LEARNING & TEACHING PRACTICE PROGRAM

An accredited pathway to recognition as a HEA FELLOW or SENIOR FELLOW.

GUIDANCE NOTES FOR ASSESSORS JUDGING FELLOWSHIP (FHEA) APPLICATIONS 2021

Version 2
Introduction

Recognition as a Higher Education Academy Fellow (FHEA) requires an applicant to meet Descriptor 2 (D2) of the Professional Standards Framework (PSF). Recognition as a FHEA acknowledges that an applicant has evidenced sustained effectiveness in teaching and enhancing the student learning experience, combined with scholarship, educational research and/or other professional activities. In making your assessment, you are asked to look for holistic evidence that the applicant is fulfilling the requirements of all elements of D2.

Please read these guidance notes in conjunction with:

- The PSF Dimensions of Practice (p.3) and PSF Descriptor 2 (p.5)
- The Griffith Application Form for FHEA
- Resources from the “Being a HEA Mentor and Assessor” professional learning workshop

In assessing FHEA applicants you are looking for evidence that PSF Descriptor 2 is met in full, through:

- a reflective portfolio of learning and teaching practice that evidences successful engagement, and evidence-based scholarly practice, in teaching and enhancing the student learning experience, combined with evidence of scholarship; and
- engagement in, and impact of, professional learning (development).

Understanding the components of the FHEA application

Part I: Reflective Portfolio of Learning and Teaching Practice

Teaching Philosophy Statement

This should help you understand the applicant's approach to teaching, and the context of practice. Ideally, a philosophy will be personal and reflective. You do not need to assess the philosophy, but should use it as a basis for understanding the applicant’s approach to education, potentially as evidence of commitment to Professional Values. You may refer to the philosophy in your feedback.

Reflective Portfolio of Learning and Teaching Practice

The reflective portfolio should have a strong reflective, not only descriptive, focus. It must be based around evidencing Descriptor 2 and must relate to the PSF Dimensions of Practice and be annotated with A’s, K’s and V’s. In some cases the portfolio may contain the Areas of Activity (A1-A4) as headings and be annotated only with K’s and V’s. The annotations should be substantive and indicate a deep understanding of the PSF and its connection to the applicant’s experience.

In the reflective portfolio, look for evidence of the applicant’s successful engagement and evidence-based scholarly practice (i.e. reference to the literature, influential persons/ideas, reference to policy or other professional knowledge that supports their practice) with regard to:

- All five Areas of Activity (Note: A5 is described in the next section of the application)
- All elements of Core Knowledge
- All Professional Values

If the applicant alludes to roles and responsibilities, awards, initiatives and innovations, and/or research in teaching and learning, they should be reflecting on the nature of these achievements as influences on teaching practice, not just listing.
Within the application, you will need to read both the Reflective Portfolio of Learning and Teaching Practice and Engagement in Professional Learning (Development) before making your final judgement on Descriptors D2(i) to D2(vi).

Reflection on Engagement in Professional Learning (Development)

Whilst the reflective portfolio is based around the five Areas of Activity, the Reflection on Engagement in Professional Learning section offers the applicant the opportunity to describe, evidence and reflect in greater detail on their professional learning (also known as professional development or continuing professional development – CPD). This section should provide evidence of D2(vi).

Part II: Referee’s Reports

The two Referee’s Reports should authenticate the applicant’s practice. You should use these reports to confirm and complement the applicant’s claims. In addition, the reports provide background on the applicant’s learning and teaching practice (experience and capabilities) in the context of the PSF. The referees must have current or recent experience of working in Higher Education and may hold a category of HEA Fellowship, although this is not essential. The referee needs to be in a position to comment on and substantiate the applicant’s record. In judging the application, you cannot use referee reports, no matter how positive, to make up for any substantive weaknesses in the applicant’s own case. The key principle is that it is the applicant’s responsibility to make a satisfactory claim and they cannot be judged to have met the standard for Fellowship unless they have done so themselves through their application.

