Guidance for Mentors

The PGDip/MA in Higher Education Practice

From September 2018, the MA in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education (aka TLHEP) will cease to recruit and will be taught out, ending in 2020. The programme will be replaced by the PGDip/MA in Higher Education Practice. The new PGDip course will comprise modified and updated versions of the two learning and teaching modules of the current programme and two new researcher development modules: The Professional Published Researcher and The Funded Leading Researcher (see Figure 1 towards the end of the document). There will also be an enhanced focus on leadership in both areas of practice. The new course has been devised to reflect a more holistic view of the work of academic professionals in Higher Education and also the new Academic Professional Apprenticeship (APA) which Keele will adopt from September 2018. The PGDip HEP will be the principal means of delivery for the APA. The PGDip has been accredited by the Higher Education Academy and is benchmarked to Descriptor 2 of the UK Professional Standards Framework for teaching and supporting learning and to phase two of the Vitae Researcher Development Framework.

The PGDip/MA HEP is an exciting new development that enables all participants, their mentors, and other colleagues to become part of a community of practice exploring and contributing to the development of the two major areas of practice of academic professionals. Specifically, it supports participants to gain the knowledge, skills and behaviours to succeed as an academic professional. The course thus has the potential to be a forum for the sharing of good and best practice and a means of disseminating this throughout the university. It will be of benefit to individual participants, schools, and the institution as a whole.

The Mentor’s Role

Mentors are a crucial part of the PGDip/MA HEP programme. Mentors are more experienced peers who can discuss with colleagues new to Higher Education and Keele University how to translate general principles about academic practice into the particular demands of the discipline and the context. Newly appointed colleagues on academic or academic-related contracts are allocated Mentors by Heads of School/Line Managers. Mentors will support participants in both their teaching and research activities but have a specific role in relation to the former. NB from 2018, Mentors must be Fellows of the HEA.
**Mentor Roles: Suggestions for Helping PGDip/MA HEP Participants**

Mentors will be invited to a meeting with the PGDip/MA HEP Director early on in the programme, where they will be able to discuss ways of helping participants coordinate PGDip/MA HEP participation with their institutional roles. Please contact the Programme Director if you would like more information about mentoring.

Typical roles ascribed to mentors are: trusted friend, counsellor, guide, advocate, role model, information provider and door opener. At a minimum, the mentor should introduce the new person to University and School processes and procedures.

Further than this, the mentor has an important role in providing guidance and support in relation to teaching, and to support participants in undertaking the PGDip/MA HEP programme, especially in relation to the two researcher development modules.

Precise mentoring roles can and should vary according to the experience and needs of the people involved, and it is important that they discuss and agree on the nature of their relationship at an early stage. Once the mentoring relationship is established, the new teacher can take the initiative, but it is important for the mentor to arrange a first meeting as early as possible and possibly arrange regular informal talks over coffee or occasional longer discussions. Mentoring should make participants feel supported rather than ‘monitored’.

**The Mentor’s Role in Observing Teaching and Supporting Teaching Development**

The PGDip/MA HEP participant’s ongoing portfolio development can be used as a basis for regular discussions about teaching. Mentors can help arrange peer observations. They can give formal and informal feedback on teaching, discuss course planning and assessment, and advise about School/section practices.

PGDip/MA HEP participants have commented how helpful it is when mentors:

- Help to foresee problems and steer the new teacher through these
- Invite new teachers to observe his/her own teaching, or arrange for them to observe that of other more experienced colleagues, and involve them in discussions about teaching in general
- Are available with hands-on support through potentially problematic experiences such as marking, or handling ‘difficult’ classes
- Appear to be comfortable with learning from new academic teachers who may have innovative and worthwhile ideas
- Are familiar with the PGDip/MA HEP and its requirements.

Participants in Module 1 of the PGDip/MA HEP, Teaching Reflectively in Higher Education, are required to observe colleagues teach on three occasions and to be observed teaching at least three times by a peer, in addition to once by their mentor, and once by a member of the PGDip/MA teaching team. Participants should have the opportunity to learn from a more experienced colleague and involving the mentor in observation will help them to become constructively involved in their progress both with the programme and in general. Observations should be recorded (example forms are provided on the KLE).
Mentors should respond to requests to observe teaching and use the procedure suggested in this guide including noting the new references to the UKPSF which it is the mentor’s job to not only be aware of but to relate to the observations of the new staff member. Further details can be found at: http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/UKPSF Feedback on teaching for the purpose of PGDip/MA HEP is intended to help the new teacher. It should not be judgemental.

The Mentor’s Role in Supporting Researcher Development
Mentors have a key part to play in assisting participants with their development as researchers and in supporting their work on the programme. Participants will take two researcher development modules: The Professional, Published Researcher and The Funded, Leading Researcher.
The first of these explores participants’ roles and identities in both knowledge-making (academic) and knowledge-needing communities. It explores participants’ responsibilities to other researchers, funders and sponsors, and the wider public. Participants will reflect, evaluate and develop their research identity in their unique research contexts and in relation to their own career development plans. The module uses delivery based on acknowledging where participants are in their research career journey, focusing on working on outputs and impact. Specifically, the aims are to enable participants to explore: Professional and Career Development, Professional Conduct, Working with Others, Mentoring, Communication and Dissemination, and Publishing. Participants will be expected to:

- Critically evaluate how to learn with and from others as part of the research context.
- Critically evaluate their own professional research practice, identity as a researcher, and career development.
- Identify opportunities and deploy strategies for publication.
- By design or application, engage with the peer-review publishing process.

