

UNIVERSITY OF WALES TRINITY SAINT DAVID CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME APPLICATION FOR FELLOW

Before you start, you will need to refer to the following documents/guidance:

The Advance HE **Fellowship Category Tool** will help you to determine whether Fellow is the most appropriate category of Fellowship for you at this point;

- + The [Professional Standards Framework for teaching and supporting learning in higher education](#) (PSF 2023) – the award of Fellow is based on the criteria of Descriptor 2 (PSF 2023) being evidenced;
- + [Fellowship Applicant Guidance](#) and [Guide to the PSF 2023 Dimensions - Fellowship \(D2\)](#).

Fellow is based on meeting **Descriptor 2 (D2) of the PSF 2023**.

Your application for **Fellow** consists of:

- a **3,000-word reflective narrative shared across all five Areas of Activity plus citations**

There is a **3,000 word limit** plus citations (overall maximum of 3,500 words). Please note that Academic Office checks the word count as part of the submission process.

In addition, **Supporting Statements from two referees** (see Applicant Guidance) will need to be submitted with your application. The **Supporting Statements** will verify and endorse that what you write about in your Account of Professional Practice represents your practice in a genuine way.

Descriptor 2 is suitable for individuals whose practice with learners has breadth and depth, enabling them to evidence all Dimensions. **Effectiveness of practice in teaching and/or support of high-quality learning is demonstrated through evidence of:**

D2.1: Use of all five Professional Values

D2.2: Application of all five forms of Core Knowledge

D2.3: Effective and inclusive practice in all five Areas of Activity

You will need to **continue to refer to the applicant guidance and Descriptor 2 of the PSF 2023** as you draft your application to ensure that you are writing to meet the requirements. You must structure your Reflective Narrative around **all five** of the PSF 2023 Areas of Activity. You will be able to use the relevant boxes below to complete your draft application

When you have finalised your application you will need to send the completed form to your referees so that they can write their Supporting Statements. Please direct your referees to the Fellowship Guidance for Referees writing a Supporting Statement. The referees need to return their Supporting Statements for you to upload with your application.

Your application is submitted first to the Academic Office **via the appropriate submission link on Moodle (Advance HE Fellowship module)**.



SECTION ONE:

NAME	Ivana Curcic
INSTITUTE/CENTRE/UNIT	Library and Learning Resources
POSITION (E.g. Lecturer/Senior Lecturer/Principal Lecturer/Director of Discipline/Other (please specify))	Academic Liaison Librarian
ROLE (E.g. Lecturer/Programme Director/Admissions Tutor/Module Leader/Other (please specify))	Academic Liaison Librarian
Referees Please could you tick the box if you have sent in your referees' statements (Please be aware if we do not receive your referees' statements at the time of the submission or a maximum of 2 days after the panel submission date then your application will be passed to the next Panel meeting). If your supporting statements are not included with your application, you must ensure your referees send their supporting statements to the Academic Office by the deadline. The Academic Office will not chase referees.	Yes ☒ No ☐
Date of Training	April 2025
Mentor	Bronwen Williams and Christine Jones



Context statement:

I have been an Academic Liaison Librarian at University of Wales Trinity Saint David's London Campus (established in 2012) since January 2018. Before this role, I worked as a librarian in secondary schools and public libraries. My career began with fifteen years of teaching in higher education, where I taught ESL and academic skills. I am trilingual and have lived in four countries across two continents, working in three of them.

At UWTSD, my primary responsibility is teaching information literacy skills, and I also support students in developing their digital skills. As the London Campus library operates entirely digitally, a strong level of digital competency is essential for all students. The student body at the Institute of Inner-City Learning, London, is diverse, consisting of non-traditional and mature students, eager to develop their academic skills, but also very busy with work and families. Our students are in class two days a week for 4-6 hours, while outside class they have jobs and often demanding family commitments; a high percentage of students also need learning support (V1, V4).