Judging the application

You have two overall choices to make regarding an application. These are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Award FHEA</th>
<th>The evidence is sufficient to grant HEA Fellowship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More evidence required</td>
<td>The evidence is insufficient and the applicant may then use the feedback to re-submit their application for Fellowship</td>
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Using the Descriptors to evaluate an application

You should base your judgement on the six Descriptors for the Fellowship category (D2). The preamble to the Descriptor states that successful applications should demonstrate a broad understanding of effective approaches to teaching and learning support as key contributions to high quality student learning.
Individuals should be able to provide evidence of fulfilling the requirements of ALL ELEMENTS of Descriptor 2. The heart of the judgement process is to use the application to make a judgement about the actual teaching and learning support practice of the applicant.

Descriptors relating to Areas of Activity

\*D2 (i) Successful engagement across all five Areas of Activity.\*  
\*D2 (iv) Successful engagement in appropriate teaching practices related to the Areas of Activity\*

D2(i) and D2(iv) are closely linked and are considered together. Applications should provide evidence of successful engagement with all five Areas of Activity. The evidence should be found across the “Reflective Portfolio of Learning and Teaching Practice” and will give descriptions of specific examples of when applicants have engaged with the Areas of Activity. It is important that the applicant clearly indicates their role in relation to the examples given.

Examples should be drawn from recent practice and must relate to higher education learning i.e. the programmes of study used as examples must be at least Level 5 of the Australian Qualifications Framework.

The depth of coverage of the Descriptors will vary according to the particular context and role of the applicant.

If you believe that any of the following are not adequately demonstrated (and you record this on the Assessor Form as “Not Demonstrated”), then this is an automatic “more evidence required” outcome:

- any Area of Activity
- the descriptor relating to Professional Values
- any of the descriptors relating to Core Knowledge

The evidence for successful engagement with D2 should be reflective and this should be based directly on all the Dimensions of Framework - that is, on the Areas of Activity, Core Knowledge and Professional Values. Generalised reflection which ignores the structure and elements of the Framework is not acceptable. It is essential that applicants demonstrate that they have engaged explicitly with all Dimensions of the Framework.

Descriptors relating to Core Knowledge

\*D2 (ii) Appropriate knowledge and understanding across all aspects of Core Knowledge (K1-K6)\*  
\*D2 (v) Successful incorporation of subject and pedagogic research and/ or scholarship within the above activities, as part of an integrated approach to academic practice\*  
\*D2 (vi) Successful engagement in continuing professional development in relation to teaching, learning, assessment and, where appropriate, related professional practices\*

D2(ii), D2(v) and D2(vi) are closely linked and are treated together.

Evidence of fulfilling these Descriptors may be found in all sections of the application, including the “Reflective Portfolio of Learning and Teaching Practice”.

D2(ii)

The chosen examples of engagement must be accompanied by a discussion of the rationale of the applicant’s approach in terms of their acquisition and application of Core Knowledge. You are expected to use your professional judgement in relation to the overall depth and adequacy of coverage of each element of Core Knowledge. If some elements are dealt with in more depth and others more superficially then compensation is acceptable.
The term ‘appropriate’ should also be used to inform your judgement about evidence of Core Knowledge. All the elements should be interpreted in the light of the professional context of the applicant and what is appropriate for them given that context. For example, the methods they choose to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching will be heavily dependent on the disciplinary and situational context in which they are teaching and/or supporting learning.

D2(v)
It is important that Fellows provide evidence of having accessed and utilised external advice and guidance based on educational scholarship (including educational literature). It is possible, though not essential, that they themselves might be undertaking some kind of research or scholarship. It might also be possible they might include research outcomes or dissemination (or publication) but this is more indicative of Senior Fellow.

