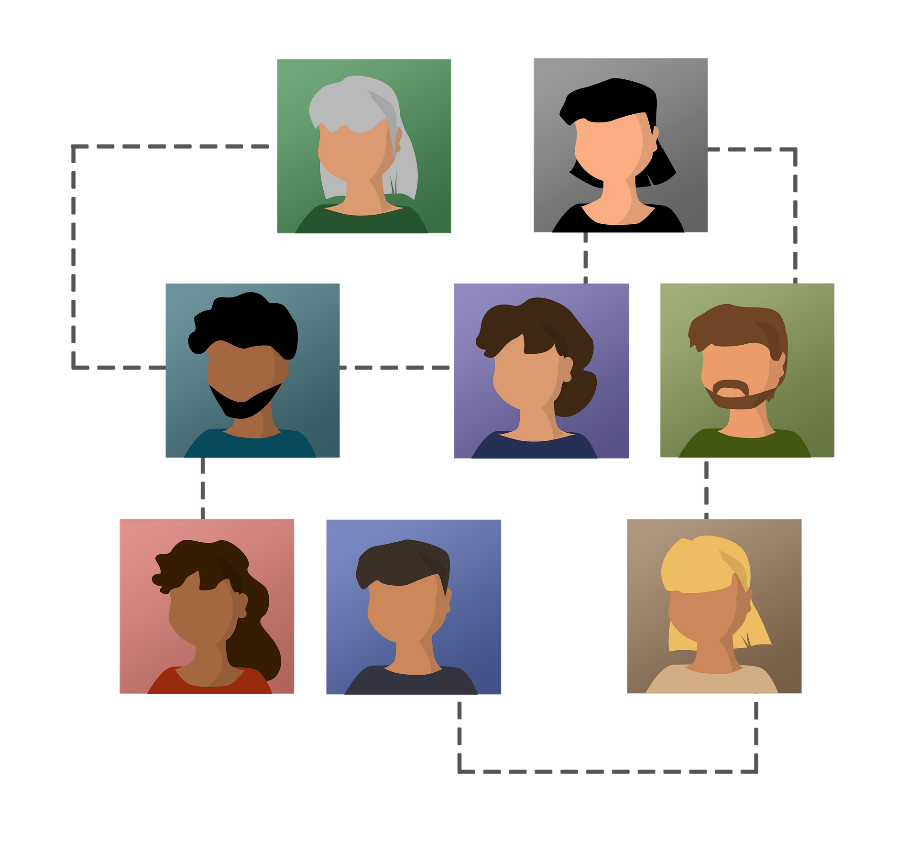


Postgraduate Certificate in Teaching in Higher Education

PGCTHE

Student Handbook 2024

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Learning and Teaching Enhancement Unit

Updated 30/8/2023

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# General information and overview

The PGCTHE programme is a work-based qualification that covers all aspects of learning and teaching. The programme is designed to develop your confidence and competency in teaching at university level. Critical reflection and the use of pedagogical literature are central components. As an Aberystwyth University Masters-level qualification (Level 7), the PGCTHE requires participants to:

reformulate and use relevant understanding, methodologies and approaches to address problematic situations that involve many interacting factors. It includes taking responsibility for planning and developing courses of action that initiate or underpin substantial change or development, as well as exercising broad autonomy and judgement. It also reflects an understanding of relevant theoretical and methodological perspectives and how they affect their area of study or work. (quoted from [Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales (CQFW) Level descriptors](https://gov.wales/credit-and-qualifications-framework-cqfw-level-descriptors))

Our core aim is to help you deepen your pedagogical understanding and develop your practice in teaching in higher education (HE). Key principles that underpin the scheme include growth, reflective practice, community, and diversity. There is no ‘one right way to teach’, so we support you in bringing pedagogical theory and practice together to make informed decisions about what is best for you and your students. We encourage you to make development and reflection part of your professional practice throughout your career.

Everyone joining our scheme has their own prior knowledge and experience, so everyone has something valuable to contribute to our discussions. You will have plentiful opportunities to engage in a supportive community within the PGCTHE and form links with others in the HE sector who have shared interests.

The excellence of our scheme is evidenced in the significant contributions that our graduates make through their own teaching and their contributions to the wider university community and beyond.

The PGCTHE’s values and methodology are based on the UK Professional Standards Framework (PSF – see the Appendix for the full text of the framework). For modules starting in January 2024, we will use the 2011 version of the framework. For modules starting in January 2025 or later, we will use the 2023 version. The framework consists of two elements: dimensions of practice (areas of activity, core knowledges, and professional values) and descriptors. The learning outcomes, taught content, assessment, and marking criteria are mapped against the framework. Starting from the needs analysis meeting, all provision including induction, CPD sessions, and consultations are built around the PSF to help you develop your knowledge and practice to meet the descriptor at D2 (Fellow in Advance HE) depth throughout:

“Demonstrates a broad understanding of effective approaches to teaching and learning support as key contributions to high quality student learning. Individuals should be able to provide evidence of:

I. Successful engagement across all five Areas of Activity

II. Appropriate knowledge and understanding across all aspects of Core Knowledge

III. A commitment to all the Professional Values

IV. Successful engagement in appropriate teaching practices related to the Areas of Activity

V. Successful incorporation of subject and pedagogic research and/or scholarship within the above activities, as part of an integrated approach to academic practice

VI. Successful engagement in continuing professional development in relation to teaching, learning, assessment and, where appropriate, related professional practices.”

The study scheme is a two-year programme consisting of two 30-credit modules accredited with Advance HE. Module 1 lays the pedagogical foundation for participants to carry out action research projects in their own teaching in Module 2. All coursework is aligned with the PSF, so Fellowship is awarded based on successful completion of coursework assessed against the framework as detailed in the marking criteria. The marking criteria are spelled out in the digital feedback using the descriptions in this handbook. This functions as a summative evaluation of attainment against the PSF.

Module learning outcomes are mapped to the PSF. We assess not only your final achievement but also your learning process. Assessments measure your achievement of PSF descriptors and dimensions of practice as described in the marking criteria in this handbook. You must meet the marking criteria, including associated PSF elements, to get a passing mark on each assessment.

Each dimension is explicitly assessed through the assessment tasks and must be evidenced in order to pass the assessment. We use Turnitin to give you feedback and ensure that you meet the required elements of the PSF. At induction, we demonstrate the mechanism for accessing your feedback and checking that you have met the marking criteria including associated elements of the PSF. A recording of this demonstration is available in our Blackboard course as part of the Blackboard tour. You must pass all assessments in order to pass the module, because that is how we validate that you have met the learning outcomes and required elements of the PSF.

Our aim is to support you in developing your practice to evidence the breadth and depth of engagement with the dimensions, as required for D2. Coursework is spread throughout the year, so the assessments provide multiple opportunities for you to evidence achievement against the dimensions of practice and descriptors. You will have plentiful opportunities to receive and act upon formative feedback both informally through supportive dialogic tutorials and formally through assessed work.

To provide recognition in the Fellowship world for participants’ partial achievement midway through the scheme, D1 Associate Fellow status (AFHEA) in Advance HE is awarded upon successful completion of Module 1. Descriptor 1 criteria require assessment of specific dimensions, however, you will be assessed on these dimensions at the depth required of D2, therefore contributing towards your Fellowship by the end of the programme. Successful completion of the PGCTHE as a whole leads to the Postgraduate Certificate as well as D2 Fellow status (FHEA). For further details, see the section of this handbook on **Exam Board and Fellowship awards**.

This handbook gives guidance on the assessments and mechanics of both modules:

* **Module 1**: PDM0430 Professionalising your Teaching in HE (AFHEA)
* **Module 2**: PDM0530 Action Research and Reflective Practice in HE (FHEA)

## PGCTHE course team and contact details

The study scheme is run by the Learning and Teaching Enhancement Unit ([LTEU](https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/lteu/)), part of Information Services at Aberystwyth University.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
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| Keziah Garratt-Smithson, provides administrative support | +44 (1970) 622117  [thestaff@aber.ac.uk](mailto:thestaff@aber.ac.uk) |
| Neil Taylor SFHEA, Lecturer in Computer Science, Internal Moderator |  |
| Dr Edd Pitt SFHEA, Senior Lecturer in Higher Education and Academic Practice, University of Kent, External Examiner |  |

## Entry requirements

The PGCTHE is open to both full- and part-time staff from Aberystwyth University teaching at any level in HE. Many newly appointed tutors and lecturers are required to undertake this qualification as part of their probation. The course is also open to staff teaching at HE level at our partner colleges.

Participants should have a minimum of 40 hours contact teaching time over the duration of each module, from January through December. We will consider staff with other scenarios on a case-by-case basis, based on the teaching you anticipate doing over the course of the module.

