

Bath Probationer Pathways to HEA Fellowship

Frequently Asked Questions

What is Probationer Pathways to HEA Fellowship?

Probationer Pathways to HEA Fellowship is practice based continuous professional development (CPD) programme for early career academics at the University of Bath (UoB), leading towards **Fellowship of the HEA**.

Obtaining HEA Fellowship has recently become a requirement for teaching in most HE institutions across the UK (as well as abroad), and at the UoB this is a probationary requirement.

The main defining factor regarding which Pathway to take is the type of your contract with the UoB, i.e. Lecturer (R&T), Lecturer (T) or Lecturer (T) on short term contract.

Do I have to engage with the Probationer Pathway?

Completion of the programme of Pathway is mandatory if you are Lecturer (R&T) or a Lecturer (T) on probation and on a full- time contract or part time contract for more than 0.4 FTE (if unsure, consult HR and/or your line manager). For more details, refer to University of Bath Quality Assurance Code of Practice QA9, Annex 1.

Do I need to actively teach to take the Pathway?

The programme is practice-based, therefore you need to be actively teaching when engaged in the Probationer Pathway. The recommended teaching involvement (for guidance only) is around 20 hours per term. Sufficient teaching is crucial to enable engagement with the practical aspects of developing your teaching practice and to collect appropriate evidence to draw on when writing your Fellowship Application.

If you are a lecturer (T&R) you could start the Research Stream of your Pathway before the Teaching Stream if you are doing less teaching at the start of your probation.

What if my teaching load is currently limited?

If your teaching participation is currently low or unevenly spread throughout the semester, you may need to defer participation in the Pathway until later when your teaching load increases. Talk to the programme Director if you think this might be the case.

Which parts of the programme do I need to complete?

This depends on your employment contract:

- Lecturer (R&T): all learning, teaching and research core and choice sessions of the Pathway leading towards Fellow HEA are mandatory. Refer to the [pathway planner](#) for further details.
- Lecturer (T) on contract longer than (or equal to) 18 months: all core and choice sessions of the Pathway leading towards Fellow HEA are mandatory. Refer to the [pathway planner](#) for further details.
- Lecturer (T) on contract shorter than 18 months: core and choice sessions of the Pathway that lead towards Associate Fellow HEA are mandatory Refer to the [pathway planner](#) for further details.

If you are a Prize Fellow, only the research stream of the Lecturer (T&R) is mandatory at this stage, but if you do sufficient teaching you may also engage with the teaching stream of the Pathway.

If unclear, contact acdev@bath.ac.uk or consult HR and/or your line manager.

Is attendance of the sessions ‘(live’ part of the online session) mandatory? What if I cannot attend a session?

Attendance of the sessions is mandatory in order to successfully complete the programme (this is an Academic Staff Committee requirement). Full participation is essential given the nature of the programme as a large part of the learning is based on interactions, exchanges of ideas and experience, and mutual support with other early career academic colleagues.

All core and choice sessions are run at least twice per academic year; if you are not able to attend a session on a given date you can sign up for the next available session. Some delivery dates are also planned out of teaching times and for other days but Wednesdays to offer additional flexibility.

What do I need to do to complete the programme?

You will need to:

- attend all programme sessions and engage with online/ personal study tasks
- take part in a peer feedback activity
- provide means of authentication of practice
- submit the Fellowship Application by the submission deadline.

For pro-formas and more information please refer to the Probationer Pathway Moodle page.

What does the authentication of practice involve?

Authentication of practice is confirmation by colleagues that your teaching practice meets the standards defined by the Advance HE (as our Accreditor) expressed in the UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF).

Lecturers (R&T) and Lecturers (T) on contract longer than (or equal to) 18 months will need to submit:

- 1 Senior Teaching Observation
- 1 Supporting Statement from their Advocate

Lecturers (T) on contract shorter than 18 months will need to submit:

- 1 Supporting Statement from their Advocate

What is a Senior Observation?