D2(vi)
A real and practical commitment to professional learning (continuing professional development) is central to the Framework and no applicant should gain Fellowship who has not clearly and explicitly evidenced such a commitment. This emphasis is stated explicitly in the Framework in A5, but is also reaffirmed in K5, K6 and V3. It follows that evidence for this Descriptor is likely to be found within the “Engaging in Professional Learning Statement”, also possibly across the application.

Descriptor relating to Professional Values

D2 (iii) A commitment to all the Professional Values (V1-V4)

Professional values underpin all of the professional activity of teaching and supporting learning and the applicant needs to provide evidence of their commitment to the values throughout their application. In principle, evidence of all of the professional values might be found anywhere within the application, including the “Reflective Portfolio of Learning and Teaching Practice”.

Key principles for evaluating applications for Fellowship (FHEA)

Independent review
All applications are to be reviewed by TWO Assessors.

Assessors supported throughout the process
The Program 4 Coordinator, or other SFHEA member of the HEA Fellowship Team, will be available to support Assessors throughout all assessment processes.

Standardised evaluation judgements
In order to qualify to assess, Assessors must participate in specific Assessor professional learning workshops provided by the HEA Fellowships@Griffith scheme. Standardised evaluation judgements are achieved through: the panel process and discussions; the role of an external assessor and moderation by the Program 4 Coordinator.

Conflicts of interest
Please notify the Program 4 Coordinator immediately of any possible conflicts of interest – preferably early in the reviewing period - so that the application(s) in question can be reallocated promptly to another Assessor or assessment panel. Conflicts of interest may include, for example, if you:

➢ are a personal friend or a relative of the applicant;
work closely with the applicant
mentor the applicant
work closely with a relative or close friend of the applicant
have previously reviewed the application

In any instance where your objective professional judgement or impartiality may be affected, then you should notify the Program 4 Coordinator.

The Assessment Process

The role of the Assessor

- The central role of the Assessor is to make a judgement as to whether the applicant has provided sufficient evidence of having met the requirements for Fellowship (FHEA).
- Each application will be reviewed independently by TWO Assessors.
- The applications will be sent to Assessors by the HEA Scheme Administrator.
- You must complete a separate ASSESSMENT GRID form for each applicant.
- Feedback must be provided within the relevant parts of the Form. Where you indicate more evidence required you should explain clearly what the applicant needs to do to achieve acceptance as a Fellow.
- Feedback may be provided where you have noticed a particular strength or exemplary work.
- To help you in making that overall judgement you will indicate “Met” or “Not Met” throughout the grid.
- You are encouraged to discuss and resolve any individual differences in judgements to reach agreed consensus judgement. If the overall judgement of a particular application by TWO Assessors is different (e.g. one award and one more evidence required) then the application will be sent to moderation by the Program 4 Coordinator. (See the Final Decision Table – FHEA for details)

The role of the Lead Assessor

- You will act as Lead Assessor for one or more applications you are allocated.
- It will be your responsibility to discuss and resolve any individual differences in judgements to reach agreed consensus judgement. (see decision table below).
- A “Panel Outcome and Feedback” form is to be used to summarise each panel decision. The Lead Assessor will record the decisions of all assessors on this form and collate the feedback from all assessors. The “Panel Outcome and Feedback” form is supplied to the applicant.
- If the outcome of an assessment is more evidence required, it is the responsibility of the Lead Assessor to work with the panel to determine what further work the applicant needs to undertake in order to attain Fellowship and to write the necessary feedback. The feedback should be completed by the closing date of the panel and be written on the “Panel Outcome and Feedback” form.
- Applicants will be encouraged to provide additional evidence within 28 days of assessment notification, and those applicants who do this will have their additional evidence assessed by the original Panel of Assessors.
Outcomes

Assessors are required to recommend one of two outcomes.

1. Award FHEA

This outcome is selected when you believe the applicant has fully evidenced Descriptor 2 in the application process, and this is corroborated by the referees.