You may skip Module 1 and go directly to Module 2 if you can provide evidence of Accredited Prior Learning (APL) via a certificate showing attainment of either the PGCE or AFHEA status within the previous five years. In such a case, we will evaluate your prior knowledge and advise on how you can build on that foundation towards attaining full FHEA status within Module 2. Because Module 2 builds on the pedagogical theory and practice introduced in Module 1, we encourage you to either join the key pedagogical workshops from the Module 1 induction or attend equivalent workshops offered throughout the year for general teaching staff.

To apply for the programme, please contact the course team ([pgcthe@aber.ac.uk](mailto:pgcthe@aber.ac.uk)) first, and then follow the application instructions on the [PGCTHE website](https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/lteu/pgcthe/).

## Welsh and English

Aberystwyth University is required to conform with the [Welsh Language Standards](https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/cgg/bilingual-policy/). The PGCTHE is delivered primarily through the medium of English with Welsh medium support upon request. Key documents such as this student handbook are provided bilingually. Welsh-speaking participants are encouraged to make use of Welsh-medium materials through the [Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol](https://www.colegcymraeg.ac.uk/cy/).

For inductions, every effort is made to ensure that group activities can be conducted through Welsh, English or bilingually. We ask all participants to state your preferred language prior to the start of the module.

Work will be assessed in the language in which it is written. Where staff teach through the medium of Welsh, we arrange for a Welsh-speaking assessor to carry out the teaching observation. The needs analysis can be carried out through the medium of Welsh if desired. Please let the course team know in advance.

If you would like to have a Welsh-speaking mentor, please tell the PGCTHE course team.

## Getting started

Prior to the start of the module, the PGCTHE team will conduct a needs analysis meeting with you to complete a customised learning contract together, identifying your learning goals and areas for further development. In this process, we help ensure that you have sufficient coverage of the PSF. This is the start of your journey and is linked to CPD sessions that you undertake while on the course.

Each module has an induction in January, including interactive workshops in which learning and teaching methodologies are introduced and applied. The induction comprises a substantial part of our taught provision, so all participants are required to attend. Dates for induction are announced on the [PGCTHE web page](https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/lteu/pgcthe/).

## Mentors

You will be assigned a subject-based mentor by the head of your department. Mentors are experienced staff who will support you throughout the programme. Whenever possible, they will hold FHEA or SFHEA status and will have completed the PGCTHE within the past five years. The PGCTHE course team provides support for mentors in the form of a mentor handbook, Course Observer access to the relevant module in Blackboard, and training with special emphasis on the PSF. Mentors are invited to attend some of our induction sessions.

For Module 1, mentors observe your teaching to help you prepare for the course team’s assessed teaching observation. They advise you on your CPD plan and can look over assignments before submission.

For Module 2, mentors advise you on your action research projects and CPD plan. This can include giving advice for the literature search and making sure that your project is feasible. We encourage you to ask your mentor to carry out an observation of your teaching.

## Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Each 30-credit module includes a minimum of 30 contact hours. For Module 1, this comprises 18 hours at induction plus 12 hours further CPD sessions of your choice. For Module 2, this comprises 12 hours at induction plus 18 hours further CPD.

The LTEU offers a range of training sessions and recommends that staff be released from other duties where practicable to be able to take them. Many sessions offered by the PGCTHE course team and other LTEU staff are held online so that participants from partner colleges have equal access.

In order to count towards the requirement for the Certificate, CPD sessions must include a discussion of pedagogy for teaching at higher education level. There are many options for meeting the CPD requirement:

* PGCTHE seminars (optional reading and discussion sessions offered online monthly)
* Training sessions organised by LTEU – look for **(L&T)** on our [booking page](https://stafftraining.aber.ac.uk/sd/list_courses.php)
* External webinars or podcasts about learning and teaching (see the [CPD Opportunities](https://trello.com/b/PwO5utD3/learning-and-teaching) section of our Learning and Teaching Trello board as well as the [Weekly Resource Roundup](https://wordpress.aber.ac.uk/e-learning/category/weekly-resource-roundup/))
* AU Teaching and Learning Conference
* Academy Forum, Academy Showcase, and selected E-learning Training sessions (see the [E-learning Training](https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/is/it-services/elearning/training-and-support/) page)
* CPD workshops at other institutions
* Attendance at learning and teaching-related workshops offered by Advance HE or other professional bodies
* External subject-specific conferences where learning and teaching are discussed
* Work shadowing a colleague in a cognate department or another university
* Observations you carry out of experienced teachers
* Department or Faculty-based learning and teaching event
* Welsh medium courses or workshops about learning and teaching offered by [Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol](http://www.colegcymraeg.ac.uk/cy/), by university staff, or by professional bodies
* MOOC courses about learning and teaching.

We require you to submit a non-assessed mid-year progress report so we can make sure you are getting enough appropriate CPD and making good progress towards meeting the PSF descriptors for your module. This also helps us align our training provision with your needs as much as possible in the next round of sessions.

## Reading list and resources

See our [Aspire Reading List](https://aber.rl.talis.com/lists/47304D00-5934-CBAF-E726-8B2998A26023.html) for core texts and further resources, categorised by pedagogical area. Our Aspire reading list should be your starting point for any literature search.

Our [Learning and Teaching Trello board](https://trello.com/b/PwO5utD3/learning-and-teaching) has further online resources categorised by topic, with new items added over the course of the year. The [Weekly Resource Roundup](https://wordpress.aber.ac.uk/e-learning/category/weekly-resource-roundup/) includes links to new and relevant publications and online resources. We email participants whenever a new Roundup is released and recommend that you subscribe to the [LTEU blog](https://wordpress.aber.ac.uk/e-learning/) to receive email updates for all new posts from the team.

# Module 1 PDM0430 Professionalising your Teaching in HE

The core of the PGCTHE is learning about learning. Module 1 focusses on your individual journey of development as a teacher, incorporating reflection and evidence-based practice. How can you find out how well your students are learning? How can you help them to learn better? Basic coverage of pedagogical theory and learning design is included.

This module is mapped against the 2011 version of the PSF. While the scheme is taught at D2 depth throughout, Module 1 ensures that participants meet descriptors for D1 through assessed coursework. Authentication of practice is carried out through the assessed teaching observation and supported by evidence from the other three assessments.

Upon successful completion of this module, staff who teach on an Aberystwyth University study scheme, whether based at the Aberystwyth campus or partner institution, are awarded AFHEA status. For staff at partner institutions who do **not** teach on an Aberystwyth University study scheme, either their home institution or Advance HE would need to award AFHEA status.

## Content

* Individual needs analysis consultation to develop your learning contract.
* Induction (18 hours) at Aberystwyth University covering evidence-based pedagogical theory, learning design, and core principles of learning and teaching. Indicative topics include: aligned teaching (learning design, learning outcomes, learning activities, authentic assessment, meaningful feedback), active learning and student engagement, lessons from cognitive science about how students learn, detecting and preventing plagiarism, making teaching accessible, effective use of technology, research ethics.
* 12 hours attendance at additional CPD events covering pedagogical theory and practice at HE level. These may be offered by Aberystwyth University or external.
* Observations of your teaching by your mentor (optional, non-assessed) and the PGCTHE team (assessed).
* Coaching sessions with your mentor and the PGCTHE team.
* Opportunities to participate in a community of practice and learn from peers.

## Learning outcomes

The learning outcomes are aligned with the 2011 version of the Professional Standards Framework (see the appendix). The Advance HE website has expanded explanations of the [dimensions of the framework](https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/knowledge-hub/dimensions-framework).

On completion of this module, you should be able to:

1. **Gather information and critically reflect on your existing teaching practice** to gain an understanding of your underlying assumptions about learning and teaching, showing personal initiative and self-direction in development of practice. (A1, A2, A3, V3)
2. **Critically engage with pedagogical literature and CPD** when planning changes to your teaching, demonstrating critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights. (**D1.5, D1.6**, A1, K2, K3, V3)
3. **Plan aligned learning activities based on a critical evaluation of available teaching methodologies**, so that learning outcomes, activities, and assessment work together appropriately to help all students learn. (A1, A2, A3, K2, K4, V1, V2)
4. **Design and implement an appropriate learning experience** that is appropriate for the discipline and meets key agendas for the university and UK higher education sector. (**D1.2**, A1, K1, K2, K4, V1, V2, V4)

## Assessment overview

| **Details** | **PSF** | **Outcomes** | **Weighting** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Community of practice** – Contribute to an online discussion board about developing your teaching practice. **1000 words minimum**. | A1, A2, A3, K1, K2, V1, V3, V4 | 1, 2, 3, 4 | 20% |
| **Essay** – Explore the literature on a topic in learning and teaching and relate it to your practice. **2500 words +/- 10%**. | **D1.5, D1.6,** A1, A2, A3, K2, K3, V3, V4 | 1, 2, 3, 4 | 30% |
| **Teaching observation** – Assessed teaching observation carried out by a member of the course team. Include a pedagogical justification and reflective report. **1000 words minimum**. | **D1.2,** A1, A2, K1, K2, K4, V1, V2, V3 | 1, 2, 3, 4 | 20% |
| **Reflective narrative** – Reflect on your learning journey from the start of the module to the present. Select a few key highlights where you have deepened your understanding about how students learn and have developed your teaching practice. List your teaching-related CPD and reflect on one or two key highlights. **2500 words +/- 10%**. | **D1.5, D1.6,** A1, A2, A3, K1-4, V1-4 | 1, 2, 3, 4 | 30% |

**In order to pass the module, you must pass all assessments with a mark of at least 50%.** This policy is in place to authenticate your teaching practice for accreditation from Advance HE. See Blackboard for more details about the assessed elements of the module.