Because skills are developed progressively over time and require ongoing practice, digital and information literacy skills, like all academic skills, need continuous, holistic support (Wiley and Avery, 2023). For this reason, I also see myself as a facilitator of academic skills and an active collaborator in supporting students throughout their academic journey. I work as part of a wider support network that includes lecturers, the Digital Skills Advisor, IT Support team, Engagement team, and the Disability and Careers officers. As my job title indicates, I am to liaise actively and participate actively in creating a supportive and effective environment (V5).



Evidencing Area of Activity 1 (A1): Design and plan learning activities and/or programmes

Since I started my position in 2018, the impact of my work has been the creation of a structured programme designed to deliver information skills to all groups across the levels at the London Campus weekdays and weekends (V1, V2). While at the time I created my own progression of skills, it's mostly analogous to the Programme Managers Timeline and the online module, Info Skills, created in the last three years by the Library Academic Services Team.

To create a relevant programme, my first step was to collaborate with academic colleagues in my institute. While Academic Liaison Librarians bring to the table how to teach research skills, the content to which the skills are applied comes from the programmes and its lecturers (K1, V5). I tried to establish the collaboration directly by asking for meetings but also indirectly, by familiarising myself with the programme's contents.

Consequently, I asked to be included in all the modules in Moodle (Learning Management System), to be familiar with the aims and objectives of the modules and its assessments, to best reinforce and scaffold relevant information skills in context, with 'the whole picture' in mind (K2). I also attend the Quality Assurance forum, which brings together both academics and support staff (K5), on topics relevant to skills development.

The Information Skills programme has evolved in response to students' needs and circumstances. At the London Campus, students tend to leave as soon as classes finish, so to ensure equitable introduction to online resources and essential skills for all students (V2), I advocated for delivering information skills sessions during class time. Initially, I visited only groups beginning their programmes, but in time I was asked to support student in later terms as well. Eventually I delivered sessions to all student groups. To accommodate this expansion, I developed a coordinated timetable that required gathering and aligning information from programme managers, Admissions, and Timetabling (K3, V4, V5).

While many HE institutions assume that students arrive with well-developed academic skills, evidence generally does not support it (Barnes and Slate, 2013; Jansen and van der Meer, 2012; Peter et al., 2017) (K3). At the Institute of Inner-City Learning, this skills gap is particularly evident: students frequently need support with basic academic skills, which they cannot develop without first acquiring basic digital skills. This need is even more pronounced at the London Campus, where the library is exclusively digital. Therefore, I assess students' digital abilities



from the point of entry: during Welcome Days, as I help them connect to Wi-Fi, download and navigate applications, I gain an initial understanding of the cohort's overall digital skill level. This insight enables me to tailor my support more effectively during subsequent Information Skills sessions and in daily drop-in sessions (V1,V2, V3, K3, K4).

During my classes and drop-in sessions, I see 1200 to 1300 students every term. While the scheduling of the sessions is now regularly done through the programme managers, I still send a reminder email to the lecturers and ask whether there is anything specific they would like me to cover; occasionally, the lecturer and I schedule additional sessions. Programmes' guidance and feedback have been crucial in directing my support towards the requirements of the assessment.



Evidencing Area of Activity 2 (A2): Teach and/or support learning through appropriate approaches and environments

During a typical term, I deliver in-person sessions to an average of 70 groups, ranging from 5 to 25 participants, occasionally up to 35. In addition, I support individual learners, primarily face-to-face, with some meetings held online. My sessions generally last around 40 minutes -- sometimes as short as 20 minutes, rarely longer than 60 minutes. My starting point in any session is to understand the situation in front of me (e.g. the aims of the session, what the learners bring) and then determine the most effective way to proceed. While experience helps me recognise common patterns, each group brings unique elements (e.g. individual learning styles), so I must be prepared to adjust my approach whenever necessary (K3, V1). Because the learners I work with are adults who bring prior knowledge and experiences to their studies (Knowles et al, 2020, p.5), I begin by presenting the plan for the session and outlining the “big picture” of the process (V3, K1)

