

The Asia Pacific International College Scholarship and Research Plan 2023 – 2025

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The Purpose of the Plan

The Asia Pacific International College (APIC) has revised its Scholarship and Research (S&R) Plan for 2023-2025, detailing the academic and research activities to be undertaken. The plan aims to fulfill the requirements of the Higher Education Standards Framework by fostering a conducive culture for research and scholarship. Research is seen as essential for academic staff, prompting APIC to establish effective policies and procedures for managing research projects and facilitating scholarly activities. To ensure compliance, APIC has adopted policies and guidelines such as the Responsible Conduct in Research and Scholarship Policy, the APIC Academic Integrity Policy and Procedures, and the Staff Code of Conduct (The Asia Pacific International College, 2023). In parallel, APIC has a strategic plan for 2024-2028, setting out its strategies for research and scholarship activities (The Asia Pacific International College, 2020). By executing these policies and strategic plans, APIC aims to promote an environment of robust scholarship and research, supporting the development and enrichment of staff and students (The Asia Pacific International College, 2022).

Background

APIC has been focusing on strengthening its commitment towards a more robust scholarship and research culture and is ready to execute a set of new initiatives to support this focus. This shift has been driven by the recent emphasis on scholarship by the Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency (TEQSA), and APIC's commitment to attain self-accrediting status, resulting in a greater focus on scholarship and research development.

A robust scholarship and research culture is crucial to advancing APIC's strategic aims and will remain central in the upcoming years. In the Higher Education Standards Framework, 'scholarship' implies activities aimed at gaining improved understanding and appreciation of a field, keeping up-to-date with its advancements, including those in teaching methods, professional practice, and original research. Engagement in scholarship endeavors can happen at the individual level, or across APIC (The Asia Pacific International College, 2020).

TEQSA's criteria necessitates an institutional culture of scholarship, categorizing providers based on the pervasiveness and scope of scholarship. The criteria stipulate that all teaching and learning in higher education should be built on advanced knowledge and inquiry, academic staff should be actively engaged in scholarship, and supervisors of research students should be active in research. The Standards also specify that teachers should be involved in scholarship relevant to their field, and be proficient in teaching, learning, and assessment practices. Scholarship can take various forms within and between different providers, therefore, TEQSA acknowledges the need for diverse strategies to cultivate and sustain it.

Strategic Positioning on Scholarship and Research

APIC, despite not being research-intensive, acknowledges scholarship and research's vital role in effective higher education, informing teaching, community engagement, and professional practice. The institution expects its graduates to display problem-solving abilities and maintain up-to-date knowledge from diverse sources. These qualities resonate with the curriculum's themes of evidence-based decision-making and real-world application.

Through scholarship and research groups and activities, APIC conducts and delivers research training for academic staff. This is conducted through research workshops, research methods short courses, and considering the enrolment of staff into the recently accredited HELL Master of Research and Graduate Certificate in Research Methods.

APIC's Research Training Plan

APIC firmly believes in its commitment to encourage the development of a vibrant research culture. ECA Higher Education Institutes have over 20 research active staff members with more than 250 published papers over the last five years. Our Research Training Plan, designed for both staff and students, offers a comprehensive, modular approach that equips researchers with essential skills, fostering collaboration and continuous growth in the field of academic inquiry.

Research Orientation and Induction: Begin with a comprehensive orientation program that introduces staff and students to the research culture of APIC, the expectations, resources available, and the importance of ethical considerations in research. **Modular Training Programs:**

Design a modular program where participants can choose courses based on their research interest and needs. Some potential modules might include 1) Research Ethics and Integrity, 2) Quantitative and Qualitative Research Methods, 3) Data Collection and Analysis, 4) Academic Writing and Publishing, 5) Grant Writing and Funding, and 6) Advanced Statistical Analysis.

Mentor-Mentee System: Pair novice researchers with experienced ones. This system provides guidance, offers opportunities for collaborative research, and facilitates learning through observation and practical experience. **Research Workshops and Seminars:**

Organise regular workshops led by internal or external experts. These might cover current trends, new methodologies, or software tools related to research. **Collaborative Research Opportunities:**

Create platforms where staff and students can collaborate on research projects, enhancing the learning experience and improving research outcomes. **Research Symposiums and**

Conferences: Organise annual events where staff and students can present their research findings. This not only enhances presentation skills but also helps in receiving feedback from peers and experts. **Access to Online Research Courses:**

Provide access to online platforms like Coursera, edX, or Udemy, where staff and students can take courses related to their research interests. **Research Groups:**

Create research peer groups that meet regularly to discuss research progress, challenges, and provide feedback. **Students' Research and Capstone Projects:**

Students are trained to conduct research through their capstone projects then present research in diverse mediums, including reputable journals and conferences. They may also train at other institutions. The college provides financial support for these efforts and hosts regular events featuring student research and guest experts.