The second module, The Funded, Leading Researcher will explore grant funding ecology and the changeable environment for the developing researcher. This module will give participants the opportunity to develop skills and experience to identify, evaluate and apply to relevant funding sources. In addition, participants will engage in peer review thereby developing skills in generating and responding to feedback and professional resilience to the critique of their ideas and plans. Participants will explore how to demonstrate the impact of their research to the general public. Participants will be able to explore how to:

- Design a realistic research proposal demonstrating effective planning of a research project and budgets.
- Frame clear research questions and articulate a methodology for both technical/specialist and lay audiences.
- Provide and respond constructively to developmental feedback on research design.
- Actively contribute to public understanding of a specialist research area by a lay audience.

Mentors will be able to act as guides, advisers and role models, and will assist in participants becoming part of and contributing to relevant research communities, both internal and external.
The Mentor’s Report
Part of the evidence provided by participants of how they have addressed PGDip/MA HEP Module 1 intended learning outcomes (ILOs) is a report from the mentor, which is seen by the candidate. This report is based on the ILOs, with space for further comments.

Mentors should comment on as many of these areas as they have any evidence for. Their comments should be based on discussions about teaching, observation of teaching and supervision of other aspects of teaching, engagement with aspects of the UKPSF, including assessment of students’ work. If the mentoring process produces concerns about a participant’s work, these concerns should be raised with both the participant and anyone who may be able to help, in ample time for the problems to be addressed. The report should not contain any surprises.

The Mentor’s Report form is downloadable from the KLE.

The Mentor’s Role in Marking, Evaluation and Assessment
Mentors are involved in the marking process as second markers. Mentors mark as many assignments as they have mentees. This is usually one portfolio for Teaching Module 1 and one portfolio for Teaching Module 2. The deadline for assignments is usually the end of June with the marking process completed by the end of July.

Mentors will also be asked to formally confirm that candidates have met the requirements of the UKPSF with respect to:

Descriptor 1 (Associate Fellowship) after Module 1
Descriptor 2 (Fellowship) after Module 2

The mentor’s role in the Academic Professional Apprenticeship
The majority of participants in the PGDip/MA HEP Programme will also be registered as apprentices for the APA. As Keele University is both an employer and a provider of the APA, participants on the apprenticeship programme are entitled to two mentors, an employer mentor and a provider mentor. For these purposes, the ‘employer’ mentor will be the school-based mentor, and the ‘provider’ mentor will be the PGDip/MA HEP tutor.

Participants in the APA programme must have a tri-partite meeting with both mentors 4 times in each of the two years of the programme. These meetings will be formal review points for APA apprentices and will therefore be in addition to the participants’ entitlement to 3 meetings with their mentor.

What are the features of the Academic Professional Standard?

- Generic set of knowledge, skills and behaviours to be met by all AP apprentices.
- Learning in the workplace with 1 day per week off the job training (at Keele this will comprise the new, for 2018, Diploma in HE Practice).
- Assessment via a teaching or research specialist route (following completion of the Diploma) after 18-24 months.
Assessment comprises a viva voce, a presentation, a reflective journal and a portfolio (apprentices will be prepared for this following completion of the PGDip HEP)
Assessment by an external, approved body

**Summary of Key Information for PGDip/MA HEP Mentors**

**Observations of Participants’ Teaching**
- Participants will be observed five times:
  - Once by their tutor
  - *Once by their mentor*
  - Three times by a peer (participants can negotiate who but it may be someone from their department, a colleague on the PGDip HEP, perhaps someone from another discipline. A variety of people would be good)

**Participants’ Observations of Others**
- Participants will observe others teach three times (*ideally, they should see their mentor teach* and an experienced colleague but they may arrange to see a colleague from the PGDip HEP cohort)

**Requirements for Module 1 Portfolio**
6 individual assignments/elements that comprise the final portfolio:
- Assessment 1: Short paper 'What makes good teaching?'
- Assessment 2: Written reflections on micro-teaching
- Assessment 3: Reflective evaluation of a taught session
- Assessment 4: Reflection on issues of student diversity
- Assessment 5: Action Plan following tutor-observed teaching
- Assessment 6: Written reflections on peer observation

Plus, the Mentor’s Report

**Summary of Mentor’s Responsibilities**
- Meet with mentee on a minimum of three occasions during the academic year:
  1. an initial meeting to determine priorities and to arrange a focus for observation
  2. after the teaching observation (debrief discussion)
  3. before writing report to discuss progress and achievements
- Observe mentee teach once
- Engage participants with the UKPSF and help them to use this to inform their practice
- Write mentor’s report at end of module 1 (portfolio requirement)
- Mark one assignment for Module 1 (June, 2019) and one assignment for Module 2 (June, 2020)
- If an APA mentor, participate in 4 tripartite evaluation meetings.
### PGDip/MA HEP Programme Outline

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<tr>
<th>Year One</th>
<th>Year Two</th>
<th>Exit Awards</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Professional Published Researcher (30 credits)</td>
<td>The Funded Leading Researcher (30 credits)</td>
<td>PGCert in Higher Education Research (60 credits)</td>
<td>Independent Study Project/ Dissertation (60 credits)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teaching Reflectively in Higher Education (30 credits)</td>
<td>Design and Development in Higher Education (30 credits)</td>
<td>PGCert in Higher Education Teaching (60 credits) D2 UKPSF</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exit Awards</td>
<td>PGCert in Higher Education Practice (60 credits) D1 UKPSF</td>
<td>PG Diploma in Higher Education Practice (120 credits) D2 UKPSF</td>
<td>Masters in Higher Education Practice (180 credits)</td>
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</tbody>
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**Figure 1**

NB: Each of the modules will be taught over two semesters. The teaching and research modules will run concurrently.