Ahead of each session, in the Announcement section of the module I am visiting, I post an accompanying PowerPoint with screenshots of key steps. During my class visits, I use short, focused tasks that prompt student participation; I walk around the room to ensure that students are engaged and able to follow the instructions. I pay close attention to the atmosphere, monitoring whether the level is appropriate and how students are responding. Depending on the group’s skill level and size, we may search the catalogue and evaluate results together as a class, or students may work individually or in pairs. I maintain a flexible approach, allowing students to work in ways that match their comfort level, while providing additional guidance to those who need more support. To ensure continued access to help, I also offer daily drop-in sessions from 1-2pm, scheduled between the morning and afternoon classes. (V1, V2, V4, K2, K3, K4)

Some of my most effective teaching moments fall into two categories:

- 1) “jumping in” at the right moment;
- 2) helping a learner gain momentum and progress.
 - 1) Because I teach skills, the timing of my input is crucial. For example, I visit Level 4 groups in week 3, to give students time to settle in. In contrast, higher- level groups can be scheduled earlier, sometimes in week 2, or even in week 1 since they typically have more immediate academic needs.

Another effective moment to “jump in” is immediately after the lecturer has explained the assessment and left the brief displayed on the screen. At that point, I can demonstrate



relevant information-seeking strategies, ensuring that all students start from the same reference point. Introducing the AI Research Assistant for catalogue searching at this exact moment provides students with immediate, meaningful hands-on experience. I have also noticed that students are more likely to return for further support because they know what I offer and what to expect (K1, K4, V1).

- 2) In supporting learners, I sometimes meet individuals who already possess necessary knowledge but need confidence to fully apply it. In these situations, I see myself more as a facilitator rather than someone introducing new material or skill. For example, doctoral students may simply need a fresh brainstorming session about their search terms or a reminder of a technique they already know but momentarily forgot to use. With just a small prompt, they are able to “take off” and progress independently. (K2, V1)

These interactions are mutually enriching. When I work with module leaders to create or update online resource lists, I typically share my screen and conduct the searches, but the final selection of titles is theirs. Observing their rationale and asking questions gives me invaluable insight into their expectations and academic perspective (K3, V5). Similarly, understanding the strategies learners use, whether effective or not, helps me refine my own practice. The feedback that emerges from this collaborative, win-win dynamic is positive and inspiring. (V5)

Evidencing Area of Activity 3 (A3): Assess and give feedback for learning

Since my contact with students as a group is limited to one or two sessions per term, I begin each visit by assessing whether they need a review before I introduce the next skill. This initial assessment is carried out through a short activity, direct questions -- including prompts for self-reflection -- and observation. The activity might be a quiz covering skills introduced in the previous term. Stronger students, who typically volunteer answers, benefit from the presentation practice, while others gain an opportunity to review. Alternatively, if there are fewer than a dozen students, I may ask them directly: "What were some of the successes and challenges you encountered last term?" (K1, K2, K3, V1, V2)

When a student identifies a challenge, I try to address it within the session. I always prepare a PowerPoint presentation for each visit, which I share with both students and lecturer, and which includes review materials as well. For example, referencing is a recurring issue, so I include several slides outlining different types of resources and their corresponding reference format, along with a short activity (e.g. identifying types of sources from a reference list). Another common area is evaluating sources; for students at lower levels, I therefore include a reminder slide on the CRAAP tool (K2, K3, V3)

I reserve time at the end of each session for feedback and direct students to further support, such as the Info Skills module, which they can complete independently, as well as one-to-one appointments with me.

When students mention difficulties finding resources, this is usually already built into the session, as searching is almost always part of my teaching. However, because information-seeking strategies vary greatly depending on students' experience, level, and topic, general instruction is rarely sufficient; therefore, I actively encourage students to book one-to-one meetings, where feedback and guidance can be fully individualised and tailored to their needs. In these one-to-one sessions, especially those supporting dissertations, I follow up with an email summarising what we covered and often copy in the academic advisor to ensure continuity of support.