**Word count:** You must adhere to the word limit set for any assessed work. Work exceeding the word count by more than 10% will be penalised by deduction of 5 marks for every 500 words over the limit. Include a word count for each assignment. Word count includes everything except for appendices and reference list. Please note that text in figures and tables, as well as headings, are all included in the word count. If you use footnotes, any textual comments in the footnotes apart from citations are also included in the word count.

**Referencing style:** Use [APA](https://apastyle.apa.org/) or Harvard referencing styles. You may use another style, providing that you identify what it is and include a link to authoritative online guidance. See the [LibGuide on Referencing and Plagiarism Awareness](https://libguides.aber.ac.uk/referencing) for examples.

## Community of practice (CoP) discussion board

Post contributions to the Community of Practice forum discussing a teaching issue, problem, or challenge. Respond to posts made by other participants. You may make as many contributions as you like. Regularly read and respond to other posts in the forum, particularly where you have a useful experience, solution, or literature to share. There is no word count for individual posts, but the combined total of your contributions should be at least 1000 words. This activity counts for 20% of your mark.

The topic for your first post is:

**What is your metaphor for learning and teaching?** Please post either a relevant quote or an image that illustrates the metaphor and tell what it means to you. You will have time to develop your metaphor during induction. If you prefer not to work with metaphors, you may use a quote and describe what you think learning and teaching is based on the quote.

You are welcome to carry on making posts after the deadline, but only the posts and responses received before 11:00 on the deadline will be marked.

The assignment should meet the following brief:

* Give a clear and detailed account of at least one area for development, issue, challenge, or problem you would like feedback and advice on, including references and/or links to online material. Demonstrate reflection and critical analysis in your contributions. Learning Outcome 1.
* Draw on your personal experiences, CPD, and pedagogical literature in your own posts and replies to others. In at least one post, demonstrate how you align the learning outcomes, activities, and assessment. Learning Outcomes 2 and 3.
* Read and respond to forum posts, engaging constructively with other participants to explore effective teaching methods and ways to respond to your students. Demonstrate reflection and critical analysis in your contributions. Learning Outcomes 2 and 4.
* Follow University policy on data protection and research ethics to protect the confidentiality of staff and students when talking about problematic issues or individuals. Learning Outcome 4.

### Marking criteria – CoP

**Gather information and critically reflect on your existing teaching practice**. The forum contributions include a discussion of how you design and implement learning activities, and/or advice for others on ways to design and implement learning activities. Posts demonstrate reflection in which you observe your own learning. (A1, A2)

**Critically engage with pedagogical literature and CPD**. You have critically evaluated appropriate pedagogical literature to inform your contributions. Sources are referenced properly with links to online resources as appropriate. (V3)

**Plan aligned learning activities based on a critical evaluation** **of available teaching methodologies**. Your posts demonstrate learning outcomes, activities, and assessment that align appropriately to help students learn. (A1, A2, A3)

**Design and implement an appropriate learning experience**. There is evidence that you have used an appropriate range of teaching and learning methods in the subject area or discipline. You demonstrate respect for individual learners and diverse learning communities. You have posted about your own practice and given helpful responses to others. (K1, K2, V1, V4)

### Marking bands – CoP

* **Distinction 70 and above** – Excellent contributions to the forum that show a considerable degree of critical analysis, evaluation, and reflection, together with a thorough knowledge of the issue based on CPD and readings in pedagogical literature. Aligned teaching is fully evidenced. Significant insights into learning and teaching have been expressed at a professional level suitable to serve as an example for others.
* **Good pass 60-69** – Very good contributions that show a good degree of critical analysis, evaluation, and reflection, together with a good understanding of the issue based on CPD and readings. Aligned teaching is partially evidenced. Insights into learning and teaching have been expressed clearly. With some revision, this contribution could be used as an example for others.
* **Pass 50-59** – Good contributions that show some critical analysis, evaluation, and reflection, together with a basic understanding of the issue addressed. There is some insight into learning and teaching evident, expressed clearly for the most part but with some problems of clarity and language. Aligned teaching is implicit but not explicitly evidenced. This contribution requires significant further revision to be used as an example for others.
* **Fail 49 and below** – A poor contribution in which some of the key elements are lacking or inadequate, inadequate understanding of the issue is evident, or which fall below the minimum word count. There is nothing about aligned teaching in any post, implicitly or explicitly. The posts would require a thorough rewriting and addition of key elements in order to be of use to others as an example.

## Essay

Propose a topic or select from the list of topics below relating to teaching practice. Your essay should include a critical evaluation of relevant pedagogical literature and a discussion of the implications for your own teaching practice. Include a central argument supported by evidence. 2500 words +/- 10%. This assignment is worth 30% of your final mark.

### Possible essay topics:

Choose **only one** of the following. In all cases, you must base your essay on a critical reading of pedagogical literature, relate it to your own practice, and give detailed examples of what it would look like in use:

1. Explore and evaluate one area of pedagogy or teaching methodology that is new to you.
2. How can we design an authentic assessment, and why would this help our students?
3. How can we incorporate active learning into our teaching effectively?
4. How can we use lessons from cognitive science to help students learn?

Before writing your essay, contact the course team so that we can make sure your topic fits the brief and that you have enough time to research and write the essay.

The assignment should meet the following brief:

* Reflect and discuss the implications of the methodologies for your teaching, providing a considered balance between theory, description, and critical discussion. Give examples in enough detail to show what it would look like in your own practice and explain how learning activities, assessment, and outcomes align. Learning Outcome 1.
* Incorporate pedagogical and scholarly literature at the level expected of a Masters’ piece of work, providing references. Engage with the ideas in the works cited to show how the readings have deepened your understanding, defining key terms based on the literature. Learning Outcome 2.
* Demonstrate core knowledge of concepts, theories and methods for effective teaching and assessment in your discipline and the HE sector, showing awareness of the range of options available. Include a central argument supported by evidence. Learning Outcomes 2 and 3.
* Situate your discussion of concepts and issues appropriately within an institutional, national and or global context, acknowledging the impact of various policies on teaching practices. Learning Outcome 4.

### Marking criteria – Essay

**Gather information and critically reflect on your existing teaching practice**. You have demonstrated reflection in your discussion, relating the insights gleaned from pedagogical literature to your own practice using concrete examples. (A1, A2, A3, V3)

**Critically engage with pedagogical literature and CPD**. You have expressed significant insights into learning and teaching clearly and explored the chosen topic thoroughly. You have used appropriate pedagogical literature and referenced it properly. Your critical analysis and evaluation of the literature is evident. (**D1.6**, K2, K3, V3)

**Plan aligned learning activities based on a critical evaluation of available teaching methodologies**. You have discussed and critically evaluated an appropriate range of teaching and learning methods, demonstrating good practice through an example where you align learning activities with outcomes and assessment.(A1, A2, A3, K2)

**Design and implement an appropriate learning experience** that is suitable for the discipline and meets key agendas for the university and UK higher education sector.The wider context of HE is acknowledged. (**D1.5**, K2, V4)

### Marking bands – Essay

* **Distinction 70 and above** – An excellent essay that shows a considerable degree of critical analysis, evaluation, and reflection, with a thorough knowledge of the issue based on pedagogical literature. Significant insights into learning and teaching are expressed at a professional level with a thorough discussion showing how you align teaching. Suitable to serve as an example for others.
* **Good pass 60-69** – A very good essay that shows a good degree of critical analysis, evaluation, and reflection, together with a good understanding of the issue addressed based on pedagogical literature. Insights into learning and teaching have been expressed clearly, with a clear example showing how you align teaching. Appropriate sources have been used and cited correctly. With some revision, this could be used as an example for others.
* **Pass 50-59** – A good essay that shows some critical analysis, evaluation, and reflection, together with a basic understanding of the issue addressed. There is some insight into learning and teaching evident, expressed clearly for the most part but with some problems of clarity and language. A minimal number of sources have been used. Aligned teaching is implicit but not explicitly addressed. The essay needs significant revision to be used as an example for others.
* **Fail 49 and below** – A poor essay in which some of the key elements are lacking or inadequate, inadequate understanding of the issue is evident, or which falls below the minimum word count. There is no evidence of aligned teaching. The essay requires a thorough rewriting and addition of key elements to serve as an example.

