



**FIRST STEPS
TO
SUPPORTING LEARNING AND TEACHING
IN HIGHER EDUCATION
AWARD
(FIRST STEPS)**

**UKPSF Descriptor 1
(Accredited by the Higher Education Academy)**

**AWARD CO-ORDINATORS:
MS VICKY DAVIES PFHEA & DR SARAH FLOYD PFHEA**

Welcome...

We hope that you enjoy following the Ulster University Award: First Steps to Supporting Learning and Teaching in Higher Education (FIRST STEPS) and that you will find it beneficial both personally and professionally.

FIRST STEPS has been tailored to the needs of part-time tutors and postgraduate teaching assistants as you develop your experience and knowledge as educators within the higher education sector.

This handbook details the structure, content and administration of the FIRST STEPS pathway and also anticipates some of the questions you may wish to have answered.

Ms Vicky Davies PFHEA and Dr Sarah Floyd PFHEA
Award Co-ordinators

FIRST STEPS: What is it?

FIRST STEPS is a HEA accredited Award that is taught and assessed by the Centre for Higher Education Research & Practice (CHERP). To gain the Award, you have to successfully complete **the requirements as set out in this booklet.**

FIRST STEPS has been designed to:

- support the University's Code of Practice for Postgraduate Tutors and Demonstrators
- to support the development needs of part-time tutors
- satisfy the requirements of Descriptor 1 of the UK Professional Standards Framework for Teaching and Supporting Learning in Higher Education (see Appendix 1)
- take account of Ulster priorities in learning and teaching

Professional Recognition

The FIRST STEPS Award is accredited by the Higher Education Academy (HEA) at Descriptor 1 and successful participants gain professional recognition for their teaching skills and experience by becoming an Associate Fellow of the HEA (AFHEA).

The requirements for alignment to the Dimensions of Practice for Descriptor 1 (Associate Fellow of the HEA) are as follows:

Descriptor 1

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

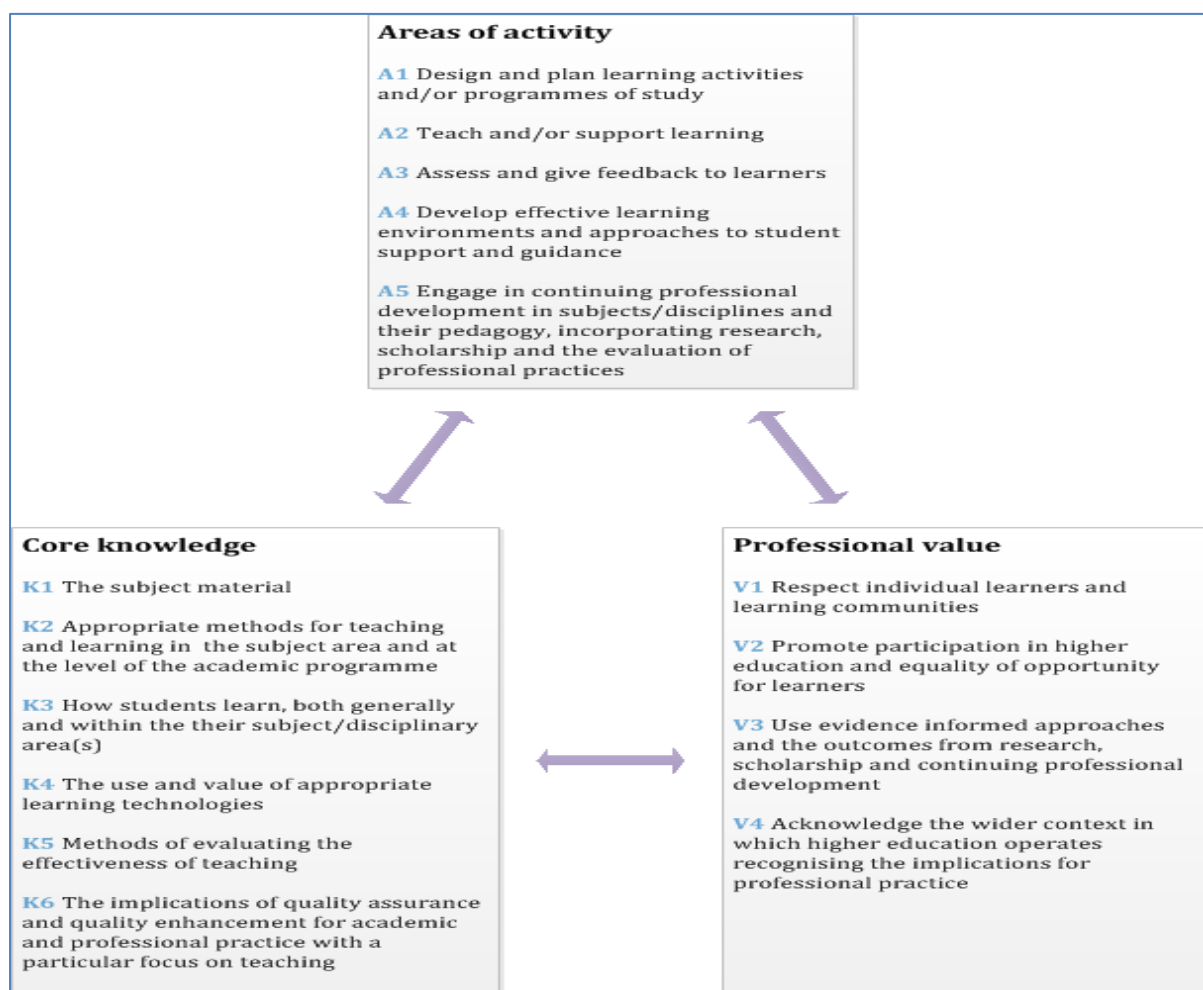
III. Appropriate Core Knowledge and understanding of at least K1 and K2

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

Figure 1: The UK Professional Standards Framework (2011) Dimensions of Practice



Ulster University recognises the need to support and develop its educators in order for them to fully achieve their potential not only in the early stages of their careers but throughout their employment. As such the ethos of the Award is inspired and informed by the UK PSF: appropriate elements of the Award are explicitly mapped to the UK PSF at D1, but also encourages participants to draw on other aspects of their professional practice to further enhance their alignment to the dimensions of practice.

