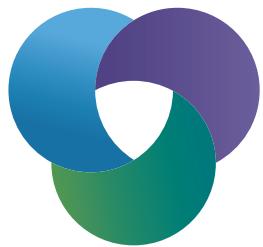


# Professional Standards Framework for teaching and supporting learning in higher education 2023

---



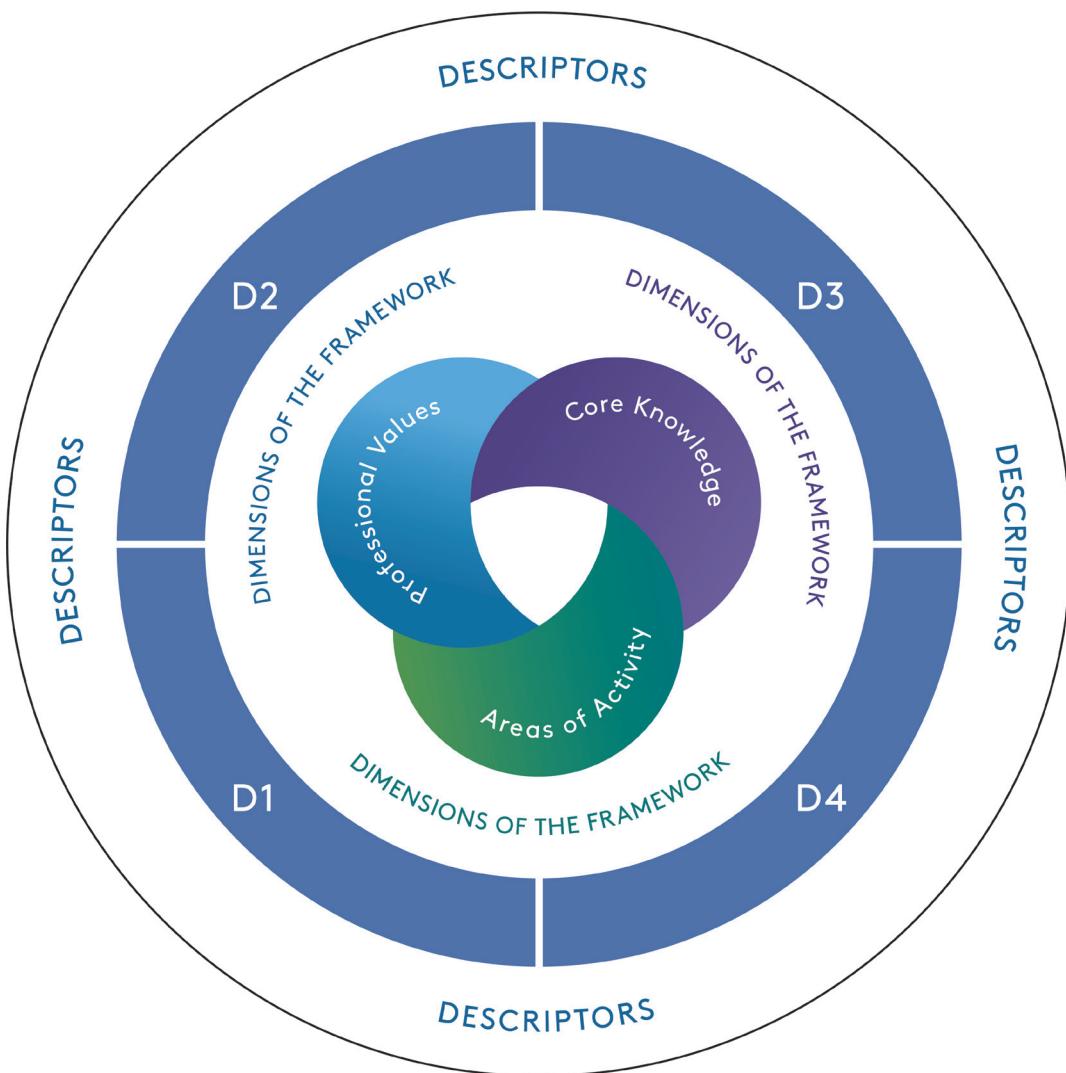
# Purpose

## The Professional Standards Framework:

- demonstrates to learners and other stakeholders the professionalism that colleagues and institutions bring to teaching and/or supporting learning.
- acknowledges the wide variety of local and global contexts in which higher education operates, and the diverse practices and roles that contribute to high-quality learning.
- identifies three related sets of Dimensions: Professional Values, Core Knowledge and Areas of Activity.
- presents, through four Descriptors, incorporating the Dimensions, a set of criteria statements against which individuals may evidence their practice.
- fosters critically evaluative, reflective and evidence-informed approaches to teaching and/or supporting learning in diverse academic or professional settings.
- enables individuals and institutions to review and enhance practices in teaching and/or supporting learning, providing a focus for initial and continuing professional development.
- provides a structure to support institutions and individuals in advancing higher education practices to meet the evolving needs of learners and society, such as acting in support of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.
- provides a structure through which individuals and institutions may gain recognition for approaches that support high-quality learning.