## Teaching observation

You are required to organise one assessed observation of your teaching by the PGCTHE course team. If you are based at a partner institution and would like to have your mentor carry out the observation, please contact the course team so that we can liaise with your mentor for consistency of assessment. If you are supporting learning in other ways but not directly teaching in a module, please contact the course team so that we can identify the most suitable way for you to meet this requirement.

There are four steps in the feedback dialogue for the teaching observation:

1. You fill out Section 1 of the form, including the **pedagogical justification** for your choices in the session, and have a **pre-teaching chat** with the course team.
2. The course team observes your teaching and provides formative feedback through a **post-teaching chat** and in writing in Section 2. If you wish to revise the pedagogical justification, send it to the course team at least one working day prior to the post-teaching chat.
3. After the post-teaching chat, you write a **post-observation reflection** in Section 3.
4. The course team provides feedback in Section 4 and a **final mark** for the observation.

The pedagogical justification and post-observation reflection combined comprise 1000 words minimum. The teaching observation is worth 20% of your mark.

Download the observation form from Blackboard, complete Section 1, and email the form to the [PGCTHE course team](mailto:thestaff@aber.ac.uk?subject=teaching%20observation) at least one working day before your pre-teaching chat.

### Marking criteria – Teaching observation

**Critically engage with pedagogical literature and CPD** when planning your teaching, demonstrating critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights. The pedagogical justification is well-grounded in evidence-based pedagogical literature and provides concrete detail about your teaching plan. (A1, K2, V3)

**Plan aligned learning activities based on a critical evaluation of available teaching methodologies**, so that learning outcomes, activities, and assessment work together appropriately to help all students learn. Show that you have made an informed choice about the use of learning technologies and effective methods to help students learn, such as active learning, variety of activities, and student practice. (A1, K2, K4)

**Design and implement an appropriate learning experience**. The teaching methods are appropriate for the subject and level, with reinforcement of key concepts. The methods meet the needs of diverse students, build rapport, and show high expectations. All students are made to feel welcome to contribute without undue pressure. Visual aids are accessible (e.g. font size is large enough to read). Students respond well during the session and are actively engaged in the learning process. (**D1.2**, A2, K1, V1, V2)

**Post-observation reflection - gather information and critically reflect on your existing teaching practice** to gain an understanding of your underlying assumptions about learning and teaching, showing self-direction in development of practice. Your reflection demonstrates a commitment to deepening your understanding of pedagogical principles and developing your teaching practice. (A1, A2, V3)

### Marking bands – Teaching observation

* **Distinction 70 and above** – An excellent teaching session in which a high level of pedagogical and subject knowledge is applied to help all students engage in learning. It is clear how you developed your practice and deepened your understanding. Your teaching is well aligned. The session would be suitable to serve as a role model for others to follow.
* **Good pass 60-69** – A very good session in which most students are engaged in learning and effective pedagogical methods are used. There is evidence that you have deepened your understanding and developed your practice. Your teaching is explicitly aligned. Some areas need minor further enhancement.
* **Pass 50-59** – A good session in which some students are engaged in learning and some effective methods are used. There are indications that you have deepened your understanding and developed your practice, but this needs to be more explicit. Alignment is implied but not explicit. Some areas need significant enhancement.
* **Fail 49 and below** – A poor session in which inappropriate or ineffective methods are used and students are not engaged in learning. There is no evidence that you have deepened your understanding and developed your practice. There is no evidence of alignment. Major improvements are needed.

## Reflective narrative

Reflect on your learning journey from the start of the module to the present. 2500 words +/- 10%. This assignment is worth 30% of your mark.

Reflect on a few key highlights where you have deepened your understanding about how students learn and have developed your teaching practice. There isn’t enough space to cover everything you have done over the year, so be selective. Highlights can include induction sessions, CPD, pedagogical literature, teaching experiences, or discussions about teaching methodology with colleagues, the course team, or your mentor.

In the **body** of the narrative, you must include reflections on one or two key CPD sessions. In the **appendix**, you must include the full list of CPD undertaken relevant to teaching and learning in HE. In order to pass the module, you must meet the CPD requirement (12 hours beyond induction).

You may structure the narrative as you wish, as long as you address the elements below:

* **Reflection on your learning journey:** Tell the story of your learning journey from induction through to the end of the module. What were your prior assumptions and knowledge, and how did they change? Reflect on how you have deepened your understanding and developed effective practice. Identify a few turning points (critical incidents) that challenged your assumptions and led you to change your mental model (double-loop learning). Learning Outcome 1.
* **Application of pedagogical literature and CPD:** Demonstrate critical thought to show how the pedagogical literature, CPD experiences, induction sessions, and consultations have shaped your understanding and practice. Be selective: identify the readings and experiences that had the greatest impact on you and tell how you engaged with their ideas. Discuss one or two key CPD sessions in depth. Learning Outcome 2.
* **Effective teaching:** Show how your teaching and assessment are aligned with the learning outcomes. Provide concrete examples and evidence that you have used effective teaching methods. This may include feedback from students or a peer observer, a detailed pedagogical justification, or other observations of student behaviour and attainment. Show that you have made informed choices with regard to methods including the use of technology in teaching. Demonstrate that the level of teaching is appropriate for your students. Learning Outcome 3.
* **Professional values:** Articulate how your professional values and teaching philosophies relate to those in the PSF and inform your teaching practices. Relate your personal experiences to the broader institutional, national, and global drivers and policies. Explain how your professional values have developed through the module. Learning Outcome 4.
* **Appendix:** Required elements of the appendix include:
  + A complete list of CPD undertaken during the course of the module. Include only sessions related to learning and teaching at HE level. Give date, length of session, title, and PSF mapping. If it was a recorded session, make that explicit and give the date that you watched or listened to the recording. Your list must include at least 12 hours of HE-related CPD over the course of this module.
  + Reference list of all sources cited.

### Marking criteria – Reflective narrative

**Gather information and critically reflect on your existing teaching practice**. The narrative includes a reflective discussion of how you design and implement learning activities, including the rationale for choices made. (A1, A2, V3)

**Critically engage with pedagogical literature and CPD**. Appropriate pedagogical literature and insights gathered through CPD have been evaluated, applied to inform your teaching, and referenced properly. Include reflection, critical analysis, and evidence that you have engaged with the ideas from the sources. (**D1.6**, A1, K2, K3, V3)

**Plan aligned learning activities based on a critical evaluation of available teaching methodologies.** Learning outcomes, activities and assessment align and work together appropriately to help all students learn. You demonstrate critical reflection on the appropriate use of learning technology, showing that you have made an informed choice. (A1, A2, A3, K4)

**Design and implement an appropriate learning experience**. There is evidence that you have used an appropriate range of teaching and learning methods in the subject area or discipline, and that you have considered diversity and inclusion as well as the wider context for HE. (**D1.5**, K1, K2, V1, V2, V4)

### Marking bands – Reflective narrative

* **Distinction 70 and above** – An excellent reflective narrative that shows independent critical thought, thorough use of relevant pedagogical literature, and considerable reflection on CPD and your own practice to demonstrate the turning points at which you deepened your understanding of how students learn and developed your own practice. Aligned teaching is thoroughly evidenced. Significant insights have been expressed at a professional level suitable to serve as an example for others.
* **Good pass 60-69** – A very good narrative that shows critical thought, use of pedagogical literature, and reflection. Insights into learning and teaching have been expressed clearly. Aligned teaching is explicit. With some revision, this narrative could be used as an example for others. Some areas need minor enhancement.
* **Pass 50-59** – A good narrative that shows some critical thought, minimal use of pedagogical literature, and some evidence of reflection. There is some insight into learning and teaching, and it has been expressed clearly for the most part but with some problems of clarity and language. Aligned teaching is implied but not explicitly addressed. This narrative requires significant revision to be an example for others.
* **Fail 49 and below** – A poor narrative in which some of the key elements are lacking or inadequate. There is no evidence of aligned teaching. The narrative requires a thorough revision and addition of key elements to be used as an example.

# Module 2 PDM0530 Action Research and Reflective Practice in HE

PDM0530 builds on the foundation established in PDM0430 to enable you to apply pedagogical theory to develop your teaching practice. Through action research, you will assess your students’ needs, plan changes to your teaching based on sound pedagogical principles and evaluate the impact of those changes on students. As with PDM0430, reflective practice is used throughout the module to help you deepen your understanding of how students learn and develop your teaching practice.

This module is mapped against the PSF. Descriptors for D2 and all of the dimensions of the framework are assessed. Authentication of practice is carried out through the two action research projects and supported by evidence from a formative teaching observation.

Judgement of FHEA status is made at the PGCTHE level. If participants have started the programme directly with Module 2 based on Accredited Prior Learning (APL), then the judgement of equivalency is based on the needs analysis meeting and our evaluation that the APL is comparable to learning gained in Module 1.

