Plymouth University
T&OD/ Teaching and Learning Support (TLS)

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<th>Document</th>
<th>Policy document for Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice (PGCAP) and Teaching Development Framework (TDF)</th>
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Plymouth University seeks to employ and promote people who have a proven ability to deliver high quality teaching, and a recognized teaching qualification or accreditation. Opportunities will be provided for those new to Higher Education teaching to gain the relevant qualification to enable them to fulfil their role.

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- outline the University’s requirements for all teaching staff to be able to demonstrate the expected standards of teaching and level of professional qualifications required either on appointment or within an agreed timeframe;
- to provide information for new academic employees and their managers about the Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice (PGCAP) and the Teaching Development Framework (TDF);
- to ensure that completion of the appropriate route to teaching qualification and accreditation is undertaken in a consistent manner across the University;
- to outline the responsibilities for managers, T&OD and the TLS team to support employees in achieving this;
- to define the options and criteria for determining the most appropriate route for gaining the relevant qualifications;
- to clarify the contractual requirements for new academics.
2. Contents of this policy

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Appendix 1: Guidance Notes for managers of new academic employees - Available at https://intranet.plymouth.ac.uk/perdev/probation

4. Links to other policies, procedures and regulations

- Induction Procedure
- Probation Procedure
- Performance Development Review (PDR)
- Capability Policy and Procedure
- Disciplinary Policy and Procedure
- Academic Regulations

5. Background Information on the PGCAP and the TDF

5.1 The Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice (PGCAP) is run by TLS and is open to both new and experienced staff.

5.2 The PGCAP is designed for staff engaged in professional and academic practices including: teaching, learning, assessment, research and professional development within the Higher Education context. It provides an exploration of the underpinning pedagogy of teaching and learning, and support for the practical aspects of developing academic practice. It aims to equip you with the necessary critical skills and knowledge to deliver the highest quality teaching and learning experience for our students.

5.3 The PGCAP programme is accredited by the Higher Education Academy (HEA). As a result, you will be eligible to become a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (FHEA) on successful completion of the full programme.
5.4 The PGCAP is taught in whole-day sessions and you will need to block all the relevant dates in your diary to ensure that you are able to meet the full attendance requirements of the programme. The schedule can be found for the next academic year which is available can be found at: [https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/your-university/teaching-and-learning/qualifications-and-accreditation/pgcap](https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/your-university/teaching-and-learning/qualifications-and-accreditation/pgcap)

5.5 The Teaching Development Framework (TDF) is relevant for staff who have at least 3 years teaching experience in HE. It provides continuing professional development and HEA recognition for experienced staff who have not yet gained an appropriate qualification or professional recognition as a teacher in higher education. Recognition can be gained at four different levels of fellowship.

5.6 The TDF is designed for staff engaged in professional and academic practices including: teaching, learning, assessment, research and professional development within HE, and who have a minimum of 3 years full-time (equivalent) HE teaching experience. To gain recognition at fellowship level, you will need to demonstrate successful achievement of all the dimensions of practice of the UK Professional Standards Framework (Further information on the UK Professional Standards Framework can be found here: [http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/ukpsf](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/ukpsf))

5.7 The TDF encourages you to reflect critically on your teaching experiences, and to prepare four case studies that demonstrate the impact of your teaching innovations on learners, and/or on colleagues. The scheme promotes critical engagement with HE literature, especially pedagogic research. You will need to include a review of your teaching and two references to support your application.

5.8 Depending on your experience, there is an opportunity to gain accreditation at the higher levels of Senior Fellow or Principal Fellow. Further information about the TDF can be found here: [https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/your-university/teaching-and-learning/qualifications-and-accreditation/tdf](https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/your-university/teaching-and-learning/qualifications-and-accreditation/tdf)

6. Who this policy applies to

6.1 This policy will apply to you if you are employed on an academic or other teaching contract, for example, Associate Lecturer (AL) or demonstrator. PhD students who teach are covered by the separate Graduate School policy.

