

in partnership

February 2023

in this issue...

Keeping our
members updated
with the latest from
Advance HE

Welcome to the February 2023 *in partnership*

Welcome to this month's In Partnership. We have launched the revised Professional Standards Framework 2023, published the fourth iteration of the Employability Case Study Compendium, and shared the results of the sector-wide consultation on the Disabled Student Commitment.

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We launch the Professional Standards Framework 2023, revised following an extensive and independent review of the framework making sure it is fit for purpose in the future.

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We share a toolkit and nine accompanying case studies from Kingston University, part of the 'Inclusive institutions: enabling and supporting culture change' Collaborative Development Fund project from 2021-22.

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We publish the fourth edition of the now annual Employability Case Study Compendium, which focuses on contemporary employability initiatives across the sector.

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We share the results of the recent consultation by the Disabled Students' Commission (DSC) on the Disabled Student Commitment and publish a joint statement from the DSC and Health Education England on supporting disabled students into the health sector.

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We share blogs from contributors to the Employability Case Study Compendium, a preview to the 2023 Sustainability Conference and a discussion on student co-creation.

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We look forward to the exciting programmes, events and conferences coming up in 2023.



As always we welcome your feedback. Please contact your Head of Membership or email memberships@advance-he.ac.uk with any ideas or content you would like featured.

Revised 'Professional Standards Framework for teaching and supporting learning in higher education 2023' launched

'Effective, impactful, inclusive and contextualised teaching and learning' – extensive consultation enhances the Professional Standards Framework

Following a sector-led review of the Professional Standards Framework (PSF), Advance HE is delighted to launch the 2023 version on behalf of the sector.

The PSF, which was last revised in 2011, is a framework used in many parts of the world to support and recognise staff development and benchmark success in teaching and learning in higher education.

PSF 2023 is the outcome of a sector-wide consultation with over 800 academics and higher education professionals from more than 20 countries.

Alison Johns, Chief Executive of Advance HE, said, "The Professional Standards Framework is widely used to develop the skills and attributes of those who teach or support teaching in higher education so that students can benefit from good practice and an excellent academic experience.

"This sector-led and evidenced-based review of the PSF, to which we committed in our 2021-24 Strategy, builds on the strengths of the current PSF while placing much more overt emphasis on the effectiveness and impact of teaching; the context in which the teaching takes place; and inclusivity – both from the perspective of those staff who are now able to engage with the PSF, and in how more inclusive approaches to teaching are now embedded in the PSF to accommodate better the needs and outcomes for all students.

"I'm confident that these factors, along with a deeper and wider emphasis on digital, professional values, student support and guidance and collaboration, will ensure the PSF is fit-for-the-future and remains relevant and compelling wherever higher education teaching and learning are delivered.

"I am grateful to the many people from around the world who contributed to this review, with particular thanks to the project team and the Steering Group, so ably led by Professor Helen O'Sullivan."

Key components of the PSF are the 'Dimensions' and Descriptors' which capture the PSF's expectations of those engaged in teaching or supporting teaching: those with experience across some dimensions of teaching and learning (Descriptor 1); those with greater experience across all dimensions (Descriptor 2); those who lead or influence those who teach (Descriptor 3); and those "highly experienced individuals whose practice involves a sustained record of effectiveness in strategic leadership of high-quality learning (Descriptor 4)." The report shows the detail (appendix 1) of the changes to the 'Dimensions' and Descriptors' in the PSF through the phases of consultation, from the 2011 version to their final iteration in 2023.

Effective and inclusive practice is particularly emphasised in Descriptors 1-3; while evidence of extensive impact is a key component for Descriptor 4.

 [Read more](#)

Introduction to the PSF 2023

Alison Johns, Chief Executive Advance HE, welcomes the launch of the revised Professional Standards Framework (PSF) for teaching and supporting learning in HE.

"On behalf of Advance HE, as custodians of the sector's framework, I am delighted to welcome the launch of the revised Professional Standards Framework (PSF) for teaching and supporting learning in HE.