In particular, the Award supports your development and understanding of how to prepare effective learning sessions (**A2**) and to provide assessment and feedback (**A3**) that supports learning. The award has been designed so that the learning opportunities will support your development and achievement of these. Additionally, the assessment tasks have been designed to enable you to provide evidence of your **effective practice** in these areas. For more detailed information see Appendix 1 and in the assessment guidance in Appendices 6 and 7. Following successful completion of the Award you will receive Associate Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy in recognition of your achievement of D1. You will also be provided with a certificate that records your successful coverage of the UK PSF and will additionally be given feedback prompts for further development and potential recognition.

At the first session for the Award you will start to fill in a self-assessment grid which will help you to map your current practice against the dimensions of practice of the UKPSF (Appendix 7). You will maintain this mapping as a *living document*, updating it throughout the course of your studies to

demonstrate evidence of the UKPSF dimensions of practice as your practice evolves. It will also be used as a focus to help you identify gathered evidence and/or development opportunities, and will inform your ongoing reflections on practice within each module and how these relate to the UKPSF. You will submit this record as part of your assessments.

FIRST STEPS: Who is it for?

FIRST STEPS provides an opportunity for anyone who has a part-time supporting learning/ teaching role within the University to validate their training and teaching experience through completing an Award appropriate to their role. It is suitable for a range of part-time staff and post-graduate students who wish to pursue an academic career and/or to enhance their employability.

Associate Fellow status of the HEA is likely to be appropriate for those who have a relatively circumscribed teaching/ learning support role or are new to teaching and supporting learning.

Registering on the Award

In order to register on this award you must:

- Complete and submit the registration form. This will include confirmation of:
 - the name of your Experienced Educator (a member of University staff who is a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy – see Appendix 10)
 - how you will achieve the required teaching/ learning support hours

Your commitment to FIRST STEPS

FIRST STEPS requires 100 hours time commitment, distributed in the following manner:

~ 25 hours contact time

- 20 Hours workshop/ tutorial attendance
- 5 Hours teaching observation (observation time and pre-and post meetings)
- 5 Hours assessment moderation activity and discussion

20 hours work based experience

- 20 hours tutoring and/or demonstrating/ learning support at HE level in Ulster

~ 55 hours private study/

- 15 Hours preparation and reflection on teaching
- 15 Hours directed reading
- 20 Hours preparation of assignment

It is expected that you will:

- Undertake 20 hours of tutoring/ demonstrating (normally concurrent with the award)
- Attend all of the workshop sessions for which you are registered
- Participate in pre- and post- workshop tasks as requested
- Authenticate your effective practice through:
 - Being observed by an Experienced Educator¹ at least once
 - Observing your Experienced Educator teach at least once
 - Gathering evaluation feedback from students

¹ A member of Ulster University staff who is a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy

- Completing an assessment moderation task with your Experienced Educator
- Complete assessed pieces of work related activity

Communicating with the Award Co-ordinators

If you have a query regarding this award please read the guidance provided here. If you are still unsure please use email to contact the award co-ordinators:

v.davies@ulster.ac.uk or s.floyd@ulster.ac.uk

You should receive a reply within a week.

AWARD RATIONALE

The Award provides an opportunity for part-time tutors and post-graduate teaching assistants to develop their understanding of and practice in effective learning, teaching, and assessment. It is offered as a stand-alone course and will be of particular benefit to those carrying out tutoring and demonstrating.

It introduces participants to a range of effective learning approaches and learning theory. It provides opportunities for participants to reflect critically on their own experience both as a learner and practitioner, and to identify aspects of their own practice that could be developed and/or improved. The pathway is mapped to Descriptor 1 of the UK Professional Standards framework. Satisfactory completion of the requirements leads to the award and conferment of Associate Fellow of the Higher Education Academy.

AIMS

To enable participants to develop their understanding of learning, teaching, and assessment in a Higher Education context, to plan, deliver, and evaluate within their practice their roles in promoting student learning.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Successful participants will be able to demonstrate:

1. Successful engagement in appropriate practices related to teaching and/or support learning, assessment and giving feedback to learners
2. Appropriate knowledge and understanding of the subject material and appropriate methods for teaching, learning and assessing in the subject area and at the level of the academic programme
3. A commitment to appropriate UKPSF Professional Values in facilitating others' learning
4. An ability to draw from the professional evidence base to evaluate and inform your practice e.g. relevant professional practices, subject and pedagogic research and/or scholarship
5. Successful engagement in professional development activity related to teaching, learning and assessment responsibilities

CONTENT

- Theories of teaching, learning and assessment
- Planning learning; designing effective learning sessions
- Teaching small and large groups
- Supportive learning environments and effective use of resources
- Assessment and feedback for learning
- Responding to Diverse Student Needs: inclusivity, SENDO, International students

TEACHING AND LEARNING METHODS

The delivery of the course recognises the need to:

- be practical
- be relevant
- demonstrate active learning methods
- model a variety of approaches to teaching, learning and assessment
- integrate theory and practice, and provide opportunities for you to analyse and reflect upon applicability to your own context
- promote an environment that fosters peer learning.

To achieve these, a wide variety of teaching and learning methods will be used including: workshops; small group activities; case studies; and experiential learning. Workshop handouts and other learning materials are available via the programme BBL area.

Workshops will be facilitated by the Award Co-ordinators who will expose you to a wide range of expertise and sources of assistance in developing your teaching and learning support. You will be encouraged to experiment with these methods, where appropriate, within your own teaching/ learning support. You will also be encouraged to identify examples of good practice in your own discipline area and to share these in order to demonstrate the benefits and potential of peer and cross-disciplinary co-operation.

In addition, you should arrange, in consultation with your line-manager/ supervisor, to undertake at least 20 hours of higher education teaching/ learning support. This will allow you to link the theory and skills covered in workshops to practice.