Upon successful completion of the PGCTHE, Aberystwyth University staff and all staff based at partner institutions are awarded the Postgraduate Certificate. Staff who teach on an Aberystwyth University study scheme, whether based at the Aberystwyth campus or partner institution, are also awarded FHEA status. For staff at partner institutions who do **not** teach on an Aberystwyth University study scheme, either their home institution or Advance HE would need to award FHEA status.

## Content

* Individual needs analysis consultation to develop your learning contract.
* Induction (12 hours) at Aberystwyth University covering action research, evidence-based pedagogical theory and practice, and reflective practice for learning and teaching. Indicative topics include: inclusive teaching, reflective practice, measuring the impact of a teaching intervention on student learning, designing and running an action research project, good academic practice, powering up your students’ learning, effective use of technology.
* 18 hours attendance at additional CPD events covering pedagogical theory and practice at the HE level. These may be offered by Aberystwyth University or external.
* Participation in action learning sets (small groups for peer support) with other participants, optional.
* Coaching sessions with your mentor.
* Consultations and group sessions with the PGCTHE course team to develop your action research projects and ensure they are conducted ethically.
* Formative observation of your teaching by the course team, your PGCTHE mentor, or a colleague in your department as part of the university [Peer Support of Teaching](https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/lteu/teaching/pot/) scheme.
* Assessed presentation of one action research project plan.

## Learning outcomes

The learning outcomes are aligned with the 2011 version of the Professional Standards Framework (see the appendix). The Advance HE website has expanded explanations of the [dimensions of the framework](https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/knowledge-hub/dimensions-framework).

On completion of this module, you should be able to:

1. **Critically reflect and identify issues and opportunities where you can improve student learning**, using pedagogical literature and CPD to demonstrate a critical awareness of current problems and practices. (**D2.5, D2.6,** A5, K3, K5, V3)
2. **Carry out an action research project based on a change in your teaching (teaching intervention)** to address the issue effectively and improve student learning, demonstrating the ability to deal with complex issues in a creative and systematic way. (**D2.4**, **D2.5,** A1-5, K1-6)
3. **Critically evaluate the effectiveness of the teaching interventions** using professional judgment based on a comprehensive understanding of techniques for evaluating teaching. (K3, K5, K6)
4. **Carry out teaching practice in accordance with professional values** as outlined in the PSF demonstrating personal responsibility and initiative to help all students learn. (**D2.4**; V1-4)

## Assessment overview

| **Details** | **PSF** | **Outcomes** | **Weighting** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Presentation** – Oral presentation supported with PowerPoint or PDF, assessed by course team staff for mark, also peer-assessed for formative feedback. 10 minutes plus Q&A. | **D2.4,** A2, A5, K1, K2, K3, K4, K5, K6, V1-4 | 1, 2, 3, 4 | 10% |
| **Action research project 1** – A teaching intervention carried out in your own teaching practice and evaluated. 2500 words +/- 10%. | **D2.4, D2.5, D2.6,** A1-5, K1-6, V1, V3 | 1, 2, 3, 4 | 30% |
| **Action research project 2** – A second teaching intervention carried out in your own teaching practice and evaluated. 2500 words +/- 10%. | **D2.4, D2.5, D2.6,** A1-5, K1-6, V1, V3 | 1, 2, 3, 4 | 30% |
| **Reflective narrative** – Reflect on your learning journey from the start of the module to the present. 2500 words +/- 10%. | **D2.4, D2.6,** A1-5, K1-4, V1-4 | 1, 4 | 30% |

**In order to pass the module, you must pass all assessments with a mark of at least 50%.** This policy is in place to authenticate your teaching practice for accreditation from Advance HE. See Blackboard for more details about the assessed elements of the module.

**Word count:** You must adhere to the word limit set for any assessed work. Work exceeding the word count by more than 10% will be penalised by deduction of 5 marks for every 500 words over the limit. Include a word count for each assignment. Word count includes everything except for appendices and reference list. Please note that text in figures and tables, as well as headings, are all included in the word count. If you use footnotes, any textual comments apart from citations in the footnotes are also included in the word count.

**Referencing style:** Use [APA](https://apastyle.apa.org/) or Harvard referencing styles. You may use another style, providing that you identify what it is and include a link to authoritative online guidance. See the [LibGuide on Referencing and Plagiarism Awareness](https://libguides.aber.ac.uk/referencing) for examples.

## Presentation

Deliver a 10-minute presentation (plus Q&A) of the project plan for one of your action research projects prior to implementing it. The aim is to give you formative feedback to improve the quality of the project before you run it.

The presentation will be peer-assessed for formative feedback. The course team will mark the presentation and give you further feedback. It is worth 10% of your mark.

The presentation should include the following sections:

* **Teaching issue:** Identify a teaching issue, opportunity, or challenge that you wish to address in your own practice. What evidence do you have from your students that a change is needed? Learning Outcomes 1 and 2.
* **Literature review:** Carry out a literature review to identify useful case studies and pedagogical theory to inform the design of your teaching intervention. Identify key insights from the literature and any relevant CPD and tell how they have informed the design of your project. Include references. Learning Outcomes 1 and 2.
* **Implementation plan:** Provide a brief implementation plan including timeline. Tell how the teaching intervention is an improvement from your prior practice and give the pedagogic rationale behind your decisions. Include considerations in connection with the Professional Values. Learning Outcomes 2 and 4.
* **Evaluation plan:** Identify your research question. Provide a summary of the ways you plan to evaluate the intervention to answer your research question. Include several sample evaluation questions. Plan to collect some form of both qualitative and quantitative data. Discuss the ethics implications of your project (see **Ethics** section in this handbook). Learning Outcomes 2 and 3.

Presentation skills including accessibility, visual aids, and your ability to respond appropriately to questions will be assessed. Practice your presentation in advance to ensure that your verbal delivery will be at a professional level (e.g. appropriate for a conference or academic departmental meeting). Use PowerPoint or an alternative format such as PDF.

All participants must upload the PowerPoint or other file for the presentation via Turnitin by the due date. The dates of the presentation sessions will be arranged by the course team to accommodate participants’ availability.

If you have provided enough detail about ethical considerations during your presentation, the course team will inform you immediately after your presentation so that you can request ethics approval for your project through the [Online Ethics Approval Form](https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/rbi/staff-students/ethics/#step-:-complete-an-assessment). If more detail is needed, the course team will ask you to schedule a separate consultation with us to discuss ethical considerations before we can approve your request.

### Marking criteria – Presentation

**Presentation skills**. Verbal delivery and visual design of the PowerPoint or PDF used in the presentation are at a professional standard to communicate your message clearly. Your presentation demonstrates good practice in accessibility. Effective time management is displayed by keeping to time (10 minutes presentation plus 5 minutes Q&A). (**D2.4**, A2, K4)

**Critically reflect and identify issues and opportunities where you can improve student learning**. The teaching intervention is informed by relevant CPD and pedagogical literature.(A5, K3, K5, V3)

**Carry out an action research project based on a change in your teaching (teaching intervention)**. The research question is sound and clearly stated. The planned teaching intervention is an advance over previous practice, improving student learning. You have chosen appropriate teaching and learning methods based on critical evaluation of available options including learning technologies. (K1, K2, K6)

**Critically evaluate the effectiveness of the teaching interventions.** Reflection and independent critical thought are evidenced in both the experimental design and the planned evaluation of results, to include both qualitative and quantitative data. You have planned to gather useful data to answer your research question. (K5, K6)

**Carry out teaching practice in accordance with professional values** as outlined in the PSF demonstrating personal responsibility and initiative to help all students learn. Your presentation is accessible. Your teaching intervention takes inclusion and diversity into consideration and is based on sound evidence. The plan reflects appropriate ethics procedures, university policies, and quality assurance procedures.(V1-4)

### Marking bands – Presentation

* **Distinction 70 and above** – An excellent presentation that shows independent critical thought, sound experimental design based on a meaningful research question, thorough use of relevant pedagogical literature to inform the project, and considerable reflection expressed clearly. The presentation is of high enough quality (content, visual design, delivery) to serve as a model for others.
* **Good pass 60-69** – A very good presentation that shows critical thought, sound experimental design, use of pedagogical literature, and reflection expressed clearly. With some revision, there is potential for using this presentation as a model for others to follow. Some areas need minor further enhancement.
* **Pass 50-59** – A good presentation that shows some critical thought, a satisfactory experimental design, minimal use of pedagogical literature, and some evidence of reflection. The research question needs refinement. The presentation has been delivered clearly for the most part but with some problems of clarity and language. The presentation requires significant revision to serve as an example for others.
* **Fail 49 and below** – A poor presentation in which some key elements are lacking or inadequate. The research question is poorly designed or missing. The presentation requires a thorough reworking and possibly redesigning the teaching intervention for reimplementation in order to be of use as a model for others.

## Action research projects (ARP)

Two (2) action research projects about teaching interventions carried out in your own practice (2500 words +/- 10% each). Each project report is worth 30% of your mark.