Please provide about 150-250 words of constructive positive feedback to the successful applicant, written in first person (‘You …’ ‘I found your …’). You should consider that this feedback may be useful for the applicant in their ASCD performance review, or promotion applications. Your feedback should be written in the Assessment Grid. The Lead Assessor will compile feedback from the panel (with minimal rewording) in the “Panel Outcome and Feedback” form. The Coordinator of Program 4 will convey congratulations to the applicant who will receive a copy of the “Panel Outcome and Feedback”.

2. More evidence required (Resubmit)

The Griffith HEA Fellowship Scheme is committed to a developmental approach to recognition. This outcome is therefore recommended when you feel the applicant needs to provide more evidence against one or more specific parts of Descriptor 2 or has inadequate referee reports.

Within the Assessment Grid, please provide a minimum of 100 words of explanatory feedback (including constructive positive feedback about the applicants’ strengths) that can be passed on to the applicant, written in first person (‘You …’ ‘I found your …’). The Lead Assessor will combine the feedback from both assessors. The “Panel Outcome and Feedback” form contains a space to list the recommendations FROM THE PANEL regarding the additional evidence, improvements needed to the application, or further work the applicant needs to undertake in order to attain Fellowship. Additional evidence requirements may range from 500 words of additional evidence (minor) to substantial changes (major). Additional evidence supplied within 28 days of assessment notification will be assessed by the original Panel of Assessors. (Note: If additional evidence is supplied after 28 days then it will be added to the original application, combined with all assessment panel documentation, and will be resubmitted to another panel when panels convene at the end of the next Trimester. The application will then be judged using the additional evidence requested from the resubmission feedback from the original panel. In the case of a request for major additional evidence, the applicant may choose to substantially revise their application.)

In some cases the additional evidence required may require additional mentoring and a longer timeframe. Feedback should be provided to applicants whose applications would benefit from additional mentoring and guidance to enable applicants to achieve the standard required for any given category after submission of an application. It should be relatively rare for an assessor or panel to choose this outcome. Nevertheless, if you believe the applicant has not evidenced D2, and cannot be expected to evidence it through a little additional material being provided, then this outcome is appropriate.

Please explain the rationale for your decision and describe anything the applicant could do to address current lack of evidence, and a suggested timeline for re-application. The feedback from the “Panel Outcome and Feedback” form will be conveyed to the applicant by the Program 4 Coordinator.
The FHEA assessment process in summary

Week 1

Submit application

HEA Administrator
- Collects applications
- Allocates applications to panels
- Sends applications to panel members

Panel of Assessors (2 members)
- Members individually read the applications and record their assessment using the FHEA Assessment Form
- Panel convenes to discuss the applications and agree on judgements.
- Lead Assessor for each application completes the Lead Assessor Feedback Summary Form.

Lead Assessor
Lead Assessor uploads:
1. Original FHEA Assessment Forms from all panel members (for archives)
2. Lead Assessor Feedback Summary - including all feedback to be sent to applicant.

Weeks 2-3

Program Coordinator
- Receives Assessment Panel outcomes
- Participates in discussions with Lead Assessor.
- Conducts moderation
- Sends sample applications to External Assessor
- Confirms all feedback

HEA Scheme Management Group
- Meets to discuss/ratify all application outcomes

Weeks 4-5

Accept
- Notification sent.

OR

Additional Evidence Required
- Program Coordinator to send notification of outcome. Include Assessor feedback describing:
  - Minor changes required or
  - Major changes required
- Applicant must revise and resubmit
- Additional requirements may range from 500 words of additional evidence (minor) to substantial changes (major).
- Additional evidence supplied within 28 days of notification will be assessed by the original Panel of Assessors.
The Final Decision Table - FHEA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessor 1</th>
<th>Assessor 2 (Lead)</th>
<th>Initial Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Award</td>
<td>Award</td>
<td>Award</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More evidence required</td>
<td>Award</td>
<td>Send to moderation</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As outlined in the assessment summary diagram, after the decision is finalised, a notification will be sent to each applicant.