"The PSF rightly has an extremely important place in the teaching and learning landscape. It is integrated into teaching and learning strategies, and supports institutions and individuals to provide high quality learning experiences and maximise student success. It supports reward and recognition, and underpins our teaching and learning accreditation –and our Advance HE Fellowships – which demonstrate personal and institutional commitment to professionalism in learning and teaching in higher education. The Fellowships are now embedded across our sector – at the time of writing I am proud to say that there are more than 165,000 Fellows around the world."

[Read more:](#)

Report of the PSF review 2021-2023

The Professional Standards Framework for teaching and supporting learning in higher education (PSF) has global recognition for raising the profile of teaching and learning in higher education. The PSF's contribution to reward and recognition is unsurpassed, being used by individuals, institutions and national bodies.

[Read more and download the report here:](#)

Member benefits and opportunities



Enabling institutional inclusive cultural change through student engagement: key attributes for success

Working collaboratively across six University Alliance universities in England, this project explored the key attributes of student engagement programmes which support meaningful, far-reaching, and sustained transformation to a more inclusive higher education.

Student 'engagement' is a buzzword in international higher education defined by students' involvement in activities that are connected to their learning (Klaue and Armitage, 2008). Students who actively engage with their University through not only their academic curricula, but also co-curricular activities are less likely to drop out and more likely to achieve better outcomes (Thomas, 2012).

However, not all university students engage with their institutions to the same degree. These groups include mature students and those who are first generation to higher education, students from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds, as well as those from lower socio-economic households. Longstanding research points to the lack of connection between these groups of students and their universities due in part to the fact that their traditions, values and behaviours are not represented or reflected in the cultures of higher education institutions. As a result, they do not feel that they fit in or belong (Reay et al. 2010). More recent research has highlighted the centrality of connection as a foundation of belonging (Blake et. al., 2022). Non- inclusive institutional cultures which undermine other ways of being, knowing, learning and doing at University operate to maintain the educational advantage of some student groups over others (UUK, 2022).

Therefore, institutional practices have a significant influence on the feelings of connectedness and belonging of differential student groups and ultimately their engagement

with their universities which in turn have tangible impacts of their outcomes. So the challenge for universities is how they open dialogue to better understand and therefore more effectively connect and reflect the lived experiences of these underrepresented groups of students (and staff).

Within the context of student engagement, many universities have made a conscious attempt to evaluate whose voices are being heard through analysis of variable participation in their student representation and co-curricular programmes, seeking to develop new student engagement programmes which encourage participation from, or explicitly support, student groups who have been identified as being disenfranchised. In so doing, universities have begun to take steps to use student engagement programmes to better understand differential experiences in their institutions and work to use these voices to progress change programmes which challenge them to be more inclusive institutions.

We explored various student engagement programmes in six higher education institutions in England which have been developed to support inclusivity in their universities.

The collaborating universities, led by Kingston University, are part of the University Alliance which is a mission group which represents large to mid-sized universities which partner with industry and the professions to deliver the workforce of today and tomorrow through practical, skills-based learning and applied research. The following institutions are part of the project:

Kingston University (Lead)
 Anglia Ruskin University
 Birmingham City University
 Teesside University
 University of Brighton
 University of Hertfordshire

Each institution put forward at least one of their student engagement programmes to be included in the project.

The project identified the key ingredients which render these institutional initiatives as successful in moving the dial on inclusivity and presents best practice across the six institutions which support meaningful, far-reaching, and sustained inclusive transformation.

After collating details of the various student engagement programmes across our six institutions, we held a sandpit event which brought together colleagues and students from our participating institutions (facilitated by external facilitators).

 [Read more and download the resources here:](#)

Supporting inclusive boards introductory podcast released

The Supporting Inclusive Boards programme will convene governance professionals in a series of developmental, online sessions to enhance and share thinking, noting the importance of the role of the governance professional in implementing change.

Using Advance HE's Board Diversity and Inclusion Toolkit as a guide, the community will work through this theme including, preparing the board and creative solutions to generating diverse board candidates, to successful recruitment, induction and retention.

In this short introduction, programme leads Kim Ansell and Tesse Akpeki discuss the importance of encouraging participants to challenge board diversity and inclusion practices at their institutions.

