



Senior Fellow – Supporting Statement Guidance and Template

Supporting Statement Guidance – Senior Fellow

Thank you for agreeing to provide one of the two supporting statements required to corroborate an application for Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (HEA). This guidance and the template have been designed to help you structure your supporting statement to provide the information required by the HEA, as explained below.

What is the function of the supporting statement?

Please note that the statement supporting an application for Senior Fellowship is not the same as a job application reference. The award of HEA Senior Fellowship is based on peer recognition of professional practice and as such you are being asked to support this application as a valued peer who has expertise in teaching and learning in Higher Education (HE).

During the Senior Fellowship review process the two independent supporting statements provided by the referees will be used to confirm that the submission presents a fair and accurate reflection of the applicant's Higher Education practice.

Am I the right person to provide a supporting statement for the applicant?

You will be expected to have current or recent experience of working in Higher Education and will normally hold one of the four categories of HEA Fellowship, although this is not essential.

You will have worked closely with the applicant, have first-hand knowledge of their HE professional practice and will be in a position to comment on and substantiate the applicant's record of effectiveness within the context in which they teach and/or support learning. You should be able to confirm that the applicant has represented their practice accurately and provide your opinion that they demonstrate the requirements Descriptor 3 criteria of the [UK Professional Standards Framework \(UKPSF\)](#).

The application for Senior Fellow (SFHEA) is based on current and recent HE practice (usually within the last 3-5 years). If you no longer work with the applicant, it is important that you are familiar with their recent practice. You are required in the template to indicate how long you have worked together.

Please note that supporting statements for applications for Senior Fellow should reflect professional relationships; i.e. not be from family members or based on personal friendships. The statement will be your independent and authentic account in support of the application.

If you feel, having read this guidance that you are not in a position to give a supporting statement then you should decline the request.

Individual role requirements of Descriptor 3 of the UK Professional Standards Framework

Individuals are required to evidence a thorough understanding of effective approaches to teaching and learning support as key contributions to high quality student learning. Such individuals are likely to lead, or be members of, established teams able to provide evidence of a sustained record of effectiveness in relation to teaching and supporting learning. As experienced staff they are able to demonstrate impact and influence through leading and managing programmes, subjects and/or disciplinary areas. In addition, they may be subject mentors, supporting those new to teaching, or they may have departmental and/or wider teaching and learning support responsibilities within an institution.

HE teaching and learning is defined as:

- > level 4 or above within the [Framework for Higher Education Qualifications \(FHEQ\)](#) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, or equivalent;
- > level 7 or above within the [Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework \(SCQF\)](#) in Scotland or the [Framework for Qualifications of Higher Education Institutions \(FQHEIS\)](#);
- > first cycle or above of the [Qualifications Framework in the European Higher Education Area \(QF-EHEA\)](#);
- > level 5 or above of the [Australian Qualifications Framework](#);
- > level 5 or above of the [New Zealand Qualification Framework](#);
- > other equivalent higher education frameworks;
- > delivery of non-accredited continuing professional development for academic and learning support staff may also be considered as evidence equivalent to the higher education academic frameworks.

Typically, those likely to be able to evidence Descriptor 3 include:

- > Experienced staff able to demonstrate impact and influence through, for example, responsibility for leading, managing or organising programmes, subjects and/or disciplinary areas
- > Experienced subject mentors and staff who support those new to teaching
- > Experienced staff with departmental and/or wider teaching and learning support advisory responsibilities within an institution.

For your information, the Descriptor 3 criteria of the UKPSF are set out below:

Individuals will 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:

- I. Successful engagement across all five Areas of Activity
- II. Appropriate knowledge and understanding across all aspects of Core Knowledge
- III. A commitment to all the Professional Values

- IV. Successful engagement in appropriate teaching practices related to the Areas of Activity
- V. Successful incorporation of subject and pedagogic research and/ or scholarship within the above activities, as part of an integrated approach to academic practice
- VI. Successful engagement in continuing professional development in relation to teaching, learning, assessment and, where appropriate, related professional practices
- VII. Successful co-ordination, support, supervision, management and/or mentoring of others (whether individuals and/or teams) in relation to teaching and learning

Therefore, for the award of Senior Fellow, the applicant must demonstrate that their HE practice evidences **all** Areas of Activity, aspects of Core Knowledge and Professional Values of the UKPSF. In addition, Senior Fellows need to demonstrate the co-ordination, support, supervision, management and/or mentoring of others.

Preparing to write your supporting statement

The applicant needs to first provide you with their Application. Please read this before you begin to write your supporting statement to verify its accuracy. You may also wish to refer to the [HEA website](#) for more information about the HEA and/or specifically about becoming a [Senior Fellow of the HEA](#).

Format of the supporting statement

A template is provided for you to complete your supporting statement. A copy of the template is included in this guidance booklet for your information. The template is available as a Word document and should be completed in this format. Scanned documents or those with a scanned image cannot be accepted.

In addition to Descriptor 3 criteria, as a guide, it is important that you comment on the following in your supporting statement:

- > your own experience of the applicant's recent HE practice;
- > any good or innovative practice and/or contribution to developments by the applicant in teaching and/or supporting learning within his/her discipline, including any university wide initiatives, as appropriate;
- > your perspective on the practical examples provided within the application to illustrate the requirements of Senior Fellow.

If English is not your first language and you are not able to provide the supporting statement in English, the HEA will accept a certified English translation of your statement. It is your responsibility to provide the certified translation for the applicant and you will be required to agree and accept the Validation Statement upon completion.

After completing your supporting statement

Once you have completed the supporting statement template, please return it to the applicant in Word format. The applicant will upload the two supporting statements from each of their chosen referees through MyAcademy.

HEA Quality Assurance Process

As part of the process you will be asked to confirm that you have written the supporting statement yourself and that the information you have provided has been written specifically for this applicant.

As part of the HEA's ongoing quality assurance process, the HEA routinely checks references for individual authenticity by means of textual review in Turnitin.com. In addition to the use of anti-plagiarism software, some individuals will be contacted to confirm that the supporting statement submitted by the applicant through MyAcademy is the statement that they have prepared and completed.

If the professional integrity of the supporting statement is in question, the statement will not be accepted.

Supporting Statement Template - Senior Fellow



Name	
Institution/organisation/other	
Job Title	
Email address	
Your HEA Fellowship Status (if appropriate)	
Relationship to Applicant	
How long have you worked with the applicant (insert dates)	
Declaration	<p>Please check the box below to indicate that you have read and agree to the following statement:</p> <p><i>In submitting your supporting statement you are confirming that the applicant's submission relates to their Higher Education professional practice and that your statement is your own work and has been written specifically for this applicant. If the professional integrity of the supporting statement is in question it will not be accepted.</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I have read and understood the declaration</p> <p>Date:</p>

Supporting Statement

Please provide your statement to support the applicant’s submission for Senior Fellow of the HEA in the following section. You are required to comment on the applicant’s recent higher education practice, providing examples to support your statement wherever possible.

Two sides of A4 will normally be sufficient for this category of Fellowship.