

Introduction to Teaching and Learning in Higher Education

7009CRB

Short Course Handbook

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Short Course Team

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Introduction to Teaching and Learning in Higher Education

Welcome

The Introduction to Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (ITHLE) is a semester-long short course designed for individuals who are new to teaching in higher education or within the Coventry University Group (CUG). It equips participants with the skills, experience, and confidence to deliver effective and engaging learning experiences.

The course aligns with Descriptor 1 of the Professional Standards Framework (PSF 2023) and is grounded in the CUG 2030 Group Strategy, which focuses on active, applied, inclusive, and social approaches to teaching.

Upon successful completion of our course, participants gain recognition as an Associate Fellow (AFHEA) of Advance HE, a widely respected qualification in higher education teaching.

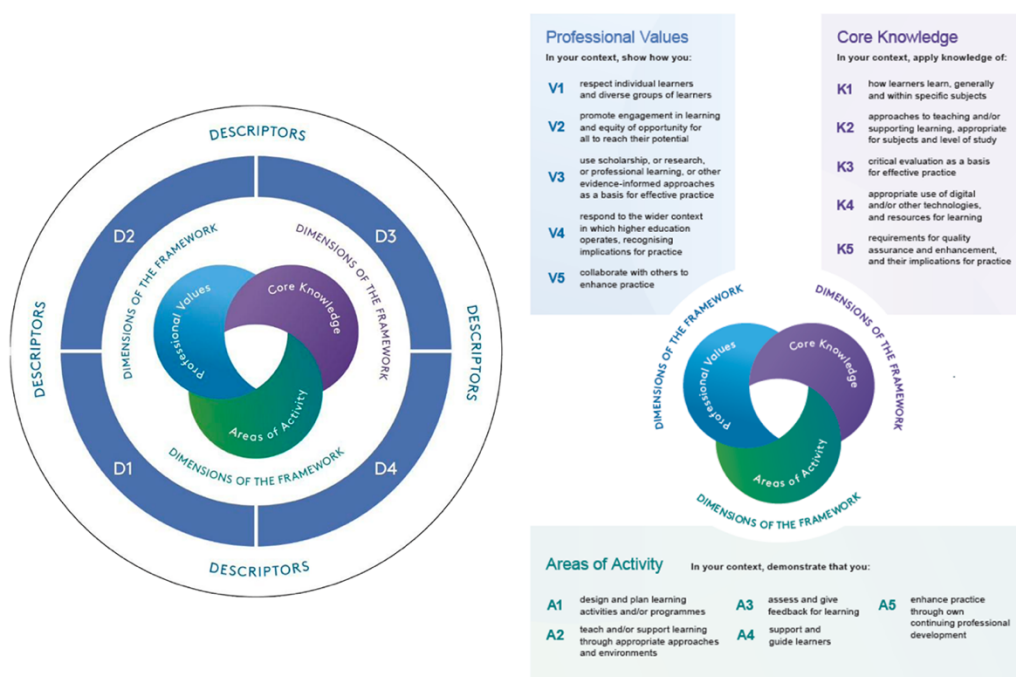
Who is this Course For?

Our course is designed for anyone within CUG who contributes, directly or indirectly, to student learning. Roles may include Hourly Paid Lecturers, Postgraduate Researchers, Teaching Fellows, E-learning Coordinators, IT Support, or Librarians. While these examples reflect a wide range of roles, this list is not exhaustive. We welcome anyone with a strong commitment to student learning and engagement.

Entry Requirements

1. **Education:** You should hold a bachelor's degree or equivalent and be capable of balancing our course commitments alongside your current job responsibilities.
2. **Teaching Responsibility:** As this is a practical, work-based short course, you must be involved in a role that supports teaching and learning within CUG.

The Professional Standards Framework



The PSF 2023 is a detailed framework created to guide individuals engaged in teaching and supporting learning in higher education. It defines effective practice through three interconnected dimensions: Professional Values, Core Knowledge, and Areas of Activity.

Incorporating the Dimensions, each Descriptor identifies the extent of practice required to meet it, and recognises the variety of practice and roles undertaken by professionals who teach and/or support learning

Our course aligns with Descriptor 1 (D1) of the PSF 2023 with successful completion leading to recognition as an Associate Fellow (AFHEA).