Award Structure

Compulsory Induction session:

- Introduction to Teaching and Learning for Post-Graduate Teaching Assistants and P/T Tutors

Followed by:

- Two-day block training* - 'First Steps to Supporting Learning and Teaching in Higher Education' course
- 20 hours tutoring and/or demonstrating within HE
- Completion of all supporting tasks
- Assignment submission

* It is intended that block training will run twice per year to suit the needs of different cohorts, normally this will be over a weekend in Belfast during October and in Coleraine in February on weekdays. For an outline of the event see Appendix 2

How FIRST STEPS will be assessed

The Award is based on the overall achievement of the learning outcomes, which align to the requirements for AFHEA. To meet this all elements of assessment must be completed satisfactorily. The Award Co-ordinators will assess and make AFHEA judgements, a sample of which

will be moderated by the external examiner. All assessors hold PFHEA and are highly experienced in making fellowship judgements.

Assessment		
Tasks		
A	Teaching context - an outline of your role and responsibilities	
B	Becoming a HE educator: an interview with an Experienced Educator in your discipline	
C	Development of an effective learning activity – lesson plan and relevant resources.	
D	Two teaching observations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. By Experienced Educator of session in Task C (see appendix 3) ii. Of Experienced Educator (see appendix 4) 	
E	Collect evaluation feedback from students	
F	Assessment exercise – undertake a moderation activity with your Experienced Educator (this can be based on current student submissions if you are involved in marking or previous work if not)	
G	UKPSF Self-assessment – completed at the start and end point of the award	
Assignment		Words
1.	Teaching and Learning Support approach and rationale (based on Task A & B)	500
2.	Case Study 1: Engaging Learners (based on Task C,D & E)	800
3.	Case Study 2: Assessment and Feedback for Learning (based on Task F)	800
4.	Overall reflection and professional development plan (based on Task G and all other assignments and tasks)	500
Total word count		2600

Assignment Format

Your assignment must follow the guidelines provided in Appendix 6.

You should submit a single copy, word-processed and with the pages numbered (as this assists us to give specific feedback). A contents page and bibliography, in addition to the specific references, are also essential. You must use Harvard referencing and take particular care to cite all references used within the text. If you are unfamiliar with the Harvard system advice is available at: <http://referencing.port.ac.uk/>

Appendices should be clearly labelled and referenced in the text of your assignment. All assignments should be submitted, via a BBL dropbox, together with a completed assignment cover sheet (available from BBL under “Assignments”).

Alternative assessment formats may be discussed and agreed with the Award Co-ordinators.

Submission Deadline

You are normally expected to submit your assignment within one year of attending the workshops. Assignments should be submitted via BBL using the Assignment Dropbox.

The submission dates each year are in December, May and July and dates will be published on BBL at the outset of each semester.

You will receive feedback and the outcome of your submission following the Award Board held in February, June and August each year.

Prior Experience and Assessment

The compulsory induction session **must normally be completed prior** to the block training.

We prefer you to gain your work-based teaching hours through the duration of the award so that you can use your developing knowledge and ideas to inform your practice. Note these must be in a higher education context, i.e. Level 4 and/or above. If you have already been involved in teaching and learning support in a HE context and wish to use this to meet the required teaching hours please discuss it with the Award Co-ordinators. Any prior experience you have had teaching or training learners at other levels will be beneficial and will inform your practice but cannot replace the HE experience required.

The support you will get

In addition to the support from Award Co-ordinators and colleagues on the course, you need to arrange for an Experienced Educator within your own discipline to provide additional support. This person will be expected to allow you to observe their teaching and also to observe you in your teaching/ learning support role and to provide feedback. We do not prescribe who they should be, but they must be a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (FHEA/ SFHEA/ PFHEA) and a member of Ulster University staff.

Once you identify your Experienced Educator, we will provide them with the necessary guidance to prepare and support them for their role.

Please contact either of the Award Coordinators for help and guidance about any aspect of the award.

Assignment Tutorial

There will be an opportunity to discuss plans for the assignment with the Award Coordinators at an assignment tutorial. Participants will be made aware of their dates and locations via announcements in BBL.

Extenuating circumstances and coursework extensions

If for an appropriate reason you need extra time, either to complete the tasks or to complete the course, contact either Award Coordinators to discuss this as soon as possible.

Withdrawal from the Award

If you wish to withdraw you may wish to discuss this with the Award Coordinators before making a final decision but in the event that you do decide to withdraw you must inform the Award Administrator.

Contacts

Award Co-ordinators:

Ms Vicky Davies v.davies@ulster.ac.uk ext 75588

Dr Sarah Floyd s.floyd@ulster.ac.uk ext 24187

Award Administrator: TBC

AFHEA

Following successful completion of the award your outcome will be submitted to the HE Academy. We will provide instructions on how to register with the HEA and how to access your certificate on My Academy. You should retain this handbook and your certificate as they may be required in the future if you are seeking partial or full exemption from professional development requirements.

READING LIST

Required:

Fry, H, Kettridge, S and Marshall, S (Eds) (2015): *A Handbook for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education: Enhancing Academic Practice*, 4th ed. Abingdon, Routledge.

Race, P (2010): *Making Learning Happen: A Guide for Post-Compulsory Education*. 2nd ed. London, Sage.

Recommended:

Biggs, J and Tang, C (2011): *Teaching for Quality Learning at University: What the Student Does*, 4th ed. Maidenhead, Open University Press.

HE Academy <http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/home>

QAA (The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education) Academic Infrastructure.

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/default.asp>

Race, P (2007): *The Lecturer's Toolkit: a practical guide to assessment, learning and teaching*. 3rd ed. Abingdon, Routledge.