APIC Adopts the HEPP-QN Scholarship Model

The Higher Education Private Provider Quality Network (HEPP-QN) proposes a unique typology of scholarship, which builds upon and expands Boyer's four-dimensional model (Fernandez et al., 2019). As a member of HEPP-QN, APIC adopts this approach, which includes 1) the Scholarship of Teaching & Learning, 2) the Scholarship of Pure and Applied Research, 3) the Scholarship of Engagement, 4) the Scholarship of Discipline, 5) the Scholarship of Professional Practice, and 6) the Scholarship of Leadership.

The HEPP-QN scholarship model incorporates five key components: Typology, Culture, Practice and Purpose, Quality, and Impact. Typology categorizes scholarship into six types to maximize benefits. Culture emphasizes a supportive academic environment promoting innovation and collaboration. Practice and Purpose aligns scholarship initiatives with the institution's mission, vision, and values, benefiting all stakeholders. Quality is maintained through rigorous methodologies, peer reviews, and continuous evaluations, ensuring a high standard of scholarship. Impact measures the outcome of scholarship activities, like publication rates and community engagement, demonstrating their value and contributions to knowledge and society.

Key Focus Areas and Key Initiatives

This Scholarship and Research Plan lists 20 key initiatives for 2023 – 2025 aligned with the HEPP-QN's six typologies of scholarship (Fernandez et al., 2019).

Key Focus Areas	Key Initiatives (2023-25)	Indicative Frequency	Responsible Officer/s	Suggested Performance Measures
Scholarship of Learning and Teaching	1.1. Unit Enhancement Project to improve student engagement.	Continuing	A/Dean S&R A/Dean L&T DoS/HOD/CC	1.1.1. Two PG Units updated each Year. 1.1.2. Two Unit Coordinators presenting their experience at L&T webinars each year.
	1.2. Learning and Teaching webinars for staff to present new L&T ideas.	Quarterly	A/Dean L&T	1.2.1. Four Learning and Teaching webinars are run each year attracting CPD points. 1.2.2. Two webinars on L&T methods to enhance student engagement. 1.2.2. Staff who attend the webinars attain additional CPD for implementing new ideas.
	1.3. Learning and Teaching Forums.	Quarterly	A/Dean L&T	1.3.1. Learning and Teaching Forum are conducted each quarter. 1.3.2. Contracted staff who attended the forums attain additional CPD for new ideas.
	1.4. Annual Scholarship and Research workshop.	Annual	A/Dean S&R A/Dean L&T DoS	1.4.1. Annual S&R workshop are run early each year to enhance staff research skills. 1.4.2. Staff attended and contributed.

