaching is explicitly aligned. Some areas need minor further enhancement.
* **Pass 50-59** – A good session in which some students are engaged in effective learning and some inclusive teaching methods are used. There are indications that you have deepened your understanding and developed your practice, but this needs to be more explicit. Alignment is implied but not explicit. Some areas need significant enhancement.
* **Fail 49 and below** – A poor session in which inappropriate or ineffective methods are used and students are not engaged in learning. The session has serious issues with inclusive teaching. There is no evidence that you have deepened your understanding and developed your practice. There is no evidence of aligned teaching.