Writing your UTF application

Guidance for applicants

Contents

Before you begin…

Please familiarise yourself with the application requirements before you begin working on your application. You can find these on the <u>University Teaching Fellowship webpage</u> (please follow the link under 'How to Apply').

The application is in 4 parts:

- Background information to your case (200 words)

- Three 'core' criteria:
    - **Individual excellence** (600 words)
    - **Raising the profile of excellence** (600 words)
    - **Developing excellence** (600 words)

This document provides guidance on writing each section of the application.

Background information to your case (maximum 200 words)

The background information section is an important part of your application. It provides contextual information in support of your Fellowship claim.

Firstly, all applicants are individuals. Their practice will inevitably be influenced by a number of factors. The opening section of your UTF application is a space for you to put any information that you think will help the reader to tune in and understand your application.

Secondly, the word limit for the core criteria is only 600 words. By putting some of the information you want to include in the background information section, you can make better use of the word limit for the main sections.

The sorts of things you might include in this section are:

- Information about your career (particularly any professional experience you bring to your role)
- (Brief) information about your department/school/function/service
- Information about your current role(s) and key responsibilities:
    - Within your department/School/function/service
    - Within the wider University community
    - Externally
- Information about your students
- Information about your subject/discipline/field
- Your teaching/teaching support philosophy and the key principles that underpin your practice
- Your rationale/motivation for applying for UTF.

Criterion 1: Individual excellence (maximum 600 words)

To make a persuasive case against this first criterion you should draw out what makes you distinctive in terms of T&L and/or T&L support. And to make your case really convincing you must draw out that, because of the choices/decisions you make/have made in relation to T&L, you have had **impact on students**.

The focus of this section should, therefore, be:

- your dedication to T&L and/or T&L support over a period of time
- how you stimulate and inspire learning and/or its support (e.g. teaching performance and module delivery, creation of engaging materials), evidenced by student evaluation and peer review
- recognising and supporting a diversity of student learning needs
- adopting good practice and innovative approaches to teaching and learning and/or the support of T&L

The table below will help you to generate ideas for this section.

Potential examples
• Designing/redesigning/diversifying curricula • Using inclusive approaches to teaching, learning or assessment • Using a student-centred/personalised approach • Implementing innovative approaches to teaching/supporting learning • Using technology to enhance learning • Demonstrating strong knowledge of discipline-specific approaches to T&L • Supporting the widening participation agenda (e.g. supporting transition to university) • Enhancing employability/developing graduate attributes (which could involve organising placements) • Developing students' critical skills/reflection/independence as learners • Supporting students in your role as an academic tutor • Taking an evidence-based approach to practice
Reflective questions
• What strategies do you use to stimulate students' curiosity and interest in ways that inspire a commitment to learning? • How do the resources you use/create enhance students' learning? • How do you support the full diversity of student learning requirements? • How do you draw upon the outcomes of relevant research, scholarship and professional practice in ways which add value to teaching and students' learning? • How have/do you engage with and contribute to the established literature or to your own evidence base for teaching and learning?

The claim for impact will be more compelling if you show how you know you had impact. This might include referring to how you evaluate your practice or by including some evidence (e.g. short quotes, data).

Criterion 2: Raising the profile of excellence (maximum 600 words)

Whereas Criterion 1 is all about impact on students, Criterion 2 is about the **impact you have had on others (i.e. colleagues)** in relation to T&L. In other words you need to show that you have had influence and impact on their pedagogic practice. This means showing that people are doing things better/differently because of you – that because of working with you they now have strategies, knowledge, skills that they can embed in their future practice.

The focus of this section should therefore be:

- Contributing to the development and understanding of teaching and learning and/or its support
- Dissemination of good practice in teaching and learning
- Contributing to the development of colleagues in teaching and learning and/or its support
- Involvement in and/or leading teaching and learning initiatives or projects

The table below will help you to generate ideas for this section.

