Communication Intensive Courses

Student Teaching and Reflection (STaR) Programme

Guide for Mentors

Communication-intensive Courses

The University of Hong Kong

AdvanceHE

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Introduction

Dear Colleagues,

Thank you for agreeing to be a STaR Programme mentor!

You are acknowledged as a qualified and experienced mentor/assessor for the HKU Advance HE Fellowship Scheme, and you are either a Fellow, Senior Fellow or Principal Fellow of Advance HE.

The STaR programme is designed for undergraduate students who undertake substantial teaching responsibilities in teaching support for Communication-intensive Courses or other higher education institution(s) in the form of near peer teaching. Mentors in this programme will support student teachers in developing a teaching portfolio mapped against Descriptor 1 of the PSF, allowing them to obtain **Associate Fellowship of Advance HE.**

This guide outlines the requirements for the STaR programme's teaching portfolio.

On behalf of the STaR Team,

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STaR Programme

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Mentoring on the STaR programme

Mentoring in the HKU Advance HE Fellowship Scheme entails one-on-one or group mentoring. Although effective and rewarding, this mentoring model is time-consuming. It is recommended that you use group mentoring for the STaR programme to help you manage your time. Students will benefit from discussing their teaching portfolio with one another and from sharing reading materials. It is up to individual mentors how they choose to support their mentees. You may want to have regular meetings in person or online, or provide support through Whatsapp or other applications.

To provide adequate support, we will organize an induction workshop and conduct regular calibration sessions to help you become familiar with your role as mentors. These sessions will cover topics such as the programme overview, your responsibilities, assessment procedures, and conducting teaching observations. As a mentor, you will conduct teaching observations of your mentees. One such observation must be included as part of the applicant's teaching portfolio (please see Appendix 1). It is also highly likely that you will be asked to write the supporting statement.

Apart from supporting students in compiling their teaching portfolio, the mentors will also read and give feedback on the final portfolio before submission. Please ensure that all elements have been addressed and that the mapping against Descriptor 1 of the Professional Standards Framework (PSF) (2023) has been done appropriately.

Below is a brief reminder of the Dimensions and the Descriptors in the PSF 2023.

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.

Descriptors

The PSF has 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)

The PSF consists of two elements: The three dimensions of the framework (Areas of Activity, Core Knowledge, and Professional Values) **and** the descriptor statement for the category of Fellowship, in this case Descriptor 1 (D1).

Descriptor 1 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:

D1.1: use of appropriate **Professional Values**, including **at least V1 and V3** (please see below)

D1.2: application of appropriate Core Knowledge, including at least **K1, K2 and K3 (**please see below)

D1.3: effective and inclusive practice in at least **two of the five Areas of Activity**

Please note: For the STaR Programme, students must demonstrate effective practice in <u>two</u> of the following three Areas of Activity: **A1, A2** and **A4**

The STaR Programme focusses on A1, A2 and A4 because all student teachers in the faculty will gain specific experience in these Areas of Activity.

A1: In your own context, demonstrate that you design and plan learning activities (and/or programmes)

This Area of Activity is about how you plan learning activities for your students. It could be face-to-face or online sessions. Make sure you explain why you plan activities in the way you do. Think about differences in the way students learn, and how you make sure that students have learned at the end of the activity. Please refer to the document *Associate Fellowship (D1) Guide to the PSF 2023 Dimensions* (to be downloaded from the STaR website) for further details.

A2: In your own context, demonstrate that you teach and/or support learning through appropriate approaches and environments

This Area of Activity is about direct engagement and interaction with learners. You are expected to have facilitated peer learning, problem-based learning sessions, or demonstrated practical sessions in a laboratory. Think about how you ensured that all learners were engaged in your activity, and how you made students interact during the session. How did you create an effective learning environment to make sure everyone was meaningfully engaged? Remember that your account will be a reflective narrative, so you can reflect on why something did not work out in the way you had anticipated and how and why you may adapt your teaching in the future. Please refer to the document *Associate Fellowship (D1) Guide to the PSF 2023 Dimensions* (to be downloaded from the CiC STaR website) for further details.

A4: In your own context, demonstrate that you support and guide learning

Sometimes you may support fellow-students in an informal context. This may involve applying particular strategies to help students understand a concept, or developing resources that aid learning. Please refer to the document **Associate Fellowship (D1) Guide to the PSF 2023 Dimensions** (to be downloaded from the CiC STaR website) for further details.