The flow chart below indicates which route is the most appropriate for you to take towards a formal post-graduate qualification or recognition of teaching in Higher Education.
**Routes towards teaching qualifications at Plymouth University**

**Do you hold a recognised teaching qualification in Higher Education - PGCHE or equivalent?**

(Staff holding a PGCE from another sector should refer to Table 1, page 6 of this document)

- **Yes**
  - Contact the PGCAP programme to discuss your qualification status. Provide formal evidence of award, such as transcript.

- **No**
  - No exemption is available if your qualification does not meet the requirements for teaching at Plymouth

**Do you have more than three years full-time equivalent contracted teaching experience in Higher Education immediately prior to your current post?**

- **No**
  - **Route 1**
    - If your qualifications are accepted at Plymouth, you will be exempt from the PGCAP/TDF although we encourage you to consider working towards higher levels of HEA fellowship through the TDF. Contact tdf@plymouth.ac.uk

- **Yes**
  - **Route 2**
    - If you are a 0.5fte or above member of staff on a permanent contract you need to complete the full PGCAP programme. If you are on a short term contract or less than 0.5fte, you need to undertake the first module of the PGCAP, and to complete the full PGCAP if your contract is extended.
      - Contact: pgcap@plymouth.ac.uk

**Do you have accreditation of your teaching from the Higher Education Academy at Fellowship level or above?**

- **No**
  - **Route 3**
    - You are exempt from the PGCAP/TDF although we encourage you to consider working towards higher levels of HEA fellowship through the TDF. Contact tdf@plymouth.ac.uk

- **Yes**
  - **Route 4**
    - You must apply for Fellowship of the HEA through Plymouth University’s Teaching Development Framework. Contact tdf@plymouth.ac.uk
6.2 Requirement to complete the full PGCAP

If you are employed on a contract that is 0.5fte or more, you have less than three years’ full-time experience of HE teaching and you do not hold a qualification to teach in HE, then you will be required to complete the full PGCAP (60 credits at M level) successfully within a specified period of time, as part of your contract of employment.

If you have a PGCE or QTS from another sector, but do not have 3 years’ full time experience in HE, you will be required to undertake some or all of the PGCAP as appropriate (See table 1, page 7). If you have another qualification, a decision on equivalence will be made by the PGCAP programme leader.

You will be given access to a minimum of 50 hours of teaching opportunities, including for example, lectures, seminars, workshops, laboratory time, tutorials, supervision, fieldwork, placement and mentoring support during the period you are expected to complete your PGCAP.

6.3 Requirement to complete the first module of PGCAP

If you are on a short term contract or employed for less than 0.5fte (e.g. ALs), have less than three years’ full-time experience of HE teaching, and do not already hold a qualification to teach in HE, you will be required to complete the first module of PGCAP (20 credits at M level) successfully within a specified period of time, as part of your contract of employment.

Those whose roles involve demonstrating to students are encouraged to engage in the Introduction to Teaching and Learning (ITL) module.

You will be given access to a minimum of 15 hours teaching during the timeframe of the module, including for example, lectures, seminars, workshops, laboratory time, tutorials, supervision, fieldwork, placement support etc.

6.4 Requirement to complete the TDF

If you are in a teaching role (including AL) and you have more than three years’ full time experience of HE teaching but no relevant teaching qualification, you will be required to achieve Fellowship (or Associate Fellowship – see below) of the Higher Education Academy through Plymouth University’s Teaching Development Framework within two years as part of your contract of employment.

If you are full time, this will be at the level of Fellowship or above; and if you are working less than 0.5fte (including AL), the minimum level expected will be Associate Fellowship. If you have significant teaching and leadership experience, you may apply for Senior or Principal Fellowship, as appropriate.

If your teaching experience is more than three years, but gained outside the UK, you may be eligible to take the TDF route, however, you are advised to complete the short course (non-assessed) version of the first module of the PGCAP as this provides a
helpful introduction to teaching at Plymouth University and the nuanced differences you will experience in teaching in a UK institution.