In addition, participants will be directed to relevant websites, journal articles and chapters via the BBL area

Appendix 1:

UK Professional Standards Framework for Teaching and Supporting Learning in Higher Education

<http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/ukpsf>

Mapping of Award Learning Outcomes against the PSF Aspects (emboldened text indicates full coverage of activities, other activities may be partially achieved depending on the participants' role and context)

<i>Areas of activity</i>	<i>Coverage</i>	<i>Assessment</i>
1. Design and plan learning activities and/or programmes of study	Participants will be introduced to curriculum development approaches but due to the nature of their roles the Award foci is on session/ activity planning	Participants' ability to plan an effective learning session/ activity will be assessed in Assignment 2
2. Teach and/or support student learning	Participants will be expected to demonstrate that they can draw from appropriate knowledge of pedagogy to inform the planning and delivery of teaching/ learning support activities. The taught sessions, Experienced Educator observation and interview will expose them to a range of approaches and theories which they will have opportunities to try within their work based practice and demonstrate in their teaching observation	Participants' ability to plan and deliver an effective learning session/ activity will be assessed in Assignment 2. In particular, their teaching observation and use of student evaluation feedback will provide evidence of this.
3. Assess and give feedback to learners	Some participants will not have any summative assessment responsibilities but all will be engaged in a moderation activity and will be providing formative feedback and guidance. The taught sessions will explore the concept of assessment for learning in addition to assessment procedures and QA practices.	Participants will be expected to demonstrate how they provide formative feedback and carry out summative assessment that is appropriate and informs learning in Assignment 3
4. Develop effective learning environments and approaches to student support and guidance	Participants will have the opportunity to develop awareness of the impact diversity can have on students' learning needs and the construction of learning environments that best support them.	Participants will be expected to demonstrate how they provide an effective learning environment in Assignment 2
5. Engage in continuing professional development in subjects/disciplines and their pedagogy, incorporating research, scholarship and the evaluation of professional practices	Participants will be introduced to pedagogic theory within sessions. The use of a subject-based Experienced Educator to conduct the teacher observations will emphasise the need to retain currency and accuracy in the delivery of subject material. Throughout the Award participants will be encouraged to reflect and critique their developing practice. Tasks will create opportunities for them to generate feedback on their practice and thinking from a range	Assignments 1 and 4 have been designed to support participants' awareness of current HE priorities and how best they can develop to meet them.

	of sources. Tutors will guide participants regarding the benefits of and opportunities for further CPD.	
<i>Core knowledge (Knowledge and understanding of):</i>	<i>Coverage</i>	<i>Assessment</i>
1. The subject material	The use of a subject-based Experienced Educator to conduct the teaching observations will emphasise the need to retain currency and accuracy in the delivery of subject material. It will also be emphasised in the assessment moderation activity conducted with the Experienced Educator.	This will be evidenced in Assignment 2&3
2. Appropriate methods for teaching and learning in the subject area and at the level of the academic programme	The use of a subject-based Experienced Educator to discuss and demonstrate subject specific approaches will complement the more generic coverage in sessions.	This will be evidenced in all assignments
3. How students learn, both generally and within their subject/ disciplinary area(s)	This will covered during sessions and also within the context of the teaching/ learning observations	This will be evidenced in all assignments
4. The use and value of appropriate learning technologies	This will be covered in sessions and depending on opportunity will be applied in practice	Awareness of this should be evidenced in all assignments
5. Methods for evaluating the effectiveness of teaching	This will be covered in sessions and participants will be expected to apply concepts to their own practice	This will be evidenced in all assignments
6. The implications of quality assurance and quality enhancement for professional practice with a particular focus on teaching	Participants will be familiarised with quality assurance approaches particularly in relation to standards and assessment. They will be expected to consider how they can continually enhance their evolving practice	Evidenced in Assignment 3

<i>Professional values</i>	<i>Coverage</i>	<i>Assessment</i>
1. Respect for individual learners and diverse learning communities	Specific input on student diversity. The role of peer learning both for academic and social integration will be covered in taught sessions.	This will be evidenced in all assignments and in particular in their teaching observation.
2. Promote participation in higher education and equality of opportunity for learners	Ulster is a widening participation university, the impact this has on practice will be a recurrent theme.	Consideration of this should be evidenced in all assignments.
3. Use evidence-informed approaches and the outcomes from research, scholarship and continuing professional development	Participants will be introduced to pedagogic theory within sessions. The use of a subject-based Experienced Educator to conduct the teaching observations will emphasise the need to retain currency and accuracy in the delivery of subject material.	Participants will be expected to demonstrate how they draw from relevant professional evidence throughout all assignments.
4. Acknowledge the wider context in which higher education operates recognising the implications for professional practice	Throughout the Award participants will be encouraged to reflect and critique their developing practice. Tasks will create opportunities for them to engage with experienced staff and to consider how fluid the HE environment is.	Assignments 1 and 4 have been designed to support participants' awareness of current HE priorities and how best they can develop to meet them.

Appendix 2: FIRST STEPS Block Training Schedule

DAY 1	DAY 2
09:45 - Registration	09:45 - Registration
<p>Introduction to the course:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule • Assessment • BBL • Support • UKPSF and AFHEA – use of self-assessment tool <p>Initial reflection on role as an educator</p> <p>Break</p> <p>Facilitating Learning</p> <p>Lunch break</p> <p>Supporting diverse learners</p> <p>16:00 hrs - Close</p>	<p>Planning for learning</p> <p>Break</p> <p>Peer feedback on plans</p> <p>How do you know your sessions are effective? Evaluation techniques</p> <p>Lunch break</p> <p>Assessment for Learning</p> <p>Reflective time: Minute paper</p> <p>Future plans: what next?</p> <p>16:00 hrs - Close</p>

Appendix 3: Your Observation of Practice (by Experienced Educator)

<p>FIRST STEPS Observation of Practice (supporting learning & teaching) –Experienced Educator Feedback Form</p> <p>Date:</p> <p>Name:</p> <p>Session:</p>

	Observed evidence
<p>Clear aims and learning outcomes</p> <p>UKSPF: A2, K1, K2</p>	
<p>Appropriate tutor and student activity and management of time</p> <p>UKSPF: A2, K1, K2</p>	
<p>Clear oral (and written) communication</p> <p>UKPSF: A2</p>	
<p>Clear, relevant resources which enhanced the learning experience (if appropriate)</p> <p>UKPSF: A2, K1, K2</p>	
<p>Some means of checking student’s learning/understanding</p> <p>UKPSF: A2, A3, K1, K2</p>	
<p>A demonstrable understanding of the varying needs of individual students</p> <p>UKPSF: A2, K2, V1</p>	