The Teaching Portfolio

In their teaching portfolio, students may address any of the Professional Values, Core Knowledge, and Areas of Activity. However, all teaching portfolios must include the following elements:

1. **A teaching observation done by the student's mentor** [K3],
2. **A reflection on the teaching observation and subsequent dialogue with their mentor** (200 words)

   The teaching observation must be done by the assigned mentor using the template (Appendix 1). The mentor should arrange a pre-observation meeting where student – the observee – will identify which aspects of teaching he/she would like the mentor to focus on while observing the class. Following the observation, the student will meet the mentor again and discuss the session, and the mentor will complete the overall evaluation. Based on the discussions and the mentor's overall evaluation, the student will write their own 200 words reflection on the teaching session mapped against the PSF.

   Please note: The teaching observation template for the STaR programme is the same as the one used for Associate Fellowship on the HKU Advance HE Fellowship Scheme.

3. **A reflection on student feedback with suggestions on how to address issues raised or further develop positive aspects of their teaching** (300 words) [K1; K3]

   While teaching, students are expected to collect feedback from their peers. In this element of their teaching portfolio, they will reflect on the feedback they have received and, as a result, provide a brief action plan for further development. If appropriate, they may cross-reference to comments from your teaching observation.

4. **A supporting statement, normally provided by their mentor.**

   Students will need one supporting statement from an experienced member of staff who is able to comment on the teaching portfolio. This person *will normally be their mentor* but can be done by any experienced member of staff who has Fellowship, Senior Fellowship or Principal Fellowship of Advance HE.

   AND, TWO of the three options below:

   ➢ An outline of TWO sessions with a rationale for planned activities linked to appropriate literature (500 words) [A1; V1; V3; K1],

This element addresses Area of Activity 1 of the PSF and focusses on how they plan a session and its learning activities. Students need to provide a rationale for designing their activities based on literature in the field. Make sure they address learner diversity when they reflect on the planning process. In their narrative, they can reflect on the extent to which activities worked and why (or why not), and what they can do in the future to make the activity more effective

➢ A reflection on TWO different teaching approaches linked to appropriate literature (500 words) [A2; V1; V3; K2]

This element addresses Area of Activity 2 of the PSF and focusses on how students create an appropriate learning environment when working with their peers. It is important that they pay attention to V1 which is to do with respecting their students and being aware of learner diversity. They will need to reflect on any challenges they have come across relating to the two approaches as well as the effectiveness of the teaching methods.

➢ Reflections on TWO examples of how they have supported a student or a group of students in achieving their learning goal(s) linked to appropriate literature (500 words) [A4; V1; V2]

This element addresses Area of Activity 4 of the PSF and focusses on how students support their peers. They may choose a case study around one student that they have worked with – or a small group of students. In order to help their peers learn, they may have developed special resources or devised particular strategies in order to support them.

Please note: Students may include a maximum of two images/photos in their portfolios but no weblinks or QR codes. Graphs or diagrams are not allowed. The images/photos must be related to their teaching experience and be referred to in the portfolio. For example, teaching materials that the student has helped develop.

Support for Students Compiling Their Teaching Portfolios

Students get a maximum of eighteen (18) months to build their teaching portfolio – from registration to submission. This may seem like a long time, but it is intentional for them to build up enough teaching experience to allow them to reflect confidently on their own teaching practice. During that time, students will have access to a range of support listed below.

1. Mandatory modules
   Before students start teaching in CiC courses, they may have completed two mandatory modules related to peer learning, small group facilitation, questioning skills and providing feedback to students. Students may draw on those modules when they compile their teaching portfolio, especially on the reflective essay they submitted as part of that initial training.

2. Mentor group
   Once students have registered for the STaR programme, the programme leader will assign each student to a mentor. As a mentor, please encourage your mentees to discuss their teaching portfolios and readings with their peers.

3. Workshop
   Students must attend a two-hour workshop after they register for the STaR programme. The workshop will cover elements of teaching and learning that they need to address in their teaching portfolio, such as theories of learning and evidence-informed teaching practice. To gain Associate Fellowship, students must demonstrate that they have engaged with the scholarship of teaching and learning and/or research related to teaching and learning (V3). They also need to show that they have some theoretical knowledge of how students learn generally and within specific subjects (K1). The workshop will address both these aspects.

Submission and Assessment of Teaching Portfolio

Student must use the templates provided for compiling the required documents: teaching observation (Appendix 1), teaching portfolio (Appendix 2), supporting statement (Appendix 3), and teaching hour log sheet (Appendix 4). The template contains guidance for each required element of the portfolio. Students have a maximum of eighteen (18) months* to get all the documents ready for submission. Students can submit all required documents via the STaR Website for assessment on 30th June or 30th November each year. **If the students are in the final year of study, they should submit the documents on or before 30th June while they are still undergraduate students (e.g., for the Class of 2027, they should submit all documents on or before 30th June 2027).** The teaching portfolio will be assessed by two assessors independently (assessors must be different from the mentor). Once assessed, outcomes will be sent to the Advance HE Scheme coordinator, who, together with a trained assessor from another faculty, will look at a random sample of 50% of the submissions.