Senior Observation is a teaching observation by a University appointed Senior Observer (from a different Department to your home Department). These are experienced academics appointed by the respective Heads of Department (who, however, do not have to have ‘Senior’ in their title!). Besides being a means of authentication of practice, this is also probationary requirement and typically takes place in year 2 of your probation. In order to arrange for Senior Observation, please contact the programme Administrator (acdev@bath.ac.uk).

What is an advocate statement?

Advocate statement is a supporting statement typically written by an experienced colleague in your Department who is familiar with your teaching and can comment on your practice in relation to the UKPSF. There is no pro-forma for the statement, but the Handbook includes guidelines for advocates that you should send to your advocate when asking for their statement. The advocate statement is arranged by yourself.

When will I submit my Fellowship Application?

There are usually two submission dates per academic year (one per semester) for both Associate Fellow and Fellow applications. The length of your contract will determine which one you will apply for.

Generally, (there may be exceptions):

- Lecturers (T) on contracts shorter than 18 months will apply for Associate Fellow at the end of semester 1 or semester 2 of probation.
- Lecturers (T) on contracts equal to or longer than 18 months will apply for Fellow at the end of semester 2 in year one, as probation length is only one year.
- Lecturers (R&T) will apply for Fellow at the end of semester 3 but no later than at the end of semester 4 of probation.

What are the marking criteria for the Fellowship Application? Who will be assessing it?

In your Fellowship Application you have to demonstrate that your teaching practice is benchmarked against the descriptors (all those that are required for the Fellowship level you are aiming at) of the UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF). Therefore, the marking criteria are the UKPSF descriptors. You can review these in the [UKPSF descriptors overview document](#) and they are further explained in the [\(Associate\) Fellow Application form](#).

The Fellowship Applications are assessed internally by a team of experienced, certified assessors.

Which documents can I access to get an idea about the assessment process? Are there any exemplars of previous (successful) applications to look at?

Documents and forms related to the assessment process can be accessed on Probationer Pathways Moodle page. Here you can review the (Associate) Fellow Application form, the Feedback form, and exemplars of the past assignments.

What if I already completed Part 1 of the Bath Course in the past?

Those who have previously completed any parts of the Bath Course will continue on the [Transition Pathway](#) where the parts previously accomplished will be recognized and mapped against the Probationer Pathway so only the new parts of the Pathway will need to be completed.

What kind of evidence should I collect/ draw on in my Fellowship Application?

Regarding necessary evidence, please watch the [videos](#) in the 'Getting Started with you HEA fellowship claim' resources section on the Hub pertinent to this topic. Typically, amongst most useful sources of evidence are Teaching Observations (within your Department), getting involved in teaching related Department activities and meetings, and gathering student feedback. Regular

personal reflections and getting engaged with relevant pedagogical literature are also high on the list. Though none of these are directly attached to the Fellowship Application, they are crucial in order to inform and ground your arguments. Further discussion of how to use evidence to make your claim is covered in the core session 003.

What is a Gateway?

Gateway is the final stage of your participation in the programme, when you have your application ready in draft format and you have committed to a submission date (5 weeks prior to the associated Fellowship Panel). You need to download a checklist from Moodle and make sure that you have fulfilled all Gateway entry requirements (i.e. completed all required sessions/ workshops, prepared the draft application, participated in the triad feedback and received your documents to authenticate practice). The completed checklist is subsequently uploaded to Moodle Gateway site, together with your application and authentication documents.

Is there any exemption from the Probationer Pathway?

Exemption from the programme may be granted for those members of staff who have already gained an HEA Fellowship on the same level which meets their probationary requirement. If this is the case, please contact the ASD Programme Administrator in the first instance (acdev@bath.ac.uk)

Those who want to apply for exemption will need to provide a copy their HEA Fellowship certificate/ registration number.

Probationers on Teaching and Research contracts (Lecturers (R&T)) will still be required to engage with the Research Stream even if they are exempted from the Teaching Stream.