Main strengths	
Aspects for consideration	
<p>Signed: _____ (Candidate)</p> <p>Signed (select one):</p> <p>1. the candidate has met all the required outcomes Yes/ No</p> <p>2. a further observation is required Yes/ No</p> <p>_____ (Observer)</p>	

Candidate's reflection on teaching/ learning session	
Action plan (to be completed by candidate following observation)	

Appendix 4: FIRST STEPS Teaching Observation of an Experienced Educator (by you)

Date:

Session:

	Observed supporting evidence
Clear aims and learning outcomes UKPSF: A2, K1, K2	
Appropriate educator and student activity and management of time UKPSF: A2, K1, K2	
Clear oral (and written) communication UKPSF: A2	
Clear, relevant resources which enhanced the learning experience UKPSF: A2, K1, K2	
Some means of checking student's learning/understanding UKPSF: A2, A3, K1, K2	
A demonstrable understanding of the varying needs of individual students UKPSF: A2, K2, V1	

Reflect on what you have observed and make a few points on what you could take forward in order to enhance/develop you own practice.

Appendix 5: Assessment Moderation Activity Record

UKPSF: A3, K1, K2

Details of the moderation task undertaken (module name/ assignment details/ level)	
Summary of process you undertook with Experienced Educator	
Key learning points arising from the activity and discussion	
Experienced Educator feedback on your engagement in making assessment judgements and providing student feedback	

Appendix 6: Assessment Guidance

Supporting Tasks: guidance

The Dimensions of Practice of the UKPSF which are covered by the assignments are indicated in red against each task and are intended to show those that are integral to the tasks themselves (A2, A3, K1, K2, V1,V3). Depending on the scope of your approach you may also be able to partially evidence other Dimensions of Practice, and you should indicate these, if appropriate, in each assignment.

In order to inform your assignments and broaden your evidence base, you are required to carry out a number of supporting tasks, **all of which** you should include in your final submission at the end of the award.

	Supporting task	Guidelines
A.	Teaching context - an outline of your role and responsibilities	In producing this try to respond to the following prompts, you may need to also draw from some of the information gleaned in the interview with your Experienced Educator (Task B) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who are your students? What stage of higher education are they? Is there any diversity in your cohort (s)? What do you believe your responsibilities in relation to supporting learning through effective teaching/ learning support and guidance are? What values/ beliefs inform the way you approach your role? Look at the UKPSF Values.
B.	Interview with an Experienced Educator	We have prepared a list of generic questions at the end of this document to help you frame the interview. It may be that you interview your Experienced Educator on more than one occasion as you require information but this will not always be the case.
C.	One sample lesson plan – including lesson plan, resources and your reflection and action plan following delivery	Using the form provided on BBL, you should prepare a full lesson plan, for your observed session by your Experienced Educator.
D.	Observation of your Experienced Practitioner form	During the course of the award we ask you to observe at least one teaching session given by your Experienced Educator. You are then asked to comment on the approaches and/or techniques that they use in their practice. You should write a short report, reflecting on what you have observed and on how you might/might not incorporate these into your own practice. You can then draw on these reflections in your later assignments. The proforma to be used for this observation can be found in Appendix 4 of this document. You may find it useful to observe a number of different sessions which use different approaches, formats etc., to broaden your evidence base.
E.	Your Teaching Observation form	After your observation by your Experienced Educator, you should reflect on the comments that they have made and indicate on the

	Supporting task	Guidelines
	and your action plan responding to comments	form how you might address these points going forward. Remember that the observation form needs to be signed by your observer and that you need to include this in your submission. The proforma to be used for this observation can be found in Appendix 3 of this document.
F.	Example evaluation feedback from students	One of the key elements of the programme and recognition at Associate Fellow of the HEA is that you are able to demonstrate that your teaching and learning practice is effective for your students. We therefore ask you to seek feedback from your students on the usefulness/effectiveness of the teaching and learning approaches you have used with them. You might use different methods (e.g. minute papers, short questionnaires, stop-start-continue or audience response systems) to gather this data, but what is important is that you are able to see from this where you have been effective for your students and where you might seek to enhance your practice further.
G.	Assessment exercise – undertake a moderation activity with your Experienced Educator	In conjunction with your Experienced Educator identify an appropriate module and explore the assessment strategy – what assignments students do and how are these marked to ensure that decisions are accurate and valid. Using two sample assignment submissions (current or previous) mark using the assignment guidance and criteria and write feedback comments for the student. Discuss your marks and comments with your Experienced Educator and jointly complete the record in Appendix 5.
H.	UKPSF Self-Assessment Tool	You will find this self-assessment tool helpful in recording your activities and evidence against the UKPSF dimensions of practice at D1. You should maintain this self-assessment as a living document, updating it regularly during the course of your studies to record your evidence and development. We suggest also that you record activities and evidence gained through your award (activities, formative & summative assessment tasks etc.). You are required to complete this document on two occasions –at the beginning and end of award – to clearly illustrate your evolving progression and alignment with the dimensions of practice of the UKPSF. More detailed information is provided in the UKPSF Self-assessment guidance document on BBL.
I.	Background Reading	You should provide a bibliography for each individual assignment, using the Harvard referencing system.

Guidance for interviewing your Experienced Educator/subject adviser

Please note that these questions are only provided as a guide – you should feel free to adapt these and/or add questions of your own that reflect your own learning and teaching context.

Generic questions for Experienced Educator interviews

You may wish to ask your Experienced Educator some of the following questions:

- What has your career path been to date?
- What have been the high points of your experience as an educator in HE?
- What have been the challenges?
- Why do you teach/ support learning the way you do? How do you know it is effective?
- Do you feel that HE is changing? How and why?
- What advice would you give me as I start out as an educator?
- What do you feel has changed in terms of the student profile on their course?
- What are the challenges that these changes have brought about in terms of your teaching practice?
- How has your teaching and learning approaches changed over time in response to changes in the student profile?

Experienced Educator interview: Student engagement focus

- How do you think students learn best within your discipline?
- Which approaches work best in relation to student engagement?
- How do you overcome specific challenges (use this as an opportunity to get advice on a challenge you have)?
- How do you support students with different learning styles or additional needs?
- How do you cope with large groups/ practical skills/ professional requirements/ group work (and/or any other context specific challenges)?