Descriptor 1 (D1) is suitable for individuals whose practice enables them to evidence some Dimensions. Effectiveness of practice in teaching and/or support of learning is demonstrated through evidence of:

- D1.1 Use of appropriate Professional Values, including at least V1 and V3
- D1.2 Application of appropriate Core Knowledge, including at least K1, K2 and K3
- D1.3 Effective and inclusive practice in at least two of the five Areas of Activity



To achieve Associate Fellowship recognition, you need to provide evidence that in your context you:

1. **Show the Professional Values**, particularly respect for diversity (V1) and evidence-informed practice (V3).
2. **Apply Core Knowledge**, including understanding how learners learn (K1), using appropriate teaching approaches (K2), and engaging evaluation to inform practice (K3).
3. **Demonstrate effective and inclusive practice in least two Areas of Activity**, such as designing learning activities (A1) and teaching or supporting learners (A2).

Supporting Your Journey Towards AFHEA Recognition

Our course focuses on the **A1** and **A2** Areas of Activity for achieving Associate Fellowship:

- **A1: Designing and planning learning activities**
You will share and critically reflect on your skills in designing inclusive and engaging

learning sessions. For example, you could evidence you have created a detailed session plan that incorporates active learning strategies tailored to the needs of diverse learners.

- **A2: Teaching and/or supporting learning**

You will share and critically reflect on your approaches to delivering learning activities effectively, using appropriate methods and technologies. For example, you could evidence you practice engaging with learners in both face-to-face and virtual environments to facilitate meaningful learning experiences.

Our course also helps you:

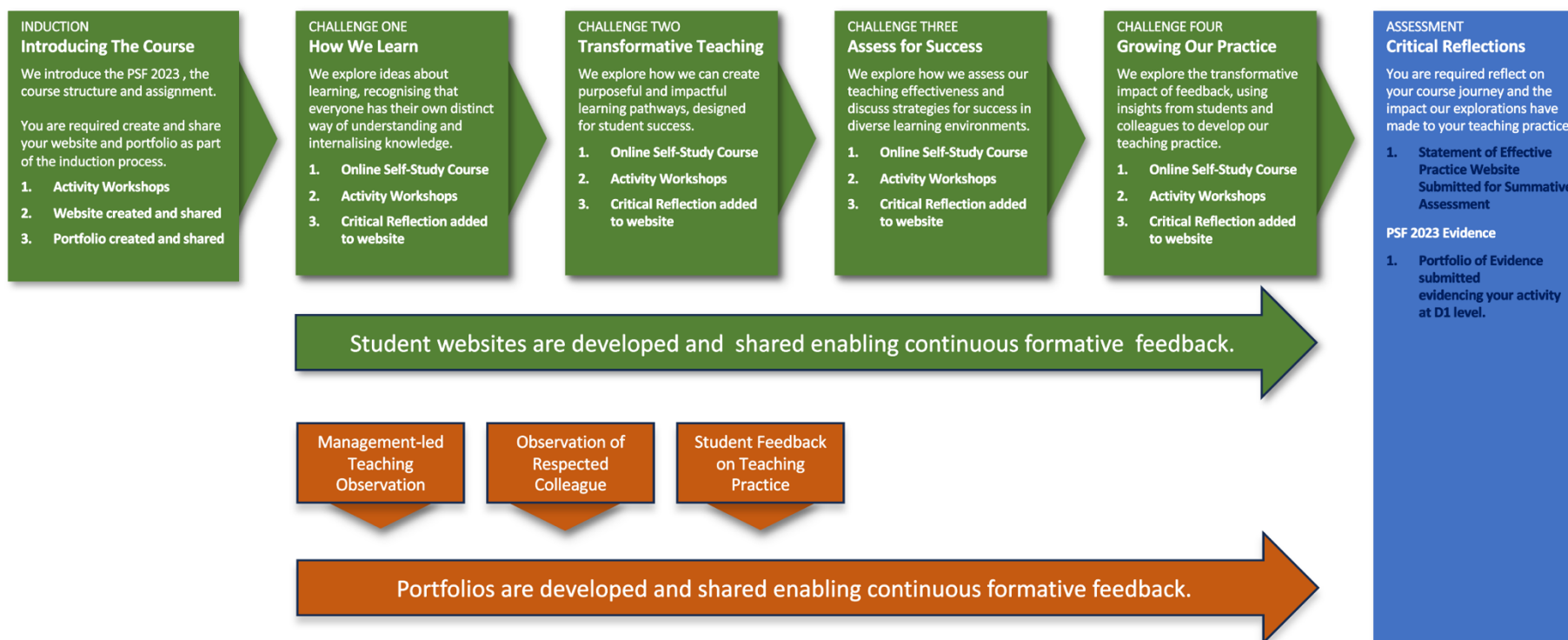
- **Shows your Commitment to the Professional Values:** You will share and critically reflect on your respect for learner diversity and the use of evidence-based teaching methods in your practice. The course emphasises V1 and V3, the minimum Professional Values required for Descriptor 1 recognition.
- **Apply Core Knowledge:** You will share and critically reflect on your understanding of effective teaching strategies, learner engagement, and inclusive practices. The course focuses specifically on K1, K2, and K3, which are the minimum Core Knowledge requirements for Descriptor 1 recognition.