My feedback is generally formative. For this reason, I closely monitor the interactive activities I assign students so I can guide them throughout the process. While I would like more insight into



the evaluations of students' coursework, at present I rely on lecturers and programme managers to tell me how students have performed overall.

I also check with programme managers to see whether any feedback about my sessions has appeared in programme reports. Although the impact of the information skills sessions is seldom measured in a standardised way, students' informal feedback is consistently positive. They frequently comment that the sessions are useful and clear and they often describe me as generous and kind -- a reminder of the unique role librarians play in supporting both academic and personal growth.

On the rare occasions when feedback has been negative, it has resulted from a gap between students' needs and my presentation. As a result, I have learned not only to consult closely modules' aims and assessments when planning my sessions but also check with both lecturers and students right at the start of the session. Flexibility and adaptability are essential to avoiding disappointment.

When I present a process in searching and evaluating for materials, my hope is that such process can help in life, that it is life-long learning. Probably the best proof of what I show students is when they apply it further – both academically and in life. I have seen some students progress from Level 4 to completing post-graduate diplomas. Some of them work with me! One student often recommends me to new students, saying that I helped him progress because I “set him straight” on how to research.



Evidencing Area of Activity 4 (A4): Support and guide learners

Over time, perceptions of the exclusively digital library have shifted. Students and new lecturers increasingly embrace it, often preferring the convenience and ease of access it offers. From the beginning, I promoted the advantages of digital access, recognising that a positive mindset helps students engage more readily with the university's digital collection. This approach also enables me to demonstrate a range of search methods—via the catalogue, Google Scholar (linked to the library catalogue), and the AI Research Assistant, which I actively promote (K1, K2, K3, K4, V2, V3).

While lecturers are expected to maintain their online resource lists, the structure of some of the London campus programmes — where modules often have multiple groups and different lecturers — makes this difficult to manage consistently. The introduction of module leaders created a clearer point of collaboration. Acknowledging their limited time, I often prepare initial lists based on the module descriptors, allowing module leaders to refine and approve them. We review catalogue results together online and select appropriate resources. As a result of this process, every module at the London campus now has an accessible online reading list, giving students a reliable starting point for their research (K1, K2, K4, V3).

Every group at every level receives a librarian visit, including weekday and weekend groups. Throughout the term, I am also available for one-to-one and small-group support, both in person and online (V1, V2, K1, K2, K4, K5). In an environment with a fully digital library, librarians must be highly visible. Participating in lectures and wider campus activities (e.g. the reading group that I ran for two terms and the Book Exchange initiative) helps ensure that students recognise me and feel comfortable seeking support. Even during Welcome Week, when I may not speak directly about the library, students often remember my face, which lowers the threshold for approaching me later.

In providing targeted support, especially in one-to-one sessions, it is important for me to understand who the students are their programme and level (via Celcat) and the relevant lecture materials (via Moodle) (K4). By understanding their needs, I can direct them to appropriate resources or connect them with other university services such as academic tutors, digital skills, disability support, careers, or IT. (V5) Sometimes this simply means helping a student refine their question, so they reach the right person. Recently, a student wrote to thank me for “being there” when she needed advice. Another shared that, after our discussion, she contacted the

people I recommended and is now progressing toward graduate-level study. Many lecturers also promote my services, telling me they are highly beneficial to their students.

Recently, I have been introducing and reinforcing the use of (Primo) AI Research Assistant as part of teaching search skills (K4, V4). It has made searching more accessible for some students and added a brainstorming element that many find useful. In this exercise, the lecturer, students and I create a prompt together, then analyse the results: identifying the types of resources retrieved (which supports referencing), discussing the corresponding in-text citation in Harvard style, and analysing the library record -- its subject headings and other useful features. These hands-on, critical thinking activities have been very well received ("very helpful"). A further positive development is that some lecturers, after seeing these demonstrations, have continued modelling catalogue searches in other instances. Such reinforcement is crucial to students' learning. As Prasetyawan et al. (2021) explain, when lecturers actively support students in developing information literacy skills, learners become more critical and independent.