Experienced Educator interview: Assessment & Feedback Focus

- What do you see as being the main purposes of assessment and feedback?
- What have they found works best in relation to A&F? (Does it align with the A&F Principles?)
You could ask about how they select the assessment task and why.
- How do you prepare students to undertake assignments?
- What feedback approaches work best?
- How do you support students with different learning styles or additional needs?
- How do you cope with assessing large groups/ practical skills/ professional requirements/ group work (and/or any other context specific assessment challenges)?

Assignment 1: Your Teaching and Learning Support Rationale and Approach (500 words)

Please provide a brief reflection on your context and your approach to supporting and enhancing the student learning experience e.g. what are your values and beliefs in relation to the work you do? What has influenced you? What do you believe your role is in enhancing the student learning experience? In preparing this you should consider how your approach aligns to the UKPSF Professional Values.

Use your outline of your roles and responsibilities (Task A) and your interview with an Experienced Educator (Task B) to inform your response. You should append both Tasks to the commentary.

UK PSF: A2, K1, K2, V1, V2

Assignment 2: Case Study 1: Engaging Your Students (800 words)

The brief

Using the Ulster Student Learning Experience Principles (Viewpoints resources <http://adl.ulster.ac.uk/principles/>) reflect on your current practice. Choose an activity or approach that you use and produce a case study exploring and critically reviewing how you came to use the approach and why you think it is successful in supporting and engaging your students in their learning. In addition to lecturing, tutorial and seminar work the activities might include, for example, studio, clinical, laboratory or workplace-based teaching, distance learning, one to one support and technology enhanced learning. Consider also further enhancements you could make to this activity.

Remember to not only give detail about the situation but also explain how and why you worked with the students in that manner. Draw on your reading of teaching and learning to support the decisions you have made to try and ensure your practice is effective.

UK PSF: A2, K1, K2, V1, V3

You should also draw from relevant tasks to underpin your narrative. Evaluative feedback you have gathered will also be useful in supporting your knowledge of how effective your approach is.

Further guidance

You should write your Case Study in the first person. Please cite sources of professional and/ or pedagogic knowledge that have informed your practice throughout. A framework of questions that you may wish to use in interrogating your practice is:

- What did you do? Concise description of engagement including own role
- How did you do it? Explanation of approach/methodology employed
- Why did you do it that way? Evidence and rationale for choices made
- What difference did it make? Impact on learners/teachers/self/institution/beyond

Template

Suggested section headings and prompts for section content:

Section headings	Content - prompts
Title	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• give your case study a title that reflects the focus
UKPSF Alignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• list which UKPSF dimensions you feel this case study evidences (you should include those that are integral to the assessment task as well as any others that you may have partially covered depending on the scope of your approach)
Context	Should cover: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• provide a brief description of the activity, who with (students/ level etc.)• the rationale for the activity including underpinning pedagogy and aims and objectives,• explain how it aligns with Ulster Student Learning Experience Principles
Your Approach	Should cover: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What did you do? Concise description of engagement including own role• How did you do it? Explanation of approach/methodology employed• Why did you do it that way? Evidence and rationale for choices made
Reflective Commentary	Should cover: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• your evaluation of your experience and what worked well and how you know this• what challenges, if any, had to be overcome
Further Enhancements	Should cover: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• how this activity might be further developed and also any further professional development that might help you

Assignment 3: Case Study 2: Assessment & Feedback for Learning (800 words)

The brief

Using the Ulster Principles for Assessment and Feedback for Learning and supporting Viewpoints resources http://ee.ulster.ac.uk/assessment_and_feedback/index.php? reflect on your current practice (append any completed audits to this case study).

Part 1: Choose one assessment approach/ feedback technique you use and produce a brief case study exploring and critically reviewing how you came to use the approach and why you think it is successful in supporting and engaging students in their learning. (500 words)

Remember to not only give detail about the situation but also explain how and why you worked with the students in that manner. Draw on your reading of assessment and feedback to support the decisions you have made to try and ensure your practice is effective.

You should also draw from relevant tasks to underpin your narrative. Evaluative feedback you have gathered may also be useful in supporting your knowledge of how effective your approach is.

Part 2: Based on the moderation task you undertook with your Experienced Educator reflect on your learning from the activity. This might include consideration of how well the assignment fits with the learning you were aiming to assess, the clarity of the guidance and criteria. You may also want to reflect on your confidence in making decisions about marks and the feedback you gave. (300 words)

UK PSF: A3, K1, K2, V1, V3

Further guidance

You should write your Case Study in the first person. Please cite sources of professional and/ or pedagogic knowledge that have informed your practice throughout. A framework of questions that you may wish to use in interrogating your practice is:

- What did you do? Concise description of engagement including own role
- How did you do it? Explanation of approach/methodology employed
- Why did you do it that way? Evidence and rationale for choices made
- What difference did it make? Impact on learners/teachers/self/institution/beyond

Template

Suggested section headings and prompts for section content overleaf:

Section	Contents
UKPSF Alignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • list which UKPSF dimensions this assignment evidences (you should include those that that integral to the assessment task as well as any others that you may have partially covered depending on the scope of your approach)
Part 1:	
Title	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • give your case study a title that reflects the focus
Context	Should cover: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide a brief description of the activity, who with (students/ level etc.) • list which Principle(s) this case study evidences • why were they selected as your focus
Your Approach	Should cover: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did you do? Concise description of engagement including own role • How did you do it? Explanation of approach/methodology employed • Why did you do it that way? Evidence and rationale for choices made, the rationale for the activity including underpinning pedagogy and aims and objectives.
Reflective Commentary	Should cover: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • your evaluation of your experience and what worked well and how you know this • what challenges, if any, had to be overcome

Part 2:	
Reflections on Moderation Activity	Should cover: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> reflect on your learning from the moderation activity you undertook with your Experienced Educator.
Further Enhancements	Should cover: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> consider how your A&F practice might be further developed and also any further professional development that might help you

Assignment 4:

Overall reflection and professional development plan (500 words)

Review critically your experience over the award by addressing the following:

- What have you learned?
- How have you applied this to your own practice?
- How do you identify what is working in your practice and consider how to enhance it?
- What areas of your practice/ experience would you prioritise for further development?
- How do you plan to achieve this in the short or medium term?
- What sort of educator would you like to become?