The aim of this assessment is to give you a structured opportunity via action research to learn more about how students learn. You will assess student learning needs, implement a teaching intervention based on sound pedagogical principles to better meet those needs, and evaluate the impact of the intervention on student learning. The projects are carried out in the following stages and then written up as reports with evidence:

Figure 1 Action Research Cycle

You are required to consult with the course team about each project in advance to ensure that the module coordinator can approve your ethics request.

The project reports should include the following sections, mapped onto the learning outcomes. Please download and use the report template from the module Blackboard site.

* **Introduction and teaching issue:** Identify a teaching issue, opportunity, or challenge (e.g. critical incident) that you wished to address in your own teaching. What evidence do you have from your students that a change is needed? Include a paragraph outlining the general context of your teaching (type of module, level of students, etc). Identify your research question. Learning Outcomes 1 and 2.
* **Literature review:** Identify useful case studies and pedagogical theory to inform the design of your teaching intervention. Tell what new ideas you learned from the sources and any relevant CPD. Define key pedagogical terms based on the literature. Tell how insights from your reading have informed the design of your project. Learning Outcomes 1 and 2.
* **Implementation:** Describe how the project was implemented, including timeline. What change did you make in your teaching? Give enough concrete detail so that the reader has a clear picture of what you did. Give the rationale behind your decisions including consideration of the Professional Values. How was this an improvement over prior practice? Learning Outcomes 2 and 4.
* **Results and evaluation:** Describe briefly the qualitative and quantitative data you collected. Include a brief discussion of your considerations of ethics (see **Ethics** section in the handbook). Provide the key evidence you collected and analyse the data. What do the results show us about good teaching practice and the impact of your intervention on student learning? Learning Outcomes 2 and 3.
* **Reflection and conclusion:** Answer your research question based on the evidence. Show how you have challenged your prior assumptions, deepened your understanding, and developed your teaching practice. What did you learn about how students learn and how we can best teach them? What will you do differently in the future? Learning Outcomes 2 and 3.
* **Appendices:** The appendices do not count towards the word count.
  + **Reference list:** List all sources cited. Learning Outcomes 1 and 2.
  + **Project documentation (optional):** This area is suitable for short items such as your questionnaire text, a sample handout or presentation screenshot, etc. For reasons of length, do **not** put all of your raw data in the appendix.
  + **Use of formative feedback**: Include a short appendix to discuss how you used formative feedback. 150-200 words.
    - **For action research project 1**, reflect on how you used feedback from the Presentation to improve this project and report.
    - **For action research project 2,** reflect on how you used feedback from Action Research Project 1 to improve this project and report.

### Marking criteria – ARP

**Critically reflect and identify issues and opportunities where you can improve student learning**. The teaching intervention is informed by relevant CPD and pedagogical literature and demonstrates insights into how students learn. The first time you use a key pedagogical term, you define it based on the literature. (**D2.6**, A5, K3, K5, V3)

**Carry out an action research project based on a change in your teaching (teaching intervention)**. You have asked a research question and answered it based on evidence.The teaching intervention is an advance over previous practice, improving student learning. You have chosen an appropriate range of teaching, learning, and assessment methods in the subject area or discipline based on critical evaluation of available options. You have made an informed choice regarding learning technology. You have followed appropriate ethics procedures, university policies, and quality assurance procedures. The report is written clearly and to a professional standard suitable for publication. (**D2.4, D2.5**, A1-5, K1-6)

**Critically evaluate the effectiveness of the teaching interventions.** Reflection and independent critical thought are evidenced in the experimental design and evaluation of results, to include both qualitative and quantitative data. The evidence demonstrates the impact of your teaching intervention on student learning. The report includes insights into how students learn and how teachers can teach effectively. (**D2.4,** **D2.5**, K3, K5)

**Carry out teaching practice in accordance with professional values** as outlined in the PSF demonstrating personal responsibility and initiative to help all students learn. Your teaching intervention takes inclusion and diversity into consideration and is based on sound evidence. You demonstrate that you have followed appropriate ethics procedures, university policies, and quality assurance procedures.(**D2.4**, V1, V3)

### Marking bands – ARP

* **Distinction 70 and above** – An excellent action research project report that shows independent critical thought, sound experimental design, thorough use of relevant pedagogical literature to inform the project, and considerable reflection expressed clearly. Your research question is meaningful and answered based on the evidence with significant insights into learning and teaching. The report is of high enough quality to serve as the basis of a publishable case study.
* **Good pass 60-69** – A very good report that shows critical thought, sound experimental design, use of pedagogical literature, and reflection. You ask a research question and answer it based on the evidence. Insights into learning and teaching have been expressed clearly. With some revision, there is potential for using this report as a case study. Some areas need minor further enhancement.
* **Pass 50-59** – A good report that shows some critical thought, a satisfactory experimental design, minimal use of pedagogical literature, and some evidence of reflection. The research question is superficial or not fully answered by the evidence. Some insight into learning and teaching is expressed, but with problems of clarity and language. This report requires significant revision to be an example for others.
* **Fail 49 and below** – A poor report in which some of the key elements are lacking or inadequate. The research question is lacking or not answered by the evidence. The report requires a thorough rewriting and possibly redesigning the teaching intervention for reimplementation to use as a case study.

## Reflective narrative

The reflective narrative for this module builds on the foundation established in the previous module or APL. Reflect on your learning journey from the start of the module to the present. 2500 words +/- 10%. This assignment is worth 30% of your mark.

Reflect on a few key highlights where you have deepened your understanding about how students learn and have developed your teaching practice. There isn’t enough space to cover everything you have done over the year, so be selective. Highlights can include induction sessions, CPD, pedagogical literature, teaching experiences, or discussions about teaching methodology with colleagues, the course team, or your mentor.

In the **body of the narrative**, you must include reflection on one or two CPD sessions and reflection on an observation of your own teaching that took place during the course of our module. The teaching observation may be carried out by a member of the PGCTHE course team, your PGCTHE mentor, or a colleague in your department as part of the university’s Peer Support of Teaching scheme. Tell what insights you have gained from the observation and how you have applied them in your practice.

In the **appendix**, you must include the teaching observation report, a list of references, and a full list of CPD undertaken relevant to teaching and learning in HE. In order to pass the module, you must meet the CPD requirement (18 hours beyond induction).

You may structure the narrative in whatever way you wish, as long as you include something that addresses the elements below:

* **Reflection on your learning journey:** Tell the story of your learning journey from induction through to the end of the module. What were your prior assumptions and knowledge, and how did they change? Reflect on ways you have deepened your understanding and developed effective practice. Identify a few turning points (critical incidents) that challenged your assumptions and led you to change your mental model (double-loop learning). Learning Outcome 1.
* **Application of pedagogical literature and CPD:** Demonstrate critical thought to show how the pedagogical literature, CPD experiences, induction sessions, and consultations have shaped your understanding and practice. Be selective: identify the readings and experiences that had the greatest impact on you and tell how you engaged with their ideas. Discuss one or two key CPD sessions in depth. Learning Outcome 2
* **Effective teaching:** Provide concrete examples and evidence that you have used effective teaching methods. Show that you have made an informed choice with regard to the effective use of technology in your teaching. Demonstrate that the level of teaching is appropriate for your students. Learning Outcome 3.
* **Professional values:** Articulate how your professional values and teaching philosophies relate to those in the PSF and inform your teaching practices. Relate your personal experiences to the broader institutional, national, and global drivers and policies. Explain how your professional values have developed through the module. Learning Outcome 4.
* **Appendix:** Required elements of the appendix include:
  + A complete list of CPD undertaken during the course of the module. Include only sessions related to learning and teaching at HE level. Give date, length of session, title, and PSF mapping. If it was a recorded session, make that explicit and give the date that you watched or listened to the recording. Your list must include at least 18 hours of HE-related CPD over the course of this module.
  + Reference list including all sources cited.
  + Teaching observation report.

### Marking criteria – Reflective narrative

**Critically reflect and identify issues and opportunities where you can improve student learning**, using pedagogical literature and CPD. You demonstrate double-loop learning and reflection on critical incidents. You reflect on one or two key CPD sessions with a discussion of consequent changes in your practice. You clearly express insights into how students learn and how we can help them. (**D2.5,** **D2.6**, A5, K3, K5, V3)

**Carry out teaching practice in accordance with professional values** as outlined in the PSF demonstrating personal responsibility and initiative to help all students learn. Appropriate pedagogical literature and material gathered through CPD has been evaluated, applied to inform your teaching, and referenced properly. There is evidence that you have engaged with the ideas from the sources. (**D2.4**, V1-4)

### Marking bands – Reflective narrative

* **Distinction 70 and above** – An excellent reflective narrative that shows independent critical thought, thorough use of relevant pedagogical literature, and considerable reflection on CPD and your own practice. You thoroughly explain the turning points (critical incidents) when you deepened your understanding of how students learn and developed your practice. Significant insights into learning and teaching have been expressed at a professional level suitable to serve as an example for others.
* **Good pass 60-69** – A very good narrative that shows critical thought, use of pedagogical literature, and reflection. You clearly explain the critical incidents where you gained insights into learning and teaching. With some revision, this narrative could be used as an example for others. Some areas need minor enhancement.
* **Pass 50-59** – A good narrative that shows some critical thought, minimal use of pedagogical literature, and some evidence of reflection. There is some insight into learning and teaching with evidence of reflection, expressed clearly for the most part but with some problems of clarity and language. This narrative requires significant further revision to be used as an example for others.
* **Fail 49 and below** – A poor narrative in which some of the key elements are lacking or inadequate. The narrative requires a thorough rewriting and addition of key elements in order to serve as an example.