				1.4.3. Attendees reported high satisfaction and committed to personal action.
	1.5. Scholarship and Research support.	Annual	A/Dean S&R A/Dean L&T DoS	1.5.1. Offering staff a discounted fee to study the Masters of E-Learning at HELI. 1.5.2. L&T related project is awarded a small research grant.
Scholarship of Pure and Applied Research	2.1. Research interests of APIC staff.	Annual	A/Dean S&R	2.1.1. A survey of all staff is conducted each year to ascertain current research interests. 2.1.2. A report is produced showing areas of research & potential areas of cross-discipline integration.
	2.2. Research output of APIC staff.	Annual	A/Dean S&R	2.2.1. Number of research active staff who produced 1 or more artefacts per year. 2.2.2. Number of publications and scholarly activities, of each active staff in last 5 years. 2.2.3. Number of research papers submitted and/or published in peer reviewed journals or conferences. 2.2.4. Number of research/capstone projects completed by students and subsequently presented or published.
	2.3. Scholarship and Research seminars for staff to present their current and recent research.	Bi-monthly	A/Dean S&R	2.3.1. Six scholarship and research seminars are run each year attracting CPD points. 2.3.2. Staff who attend the webinars report new research projects stemming from the webinar.
	2.4. Research training	Bi-annual	A/Dean S&R	2.4.1. Number of research methods seminars developed and conducted for all staff and interested students. 2.4.2. Number of research ethics presentations developed and presented by research active staff. 2.4.3. Number of staff and students who attend research training workshops and seminars annually. 2.4.4. Number of online research courses completed by staff/students through platforms. 2.4.5. Number of external experts or guest lecturers involved in the institution's research training workshops and seminars.
	2.5. Research support	Bi-annual	A/Dean S&R	2.5.1. Provide mentorship by pairing junior faculty members with experienced researchers. 2.5.2. Number of active mentor-mentee pairs and the average duration of their collaborations. 2.5.3. Facilitate extended leaves for academic staff to focus on their research and scholarly projects. 2.5.4. Recognise and reward outstanding scholarly accomplishments.
	2.6. APIC small research grants.	Annual	A/Dean S&R Dean	2.6.1. APIC small research grant applications are advertised each year. 2.6.2. At least one small research grant is awarded. 2.6.4. All recipients of small research grants present at research webinars.
	2.7. Research collaboration and engagement.	Bi-annual	A/Dean S&R	2.7.1. Interdisciplinary research collaboration among colleagues, both within and outside APIC. 2.7.2. Involve students in research projects, to foster a culture of scholarship and inquiry.
	3.1. Increasing industry engagement with APIC, APIC staff and APIC students.	Quarterly	A/Dean S&R DoS	3.1.1. A workshop is run in each year to determine potential industry engagement in the APIC discipline areas. 3.1.2. Units include opportunities for students to directly engage with industry professionals
Scholarship of Engagement	3.1. Increasing industry engagement with APIC, APIC staff and APIC students.	Quarterly	A/Dean S&R DoS	3.1.1. A workshop is run in each year to determine potential industry engagement in the APIC discipline areas. 3.1.2. Units include opportunities for students to directly engage with industry professionals

	3.2. Community web presence to support APIC staff and students to connect with the industry trends.	Ongoing	A/Dean S&R A/Dean L&T DoS	3.2.1. A APIC community web presence is created to allow updates about key industry trends. 3.2.2. Each staff member contributes at least one annual posting.
	3.3. On-line public information sessions with joint industry representatives and staff as presenters.	Bi-monthly	A/Dean S&R DoS A/Dean L&T	3.3.1. One on-line public information sessions are scheduled each year. 3.2.2. Staff who attend the webinars apply for CPD for implementing ideas they learned.
Scholarship of Discipline	4.1. Discovery of new knowledge for course design, activities and evaluations.	Ongoing	A/Dean S&R DoS A/Dean L&T	4.1.1. Six Learning and Teaching webinars are run each year attracting CPD points. 4.1.2. Thirty percent of staff who attend the webinars apply for additional CPD for implementing ideas.
	4.2. Industry advisory panels informed by the latest industry research and developments.	Bi-annual	A/Dean S&R DoS	4.2.1. One formal or informal industry advisory panel is established with appropriate membership. 4.2.2. Recommendations from the advisory panels are reviewed by the Discipline staff.
	4.3. Application of current discipline knowledge into staff teaching activities.	Ongoing	DoS	4.3.1. He DoS convenes meetings of discipline staff to consider the implementation of current knowledge into teaching activities. 4.3.2. Recommended changes to teaching activities are presented to the L&T committee.
Scholarship of Professional Practice	5.1. Professional Development Events (led mainly by L&T).	Bimonthly	A/Dean S&R A/Dean L&T DoS	5.1.1. Staff are encouraged to consider professional development events run by APIC and led mainly by L&T in areas of strength (e.g. short courses for staff). 5.1.2. At least 3 professional development events or short courses are convened each year.
	5.2. Discipline advances translated into professional practice.	Ongoing	A/Dean S&R A/Dean L&T DoS	5.2.1. Thirty percent of APIC staff are awarded CPD points for demonstrating translation of discipline advances into their personal teaching practice. 5.2.2. At least one staff member in each discipline presents his/her experience at a scheduled forum or webinar event each year.
	5.3. APIC scholarship and research documentation.	Annual	A/Dean S&R	5.3.1. A revised process of gathering ongoing scholarship and research documentation is developed during 2022. 5.3.2. All contract staff at APIC provide at least quarterly updates of their scholarship and research activities.
Scholarship of Leadership	6.1. Scholarship & Research Skills	Annual	A/Dean S&R	6.1.1. An initiative to develop the leadership skills of HoDs/CC/DoS (e.g. financial support to attend a leadership/people management course) 6.1.2. An initiative to develop the leadership skills of Unit Coordinators (e.g. involvement in a mentorship program)
	6.2. Dean's Teaching Awards.	Annual	Dean A/Dean S&R A/Dean L&T	6.2.1. An updated application for the Deans Teaching awards is distributed in Q4 of each year. 6.2.2. Deans teaching awards are selected and reported in Q1 of each year.
	6.3. Scholarship and Research Annual Report	Annual	A/Dean S&R	6.3.1. A revised structure for a APIC Scholarship and Research Annual Report is agreed. 6.3.2. A APIC Scholarship and Research Annual Report is completed in Q1 of each year for the previous year.