Table 1: Requirement for staff holding a PGCE from another sector

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<th>Existing Qualification</th>
<th>Required route</th>
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<td>PGCE/BEd/QTS (not HE sector)</td>
<td>Successful completion of first PGCAP module, leading to HEA Associate Fellowship. In discussion with the line manager through PDR or probation meetings, the individual may be asked to undertake further PGCAP modules.</td>
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7. Responsibilities

7.1 Responsibilities for managers:

- Identifying the appropriate contractual requirements for new academics at the time of recruitment and appointment and advising the candidate and the recruitment team.

- Inducting your new employees to ensure they are familiar with the PGCAP/TDF policy, as well as arrangements for probation and performance development reviews.

- Supporting your employees to enable them to identify and achieve relevant performance objectives in teaching and learning, including the attainment of the appropriate qualification or recognition as specified in their employment contract.

- Participating in leadership development opportunities to ensure you are competent and confident in the induction, probation and PDR for academic staff to the standards required at Plymouth University.

- Regularly reviewing progress on performance objectives, including timely progress towards PGCAP/TDF as part of the induction, probation and PDR processes.

- Providing opportunities for development, support and time for your employees to enable them to attain the highest standards in teaching and learning, and successful PGCAP / TDF engagement and completion, including:
  - Ensuring that scheduled dates for taught PGCAP sessions are protected from any conflicting activity
  - Allowing 7 days for those completing the first module (20 credits)
7.2 Responsibilities for employees:

- Identifying what is expected of you in relation to the PGCAP programme or the TDF;
- Providing consent for your development, progress and any concerns in relation to your progress, to be discussed with your manager;
- Ensuring your schedule is clear for the PGCAP taught sessions and private study time relating to the PGCAP or TDF;
- Maintaining regular dialogue with your manager about progress on PGCAP/ TDF through induction, probation and PDR processes;
- Participating, engaging and successfully completing the PGCAP programme or TDF within the required timescale;
- Ensuring that you are registered for TDF to be able to complete within the agreed timeframe;
- Working with the Teaching and Learning Support team and your manager, in identifying and discussing further development needs, your progress and any concerns in a timely manner

7.3 Talent and Organisational Development (T&OD) is responsible for:

- Providing easy access and clear guidance to employees and managers in relation to induction, probation and PDR processes, policies and procedures;
- Providing accessible leadership development for managers;
- Preparing employment contracts for academics that reflect the PGCAP / TDF requirements as advised by the appointing manager and Teaching and Learning Support.
- Providing advice and guidance for managers and employees in relation to HR processes. Together with Teaching and Learning Support, monitoring, evaluating and managing the PGCAP/TDF policy.

7.4 Teaching and Learning Support are responsible for:

- Providing and administering a Masters level Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice (PGCAP) which is accredited by the Higher Education Academy;
• Supporting PGCAP participants in developing a critical knowledge and conceptual base in the field of professional and academic practice;

• Facilitating PGCAP participants’ critical reflection and development of their own professional and academic practice;

• Encouraging PGCAP participants to share experiences with participants from other disciplines and make an informed contribution to their communities of practice;

• Giving constructive feedback and marking assessed elements of the PGCAP programme;

• Liaising with managers and employees to identify opportunities and solutions where employees are struggling to engage with or make acceptable progress towards gaining PGCAP / TDF completion in the agreed timescale.

• Providing and administering the Teaching Development Framework which is accredited by the Higher Education Academy;

• Providing feedback on all applications once prior to submission to a TDF panel of reviewers.

8. Procedures to be followed

Structure of the PGCAP

8.1 The full 60 credit PGCAP consists of two core modules and an elective to meet the requirements of the university and the HEA as accrediting body. A learning contract will be drawn up between you and your manager/mentor and TLS will identify the appropriate modules and timeframe necessary for training and completion.

Contractual requirement for PGCAP/TDF

8.2 If you are required to complete all or part of the PGCAP, or achieve HEA accreditation through the TDF, this will be confirmed to you in your offer of employment, together with required timeframes for successful completion.