Potential examples
- Leading/contributing to School/Department training events, sessions on the T&L programme or teaching and learning workshops and conferences outside the University   - Mentoring others in relation to teaching and learning   - Promoting inclusive pedagogy   - Arranging opportunities for sharing best practice   - Leading or working collaboratively with others (including students) within and/or across the institution on T&L initiatives (including contributing to/chairing working groups/T&L committees)   - Leading local/institutional initiatives and investigations into new teaching and support approaches   - Developing an effective team/ensuring consistency of approach across a team   - Developing resources for colleagues   - Leading others to respond to evaluation/feedback   - Contributing to national initiatives, engaging with Advance HE   - Supporting others to gain professional recognition for their work (e.g. promoting and supporting others to gain HEA Fellowship; supporting delivery of the FLAIR Framework)   - Supporting others to embed new institutional initiatives   - Writing articles/papers for internal/external teaching and learning publications   - Contributing to/leading University T&L-funded projects e.g. TLEP/PLanT, JISC bids

• Being a guest lecturer or External Examiner
Reflective questions

• How have you contributed to colleagues' professional development in relation to promoting and enhancing student learning?
   o What impact did you aim to have and why? Was it to develop colleagues' repertoire of strategies, to support them to innovate their practice and/or to develop knowledge/skills/confidence around aspects of T&L?
   o What are they doing better/differently because of you?
• What/how have you contributed to departmental/faculty/institutional/national initiatives to facilitate students' learning?
• What/how you have contributed to and/or supported meaningful and positive change with respect to pedagogic practice and/or policy?

Criterion 3: Developing excellence (maximum 600 words)

The focus of this section is how you have developed/are developing and reflecting on your own professional practices in relation to T&L. Important things to draw out are:

- Demonstrating a commitment to, and the impact of, individual professional development
    - CPD opportunities you have engaged with
    - conference attendance/contributions
    - reward and recognition applications (e.g. FHEA/SFHEA)
- Demonstrating a reflective approach to T&L and/or T&L support
    - What prompts you to reflect
    - How you reflect on your practice
    - Methods you use to evaluate your practice
    - What you do as a result of reflection/evaluation
- Demonstrating awareness of the wider context, including T&L initiatives both within the University and across the sector/at a national level
    - Membership of/Chairing Working Groups, Committees, Boards of Studies and Student Experience, Periodic Review panels, national/international affiliations, membership of SIGs etc
    - T&L awards

Potential examples
- Attending T&L workshops/conferences/webinars (departmental/school/ institutional/external)   - Accessing other relevant professional development opportunities (e.g. Aurora)   - Using membership/leadership of working groups/committees etc as a way to enhance understanding of T&L   - Participating in peer review   - Engaging in formal/informal study in relation to T&L   - Undertaking pedagogic research and disseminating findings to others   - Your own reflective practice   - Responding to student feedback   - Working collaboratively with students on T&L initiatives   - Active participation in Communities of Practice   - Being an external examiner
Reflective questions
- How have you adapted your practice as a result of CPD you have undertaken?   - How has your CPD enabled you to support the professional development of others (i.e. colleagues) in relation to promoting and enhancing student learning?

- How have you contributed to departmental/faculty/institutional/national initiatives to facilitate students' learning?
- How have you contributed to and/or supported meaningful and positive change with respect to pedagogic practice, policy and/or procedure?

What makes a good UTF application?

- Clear structure
    - o Clearly align the contents of each section to the relevant criterion
    - o Use subheadings within each section
- Clarity
    - o Explicitly articulate your motivation/rationale/philosophy behind approach/actions
- Demonstrate that you have relevant and sufficient experience, expertise and contribution to T&L
- Impact
    - o Show how you are distinctive/outstanding in relation to Teaching & Learning at the University (this could be at different 'levels': e.g. dept/school/ institutional)
- Evidence to support your claims
    - o Include data, short quotes etc
- And remember: You have 2000 words to convince the panel. Business as usual is not enough!

Practical information

- If you have any queries, or if you would find it useful to see an example of a successful application, contact Jennie Chetcuti j.l.chetcuti@reading.ac.uk or cqsd-tandl@reading.ac.uk

- If you would find it useful to contact one of the current UTFs, you will find a list on the Teaching and Learning pages under 'Our People': https://www.reading.ac.uk/about/teaching-and-learning/t-and-l-people/university-teaching-fellows.aspx

- You will find the application form and closing date for applications on the relevant webpage: https://www.reading.ac.uk/cqsd/awards-recognition/application-process-utfs