

# Teaching Statements

## 1. What is a teaching statement?

A teaching statement outlines the beliefs, philosophy, and pedagogical approaches that you would use to help students learn, acquire skills, and stay motivated. It should be evidence-based and demonstrate what you would bring to a prospective institution.

An institution will use the teaching statement to help them assess your teaching and whether your approach aligns with theirs.

## 2. When is a teaching statement required?

A teaching statement is usually requested as part of the application process for a lectureship. The application process for a lectureship varies from one institution to another. **Read the requirements carefully. You could be deselected for not following the application instructions correctly.**

Even if a teaching statement is not requested at the application stage, it is useful to prepare a teaching statement as **you are likely to be asked about your teaching experience and philosophy during a lectureship interview.**

## 3. Preparing to write a teaching statement

Before starting your teaching statement, do some research on the role and the institution you are applying to. This will help target your teaching statement to the needs of the institution.

Address the following questions:

- **What modes of teaching happens at the institution e.g., online delivery, tutorials, lectures etc. How can you add to this?**
- **What type of students attend the institution e.g., international students? Do you have experience of working with such students?**
- **What level will you be expected to teach at e.g., master's level. Do you have experience of teaching at this level?**
- **What courses do they currently offer and what new courses could you teach?**

## 4. Structure of a teaching statement

Teaching statements are usually 1 – 2 pages long.

There is no universal way to structure a teaching statement but make sure you have understood what

they are asking for. Here are a few suggestions, which are not mutually exclusive.

**Timeline:** You could use sections such as **past**, **current**, and **future teaching**, reflecting on how your past teaching has impacted on your current approach and what approaches you will use going forward.

**Goals:** You could focus on what you are aiming for in your teaching practice. Highlight how your goals inform your approaches and how you measure the outcomes from your teaching.

**Themes:** Focus on themes e.g., how you ensure that your teaching is informed by research, how you ensure that people learn effectively online or how you deal with neurodiversity.

## 5. Preparing a teaching statement

Writing a teaching statement requires self - analysis and reflection. Here are some suggestions on how to create content for your teaching statement, following the acronym **ABC**: Analyse, Borrow and Contextualise.

**Analyse:** Reflect on your teaching by answering the following questions:

- What do you want your students to gain from your courses?
- How do you know if they achieved what you intended?
- What do you enjoy about teaching?
- What are the challenges and how do you overcome these?
- How do you deal with a diversity of backgrounds, education, and neurodiversity amongst students?
- How does your teaching philosophy affect which institution you might like to teach at?

**Borrow:** For inspiration, ask colleagues for examples of their teaching statements. Evaluate the examples critically:

- Is the structure easy to follow?
- Is the writing style appropriate?
- Does the statement leave you with a positive impression of the teacher?

### Contextualise:

Different institutions will have different emphases and approaches to teaching. In the UK, for example, there are teaching-focussed universities and research-intensive universities. A research-intensive university

will be interested in how your research informs your teaching. Other universities might be focussed on remote or online teaching, or engaging students from under-represented groups.

It is also important to know who you will be teaching. It may be undergraduates, masters, postgraduate researchers, or staff members.

A teaching statement should be written in the context of the university you are applying to. Think about the institution and the cohorts you will be teaching when you are deciding on which aspects to emphasise in your teaching statement. **Emphasise relevant knowledge, tools, and approaches.**

Also consider the department's current offering and how this compares with your teaching and research experience? Can you add something new or fill a gap?

## 6. Evidence

Use metrics and evidence to support the claims you make in your teaching statement.

Compile a spreadsheet of the teaching you have done. Write a list of techniques and approaches that you have used. Have data and reflections from teaching qualifications at hand. Collate student feedback and scores.

Use this data **to add numbers and specific details to your teaching statement.** Use positive student feedback to substantiate relevant claims, add awards, and teaching recognitions such as [Advance HE Fellowships](#).

## 7. Writing style

Knowing your audience will help guide your style of writing. Use your research on the institution to help you. Look at the institution websites for information on their teaching standings and student experiences. To fine tune your writing style look for teaching statements from people at a similar career-stage.

## 8. Limited teaching experience

It is not always possible to gain significant teaching experience before applying for a lectureship. Selection panels will understand this. Tackle this by:

- Writing about your experience as a teaching assistant, tutor, coach, mentor etc.
- Seek out last-minute teaching-related opportunities, if possible.
- Observe other people's teaching practice as inspiration.
- Propose courses and techniques you would deliver / use, if appointed.

## 9. Revising and reviewing

Reflect on how your teaching statement fits into your overall application. Try to avoid any duplication e.g., do not list all the courses you have taught in the teaching statement if you have done this in your CV.

Once you have finished the teaching statement, seek feedback from colleagues, particularly academics that sit on hiring committees, and the PFDC.

Finally, edit and proofread thoroughly!