 [Listen to the podcast here:](#)

Learning and Teaching

Contemporary Practices and Initiatives in Employability: new case study compendium

Co-editors of our fourth annual case study series on employability, Stuart Norton and Maria Romero-González, introduce the latest compendium 'Contemporary Practices and Initiatives in Employability'.

Building and embedding employability skills, values, behaviours and attributes requires that higher education courses offer opportunities to acquire and practice the skills through placement and extracurricular activities. This creates pressures for education providers, requiring a re-thinking of how the courses are designed and delivered and how to ensure students have the required skills at exit. This can be perceived as onerous and difficult to achieve, however, in the past few years, there have been a wide range of examples of embedding employability in the curriculum from assessment in modules to programme level that have provided a pathway for providers to increase the practice of employability, as highlighted through compendiums such as this series.

The best interventions require a re-thinking of the pedagogies used in and out of the classroom framed with a future look on how the knowledge and skills will be used in employment. This is often referred to as authenticity; and the most effective way to provide that experience in education is through equal active participation of all the members of the learning community.

In [Contemporary Practices and Initiatives in Employability](#) we present here a collection of novel examples from across the sector of how sustainable and innovative pedagogies can be used in the delivery of higher education courses that will equip students with the skills needed after graduation.

While we have presented the cases under the broad banners of career preparation, knowledge and soft skills and wider context, we could have easily presented them under different headings and re-categorised them.

Additional strong themes from the [Employability Symposium 2022](#), which will undoubtedly be picked up on throughout these submissions, include inclusivity and equitable opportunities, in particular throughout the career preparation section. Further sub-themes include interdisciplinary, and sustainability.

There will be a range of overlap with differing themes, but what binds them together is their propensity for helping the sector to find solutions to enhancing employability.

One other recurrent theme through the case studies is the need for authenticity of the experience provided. This is an essential ingredient that ensures students appreciate how the practice of skills in an educational environment can be translated into employment practices.

Another aspect related to authenticity covered in the case studies is co-creation with students and prospective employers. This provides a sense of reality and ownership that is highly valued by all the participants, giving a more fulfilling experience.

We hope the case studies support the academic community with the implementation of employability skills in higher education. A final challenge remains to give employability the place it deserves in education and ensure such initiatives are scalable. For this to happen, a rebranding of 'skills' is necessary to shift the perception from the learning community that skills are less important than knowledge and initiatives need to be appropriately resourced.

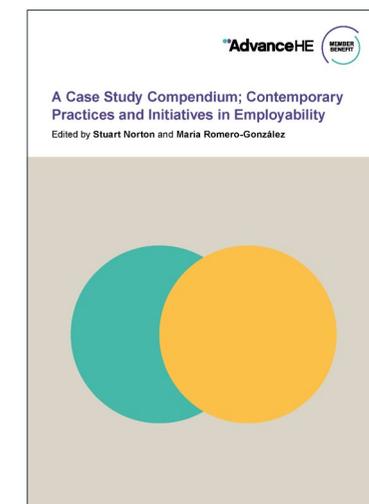
The employment sector already recognised that skills are essential to succeed in the work environment, it is time that we value the importance and relevance of developing the broad notion of professional skills, including values, to make wise decisions in life through education.

Stuart Norton is Senior Consultant (Education) at Advance HE and is leading the review and update of the Student Success Framework series.

Dr Maria Romero-González is Director of Education for the School of Engineering and Materials Science at Queen Mary University of London, and Director of Learning Development at the Queen Mary Engineering School in Xi'an, China.

[Read more here](#)

Advance HE members can download A Case Study Compendium: Contemporary Practices and Initiatives in Employability Edited by Stuart Norton and Maria Romero-González [here](#).



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Higher education sector welcomes proposal to deliver a better deal for disabled students

A plan by the [Disabled Students' Commission](#) (DSC) to promote greater inclusivity by introducing a *Disabled Student Commitment* into universities and colleges across the UK has been welcomed by the sector.

The summary report analyses the responses of 70 disabled students, the DSC academics and sector organisations to a consultation by DSC into the introduction of the Commitment.

Building on research since its inception in March 2020, the Disabled Students' Commission is developing a Disabled Student Commitment, which is a call to the sector and its bodies to make the step change that is required to create a more inclusive higher education environment for all. The commitment calls on Higher Education Providers (HEPs), Government, funders, agencies, regulators and professional, statutory and regulatory bodies to look at what they can currently do, what innovative practice they can share, and how they can change.