For applicants who receive an “award” judgement, this notification will come from the HEA Fellowships@Griffith scheme Director and will include the final decision and a copy of the “Panel Outcome and Feedback” form. Applicants who successfully receive recognition will subsequently be listed on the HEA Fellowships@Griffith website.

For applicants who receive a “more evidence required” (Resubmit) judgement, this notification will come from the Program 4 Coordinator and will include the final decision and a copy of the “Panel Outcome and Feedback” form. This feedback must be sufficient to enable an applicant to revise and resubmit. Applicants who are able to revise and resubmit within 28 days of assessment notification will have their resubmission assessed by the original Panel of Assessors. Additional evidence supplied after this time will be added to the original application, and assessment documentation, and resubmitted to a panel when panels next convene in the following trimester.

The appeals process

Applicants will receive a formal assessment outcome and specific feedback aligned to the Descriptor assessment requirements and PSF criteria.

If an applicant disagrees with the outcome following assessment they may apply to have a review of the recognition decisions taken by the Assessment Panel. The grounds upon which an applicant may request a review of a recognition decision are limited to the following:

a) The assessment of the submission was not conducted in accordance with procedures as outlined in this handbook;
b) There was an administrative error or some other significant procedural irregularity that impacted the decision.

Note: Disagreement with the judgement of the Assessment Panel in assessing the merits of an individual submission for recognition cannot in itself constitute grounds for a request by an applicant for a review of the decision.
The process will be to write to the Director, LF/GO (or designate) clearly outlining:

- Which specific part(s) of the assessment feedback are disputed; and
- Why the assessment outcome is disputed.

At their discretion, the application may be forwarded to a new Panel of Assessors for reassessment. In the case of an administrative error, this will be checked and corrected if needed.

**External Assessor for the Griffith HEA Fellowship Scheme**

Advance HE requires that all External Assessors be:

- Senior or Principal Fellows of the HEA;
- suitably experienced in making HEA Fellowship judgements and current in their knowledge and understanding of the requirements of the relevant category(s) of Fellowship; and
- free from any reciprocal external relationships and perceived or actual conflict of interest

Within the Griffith HEA Fellowship Scheme, External Assessors will play a key role in securing standards in relation to the accredited programs. They will be responsible for confirming to Advance HE, and to Griffith, that the programs are operating at the appropriate standard. In particular, External Assessors will take the lead in ensuring that:

- The standards set for each program remain appropriate for the fellowship category;
- The standards of participant performance are comparable with similar programs with which they are familiar;
- The processes for assessment and the determination of awards are sound and fairly conducted; and
- In the first year, in Program 4, they participate as a member of all Assessment Panels.

To fulfil this role, the main duties of the External Assessors will generally include:

- Maintaining an overview of marking standards through the sampling of participants assessment submissions;
- Attending meetings of the Griffith HEA Fellowship Scheme Management Group as appropriate when assessment and assessing is discussed;
- Submitting reports following the completion of any assessment and/or moderation activities, including an Annual Report.

Within Program 4, the External Assessor has an active role in assessment and moderation processes:

- In the first year of Program 4, the External Assessor will be a full-member of all Assessment Panels assessing SFHEA applications and be involved in the moderation (in collaboration with the Program 4 Coordinator) for all FHEA applications.
- Each SFHEA Assessment Panel will be comprised of 3 members, all recognised to a minimum of D3 (SFHEA), where one member is the External Assessor.
- For those SFHEA applicants within the Dialogic Route, their APCs will be recorded to enable the External Assessor to assess (in the first year) and to moderate (in following years).
- For FHEA applications, the External Assessor will provide confidence in the assessment judgements through external moderation of a sample of successful and unsuccessful applications.

After the first year, the External Assessor will perform the role of Moderator in collaboration with the Program 4 Coordinator for all SFHEA and FHEA applications.