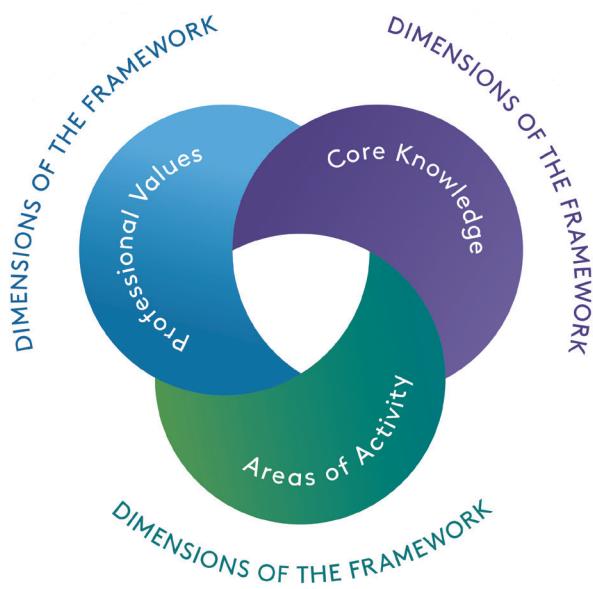
# The Professional Standards Framework



# Dimensions

## What are Dimensions?

- Dimensions are 15 statements which inform and describe practice. They are arranged as three related sets of five **Professional Values**, five forms of **Core Knowledge** and five **Areas of Activity**. Each set of Dimensions has its own stem statement. Essential to professional practice, these identify what professionals do to enable high-quality teaching and/or support of learning in higher education.
- **Professional Values:** underpin all forms of Core Knowledge and Areas of Activity. They are the foundation of professional practice.
- **Core Knowledge:** informed by the Professional Values, representing key forms of knowledge required to undertake the Areas of Activity. There are multiple and diverse forms of knowledge which are connected to and shaped by communities and contexts.
- **Areas of Activity:** bring together the Professional Values and forms of Core Knowledge, showing the essential activities that support delivery of effective practice.



## Professional Values

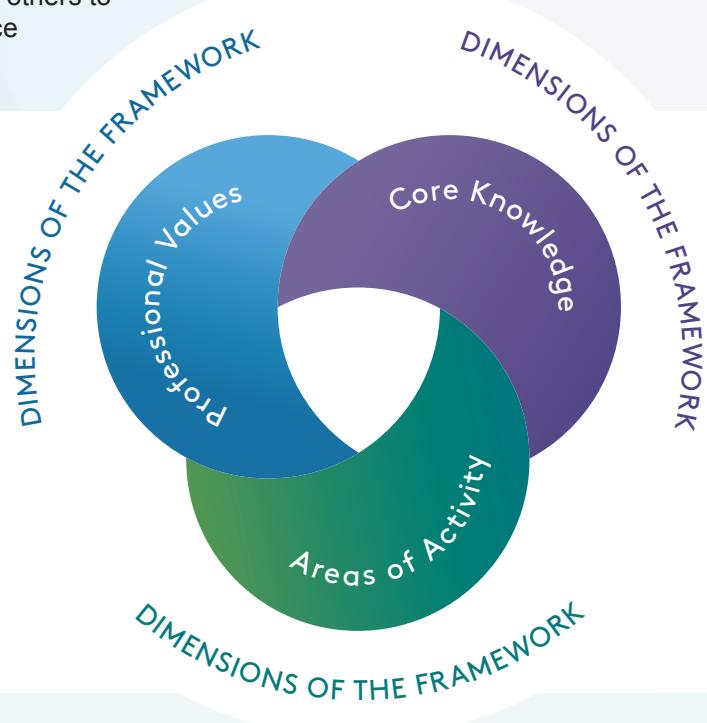
In your context, show how you:

- V1** respect individual learners and diverse groups of learners
- V2** promote engagement in learning and equity of opportunity for all to reach their potential
- V3** use scholarship, or research, or professional learning, or other evidence-informed approaches as a basis for effective practice
- V4** respond to the wider context in which higher education operates, recognising implications for practice
- V5** collaborate with others to enhance practice

## Core Knowledge

In your context, apply knowledge of:

- K1** how learners learn, generally and within specific subjects
- K2** approaches to teaching and/or supporting learning, appropriate for subjects and level of study
- K3** critical evaluation as a basis for effective practice
- K4** appropriate use of digital and/or other technologies, and resources for learning
- K5** requirements for quality assurance and enhancement, and their implications for practice



## Areas of Activity

In your context, demonstrate that you:

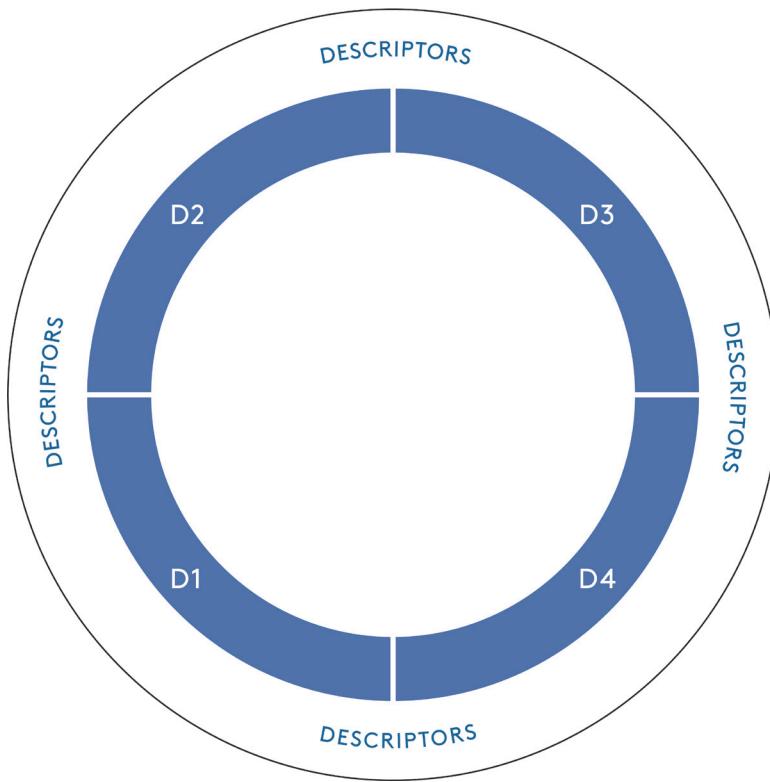
- A1** design and plan learning activities and/or programmes
- A2** teach and/or support learning through appropriate approaches and environments
- A3** assess and give feedback for learning
- A4** support and guide learners
- A5** enhance practice through own continuing professional development



# Descriptors

## What are Descriptors?

- Four Descriptors, each consist of an introduction and a set of three criteria statements.
- These define the key characteristics of four broad categories of practice. Incorporating the Dimensions, each Descriptor identifies the extent of practice required to meet it and recognises the variety of practice and roles undertaken by professionals who teach and/or support learning.
- **Individuals** use the Descriptors to plan their development and evidence their practice to achieve professional recognition.
- **Institutions** use the Descriptors as a basis for initial and continuing professional development and recognition programmes, to inform career/progression pathways and support talent development.
- **Professional organisations** use the Descriptors as a basis for activities and recognition frameworks that support the professional development of individuals and institutions.



# Descriptor 1

D1 is suitable for individuals whose practice enables them to evidence some Dimensions. Effectiveness of practice in teaching and/or support of learning is demonstrated through evidence of:



**Descriptor 1 aligns with Advance HE  
recognition as Associate Fellow.**



## Descriptor 2

D2 is suitable for individuals whose practice with learners has breadth and depth, enabling them to evidence all Dimensions. Effectiveness of practice in teaching and/or support of high-quality learning is demonstrated through evidence of:



**Descriptor 2 aligns with Advance HE  
recognition as Fellow.**



## Descriptor 3

D3 is suitable for individuals whose comprehensive understanding and effective practice provides a basis from which they lead or influence those who teach and/or support high-quality learning. Individuals are able to evidence:



Descriptor 3 aligns with Advance HE recognition as Senior Fellow.



## Descriptor 4

D4 is suitable for highly experienced individuals whose practice involves a sustained record of effectiveness in strategic leadership of high-quality learning. Their impact is extensive. Individuals are able to evidence:



**Descriptor 4 aligns with Advance HE recognition as Principal Fellow.**



## Relationship to Advance HE individual professional recognition and institutional accreditation

Advance HE recognises individuals who meet the requirements of one of the Descriptors of the Professional Standards Framework (PSF) through the award of a category of Fellowship. Advance HE institutional accreditation provides a mechanism through which professional development programmes can be confirmed as being aligned to the PSF enabling those who complete them to be recognised as an Associate Fellow, Fellow, Senior Fellow or Principal Fellow. Guidance and support is offered through the work of Advance HE to higher education institutions wishing to be accredited for their application and use of the PSF.

Please see [www.advance-he.ac.uk](http://www.advance-he.ac.uk) for further details.



The PSF, this material and its content is developed by Advance HE and on behalf of the higher education sector. The copyright in this material and content is jointly owned by Advance HE, GuildHE and Universities UK.

© Advance HE, GuildHE, Universities UK 2023. All Rights Reserved.

Any redistribution or reproduction of the contents, in part or in whole, in any form, shall be strictly prohibited, unless permission thereof has been explicitly granted by the copyright holders.

