



Heriot-Watt University  
Research Gateway

## Rabee's ten-step guide to becoming an Advance HE Senior Fellow

### Citation for published version:

Rustum, R 2023, *Rabee's ten-step guide to becoming an Advance HE Senior Fellow*. Advance HE, UK. <<https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/news-and-views/rabees-ten-step-guide-becoming-advance-he-senior-fellow>>

### Link:

[Link to publication record in Heriot-Watt Research Portal](#)

### Document Version:

Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

### General rights

Copyright for the publications made accessible via Heriot-Watt Research Portal is retained by the author(s) and / or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing these publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

### Take down policy

Heriot-Watt University has made every reasonable effort to ensure that the content in Heriot-Watt Research Portal complies with UK legislation. If you believe that the public display of this file breaches copyright please contact [open.access@hw.ac.uk](mailto:open.access@hw.ac.uk) providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.



Search site...



Login

**AdvanceHE**[◀ Back to News + Views](#)

## Rabee's ten-step guide to becoming an Advance HE Senior Fellow

22 Feb 2023 | Dr Rabee Rustrum

Associate Professor of Heriot-Watt University Dubai, Dr Rabee Rustrum, shares his experiences of applying to become a Senior Fellow and gives his top tips.

I was introduced to Advance HE (then the Higher Education Authority) in 2015 when I completed a postgraduate certificate in academic practice and, with it, was awarded a Fellowship.

Achieving professional recognition motivated me to keep thinking about my teaching role and apply to be a Senior Fellow: to reflect on my growing leadership responsibilities and the opportunities I have to influence other colleagues in Teaching and Learning practice.

I knew the application process for Senior Fellowship would require time and effort in reflection and gathering evidence; nevertheless, I was determined and motivated to do it. Obviously, I was very familiar with the [Professional Standards Framework \(PSF\)](#) – which underpins the fellowship awards –exploring it in detail in the context of my 20 years of academic experience and role; I was confident that I had the evidence of practice and leadership for a successful application.

## Dimensions of the PSF

The first thing I did was read the relevant criteria of Descriptor 3 of the PSF. I wrote down headings, evidence, quotes, the experience I had in academic leadership and my influence on others. I also noted down the examples that I planned to use, with evidence from the literature. I mapped all this to the dimensions of the PSF, such as 'Core Knowledge', 'Professional Values' and 'Areas of Activities'.

I shared my initial draft with a senior colleague who gave me feedback. From this, I produced a second draft, mapping all my content against the PSF dimensions. My mentor reviewed it and made further suggestions to refine it still more for final submission.

## Results of my application

I was delighted that my application was successful and that I had been awarded Senior Fellowship at first attempt – a great cause for celebration!

The application was not easy, and it was something of a challenge to do alongside an already heavy workload. However, it was definitely worth it, and it makes me proud of my work. The whole process caused me to reflect on my academic practice in Syria, the UK, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates. It also allowed me to understand the PSF in terms of its dimensions and how I apply these in my working environment. Added to that, Senior Fellowship has enhanced my confidence and motivated me to take other academic leadership roles. My aim now is to maintain my reflective practice, and as I work to continuously develop in learning and teaching as a Senior Fellow, I set my sights on applying for Principal Fellowship when the time is right.

## Advice to colleagues

Since I have become a Senior Fellow, a number of colleagues have asked me for advice about applying. I always tell them that it is reasonably straightforward but requires dedicated time for reflection and thinking about personal development. But above all, it is never too early to start your fellowship application. It is definitely worth the time and effort – so go for it!

### Rabee's ten top tips

1. Read the requirements of the fellowship category you are applying for from the Advance HE [website](#).

2. Use [the Fellowship Category Tool](#) if you are unsure which category is most appropriate for you to apply for.
3. Keep a record of your academic activities and CPD events, as you need them for several applications.
4. Begin writing early and give yourself a deadline – making sure you can build in time within your work commitments.
5. Contact your referees, send them the guidance documents and get their approvals early – otherwise, they might be busy when you need them!
6. Make notes on the examples of academic practice that you will use in your application. This could be your involvement in teaching and learning activities, staff development, leadership and management, organisation role or student feedback.
7. Make sure to link the PSF dimensions to your examples.
8. Cite and support your claims with evidence from the literature.
9. Discuss these examples with your mentor and senior colleagues, who will provide advice and feedback.
10. Start writing your application using a reflective narrative style; try to avoid descriptive styles. For every example of your academic practice, discuss the main limitations, describe what you did to improve these limitations, and discuss the results and impacts of your new practice.

Find out the [comprehensive support we offer for Fellowship applications](#) including our Fellowship Application Builder and Writing Retreats.



## About

---

**Author:** [Dr Rabee Rustrum](#)

**Subject:** [Fellowship](#)

**Theme:** [Fellowship](#)

We feel it is important for voices to be heard to stimulate debate and share good practice. Blogs on our website are the views of the author and don't necessarily represent those of Advance HE.

### Keep up to date - Sign up to Advance HE communications

Our monthly newsletter contains the latest news from Advance HE, updates from around the sector, links to articles sharing knowledge and best practice and information on our services and upcoming events. Don't miss out, sign up to our newsletter now.

→ [Sign up to our enewsletter](#)

## AdvanceHE

[Terms](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Cookie](#) | [Opt-out](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Current Vacancies](#)

©Advance HE 2020. Company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales no. 04931031 | Company limited by guarantee registered in Ireland no. 703150 | Registered charity, England and Wales 1101607 | Registered charity, Scotland SC043946 | VAT Registered number GB 152 1219 50. Registered UK Address: Advance HE, Innovation Way, York Science Park, Heslington, York, YO10 5BR, United Kingdom | Registered Ireland Address: Advance HE, First Floor, Penrose 1, Penrose Dock, Cork, T23 Kw81, Ireland.