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The UK Professional Standards Framework  
for teaching and supporting learning  
in higher education  
2011

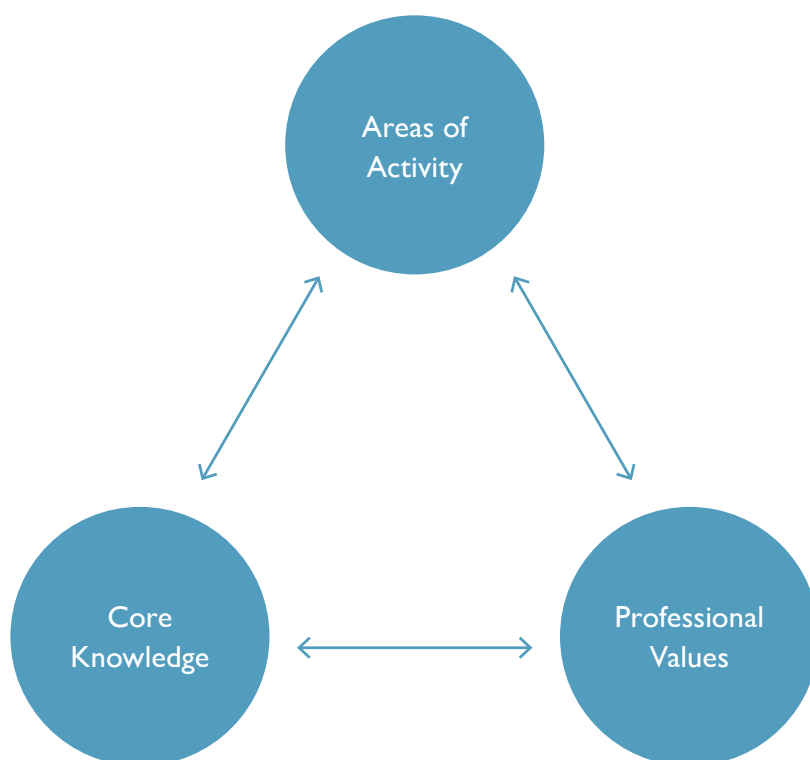
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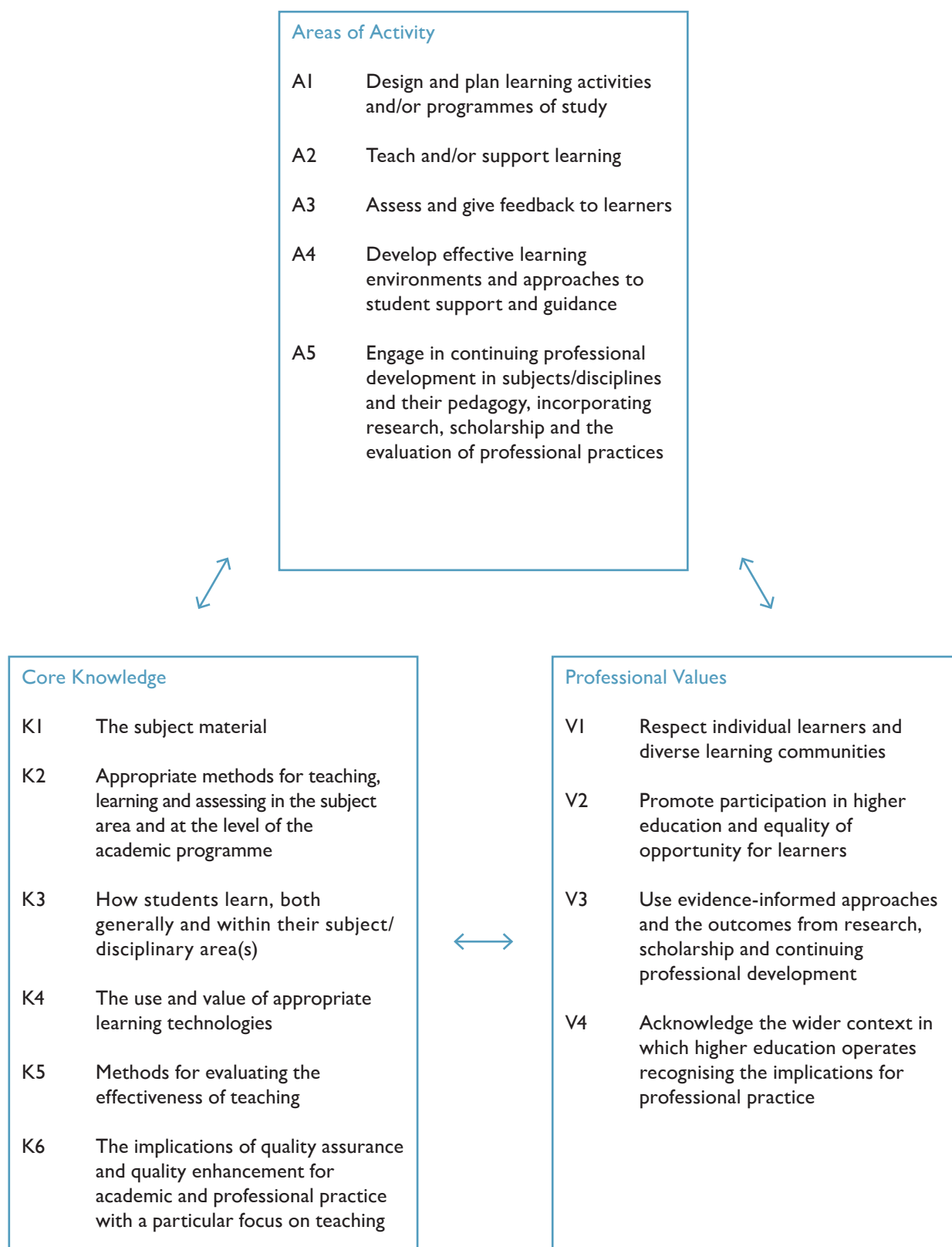
## Aims of the Framework