Appendices (all supporting tasks):

Task A: Teaching context

Task B: Interview with Experienced Educator

Task C: Sample lesson plan, resources, reflection and Action Plan

Task D: Experienced Educator Observation Form

Task E: Your Teaching Observation Form and Action Plan

Task F: Student evaluation and Action Plan

Task G: Assessment exercise Form

Task H: UKPSF Self-assessment (completed twice)

Task I: Reference List in Harvard style covering all assignments

UK PSF: A2, A3, K1, K2, V1, V3

Appendix 7: UKPSF Self-Assessment Tool: Completion instructions

You will find this self-assessment helpful in recording your activities and evidence against the UKPSF dimensions of practice at D1. You should maintain this self-assessment as a living document, updating it during the course of your studies to record your evidence and development. You should also record activities and evidence gained through the Award (activities, formative & summative assessment tasks etc.).

You will notice that some of the dimensions of practice are shaded. These dimensions are those that are explicitly covered by the award to evidence your practice at D1 and **must** be completed.

However, it is likely that you will be able to complete, at least partially, some of the other dimensions of practice depending on your own individual experience.

You are required to submit this completed document as part of the final portfolio, and should provide evidence at two points during the award (start and end points) to demonstrate your evolving practice and development needs. You should complete the grid, expanding the rows as required, as follows:

Start point
End point

N.B. You should ensure that in your end-point entries you clearly map the assessment tasks against the relevant dimensions of practice.

An example of a completed dimension is provided overleaf for guidance.

Example of a completed dimension (A2: Teach and/or support learning)

A2	What evidence could I currently provide in support of this area of activity?	How might I go about developing further evidence in support of this area of activity?	What professional development might I need in support of this area of activity?	First Steps
A2 Teach and/or support learning Start point: 1/9/16	I have limited experience of teaching at the moment although I carried some as part of my yr 1 PG studies. I have delivered a lecture and facilitated small group tutorials	Once I actually start to teach more and get practical experience then my real teaching development will take place. Getting feedback from others (students and colleagues) will provide further evaluative evidence of my approaches and help me identify areas for enhancement.	I believe that the chance to observe other lecturers and teachers, as well as the feedback from my planned observations will contribute to my professional development. Further reading and the opportunity to put theory into practice in my upcoming teaching roles will enhance my knowledge in this area.	First Steps workshops and tasks
A2 Teach and/or support learning End point: 28/4/17	Some students have additional needs and require extra time and effort from me. I have arranged more regular and longer one-to-one meetings to ensure the students submit their best possible piece of work.	Continue to incorporate new Pedagogic approaches into my teaching and monitor how it works	Student support workshops.	Case Study 1 Assignment 4 Lesson plan 1 Observation Feedback from students Observation of Experienced Educator

UKPSF Self-Assessment Tool

Self-assessment mapping	Date completed
Start point	
End-point	

My Activities

How can you demonstrate engagement in /provide evidence for the following **UKPSF Areas of Activity?**

	What evidence could I currently provide in support of this area of activity?	How might I go about developing further evidence in support of this area of activity?	What professional development might I need in support of this area of activity?	First Steps
A1 Design and plan learning activities and/or programmes of study				
A2 Teach and/or support learning				
A3 Assess and give feedback to learners				
A4 Develop effective learning environments and approaches to student support and guidance				
A5 Engage in continuing professional development in subjects/disciplines and their pedagogy, incorporating research, scholarship and the evaluation of professional practice				

My Core Knowledge

How can you demonstrate engagement in /provide evidence for the following **UKPSF Core Knowledge?**

	What evidence could I currently provide in support of this area of activity?	How might I go about developing further evidence in support of this area of activity?	What professional development might I need in support of this area of activity?	First Steps
K1 The subject material				
K2 Appropriate methods for teaching and learning in the subject area and at the level of the academic programme				
K3 How students learn, both generally and within their subject/ disciplinary area(s)				
K4 The use and value of appropriate learning technologies				
K5 Methods for evaluating the effectiveness of teaching				
K6 The implications of quality assurance and quality enhancement for academic and professional practice with a particular focus on teaching				

My Professional Values

How can you demonstrate engagement in /provide evidence for the following **UKPSF professional values**?

	What evidence could I currently provide in support of this area of activity?	How might I go about developing further evidence in support of this area of activity?	What professional development might I need in support of this area of activity?	First Steps
V1 Respect individual learners and diverse learning communities				
V2 Promote participation in higher education and equality of opportunity for learners				
V3 Use evidence-informed approaches and the outcomes from research, scholarship and continuing professional development				
V4 Acknowledge the wider context in which higher education operates recognising the implications for professional practice				

Appendix 8: Assessment Feedback Pro-forma

FIRST STEPS Feedback

Name:

Required elements

	Met/ Not Yet Met
Task A: Teaching context	
Task B: Interview with Experienced Educator	
Task C: Sample lesson plan, resources, reflection and Action Plan	
Task D: Experienced Educator Observation Form	
Task E: Your Teaching Observation Form and Action Plan	
Task F: Student evaluation and Action Plan	
Task G: Assessment exercise Form	
Task H: UKPSF Self-assessment (completed twice)	
Task I: Reference List in Harvard style covering all assignments	

Learning outcome	1	2	3	4	Comments
1. Successful engagement in appropriate practices related to teaching and/or support learning, assessment and giving feedback to learners	✓	✓	✓	✓	Assignment 1: UK PSF: A2, K1, K2, K3, V1 Comments:
2. Appropriate knowledge and understanding of the subject material and appropriate methods for teaching, learning and assessing in the subject area and at the level of the academic programme		✓	✓	✓	Assignment 2: Case Study 1: UK PSF: A2, K1, K2, V1, V3 Comments: Assignment 3: Case Study 2: UK PSF: A3, K1, K2, V1, V3 Comments:
3. A commitment to appropriate UKPSF Professional Values in facilitating others' learning	✓	✓	✓	✓	Assignment 4: UK PSF: A2, A3, K1, K2, V1, V3 Comments:
4. An ability to draw from the professional evidence base to evaluate and inform your practice e.g. relevant professional practices, subject		✓	✓	✓	

and pedagogic research and/or scholarship					Overall comments:
5. Successful engagement in professional development activity related to teaching, learning and assessment responsibilities		√	√	√	

