BIRMINGHAM CITY University

BCU PSF Application form – Fellow (D2)

Submit this application as one file (including referee statements and any other evidence relevant to your application), by email to psf@bcu.ac.uk

Name		**Date**	
Role/job title			
Faculty/School			

The application is to be within the allocated word count - please state your word count here 290
As you add text to this document, select the word count number above, right click to select Update Field, to automatically update the word count; alternatively insert a word count for the whole document, which should not exceed 3790 words (3500 for D2 plus existing text on this document). Do use a good standard of English and ensure that you have permission to name any individual referred to, otherwise the Panel may return your application. If you have any questions on these requirements, please contact your Faculty Lead (Fellowship).

Account of Professional Practice (APP)

For each Area of Activity (A1, 2, 3 and 4) provide a reflective commentary, incorporating all the Dimensions of Core Knowledge and Professional Values. Use around 700 words for each Area.

A3: Assess and give feedback to learners

As I support students by distance learning mainly through correspondence tuition, providing useful and, crucially, timely, feedback (Price et al, 2008; Nicol, 2006) to students is one of the most important elements of my teaching practice [K2]. Additionally, I am aware that often 'non-traditional' entrants to HE are very anxious around receiving feedback, particularly in the early moths, and require sensitive feedback that encourages continued engagement with their first study at HE level [V2]. I aim to provide developmental and motivational feedback on assessments, within QAA (2014) framework guidelines and in accordance with marking guidelines (MG) provided by the module team [K6]. I assess written student work and award a grade by referring to MG, which covers marking ranges, expected performance against specified learning outcomes and dealing with academic matters such as plagiarism, word count and referencing. The MG and its associated moderation and training activities for tutors is designed to ensure consistency of marking across the module [K6].

The online assessment system uses technology to offer opportunities for speedy and efficient feedback [K4]. I provide student feedback through written comments on their scripts, engaging with academic content as well as study skills, and offering developmental feedback and signposting to module materials (for example, by inserting hyperlinks in their script) as well as to more generic resources, such as on writing style and presentation points. This is a strong support mechanism, as the feedback can focus on both individual academic development needs and learning about the subject matter; for example, a learner finding

‘number work’ difficult may find links signposting them to a variety of different (internal and external) sources, better supports their learning than using only the module materials, so I will offer these alternative options [K3]. I also use the opportunity here to try to enhance individuals’ learning experience and signpost to other resources if the learner is achieving well and/or indicates a particular interest in a topic [V1]; for example, for business learners, I signpost to external sites such as CIPD, ILM or CMI [K1]. I also provide an overall summary of how the student has performed against intended learning outcomes and the main areas to focus on for developing academic skills; this is intended to feed forward to the next written assessment. Feedback is crucial in maintaining motivation (Carless, 2017), and care is taken to make this learner-centred [V1, K2], as well as opening opportunities for dialogue if a learner appears to find an aspect of the subject challenging; I find a simple ‘Do give me a call…’ is supportive here.

Quality assurance processes provide monitoring of my marked scripts [K6] and I have consistently achieved positive feedback from peers and line management in this area of my work, particularly in taking the time to provide carefully worded, motivational feedback to weaker learners [K5]. I have also taken on the role of monitor for tutor peers, which was a valuable professional development activity [V3]. It was useful to view others’ feedback styles, sometimes to confirm my own good practices, such as methods of entering written comments; but at times also acknowledging and sensitively handling scripts that I felt offered less helpful feedback to students, and I aimed to offer a balance of praise for good practice and constructive criticism to peers. There have been occasions when I have suggested a greater need to view the task as ‘Assessment for Learning’ (Black, 1997) and felt greater emphasis may have been required on developmental feedback, rather than a ‘tick box’, marking process. This I feel is an important role in terms of professional academic standards, which may be monitored by external bodies [V4].

Additionally, there are opportunities to feedback to the module team on any areas of concern regarding assessment. For example, on the new Introducing Sociology module, I have fed back using tutor forum mechanisms that some tasks were not clearly explained or that an activity was not accessible to a particular student. This feedback process allows the module team to address issues that may affect the credibility of the module in terms of quality assurance or academic robustness and assess whether it meets learner needs in terms of inclusion, as well as in a ‘consumer’ environment [V4].