8.3 Completion of the PGCAP programme will normally take one year with the option to complete in two years. Reviews of your progression through the programme will be undertaken by your manager through your probation and PDR reviews.

8.4 Completion of the TDF is very much dependent upon your teaching experiences and background. You will be expected to demonstrate incorporation of subject and pedagogic research and/or scholarship, as well as successful engagement in CPD in relation to teaching, learning and assessment. This may be achieved very quickly or it could take you several months to acquire. You are advised to
attend a TDF workshop when you start your career with Plymouth at the earliest opportunity to develop an action plan for successful completion.

8.5 If your employment is conditional upon you completing TDF or PGCAP within a specified period, it is important that you fully engage in and commit to this process when you join the University. Your manager and TLS are committed to providing you with the opportunities and facilities you need to achieve this. However, we also recognise that individuals can find this requirement, and juggling priorities a challenge. If you do find yourself in this situation, you should discuss your concerns with your manager at the earliest opportunity, as failure to meet a contractual requirement may put your employment at risk.

8.6 As a new lecturer, you will normally be appointed within Grade 7. Progression to grade 8, or if under exceptional circumstances, you are appointed to grade 8, progression to the next increment, will depend on the successful completion of PGCAP or TDF.

Once you have completed PGCAP or TDF, you will progress to the first increment in grade 8 on 1 September following the date of successful completion. Note, if you have submitted everything required before the end of September, but not had notification of success, progression will be backdated on confirmation of success.

Assessment

8.7 Assessment of the PGCAP is in accordance with the approved programme documentation and academic regulations. You will be awarded a pass, fail, merit or distinction as appropriate. If the attainment of PGCAP has been identified as a contractual requirement, you will need to achieve at least a pass. You should contact your manager or the TLS team should you have concerns at any stage in relation to your ability to achieve a pass, as this could affect your employment contract.

8.8 The PGCAP Award Board will decide whether you have successfully completed the programme and are eligible for the award of the relevant certificate. Under university regulations, you are only allowed two attempts at an assessment at this level. Failing on the second attempt precludes you from further attempts and would normally lead to cessation of your contract. The Board will notify T&OD, as part of the process of completing employment checks to ensure that you have met your contractual obligations and are able to progress to grade 8, or if you are already within grade 8, to qualify for your next increment.

8.9 The TDF accreditation panel normally meets bi-monthly. Applications are reviewed by two independent assessors drawn from a wider assessment and accreditation panel. The assessors will be looking for evidence that applicants have met the criteria for the given level of fellowship. Full details of the
accreditation process can be found at: https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/your-university/teaching-and-learning/qualifications-and-accreditation/tdf  The panel will notify T&OD, as part of the process of completing employment checks to ensure that you have met your contractual obligations and are able to progress to grade 8, or if you are already within grade 8, to qualify for your next increment.

9. Progression Routes linked to the PGCAP

The Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice provides a foundation for continual professional development. The PGCAP programme currently has four potential progression routes:

- International Masters Programme in the Institute of Education
- The (PG Cert) Health and Social Care Education (leading on to Diploma, MSc) in the Faculty of Health
- Masters in Clinical Education (M ClinEd) in PUPSMED
- The ResM (supported by PedRIO/ TLS, and managed through the Graduate School)

10. How you can inform the continuous review of this procedure

10.1 It is important to continue making improvements in the way we lead and develop people. The University is committed to ensuring this procedure remains fit for purpose at individual, team and organisational level. Please send your thoughts and comments in relation to any improvements by email to the contacts listed below.

10.2 This policy will be reviewed regularly, taking into account feedback from within the organisation, evaluation mechanisms and any changes in statutory regulations that may be relevant.

11. Contact details

11.1 For queries relating to contracts:
    T&OD Administrative Team: tod@plymouth.ac.uk

11.2 For queries relating to existing qualifications:
    PGCAP Programme Lead or Teaching Development Framework Lead
    Contact via: pgcap@plymouth.ac.uk or tdf@plymouth.ac.uk