The external reviewer will have access to all submissions but will be asked to look at 50% of the submissions to ensure consistency in the assessment process. There are three possible outcomes: Approved, Revise and Re-submit, and Not Approved. If a portfolio gets 'Revise and Re-submit', the student will be given two weeks to address the feedback from the assessors before submitting the teaching portfolio for reassessment. The student will be supported by his or her mentor during that process. If a teaching portfolio is marked 'Not Approved', the student must wait for the next submission deadline before re-submitting. Once the student's teaching portfolio has been approved, the outcome will be ratified as an Associate Fellowship panel, and the student's name will be entered into the database of Advance HE. The student will then receive a certificate directly from Advance HE.

When a teaching portfolio is not approved, it fails to meet the descriptor standards. There will be too many amendments to address within two weeks or there is not enough evidence of effectiveness and the applicant will not be able to collect more evidence in two weeks.

For a 'revise and resubmit' outcome, the reviewers will allow for extra words – a maximum 100 words.

External Reviewer

The external reviewer for the STaR programme is Dr Tina Byrom, Head of Enhanced Academic Practice, Loughborough University in the United Kingdom.

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Name of reviewee:_____

Date:_____

Undergraduate Programme:_____

The peer review is aligned with the first four Areas of Activities of the Professional Standards Framework (PSF). Observers are encouraged to make references to the Core Knowledge and Professional Values when observing their reviewees.

The aspects listed under each activity are for guidance only. Observers may wish to focus on other aspects of the teaching following the pre-observation meeting with the reviewee.

Areas of Activity	Comments
1. Design and plan learning activities - Appropriate learning outcomes; - The subject material; - Clarity of course materials (handouts, slides, etc); - Logical links between learning activities; - Timing and planning of the overall session;	
2. Teach and/or support learning through appropriate approaches and environments - Clear introduction of the topic and what is to be learned in the session; - Mastery of the topic/subject - Appropriate methods for teaching and learning in the subject; - Delivery – clarity and speed; - Level of student engagement; - Ensuring all students can participate in learning activities	

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3. Assess and give feedback for learning - Appropriate assessment for understanding and learning during the session; - Providing students with feedback on their learning	
4. Support and guide learners - Appropriate use of learning technologies - The environment is relaxed and inclusive - Guidance to additional resources - Handouts	
5. Other aspects	

Overall evaluation and comments – to be completed *after* the post-observation discussion with the reviewee

Name of observer:_____

Signature:_____

School/Department:_____

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Date:_____

Reviewee's reflection on the observation and evaluation. Please make references to the Core Knowledge and Professional Values when writing your reflection.

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Appendix 2 Template for STaR Teaching Portfolio

FULL NAME: _____

Please enter your name in the form that you want it to appear on your certificate. Please note: You _cannot_ have your name written in Chinese.

Date of registration on the STaR programme: _____

Date of submission: _____

Total number of words (excluding references and PSF mapping): _____

I confirm that this teaching portfolio is my own work based on teaching completed for Communication-intensive Courses, the University of Hong Kong and/or other higher education institutions.

Signature: _____

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Your teaching portfolio must include six (6) elements. The first element is a teaching observation done by your mentor. The observation must be signed by your mentor and submitted as a PDF file as part of your teaching portfolio. The last element is a supporting statement – normally done by your mentor, but another experienced member of staff who knows you as a teacher can also provide this statement. The supporting statement must be signed and included as a PDF file.

The rest of your portfolio is done in this template. ***Please do not exceed the total word limit of 1,500 words (excluding mapping and references).***

Please pay attention to the mapping of the Professional Values (Vs) and the Core Knowledge (Ks) where appropriate. For Associate Fellowship, you must address V1, V3, K1, K2, and K3, but you may also address other Vs and Ks.

A reflection on your teaching observation and the subsequent dialogue with your mentor. Please provide at least two (2) action points as a result of your reflection (200 words)

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A reflection on student feedback with suggestions on how to address issues raised or further develop positive aspects of your teaching (300 words). Make sure you collect feedback from more than one group of students. If appropriate, you may link student feedback to aspects raised in your teaching observation.

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Area of Activity 1
Design and Plan learning activities and/or programmes.
An outline of TWO sessions with a rationale for planned activities linked to appropriate literature (500 words). When planning, consider diversity in your classroom and how to provide opportunities for all students to contribute.