Recommendation: AFHEA – met/not yet met (all tasks and assessments must be completed successfully for AFHEA to be awarded)

Marked by:

Date:

Moderated by:

Date:

Appendix 9: Participant Assignment Cover Sheet and Check List

FIRST STEPS Assignment Cover Sheet

Name:
Student/ staff Number:
Contact email:
Date Submitted:

Please confirm that your one PDF file includes all the following elements:

	Submitted
Assignment 1	
Assignment 2	
Assignment 3	
Assignment 4	
Task A: Teaching context	
Task B: Interview with Experienced Educator	
Task C: Sample lesson plan, resources, reflection and Action Plan	
Task D: Experienced Educator Observation Form	
Task E: Your Signed Teaching Observation Form and Action Plan	
Task F: Student evaluation and Action Plan	
Task G: Assessment exercise Form	
Task H: UKPSF Self-assessment (completed twice)	
Task I: Reference List in Harvard style covering all assignments	

By submitting these assignments, I declare that this is all my own work and that any material I have referred to has been accurately referenced. I have read the University's policy on plagiarism and understand the definition of plagiarism. If it is shown that material has been plagiarised, or I have otherwise attempted to obtain an unfair advantage for myself or others, I understand that I may face sanctions in accordance with the policies and procedures of the University.

Appendix 10: Your Experienced Educator

Experienced Educator Role & Responsibilities

In the first instance, it is your responsibility to identify their Experienced Educator during the programme application process, so early contact regarding their responsibilities can be ensured by the Award Co-ordinators. Where difficulties may arise, you are encouraged to contact the Award Co-ordinators to seek advice on whom might be appropriately approached to take this role. Experienced Educators, who must be a member of staff at Ulster University and hold Fellowship at a minimum of D2, are provided with guidance on their role which will be updated annually so as to take cognisance of any developments which may occur as a result of external and/or internal drivers and participant feedback on the programme.

Given the geographical distances involved between the four university campuses, Experienced Educator briefing sessions will take place via webinars: Experienced Educators attend one of these briefings once a year to be appraised of any updates to the programme and the UKPSF. Additional guidance and key information is provided in an online area accessible to all Experienced Educators.

You should identify an Experienced Educator, from your broad discipline area, who will support and advise you during the Award. To satisfy the independent authentication requirements of the Award this colleague will:

- formatively observe your teaching on at least one occasion;
- carry out an assessment and feedback moderation;
- provide corroboration of your effective practice in the above two tasks.

The Experienced Educator will be a person whom you feel you could call upon to provide guidance, support and specialist knowledge within the context of their academic discipline. He/she will be someone whom you consider to have an interest in a particular area of your studies and who is willing to share their own expertise and knowledge, though in doing so, they would not be formally called upon to assess your written work. They will also be someone who is familiar with the UKPSF and be able to apply its dimensions of practice to observed sessions/moderation exercises as evidence of effective practice at D1.

Experienced Educators should be capable of:

- building a rapport with you;
- showing empathy with you in relation to your professional roles;
- respecting your practice and the choices you make concerning your work as a First Steps participant;
- encouraging you to take responsibility for your learning;
- acting as a 'critical friend', that is, someone capable of:
 - offering unbiased constructive criticism, guidance and feedback;
 - being a good listener;
 - questioning, interpreting and explaining;
 - assisting with problems while challenging you to make decisions;
 - striking an acceptable balance between giving advice and not taking control;
 - drawing on their knowledge and understanding of the UKPSF to underpin their role.

He or she will also have a very particular interest in higher education practice and would in turn be willing to share insights and reflections with you about their work.

Not Just Teaching

While observation of teaching is clearly an important aspect of the Experienced Educator's role, it is not, however, the only role that could be fulfilled by the person concerned. For example, within the Award he or she may be called upon to discuss their expertise in and or experiences of:

- module development, management and planning
- student support
- specific strategies they use in their own teaching, including student assessment.

In other words, the Experienced Educator will be a confidential sounding board for a variety of educator-specific issues.

Authentication of Practice

Experienced Educators are provided with pro-formas to guide the evaluation of any teaching observations/assessment moderation (Appendices 3 & 5).

Observing Teaching

Arrangements for the observation should be made with as much advance notice as possible. Preferably, you should be provided with feedback immediately after the observation, however if this is not possible, then within the next 2-3 days of the observation. Feedback is generally most effective if given at the earliest opportunity. The post-observation meeting should ideally begin with your own thoughts about the teaching session, and you are encouraged to begin with positive aspects first of all. Many people find this difficult, wanting to look first at the less positive, but this is not always a good thing, as negativity has a habit of taking over in such situations.

Moderating assessment

The Experienced Educator should identify an appropriate module and support you in exploring the assessment strategy and marking criteria. He/she should take time to explain the rationale that underpins the assessment strategy and marking criteria design, and how they are used to ensure accurate and valid decision-making. The Experienced Educator should also focus on showing how the Ulster Principles for Assessment and Feedback for Learning underpin the approach taken to providing meaningful feedback.

You will need to have access to two sample assignment submissions (current or previous), and mark these using the assignment guidance and criteria to produce a mark and feedback comments for the student. The Experienced Educator should moderate/discuss these with you and you will jointly complete the pro-forma provided.

For both these authentications of practice records, it is important for the discussion is focused in a positive way, before dealing with other issues that point to the need for development within them.

The pro-formas are used to focus the discussion and in turn avoid generalities. There should be a focus on what was done, why it was done and how well it was done, again beginning with your own evaluation which should focus on the facts of the situation, drawing upon these as evidence to substantiate and support reflections and findings.