Upon successful completion our course, you will have developed a comprehensive portfolio aligned with the PSF 2023 Dimensions of Practice for Descriptor 1. This portfolio will evidence your teaching practice at the level required for Associate Fellowship.

For more information on the Professional Standards Framework see:

[Guide to the PSF 2023 Dimensions - Associate Fellowship February 2023 1683713954.pdf](#)

SHORT COURSE JOURNEY



The ITHLE Short Course Journey

ITHLE begins with an interactive group induction and progresses through four distinct challenges. Each challenge includes an online self-study module paired with two activity workshops. After each challenge, you will be required to write and share a critical reflection, contextualised within the PSF 2023, on how your learning impacts your role as a facilitator of learning.

1. **Online Self-Study Modules:** These self-study modules present key concepts and activities while encouraging online peer discussions to deepen understanding.
2. **Activity Workshops:** These sessions are designed to encourage critical reflection on your personal teaching practices, drawing on insights from the online modules and peer interactions.

A distinctive feature of our course is that you will develop and evolve your own, reflective website, which is shared with the course as your learning journey progresses. This dynamic learning environment provides opportunities for feedback from peers and the course team. Each challenge immerses you in activities that encourage experience sharing, critical reflection, and growth through formative feedback.

3. **Critical Reflection** You are tasked with reflecting critically on your teaching practices considering the theory and policy we have explored within the context of the PSF 2023. You should substantiate your insights with actual examples from your own day-to-day teaching experiences. We require you to add this critical reflection to your course shared website.
4. **Formative Peer Feedback** Your course shared website will enable peer feedback on your reflections and provides you with the opportunity to critically reflect on the work of others. With peers from diverse backgrounds, you will be exposed to a wide range of teaching approaches which may challenge or reinforce your own perspectives. This interaction with diversity and subsequent reflection is a vital aspect of our course learning experience.

A key element of the course is the guided creation of a portfolio evidencing that your teaching practice meets the D1 Associate Fellow requirements. This portfolio will include a formal CUG Management-led Teaching Observation, your observation of a respected colleague, and student feedback on your teaching. These components are integral to your course assignment submission and will be formally evaluated (see Assessment Brief).

Structure and Environment: Embedding the PSF 2023 Dimensions

- **D1.V1 (Respect for Diversity)** Our course celebrates diversity as a fundamental element of effective teaching and learning. You will critically reflect on your own teaching practices within a diverse environment, gaining deeper insights into inclusivity and respect for individual learner needs. This reflection will help you embed these principles

into your daily teaching practice.

- **D1.V3, D1.K1, and D1.K2 (Scholarship, Knowledge of Learners, and Teaching Approaches)** Through our online self-study modules, you will engage with contemporary pedagogic theories, modern higher education policies, and varied teaching approaches. These are designed to be active, applied, inclusive, and social, reflecting the demands of higher education today. You are encouraged to critically reflect on these concepts, adapting or reinforcing them to suit your unique teaching context.

By exploring your peers' websites and examples of practice, you will gain exposure to a variety of disciplines and teaching environments. This will deepen your understanding of how theory informs practice across different subject areas, reinforcing the importance of evidence-based teaching and professional learning.