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Area of Activity 2
Teach and/or support learning through appropriate approaches and learning environment
A reflection on two different teaching approaches linked to appropriate literature (500 words). You will need to refer to learning theory or theories in this section.

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Area of Activity 4
Support and guide learners
Reflections on TWO examples of how you have supported a student or a group of students in achieving their learning goal(s) linked to appropriate literature (500 words)

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List of references (in alphabetical order)

> Please remember to include your signed teaching observation AND your signed supporting statement

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Appendix 3 Template for Supporting Statement

Supporting Statement

Associate Fellow of Advance HE (D1)

Name	
Institution	
Faculty/Department	
Job title	
Email	
Your Advance HE Fellowship status when applicable	
Relationship to applicant	
How long have you worked with the applicant (please insert dates)	
Declaration	Please tick the box below to indicate that you have read and agreed to the following statement: *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 have read and understood the declaration

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Please provide your statement to support the applicant's submission for the Associate Fellowship of Advance HE. You are required to comment on the applicant's recent higher education practice, providing examples to support your statement wherever possible. A one-page statement will typically be sufficient for this category of Fellowship. For further guidance, please refer to Guidance for Referees-AssociateFellowship2024_1738594930.pdf

Signature: _____

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Appendix 4 Template for Teaching Hour Log Sheet

Accumulated Hours of Teaching Activities

(to be completed by student applicant and signed by peer teaching programme coordinator)

Name of applicant: _____

Date	Time	School/ Department	Types of teaching	Description	No. of hours
example 1-Nov-23	09:30-11:30	CCHU9001	Classroom teaching	Reflective writing workshop	2
1-30 Sept 2025	See time table attached	Writing Centre	1:1 consultation	One-on-one consultations	15
				Total no. of teaching hours completed	25

Name of peer teaching programme coordinator: _____

Signature: _____

School/Department: _____

Date: _____

*You should aim to have at least two types of teaching with each contributing to at least 30% of the total teaching hours (e.g., 7.5 hours classroom teaching + 17.5 hours 1:1 consultation = 25 hours).

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Appendix 5 Assessment Sheet A

Each reviewer must complete Assessment Sheet A before meeting his or her review partner to decide on an outcome. After the discussion, they must complete Assessment Sheet B. Feedback can be copied and pasted from A to B. If two reviewers cannot agree on an outcome, they need to contact the programme leader who will include a third reviewer in the final decision.

Ticking 'Yes' or 'No' is not sufficient. You must include clear feedback to the applicant in each section.

Please make sure that feedback to the applicant is consistent with your outcome before you submit the sheet to the STaR programme leader.

Descriptor 1			
D1 is suitable for individuals whose practice enables them to evidence some Dimensions. Effectiveness of practice in teaching and and/or support of learning is demonstrated through evidence of:			
	Yes	**No**	**Feedback to applicant**
Use of appropriate Professional Values, including at least V1 and V3(D1.1)			
Application of appropriate Core Knowledge, including at least K1, K2, K3 (D1.2)			
Effective and inclusive practice in two of three Areas of Activity (A1, A2, A4) (D1.3)			
Appropriate supporting statement			
Any other comments			
Approved			
Revise and re-submit within two weeks			
Not Approved			

Full name of reviewer: _____

Signature of reviewer: _____   Date: _____

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The two reviewers should complete Assessment Sheet B based on their own assessment and the subsequent discussion. You may copy and paste from your Assessment Sheets A.

Ticking 'Yes' or 'No' is not sufficient. You must include clear feedback to the applicant in each section.

If an outcome is 'Revise and re-submit', make sure your feedback covers what the applicant needs to address in order to meet D1.

Please make sure that feedback to the applicant is consistent with your outcome before you submit the sheet to the STaR programme leader. If your final outcome is Revise and resubmit, please ensure that your feedback is actionable. You must guide the applicant to the exact area(s) in the teaching portfolio which need amendments.

Reviewers' names and signatures

Name: _____   Signature: _____

Name: _____   Signature: _____

Date: _____

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Descriptor 1 (D1)			
D1 is suitable for individuals whose practice enables them to evidence some Dimensions. Effectiveness of practice in teaching and and/or support of learning is demonstrated through evidence of:			
	Yes	**No**	**Feedback to applicant**
Use of appropriate Professional Values, including at least V1 and V3 (D1.1)			
Application of appropriate Core Knowledge, including at least K1, K2, K3 (D1.2)			
Effective and inclusive practice in two of three Areas of Activity (A1, A2, A4) (D1.3)			
Appropriate supporting statement			
Any other comments			
Suggested outcomes (please insert X)			
Approved			
Revise and resubmit	In order to meet the D1 criteria, the applicant needs to:		
Not approved	The reasons why the portfolio is not approved are:		