The UK Professional Standards Framework:

1. Supports the initial and continuing professional development of staff engaged in teaching and supporting learning
2. Fosters dynamic approaches to teaching and learning through creativity, innovation and continuous development in diverse academic and/or professional settings
3. Demonstrates to students and other stakeholders the professionalism that staff and institutions bring to teaching and support for student learning
4. Acknowledges the variety and quality of teaching, learning and assessment practices that support and underpin student learning
5. Facilitates individuals and institutions in gaining formal recognition for quality-enhanced approaches to teaching and supporting learning, often as part of wider responsibilities that may include research and/or management activities



## Dimensions of the Framework



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**Descriptor I****Typical individual role/career stage****Related HEA recognition**

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Demonstrates an understanding of specific aspects of effective teaching, learning support methods and student learning. Individuals should be able to provide evidence of:

I. Successful engagement with at least two of the five Areas of Activity

II. Successful engagement in appropriate teaching and practices related to these Areas of Activity

III. Appropriate Core Knowledge and understanding of at least K1 and K2

IV. A commitment to appropriate Professional Values in facilitating others' learning

V. Relevant professional practices, subject and pedagogic research and/or scholarship within the above activities

VI. Successful engagement, where appropriate, in professional development activity related to teaching, learning and assessment responsibilities

Individuals able to provide evidence of effectiveness in relation to their professional role(s), which, typically, will include at least some teaching and/or learning support responsibilities. This teaching and learning role may sometimes be undertaken with the assistance of more experienced teachers or mentors. Typically, those likely to be at Descriptor I (D1) include:

a. Early career researchers with some teaching responsibilities (e.g. PhD students, GTAs, contract researchers/post doctoral researchers etc.)

b. Staff new to teaching (including those with part-time academic responsibilities)

c. Staff who support academic provision (e.g. learning technologists, learning developers and learning resource/library staff)

d. Staff who undertake demonstrator/ technician roles that incorporate some teaching-related responsibilities

e. Experienced staff in relevant professional areas who may be new to teaching and/or supporting learning, or who have a limited teaching portfolio

Associate Fellow

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**Descriptor 2****Typical individual role/career stage****Related HEA recognition**

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Demonstrates 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

Individuals able to provide evidence of broadly based effectiveness in more substantive teaching and supporting learning role(s). Such individuals are likely to be established members of one or more academic and/or academic-related teams. Typically, those likely to be at Descriptor 2 (D2) include:

- a. Early career academics
- b. Academic-related and/or support staff holding substantive teaching and learning responsibilities
- c. Experienced academics relatively new to UK higher education
- d. Staff with (sometimes significant) teaching-only responsibilities including, for example, within work-based settings

Fellow

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**Descriptor 3****Typical individual role/career stage****Related HEA recognition**

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Demonstrates a thorough understanding of effective approaches to teaching and learning support as a key contribution 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, scholarship and, as appropriate, related academic or 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

Individuals able to provide evidence of a sustained record of effectiveness in relation to teaching and learning, incorporating for example, the organisation, leadership and/or management of specific aspects of teaching and learning provision. Such individuals are likely to lead or be members of established academic teams. Typically, those likely to be at Descriptor 3 (D3) include:

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

Senior Fellow

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**Descriptor 4****Typical individual role/career stage****Related HEA recognition**

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Demonstrates a sustained record of effective strategic leadership in academic practice and academic development as a key contribution to high quality student learning. Individuals should be able to provide evidence of:

- I. Active commitment to and championing of all Dimensions of the Framework, through work with students and staff, and in institutional developments
- II. Successful, strategic leadership to enhance student learning, with a particular, but not necessarily exclusive, focus on enhancing teaching quality in institutional, and/or (inter)national settings
- III. Establishing effective organisational policies and/or strategies for supporting and promoting others (e.g. through mentoring, coaching) in delivering high quality teaching and support for learning
- IV. Championing, within institutional and/or wider settings, an integrated approach to academic practice (incorporating, for example, teaching, learning, research, scholarship, administration etc.)
- V. A sustained and successful commitment to, and engagement in, continuing professional development related to academic, institutional and/or other professional practices

Individuals, as highly experienced academics, able to provide evidence of a sustained and effective record of impact at a strategic level in relation to teaching and learning, as part of a wider commitment to academic practice. This may be within their institution or wider (inter)national settings. Typically, those likely to be at Descriptor 4 (D4) include:

- a. Highly experienced and/or senior staff with wide-ranging academic or academic-related strategic leadership responsibilities in connection with key aspects of teaching and supporting learning
- b. Staff responsible for institutional strategic leadership and policy-making in the area of teaching and learning
- c. Staff who have strategic impact and influence in relation to teaching and learning that extends beyond their own institution

Principal Fellow

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## Framework Guidance Notes (FGN)

The UK Professional Standards Framework is supplemented and supported by a series of Framework Guidance Notes (FGN). These are designed to highlight and disseminate good practice in a given area as well as outline issues that institutions and individuals may want to consider in using the UK Professional Standards Framework.

## Relationship to the Higher Education Academy National Accreditation Scheme

The Higher Education Academy recognises the importance and value of the UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF) and aligns its Fellowship categories with the Descriptors. Its accreditation scheme provides a national professional benchmarking of provision that reflects the best practices in the sector. Guidance and support is offered through the work of the Higher Education Academy to higher education institutions wishing to be accredited for their application and use of the UKPSF.

Please see <http://www.heacademy.ac.uk> for further details.

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