Dean: Dean of Higher Education
 A/Dean S&R: Associate Dean, Scholarship and Research
 A/Dean L&T: Associate Dean, Learning and Teaching
 DoS: Director of Studies
 HoD: Head of Discipline

LS: Learning Support
DL: Digital Learning

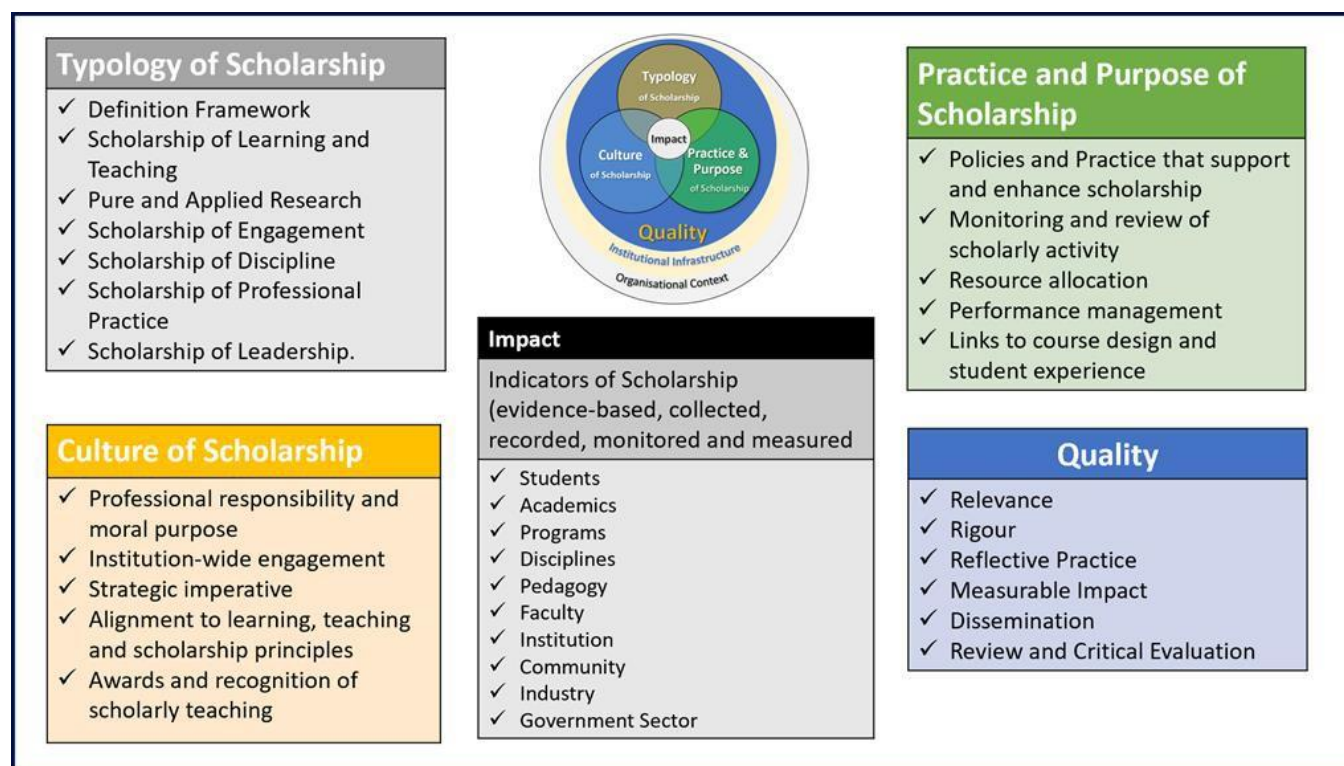


Figure 1: The HEPP-QN Scholarship Framework (Fernandez et al., 2019; Whateley et al., 2022)

Appendix 1 – The Six Key Focus Areas

As staff become engaged in the process of setting key scholarship and research directions, they should also contribute to an updated set of initiatives in the 6 key focus areas.