# Policies and procedures

## Registration and student account

In order to complete your registration for the PGCTHE modules, you will need to activate your student account and complete the online registration process via your student record. There is a second registration that takes place in September, because our modules bridge two academic years. We will send you details about these processes in advance.

It is essential that you keep your student account active. If your student account is locked for any reason, you won’t be able to log onto Blackboard and complete the assignments. The university sends important messages to your student email account, so it is your responsibility to monitor these messages. It is possible for you to set up forwarding from your student email to your Aberystwyth staff email, so that you don’t miss an essential message. You can do this by logging onto your student email using the online version of Office 365. Click on **Settings** / **View all Outlook settings.** Then click on **Mail** / **Rules** to turn on forwarding.

Please note that these instructions may change with future software updates, and you can only use this to forward messages from one Aberystwyth email account to another Aberystwyth email account. Forwarding email to an external email account is not possible.

## Privacy and data retention policy

In accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Aberystwyth University will hold your data securely on university systems. The [Student Privacy Statement](https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/academic-registry/about/data-protection-information/data-protection-notice-applicants/) on the university admissions page gives details about how your admission documentation and student record information is held. In addition, the PGCTHE course team holds your assignment submissions and feedback securely and confidentially in the Blackboard courses for each module for five years from the start of each module. Only members of the course team are able to view this information for purposes directly associated with your participation in the PGCTHE programme. These include, for example: moderation of marks at exam board, reporting marks through the Student Record system, and recording your achievement with Advance HE so that they can issue certificates when you complete each module of the programme (AFHEA for successful completion of Module 1, and FHEA for successful completion of the PGCTHE). If successful completion of the PGCTHE programme is part of your probation, the PGCTHE course team will notify HR once you have completed the study scheme successfully.

Aberystwyth University has a legitimate interest under the General Data Protection Regulation in processing the information for this purpose and it will only be used for administration associated with your participation in the PGCTHE programme. For more information about your rights, please see the university page on [Data Subjects’ Rights](https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/infocompliance/dp/data-subject-rights/).

## Late submission, deadline extensions, and special circumstances

Please see the [Academic Quality Handbook](https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/academic-registry/handbook/) for details of university policy and procedures that apply to the PGCTHE.

* **3.3 Submission of Coursework** – ‘Work submitted after the deadline will be awarded a zero’.
* **3.8 Special Circumstances and Reasonable Adjustments** – To request consideration of special circumstances (e.g. medical or family emergency that interferes with your ability to complete coursework), download the Special Circumstances form from the [Academic Quality Handbook](https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/academic-registry/handbook/taught-schemes/) and send it to the [PGCTHE course team](mailto:thestaff@aber.ac.uk) with documentation. Tell how the special circumstances impacted your study, including the dates when the special circumstances began and ended or are expected to end. Participants who are granted Special Circumstances are allowed to resit the failed or missing coursework for an uncapped mark. If you require reasonable adjustments, please tell the [PGCTHE course team](mailto:thestaff@aber.ac.uk) directly at the earliest opportunity.
* **3.9 Coursework Extensions** – ‘Extensions can only be granted where there are clear medical/personal circumstances (supported by independent documentary evidence) that have affected a student’s ability to submit coursework on time’. To request an extension for up to two weeks, download the form from the [Academic Quality Handbook](https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/academic-registry/handbook/taught-schemes/) and send it to the [PGCTHE course team](mailto:thestaff@aber.ac.uk)at least three days before the assignment deadline.

## Referrals, fails, and appeals

Where assessors judge that an element does not meet the requirements to achieve a pass, that element is referred. Referred elements will be read by the internal moderator and external examiner. Where the referral is agreed by the Examination Board, the candidate will be given guidance concerning what needs to be done to demonstrate performance of the learning outcomes.

Referred elements must be submitted by the next submission date. Referred elements can be resubmitted no more than twice before the candidate is deemed to have failed the module. Participants who are referred and who have not been granted Special Circumstances will be allowed to resit for a mark capped at the passing level, 50%.

In the event of a candidate’s failing the module, there is a right of appeal in accordance with AU practice for postgraduate study. Please see [12. Academic Appeals](https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/academic-registry/handbook/appeals/) from the Academic Quality Handbook for details of the procedure.

## Withdrawal

Those who want to withdraw from Module 1 or Module 2 for any reason, including leaving University employment, should contact the course team as soon as possible. See the [Withdrawal from University](https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/academic-registry/students/ug-issues/other-info/withdrawal/) page for full details and instructions for requesting a withdrawal via the online student record system.

If you wish to withdraw temporarily and continue the programme at a later date, please indicate this clearly on the form. Please note that for technical reasons, **students taking a temporary withdrawal are not able to withdraw during the exam periods**.

## Assessment, exam board, and Fellowship award processes

The AFHEA and FHEA awards are issued based on successful completion of module coursework, which assesses the relevant Descriptors and Dimensions of Practice. The PGCTHE programme follows standard university procedures for credit-bearing academic programmes, such as exam boards and reporting of marks, detailed in the diagram below.

Figure Diagram of processes

Coursework is marked and second marked by PGCTHE course team members who hold SFHEA status.

The main PGCTHE exam board meets once a year in February to approve module marks. Supplementary exam boards are held in June or August/September if needed for resits or students completing coursework after returning from temporary withdrawal.

The PGCTHE Exam Board is chaired by the PGCTHE Coordinator and consists of:

* PGCTHE Coordinator
* LTEU Manager
* External Examiner
* Internal Moderator
* Other members as needed

Prior to the PGCTHE exam board, the internal moderator and external examiner read a selection of submissions across the marking range and have access to all assignments, feedback, and marks. The sample comprises:

* The work of at least 10 students or at least 10% of the total number of students, whichever is greater
* The work of all students awarded a ‘Fail’ overall due to poor performance
* A proportional sample of the work of students in other degree classifications

In their reports, both the internal moderator and external examiner comment on the compliance of Module 1 with PSF D1 and Module 2 with PSF D2.

After the PGCTHE exam board, results are submitted to Academic Registry and validated at the university’s Senate Exam Board. The LTEU then enters the details of successful candidates into the Advance HE Fellowship database. You will then receive a message from Advance HE with instructions for downloading your certificate.

The LTEU then reports names of staff who attain AFHEA or FHEA to the university Human Resources office and partner institutions as appropriate. Names of successful candidates are also reported to Academic Enhancement Committee and the ARCHE panel. Participants who withdraw or are referred are not named in those reports.

For those progressing from Module 1 to Module 2, please note that the Exam Board takes place after the Module 2 induction. This means that your progression to Module 2 is provisional upon final validation of a passing mark for Module 1 at the exam board.

## Research ethics

When working with human participants, particularly student cohorts, it is important that you consider and apply relevant research ethics guidelines when designing teaching interventions for the PGCTHE. Key issues that you may need to consider include:

* Working in a dual role
* Obtaining informed consent
* Offering confidentiality and anonymity
* Ensuring that vulnerable groups are appropriately supported

With the support of your mentor and the PGCTHE Coordinator, you must ensure that have read the [Research Ethics Policy](https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/rbi/staff-students/ethics/) at the design and planning stage of your research. It is also important that you also observe any departmental or discipline specific ethical practices (e.g. BPS or BERA guidelines).

Participants in PDM0530 are required to [request Ethics approval](https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/rbi/staff-students/ethics/#step-:-complete-an-assessment) for both of your action research projects before you run each project. In order to approve your request, we need a clear understanding of what you intend to do and how you plan to address ethical issues. Therefore, you are required to discuss your action research project plans with the PGCTHE Coordinator prior to submitting your Ethics approval request.

It is not envisaged that Research Ethics Panel (REP) approval will be required for PGCTHE activities. However, if the activity falls outside the scope of this document or if you simply require further advice, please contact the Research Ethics team via [ethics@aber.ac.uk](mailto:ethics@aber.ac.uk) or 01970 621694, who will be happy to assist you in setting up your chosen project. Please see the [Research Ethics](https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/research/good-practice/research-ethics/) page for further guidance.

# Appendix 1 – PSF (2011 version)

The PGCTHE is accredited at Descriptor 1 (Module 1) and Descriptor 2 (completion of the PGCTHE) by Advance HE. The scheme is based on the Professional Standards Framework for teaching and supporting learning in higher education (PSF). Please see [PSF Dimensions of the Framework](https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/knowledge-hub/dimensions-framework) for further explanation of each dimension.

