# About the Higher Education Academy

The Higher Education Academy (HEA) is an international body based in the UK with a global network, working across the world to enhance the quality of the teaching and learning support and experience for students, ensuring the education they receive is world-class.

The HEA is a not-for-profit organisation that works with individuals, institutions and governments to improve teaching at a local, regional, national and international level. There are now over 250 institutions that subscribe to the HEA from eight different countries, and there are over 83,000 fellows of the HEA across the world. Fellowship is an international recognition of a commitment to professionalism in teaching and learning in higher education, and is increasingly being linked to recruitment and promotion within universities.

The HEA has an internationally recognised professional development framework for teaching in higher education (the PSF), with a proven record of adapting this and establishing development programmes, through a global network of strategic partners and subscribers. Furthermore, the HEA provides consultancy and workshops on:

* Teaching and management in higher education, supporting all staff, from those new to teaching to senior leaders. This includes delivering Certificates in Teaching and Learning, and in Leading Teaching and Learning
* The six areas of the HEA FrameWORKS series:
	+ Transforming Assessment
	+ Embedding Employability
	+ Student access, retention, attainment and progression
	+ Student engagement through partnership
	+ Internationalising HE
	+ Flexible Learning in HE
* Achieving fellowship of the Higher Education Academy
* Identifying practice gaps
* Use of surveys to understand student needs

The HEA is active across the globe and has recently delivered projects in the following countries: Australia, Bahrain, China, Dubai, Kazakhstan, Luxembourg, New Zealand, Republic of Ireland, Saudi Arabia, Thailand, Turkey, United Kingdom, Uruguay and USA.

Further information about the Higher Education Academy is available on our website: [www.heacademy.ac.uk](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk)

**The Higher Education Academy and the Teaching Excellence Framework**

**1. Introduction**

Jo Johnson, then Minister for Universities and Science, announced in July 2015, the UK government’s intention to develop a Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF). Its key aims included the identification and encouragement of excellent teaching for all students and equal status for teaching and research. As the body championing teaching excellence in the UK, the Higher Education Academy warmly welcomed the proposal and has contributed extensively to the development of the framework.

**2. The HEA and the development of the TEF**

In many ways, the HEA has paved the way for the TEF since its creation in 2005 by promoting the enhancement of teaching and learning by:

* Devising and managing the UK Professional Standards Framework, the internationally-recognised set of professional standards and guidelines for everyone involved in teaching and supporting learning in HE. The HEA accredits personal development programmes at individual or institutional level to improve teaching quality against this framework.
* Sponsoring and disseminating research into the most effective methods of enhancing teaching and learning. This has included research into particular pedagogic practice (e.g. student engagement), reward and recognition of excellent teachers, and defining teaching excellence.
* By administering (since 2005) the National Teaching Fellowship Scheme which identifies and rewards 55 excellent teachers each year.

Since the announcement in July 2015, the HEA has contributed very directly to the development of the TEF by means of:

* The secondment of senior sHEA taff to the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (DBIS), the government department charged with the design of the TEF
* The involvement of the HEA’s Chief Executive (Professor Stephanie Marshall) in the TEF Delivery Group, which has strategic oversight of the design and implementation of the TEF, and of the HEA’s Head of Special Projects in the TEF Working Group, which has developed the structure of the scheme.
* The HEA’s academic networks. The working group of Pro-Vice Chancellors (Learning and Teaching) has met officials from DBIS (now the Department for Education - DfE) on three occasions to provide feedback on emergent proposals on the *institutional-level* assessment of teaching excellence currently being conducted. A summit conference involving Deans from across the curriculum met with DfE officials to discuss the potential transition to a *discipline-level* assessment planned for next year.
* Written submissions to the government’s consultation on its proposals.