1. Scholarship of Learning and Teaching

The college aims to create an environment that supports the continuous improvement of teaching and learning practices. This may involve incorporating innovative teaching methods, utilizing technology in the classroom, and fostering a culture of reflective practice among staff. Examples of initiatives include faculty development programs, workshops on pedagogical techniques, and establishing communities of practice for teaching staff.

2. Scholarship of Pure and Applied Research

The college is dedicated to promoting both pure and applied research that contributes to the advancement of knowledge and has practical applications. Examples of initiatives include providing research training, supporting interdisciplinary research projects, establishing research groups, and promoting collaborations with industry partners to address real-world challenges.

3. Scholarship of Engagement

The college seeks to foster a culture of engagement that connects the institution with its community, both locally and globally. Initiatives may include encouraging staff and students to participate in community projects, developing partnerships with community organizations, and promoting public lectures and events that showcase the college's research and expertise.

4. Scholarship of Discipline

The college is committed to advancing knowledge within specific disciplines by supporting discipline-specific research and scholarship. This may involve creating opportunities for staff to engage in collaborative research projects, hosting conferences or symposia within the discipline, and promoting the publication of research findings in reputable academic journals.

5. Scholarship of Professional Practice

The college aims to enhance the professional practice of its staff by supporting research that informs and improves practice within their respective fields. Initiatives may include establishing industry partnerships, offering professional development opportunities, and facilitating connections between staff and professional organizations.

6. Scholarship of Leadership

The college emphasizes the development of leadership skills among staff and students through various means, such as leadership training programs, mentorship opportunities, and research projects exploring leadership theories within the college context. The institution aims to create a culture of scholarship and research excellence, incorporating research training into all academic programs. The desired outcome is an enhanced culture of scholarship and research, demonstrated by the achievement of performance measures for key initiatives.

Appendix 2 – Research, Scholarship, and Professional Development Activities

Research Activities

Research is the systematic process of investigation and discovery aimed at advancing knowledge and understanding in a specific field or discipline. It involves activities related to both pure and applied research projects, each of which serves a distinct purpose. Pure research, also known as basic or fundamental research, seeks to generate new knowledge or develop existing theories without any immediate practical application. Applied research, on the other hand, is focused on solving specific problems or addressing real-world issues by applying existing knowledge and theories (Western Sydney University, 2020).

There are several forms of research output, which can be broadly categorized as follows:

- **Project-related output:** These outputs result from the planning, execution, and completion of a research project. They include research proposals, project reports, and progress updates. Such outputs are crucial for securing funding, tracking the progress of a project, and demonstrating its impact to stakeholders.
- **Peer-reviewed research output:** This category refers to research work that has undergone a rigorous evaluation process by experts in the same field, who assess the quality, validity, and significance of the research. Examples of peer-reviewed research output include journal articles, conference papers, and book chapters. These outputs contribute to the collective knowledge of the scientific community and help establish the credibility of the researchers involved.
- **Literature reviews:** Literature reviews are comprehensive surveys of existing research on a particular topic. They involve the identification, analysis, and synthesis of relevant studies to provide an overview of the current state of knowledge and highlight gaps that may warrant further investigation. Literature reviews are critical in informing the development of new research questions and hypotheses, as well as guiding researchers in designing their studies.
- **Conference presentations:** Researchers present their work at conferences to share their findings, receive feedback, and engage in discussions with fellow researchers. These presentations may take the form of oral talks, poster presentations, or panel discussions. Conference presentations facilitate the exchange of ideas, promote collaboration, and help researchers stay updated on the latest developments in their field.
- **Journal publications:** Journal articles are an essential medium for disseminating research findings and contributing to the body of knowledge in each field. These articles, which are

often peer-reviewed, provide detailed accounts of the research methodology, results, and implications. Publishing in reputable, high-impact journals helps establish a researcher's credibility and can enhance their career prospects.

- **Research communication:** This category encompasses various channels through which researchers share their work with both academic and non-academic audiences. Examples include research briefs, policy reports, blog posts, and social media updates. Effective research communication is essential in translating complex scientific findings into accessible language, raising public awareness about critical issues, and informing decision-making processes.