## Descriptor 1 of the PSF (achieved upon completion of Module 1)

Participants who successfully complete Module 1 will be awarded AFHEA. All of the Professional Values and most of the Areas of Activity and Core Knowledge dimensions of the framework are assessed in Module 1.

The framework states that Associate Fellows should demonstrate an understanding of specific aspects of effective teaching, learning support methods and student learning. Individuals should be able to provide evidence of:

1. Successful engagement with at least two of the five Areas of Activity.
2. Successful engagement in appropriate teaching and practices related to these Areas of Activity
3. Appropriate Core Knowledge and understanding of at least K1 and K2
4. A commitment to appropriate Professional Values in facilitating others' learning
5. Relevant professional practices, subject and pedagogic research and/or scholarship within the above activities
6. Successful engagement, where appropriate, in professional development activity related to teaching, learning and assessment responsibilities

## Descriptor 2 of the PSF (achieved upon completion of full PGCTHE)

Participants who successfully complete the PGCTHE including Module 2 will be awarded FHEA. All of the dimensions of the framework are assessed in Module 2.

The framework states that holders of FHEA should demonstrate a broad understanding of effective approaches to teaching and learning support as key contributions to high quality student learning. Individuals should be able to provide evidence of:

1. Successful engagement across all five Areas of Activity
2. Appropriate knowledge and understanding across all aspects of Core Knowledge
3. A commitment to all the Professional Values
4. Successful engagement in appropriate teaching practices related to the Areas of Activity
5. Successful incorporation of subject and pedagogic research and/ or scholarship within the above activities, as part of an integrated approach to academic practice
6. Successful engagement in continuing professional development in relation to teaching, learning, assessment and, where appropriate, related professional practices

## PSF Dimensions of Practice Checklist (2011 version)

**Areas of Activity**

* 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 practices

**Core Knowledge**

* K1 The subject material
* K2 Appropriate methods for teaching, learning and assessing 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

**Professional Values**

* 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 2 – PGCTHE Learning Contract

Please fill out as much of this form as you can and send it to the [PGCTHE course team](mailto:thestaff@aber.ac.uk) prior to our needs analysis meeting. We will work through the form together during the meeting.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **PGCTHE Module** | PDM0430 / PDM0530 |
| **Student name** |  |
| **What name do you prefer to be called?** |  |
| **What pronouns do you use?** |  |
| **Are you currently undertaking another study scheme?** | No / Yes, PhD / Yes, other (please specify)  If yes, give expected completion date: |
| **Other information about your background** |  |

**Your teaching context at university level**

The PGCTHE is customised to your needs. Please tell us about the university-level teaching you expect to do over the course of the module (delete or add as needed).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Level** | Foundation / UG / PGT / PGR / other |
| **Department / study scheme** |  |
| **Main topics taught** |  |
| **Teaching mode** | On campus / Bespoke DL / other |
| **Approximate total hours** |  |
| **Typical class size** | **Large** (>100) / **Medium** (30-99) / **Small** (10-29) / **Tutorial** (<10) |
| **Class types** | Lecture / Seminar / Practical / Tutorial / other |
| **Home institution** | Aberystwyth University / Coleg Cambria / other |

**Your prior knowledge**

Everyone has a unique starting point based on your prior knowledge and experience. What do you already know about pedagogy? How did you learn it?

| **Area of pedagogical knowledge** | **How you gained that knowledge** |
| --- | --- |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

**Your learning goals**

What do you want to learn while on this module? Please list your learning goals in the table below. During our needs analysis meeting, we will refine your list together.

| **Your learning goals** |
| --- |
|  |

**What you can expect from the course team**

The list below describes what we offer for all participants. What else can we do to support your learning? During our meeting, we will discuss the support you need.

| **For all participants, the course team will:** |
| --- |
| * Treat you honestly, fairly, and with respect * Keep you informed about useful resources and CPD opportunities * Respond to emails within two working days * Design activities and materials that are as accessible and inclusive as possible * Mark according to the marking criteria * Provide feedback on strengths and areas for future focus * Return feedback within 15 working days * Schedule consultations upon request * Support you in your specific teaching context |
| **What else can we do to support you (include any support through the medium of Welsh)?** |
|  |

**What the course team expects of you**

This list below describes our expectations of all participants. Please tell us what you are willing to commit to your study. We will discuss this during our meeting.

| **The course team expects all participants to:** |
| --- |
| * Treat the course team and other participants honestly, fairly, and with respect * Keep in contact with the course team, especially if you have difficulties or issues * Visit the Blackboard course regularly * Read the [Weekly Resource Roundup](https://wordpress.aber.ac.uk/e-learning/category/weekly-resource-roundup/) to identify CPD sessions and pedagogical literature that are useful for your teaching context * Attend the induction and carry out any associated preparation tasks * Read relevant pedagogical literature throughout the module, using our [Aspire reading list](https://aber.rl.talis.com/lists/47304D00-5934-CBAF-E726-8B2998A26023.html) as a starting point * Allocate enough time to complete the coursework by the deadline (contact the course team as soon as possible if you cannot meet a deadline) * Follow the assignment briefs, citing all sources appropriately * Contact the course team if you have any questions about the coursework, CPD, or the module in general |
| **What are you willing to commit to your study?** |
|  |

**PSF dimensions of practice (2011 version)**

During our needs analysis meeting, we will discuss the dimensions of practice together to identify which areas you need to develop further.

|  |
| --- |
| Areas of Activity |
| **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 practices |

|  |
| --- |
| Core Knowledge |
| **K1** The subject material  **K2** Appropriate methods for teaching, learning and assessing 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 |

|  |
| --- |
| Professional Values |
| **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 |

**Sign-off**

The staff member and student agreed to this learning contract on the date below.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Student** | **Staff member** |
|  |  |  |

# Appendix 3 – PDM0430 Assessed Teaching Observation Form

**Section 1 Participant’s information**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name of Participant** | **Date** |
| **Name of Observer** | **Number of students in class** |
| **Module** | **Location** |
| **Topics:** | **Start Time**  **Finish Time** |
| **Learning outcomes for this session** | |
| **Pedagogical justification for the methods used in this session, including references where appropriate. Include any provision you have made to make learning materials accessible. (500 words)** | |
| **In what areas would you like to receive advice and feedback?** | |

**Section 2 Observer comments and feedback**

| Marking criteria and feedback from observer | Distinction | Good pass | Pass | Fail |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Critically engage with pedagogical literature and CPD** when planning changes to your teaching, demonstrating critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights. The pedagogical justification is well-grounded in evidence-based pedagogical literature and provides concrete detail about your teaching plan. (A1, K2, V3) |  |  |  |  |
| **Plan aligned learning activities based on a critical evaluation of available teaching methodologies**, so that learning outcomes, activities, and assessment work together appropriately to help all students learn. Show that you have made an informed choice about the use of learning technologies and effective methods to help students learn, such as active learning, variety of activities, and student practice. (A1, K2, K4) |  |  |  |  |
| **Design and implement an appropriate learning experience.** The teaching methods are appropriate for the subject and level, with reinforcement of key concepts. The methods meet the needs of diverse students, build rapport, and show high expectations. All students are made to feel welcome to contribute without undue pressure. Visual aids are accessible (e.g. font size is large enough to read). Students respond well during the session and are actively engaged in the learning process. (**D1.2,** A2, K1, V1, V2) |  |  |  |  |

**General comments**

|  |
| --- |
| **Strongest aspects of this teaching session** |
| **Future areas of focus** |

**Section 3 Participant’s post-observation reflection (500 words combined)**

Your answers to these questions will provide useful material for your reflective narrative and for practical application in your teaching.

|  |
| --- |
| **What insights did you gain from this observation?** |
| **What changes are you considering making to your teaching in response to this observation?** |

**Section 4 Observer feedback on post-observation reflection**

| Marking criteria and feedback from observer | Distinction | Good pass | Pass | Fail |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Post-observation reflection. Gather information and critically reflect on your existing teaching practice** to gain an understanding of your underlying assumptions about learning and teaching, showing self-direction in development of practice. Your reflection demonstrates a commitment to deepening your understanding of pedagogical principles and developing your teaching practice. (A1, A2, V3) |  |  |  |  |

|  |
| --- |
| **Further comments on post-observation reflection:** |

**Marking bands**

* **Distinction 70 and above** – An excellent teaching session in which a high level of pedagogical and subject knowledge is applied to help all students engage in learning. The session would be suitable to serve as a role model for others to follow.
* **Good pass 60-69** – A very good session in which most students are engaged in learning and effective pedagogical methods are used. Some areas need minor further enhancement.
* **Pass 50-59** – A good session in which some students are engaged in learning and some effective pedagogical methods are used. Some areas need significant further enhancement.
* **Fail 49 and below** – A poor session in which inappropriate or ineffective methods are used and students are generally not engaged in learning. Major improvements are needed.