The Commitment does not seek to replicate or replace legal duties, but asks organisations to do more by focusing on how they can improve the disabled student experience.

Sector responses

As well as individual students, those responding included Universities UK, the Department for Education, General Medical Council and UK Research and Innovation.

The Commitment is being developed by the DSC to drive a step-change in the offering available to disabled students in higher education and the organisation plans to launch the framework later this Spring.

- “ Our higher education sector must be a place where disabled students can thrive and enjoy the same opportunity for success,”
- “ The Disabled Student Commitment will provide institutions with a structured and comprehensive framework to measure themselves against.
- “ It complements the pockets of good practice that are evident in the sector and its purpose is to be a driver for real change.
- “ For this reason, I am extremely grateful to those who responded to our consultation and have expressed such firm support as well as offering us expert and detailed feedback that is helping us to refine the Commitment still further.”

Professor Geoff Layer, chair of the DSC which was formed in March 2020 and is funded by the Office of Students for a duration of three years.

 [Read more here.](#)



Joint Ambition – Health Education England and Disabled Students' Commission

Disabled Students' Commission (DSC) have worked with the Health Education England (HEE) to produce this short joint statement. This statement reflects their joint ambition to help develop and promote support for health learners successfully transition into employment in the National Health Service (NHS) and wider health and social care economy.

This joint statement is built on and shaped by the work of health system leaders and stakeholders. There is recognition that work is already being undertaken across the system, but an acknowledgement more needs to be done, including with stakeholders such as:

- + Colleges and higher education institutes
- + The Royal Medical Colleges
- + Professional and regulatory bodies in health
- + NHS Trusts, health and social care employers and providers
- + NHS England and the health arm's length bodies

This joint statement was developed through a 'deep dive' into current data and research on disabled health graduates, and through a roundtable event attended by senior representatives from a range of organisations including, NHS employers, the Disabled Doctors Network, HEE, and the NHS.

[Access the joint statement here.](#)

new content + publications

Student co-creation – are we working well together?

Ahead of the Students as Co-creators Symposium, Dr Helen Webster offered an invitation to explore the possibilities and challenges of student co-creation. How might we fully realise the benefits and embed co-creation approaches more sustainably into the student experience?

[Read more](#)



Partnerships with students to co-design employability resources

Two Swansea University students talk about their experiences as content creators, undertaking summer internships in the Employability Team - key examples of how development of partnerships with students to co-design employability initiatives and resources can benefit all parties involved.

[Read more](#)



Leading with purpose: aligning people and place for sustainable futures

Advance HE's Sustainability Conference in June will bring together senior leaders with responsibility for sustainability strategy to discuss how institutions can take an holistic approach to aligning their strategy and practice. Conference leads, Kay Hack and Kim Ansell discuss their aspirations for the day and for the sector.

[Read more](#)



Leadership shadowing for employability skills development

Dr Rosemary Clyne, Senior Lecturer in Biomedical Sciences at Queen Mary University of London, highlights some of the feedback received on the leadership shadowing scheme she designed for employability skills development at the University.



[Read more](#)

Supporting and enhancing academic governance

A new project “to identify practical ways in which governing bodies are already carrying out academic governance and to identify ways to further strengthen this.”

[Read more](#)



Dates for the diary

Programmes

Leadership & Management

Enhancing Programme Leadership – 20 April 2023

This virtual programme aims to support programme leaders at a time when they may be new to leadership, or looking to gain confidence in their leadership skills. It will address their unique challenges, opportunities, and realities, by developing their networks and skills and providing tools to enable them to thrive in this unique role. [Find out more.](#)

Senior Women’s Leadership Development Programme – 9 March 2023

One of our women-only programmes designed specifically for women in senior positions in HE to help them take the next step up or extend their role, profile and impact. It aims at creating more gender parity in senior leadership within higher education. [Find out more.](#)

Strategic Leadership Programme – Booking Deadline: 27 March 2023

The Strategic Leadership Programme will appeal to those with a portfolio which reaches across the institution and who want to exercise their strategic vision to make a meaningful impact in shaping the future direction of the higher education sector through influence and engagement.