Scholarship Activities

Scholarship refers to activities focused on acquiring, refining, and disseminating knowledge within a specific field. These activities are essential for enhancing understanding, appreciation, and staying current with developments in each domain (TEQSA, 2022).

Various types of scholarship activities can contribute to this goal, including:

- **Peer-reviewed scholarly output/publication/communication:** Engaging in the production and dissemination of knowledge through various channels such as literature reviews, conference presentations, and journal publications. This process involves submitting work for evaluation by experts in the field, ensuring the rigor and quality of the research being shared.
- **Scholarly review, original research, or teaching practice contributing to course development:** This encompasses activities that integrate research findings and innovative teaching practices to enhance the design, content, and delivery of academic courses. This may involve developing new curricula, creating teaching materials, or employing novel pedagogical techniques.
- **Synthesizing and communicating advances in evidence-based practice:** Sharing knowledge and promoting best practices in each field through presentations, podcasts, feature articles, or other media. This helps to ensure that professionals remain up to date with the latest research, methodologies, and insights in their area of expertise.
- **Teaching practice engaging the latest ideas, debates, and issues:** Educators adopting innovative teaching methods, curricula, academic policies, and learning materials that reflect current developments, debates, and issues within their discipline. This fosters a dynamic and engaging learning environment for students.

- **Contributions to relevant professional bodies or communities of practice:** Actively participating in and supporting the development of professional organizations or networks. This can involve creating new standards, knowledge resources, or codes of practice that benefit the broader community and advance the field.
- **Active and ongoing involvement in relevant scholarly academic societies, editorial roles, or peer review:** Engaging with scholarly communities through membership, leadership roles, or editorial positions, and participating in the peer-review process. These activities foster collaboration, knowledge exchange, and quality assurance in academic research.
- **Undertaking higher level qualifications leading to scholarly activity, particularly higher degrees by research:** Pursuing advanced degrees or certifications, such as doctoral or postdoctoral programs, to develop expertise and contribute to the body of knowledge within a specific field. This can also involve mentoring and guiding the next generation of scholars.
- **Undertaking advanced specialized practice or scholarly secondments:** Participating in opportunities to gain experience and expertise in other institutions, industries, or research settings. These experiences can broaden perspectives, foster collaboration, and promote the transfer of knowledge and skills across different contexts.

Professional Development Activities

Professional development encompasses activities aimed at enhancing an individual's personal or professional skills, knowledge, and competencies. These activities can range from formal training to informal learning opportunities and may not always be directly related to one's teaching or research role (Harvard University, 2022).

Examples of professional development activities include:

- **Lower-level training or unrelated activities:** Participating in training sessions or workshops that focus on developing general skills, such as using learning management systems (e.g., Canvas), enhancing emotional intelligence, or learning new software applications. These activities might not directly relate to an individual's teaching role or academic discipline but can contribute to their overall personal or professional growth.
- **Membership of academic governance committees:** Serving on committees responsible for making decisions and providing guidance regarding institutional policies, procedures, and strategic planning. These roles can offer valuable insights into the inner workings of an academic institution and help develop leadership, communication, and decision-making skills.

- **Dated or irrelevant scholarly activity (e.g. content or methods that are no longer employed in the field):** This can occur due to the rapid pace of scientific and academic progress. Traditional approaches, once cutting-edge, can become obsolete, with new research paradigms or technological advancements superseding them, thus rendering these activities no longer employed in the field.
- **Unrelated scholarly activity or research in disciplines/fields being taught:** Engaging in research or scholarly activities outside of one's primary teaching or research area (e.g., an information systems teacher conducting research in art history). This can foster intellectual curiosity, promote interdisciplinary understanding, and potentially lead to new insights or collaborations.
- **Basic or routine practice that does not engage with advances in practice,** or is unrelated to the discipline/field (e.g. an accountant preparing personal tax returns for individuals while teaching corporate finance or training in software use)
- **Attendance at conferences:** Participating in academic or professional conferences allows individuals to stay informed about the latest trends, research, and innovations in their field or other areas of interest. This can lead to networking opportunities, collaborations, and the exchange of ideas that may inspire new directions in one's professional life.
- **Membership in professional bodies:** Joining and actively participating in professional organizations or associations related to one's field or area of expertise. Membership can provide access to resources, networking opportunities, and forums for sharing ideas and best practices, as well as contribute to the development of professional standards and guidelines.

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