Evidencing Area of Activity 5 (A5): Enhance practice through own continuing professional development

I have always been interested in how people learn, not only academic subjects and skills but everyday forms of learning, and how people teach or facilitate learning. I enjoy learning myself and sharing what I learn with others, which is why I value a collaborative approach to problem-solving: it enables knowledge to be exchanged and enriched (V3, V4). I meet with other IICL librarians regularly, both informally and to discuss issues that affect our work and to share professional insights. We also maintain a Teams chat for the Academic Liaison Librarians' team, where we post recordings of presentations and webinars we have attended.

During term breaks, I make a particular effort to keep up with new literature and complete relevant online trainings not only of new topics but also to strengthen areas in which I am largely self-taught or to explore alternative approaches to topics I also teach. Platforms such as LinkedIn, Jisc, CILIP, SCONUL, and the *Nexus Learning and Teaching Conference* provide valuable ideas, examples, and "food for thought," helping me refresh and update my practice. Completing an advanced Excel online course equipped me to demonstrate a range of useful features to students (K4).

Participating in Jisc's in-person roundtable event *Skills in the AI Age* was especially impactful: afterwards it gave me the confidence to discuss with programme managers and lecturers the benefits of allowing students to use AI for researching topics or proofreading their writing, so that I can support them in developing these emerging skills.

Recently, my focus has been on digital literacy, generative AI skills and Open Access. Workshops and journal articles have guidance and reassurance in fields that are evolving rapidly. I intentionally selected workshops where presenters share concrete experiences and adaptable frameworks that I can use with my own students. These complement my existing knowledge of teaching skills, while Open Access publishing is particularly relevant when supporting doctoral students.

Librarians learn continuously by default: we develop our own professional skills to be able to understand the context when facilitating the acquisition of the research skills. Our campus offers a relatively narrow set of disciplines – Business, Health and Social Care, and Applied Computing and Cybersecurity. While I would never claim to be an expert in these fields, I keep a general awareness of them by subscribing to notifications from relevant journals via Browzine – one of our scholarly journals' apps. When teaching, I show students my own subscriptions to



demonstrate that I, too, engage in ongoing academic reading—modelling the behaviour I encourage in them.

I was fortunate to attend *DigiFest 2025* in person, an annual Birmingham based conference showcasing the latest developments in digital, data and technology in education. Instead of feeling overwhelmed, the experience was empowering and affirming; its impact was not immediate but developed gradually as new ideas “simmered” and took shape in my practice. My students have also contributed significantly to my professional growth. Observing what works for them and what motivates them pushes me to refine my methods and strive to provide the best possible support. The same is true with my colleagues. From some, I learn about the latest research and publications, while others collaborate with me as co-teaching partners during my sessions. In one instance, after I demonstrated how to search the catalogue using the Research Assistant, the lecturer and I moved around the room assisting students. Her input in evaluating sources was extremely valuable to me as well.

I was delighted to co-present online with a colleague at *Connect More 2025*, where we described the evolution of our digital and information skills programme, developed at a time when having an exclusively digital library was still considered an anomaly.



References/Citations:

- Barnes, W. B. and Slate, J. R. (2013) "College-Readiness Is Not One-Size-Fits-All", *Current Issues in Education*, 16(1). Available at:
<https://cie.asu.edu/ojs/index.php/cieatasu/article/view/1070> (Accessed: 1 April 2025).
- Jansen, E.P.W.A. and van der Meer, J. (2012) 'Ready for university? A cross-national study of students' perceived preparedness for university', *Australian educational researcher*, 39(1), pp. 1–16. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13384-011-0044-6>.
- Jisc (2025a) *Connect More 2025*. Available at: <https://www.jisc.ac.uk/connect-more> (Accessed 15/04/2025)
- Jisc (2025b) 'About Digifest 2025'. *Digifest 2025*. Available at:
<https://www.jisc.ac.uk/digifest/about-2025> (Accessed: 5/04/2025)
- Kenner, C. and Weinerman, J. (2011) 'Adult Learning Theory: Applications to Non-Traditional College Students', *Journal of college reading and learning*, 41(2), pp. 87–96. Available at:
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10790195.2011.10850344>.
- Knowles, M.S. *et al.* (2020) *The adult learner: the definitive classic in adult education and human resource development*. Ninth edition. Abingdon, Oxon ; Routledge.
- Peter, J., Lechner, N., Mayer, A.K. and Krampen, G. (2017) 'Making information literacy instruction more efficient by providing individual feedback', *Studies in Higher Education*, 42(6), pp. 1110–1125. Available at: <https://doi-org.uwtsd.idm.oclc.org/10.1080/03075079.2015.1079607>
- Prasetyawan, Y.Y., Heriyanto, H., Arfa, M. and Shuhidan, S. M. (2021) 'Lecturers Perceptions of Students' Information Literacy: Identifying their roles in Supporting Students' Information Literacy', *Library philosophy and practice* (e-journal). 5180. Available at:
<https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/5180> (Accessed 1 April 2025)
- Thompson, C. *et al* (2024) *The ultimate guide to lesson planning: practical planning for everyday teaching* London : Routledge.



UWTSD, Library and Learning Resources (2024) *Library Info Skills Module*. Available at: <https://moodle.uwtsd.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=11455> (Accessed: 27 March 2025).

Wiley, J.M. and Avery, A. (2023) "Enhancing Your Teaching Methods: An Information Literacy-Based Approach to Developing Course Assignments," *Communications of the Association for Information Systems*, 53(1), pp. 815–832. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.17705/1CAIS.05334>.

Your application (including the two Supporting Statements from your referees) is submitted first to the Academic Office **via the appropriate submission link on Moodle (Advance HE Fellowship module)**.



SECTION FOUR: Referees

Your application must be accompanied by two **supporting statements** from persons who are in a position to comment on your teaching and learning practices and achievements.

The function of a Referee is to provide an informed peer review of your eligibility for Fellow, using their knowledge of your work and the context in which you teach and/or support learning. Each Referee are expected to **authenticate your application** by commenting directly on the content of your application and to make additional, relevant comments, as they wish.

Referees should be experienced staff and be able to comment knowledgeably, and from first-hand experience, on your current role and any other relevant activities recently undertaken. **Your Referees should either be Fellows, Senior Fellows or Principal Fellows of Advance HE**, or an appropriately experienced member of staff working for a UK Higher Education Institution (HEI). All Referees need to be familiar with the PSF2023.

Referees should be provided with a copy of the Guidance Notes for Referees – please speak to your mentor regarding this document.

Referee 1:	
Name	Charles Oham
Job Title	Lecturer and Module Leader in Business
Fellowship Status	Senior Fellow Higher Education Academy
Institution/Institute/Centre/Unit	University of Wales Trinity Saint David London Campus
Email address	c.oham@uwtsd.ac.uk
In what capacity can this individual comment on your professional practice? Charles Oham is a colleague who has observed my sessions for many years.	

Referee 2:	
Name	Zainab Atta
Job Title	Lecturer and Module Leader in Business
Fellowship Status	Fellow FHEA
Institution/Institute/Centre/Unit	University of Wales Trinity Saint David London Campus
Email address	z.atta@uwtsd.ac.uk
In what capacity can this individual comment on your professional practice? Zainab Atta is a colleague who has observed my sessions for many years.	



GDPR on data sharing with ADVANCE HE

Following the implementation of GDPR you should be aware that successful recognition at UWTSD, personal data including your name and email address will be supplied to Advance HE. This is in order to trigger your fellowship registration and certificate being recorded on their MyAdvanceHE database.

<https://my.advance-he.ac.uk/>

Advance HE will make use of this data in the course of providing their Accreditation Services to UWTSD, and potentially in any reviews they might carry out of our accredited provision.

By submitting your coursework and appendices you are confirming you agree to this data sharing.

SECTION FIVE: Declaration

Please sign and date in the box below to confirm that the application you are submitting is your own work.

Signature	
Date	14/04/2026