- **D1.K3 (Critical Reflection and Evaluation)** Reflection and self-evaluation are central to our course. You will engage in inquiry and constructive challenge to critically assess your teaching practices. Collaboration with peers will provide further opportunities for feedback and growth, while student feedback—both formal and informal—will offer valuable insights into your teaching effectiveness and areas for development.
- **D1.A1 and D1.A2 (Design and Delivery of Learning Experiences)** A key focus of the course is designing and delivering effective learning experiences. You will explore diverse teaching methodologies across a range of learning environments, including physical, virtual, synchronous, and asynchronous settings. Constructive alignment is at the heart of our approach, ensuring a clear connection between learning objectives, activities, and outcomes.

Our Teaching Approach

Our course is experiential, meaning you will not only study teaching concepts but actively experience and apply them through hands-on activities. This active engagement is reinforced by critical reflection, enabling you to connect the course content to your own teaching context and experiences. Peer interactions further enrich this process, exposing you to diverse teaching practices across a range of disciplines.

Given the breadth and diversity of our students, who teach across various disciplines and environments, our approach is intentionally broad. We explore a wide spectrum of ideas rooted in theory, policy, and peer engagement. However, we recognise that it is neither possible nor necessary for every student to master all the concepts introduced in the course.

Instead, our aim is for you to identify and integrate the course elements that resonate most with your unique teaching context, level, and abilities. This personalised approach ensures that we support you in your course journey while acknowledging that every student's path is distinct.

To help you focus, we have limited the assessment to the digital equivalent of 2,000 words. This encourages you to concentrate on the course components that have the greatest

impact on your teaching practice. By prioritising what is most relevant and reflecting critically on your learning journey, you will develop an assignment submission that is both meaningful and tailored to your professional growth.

Intended Learning Outcomes

Our course is designed around three key learning outcomes, ensuring that your journey is purposeful, engaging, and aligned with the Professional Standards Framework.

On completion of this short course the student should be able to:

1. Design, plan, deliver and evaluate effective learner-centred learning activities appropriate for a modern global learning experience.
2. Review their own role in assessment and feedback processes demonstrating a knowledge of relevant policies, quality procedures, standards and literature.
3. Demonstrate engagement with pedagogic theory, research and insights and the impact on their learning, teaching and assessment practice
4. Identify their initial and on-going development needs informed by the PSF

Indicative Learning

Challenge One: How We Learn

In this challenge, we explore ideas about learning, recognising that everyone has their own distinct way of understanding and internalising knowledge.

You will:

- Explore key learning theories, including behaviourism and social constructivism, and analyse their potential to shape your approaches to teaching. You will reflect critically on the ways understanding various learning theories can transform your own teaching practice.
- Unpack the complexity of student diversity in the context of your teaching and learning. You will reflect critically on how diversity can be leveraged to create richer learning experiences within your own teaching practice.
- Investigate the fundamentals of inclusivity, especially concerning diverse student groups. You will reflect critically on strategies for being more inclusive within your own teaching practice.

Key topics: Pedagogic Theory, including Behaviourism and Social Constructivism. Diversity. Inclusive Practice.

Challenge Two: Transformative Teaching

In this challenge, we explore how we can create purposeful and impactful learning pathways, designed for student success.

You will:

- Examine the student learning journey by deconstructing the roles of objectives, activities, and assessments in enhancing the learning experience. You will reflect critically on the ways in which constructive alignment can influence your current teaching practice.
- Analyse the distinctions between teaching-centric and learning-centric approaches. You will reflect critically on the implications of these approaches for your own teaching practice.
- Investigate and cultivate 'The Coventry Way' (active, inclusive, applied, and social) learning experiences. You will reflect critically on how these elements could impact your own approaches to teaching.

Key topics: Constructive Alignment. Active Learning. Teacher-led vs Student-led Learning. The Coventry Way.

Challenge Three: Assess for Success!

In this challenge, we delve into methods of assessing the effectiveness of our teaching and the extent of student learning. Additionally, we will discuss the diverse environments in which we teach and their role in enhancing the learning experience.

You will:

- Investigate the role of assessment, acknowledging its potential to enhance student engagement. You will reflect critically on the use of assessment and feedback and its implications for your current teaching practices.
- Distinguish between Summative, Formative, and Peer Assessment/Feedback, analysing their implementation within the learning journeys we facilitate. You will reflect critically on how these approaches to assessment/feedback can influence your current teaching strategies.
- Analyse the merits and limitations of physical, virtual, synchronous, and asynchronous learning environments, evaluating their effects on student engagement. You will reflect critically and consider their implications for your current teaching practices.