The programme is delivered as a blended offer involving both online and in person delivery. It takes a ‘systems thinking’ approach to considering strategic leadership and is comprised of a mix of theoretical inputs, provocations, speakers, practical exercises, observations, and discussions. [Find out more.](#)

Leadership & Management

Diversifying Leadership

Midlands cohort: 15 March 2023

North West cohort: 23 March 2023

The Diversifying Leadership programme is designed to support early-career academics and professional services staff from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds who are about to take their first steps into a leadership role. It explores themes of power and influence, demystifying leadership, cultural identity and cultural capital, increasing your visibility and authentic leadership and features leadership stories from high-profile HE leaders. [Find out more.](#)

Research Team Leadership – 25-26 May 2023

Effective leadership is critical to the success of any team. For those new to a research team leadership role, developing the necessary practical skills combined with the requirements of meeting research delivery objectives can be particularly challenging.

Research Team Leadership in Changing Times is a two-day online course designed to develop your skills as a research team leader with particular reference to supporting research leaders and their teams in these changing times.

[Find out more.](#)

Leading Departments – 14 March 2023

The programme is designed to be suitable for you whether you have an academic background and are leading a teaching, research or knowledge transfer department or have a professional service background and are leading an administrative or a professional service, for example, student support services, information technology service, marketing, or campus services. [Find out more.](#)

Dates for the diary

Conferences + Events

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Conference 2023: The Shoulders of Giants: Listening, Learning and Improving our Practice **Dates: 15-16 March 2023 Location: The DoubleTree by Hilton, Hull**

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Conference 2023 will look to identify new giants, challenge exclusionary ideas by acknowledging work from marginalised groups, and maximise the potential for future learning by sharing ideas on inclusive practices. The conference will run across two days with an optional evening dinner and entertainment on the evening of the 15 March. Delegates can attend the full conference or choose the one day that resonates most with their work, experiences or requirements. [Find out more.](#)

Student Engagement Conference 2023: What does student engagement mean to you? –20 April 2023, Manchester Metropolitan University

The Advance HE Student Engagement Conference 2023 will be held in person on 20 April at Manchester Metropolitan University and will focus on:

What does student engagement mean to you?

How does the meaning vary depending on who we are – a student, a lecturer, a senior leader?

How do you measure student engagement?

And how do we merge these understandings together to achieve excellent student outcomes for all?

This conference will be of interest to those with responsibility for the student academic experience and student engagement more widely, SU teams wishing to widen their student engagement, course leaders seeking to have a more engaged cohort and others focused on the student experience and improving student outcomes. [Find out more.](#)

Writing Retreat Senior Fellow – 28 February 2023 – Virtual

The online Senior Fellow Writing Retreat is an invaluable opportunity to have the time and space to progress your application to become a Senior Fellow, receiving expert analysis and feedback in the process. Held over one day, the retreat offers you the chance to transform your notes and thoughts into an application that matches Advance HE's criteria for Senior Fellowship.

Senior Fellowship offers you the chance to be recognised for your sustained record in teaching and learning and specific aspects of teaching provision, showing that you have demonstrated a thorough understanding of effective approaches to teaching and learning support as a key contribution to high quality student learning. [Find out more.](#)

Sustainability Symposium 2023: Top-down or bottom-up? How do we ensure all our graduates become sustainable citizens?

Sustainable citizens, people who can apply their knowledge and skills to global sustainability challenges, are increasingly in demand. Employers, professional bodies, students and the public recognise the need for everyone to have greater understanding of our impact on the planet and the skills to alleviate it.

The symposium is aimed at academic and professional staff, students, programme leaders and senior leaders who wish to learn about the latest sustainability innovations and showcase their own initiatives. Students are also invited to present and attend, and we would be delighted to see a strong student presence at the event. [Find out more.](#)

New to Teaching **Starts 22 March 2023 Location: Virtual**

New to Teaching is back in 2023 from 22 March with the aim to provide delegates with a safe and nurturing environment in order to successfully build confidence to deliver effective courses focusing on active learning, engaging students and making teaching inclusive of all students. [Find out more.](#)