- Explore and experience the design of an VLE hosted course that integrates 'physical, virtual, synchronous, and asynchronous' components. You will reflect critically on this experience and its alignment with your current teaching strategies.

Key topics: Assessment Literacy. Summative, Formative, Peer Feedback/Assessment. Physical, Virtual, Synchronous and Asynchronous learning Environments. VLE.

Challenge Four: Growing Our Practice

In this challenge, we emphasise the transformative power of feedback. Through insights from students and colleagues, we aim to continuously refine our teaching methodologies, striving for excellence in facilitating learning.

You will:

- Explore informal feedback strategies and familiarise yourselves with CUG's formal Module Evaluation Questionnaire (MEQ) evaluation. You will seek informal feedback on your teaching from your students and reflect on the implications of this experience for developing your own teaching practice.
- Participate in CUG's formal Management-led Teaching Observation process to gain insights that will enhance your teaching approach. Additionally, you will observe a respected colleague to reflect on various teaching strategies and practices, with the aim of developing your own teaching approaches.
- Identify forthcoming learning opportunities within CUG and create a plan for future self-development, laying the foundation for your sustained growth in teaching effectiveness.
- You will reflect critically on all the tangible impacts of this course on your teaching practice.

Key topics: Formal and Informal Assessment. Teaching Observations. Further Learning Opportunities.

Your Assessment

Summative course assessment comprises two components:

1. Statement of Effective Practice
This critical and scholarly reflection evaluates the impact of your course journey on your teaching practice. It is assessed on a grading scale of fail, pass, merit, or distinction.
2. Portfolio of Evidence
This portfolio demonstrates your teaching practice at PSF 2023 D1 level. It is assessed on a pass/fail basis.

You need to pass both components to successfully complete our course.

Statement of Effective Practice

As the course progresses, you will create a one-page website, which will be submitted for summative assessment as your 'Statement of Effective Practice' at the end of the course.

During the induction, you will write a 200-word introduction for the site. After completing each challenge, you will add a 400-word critical reflection on how the course learnings influence your teaching practice. Finally, before submission, you will complete the website with a 200-word conclusion.

- **Formative Assessment** Student websites serve as living documents, with opportunities for formative peer feedback as the course progresses.
- **Summative Assessment** The definitive version of the website, containing reflections from all challenges and an impact conclusion, is submitted as a 2,000-word 'digital equivalent', along with your Portfolio of Evidence, for summative assessment at the end of the course.

Comprehensive guidance and support will be provided during the course induction for those new to creating a website.

Portfolio of Supporting Evidence

To meet the PSF 2023 D1 Descriptor, you will need to evidence successful teaching practice in an online portfolio. Your portfolio must contain, as a minimum, the following documents:

- **A Formal CUG Management-led Teaching Observation of You** The selected observer must be qualified under the CUG Management-led Observation Scheme and act as a representative of the Associate Head - Student Experience. Observations must follow the official teaching observation process, utilising the designated form. A concise critical reflection must be provided as part of the process, demonstrating the impact of the observation on the development and enhancement of your teaching practice.

To meet the required standard, you must achieve a rating of 'good' or higher in most of the assessment criteria. This allows for no more than two criteria to be rated as 'satisfactory' and none as 'poor'.

- **An Informal Teaching Observation of an Experienced Colleague using the CUG Management-led Process** You are required to observe an experienced colleague. Observations must follow the official teaching observation process, utilising the designated form. A concise critical reflection must be provided as part of the process, demonstrating the impact of the observation on the development and enhancement of your teaching practice.

We recommend selecting a colleague or peer whom you respect and from whom you feel you can gain valuable insights.

- **Evidence of Student Feedback on a Teaching Experience You Facilitate** Evidence may comprise formal or informal feedback, or a combination of both. Participants are encouraged to gather direct classroom feedback, which can have an immediate impact on your teaching practice. A concise critical reflection must be provided, demonstrating the influence of feedback on the development and enhancement of your teaching practice.

You are encouraged to use your portfolio to showcase additional supporting materials, such as lesson plans, reflections, course activities, and teaching materials. These materials can demonstrate your engagement with the course content and the learning gained throughout the course.

You are encouraged to further utilise your portfolio to provide supporting evidence which you can link to your Statement of Effective Practice. This evidence should further reinforce the ideas and reflections you present in your statement.

Please see the Assignment Brief for a full and formal description of the course assessment.