



U21 Teaching Standards Framework – Overview

What is it? The U21 Teaching Standards Framework (TSF) is designed to **provide those with responsibilities for assessing and/or developing the teaching contributions and/or performance** of staff in Research and Teaching (RT) or Teaching Focused (TF) roles within U21 member institutions with **a common set of evidence based standards** against which to assess these contributions/performances.

How can it be used? The framework can be used to **resolve a range of HR issues related to the management of staff involved in teaching in research intensive universities**, including: (a) **job design** (e.g., “How should RT and TF appointments be differentiated in terms of role and responsibilities in relation to teaching?”); (b) **recruitment and selection of staff** (e.g., How should we differentiate between the type of knowledge, skills and experience we seek in those seeking appointment to a RT or TF position?); (c) **orientation and induction of new staff** (e.g., How should our orientation and induction practices be differentiated for those appointed to RT and TF positions?); (d) **workload modelling/determination** (e.g., How should our workload models/ formulae change to appropriately reflect the differences in responsibilities of teachers in RT and TF positions?); (e) **performance review** - including promotion (e.g., What indicators, metrics and standards might be appropriately applied to the assessment of teaching performance for those in RT and TF positions?); (f) **professional and career development** (e.g., How may our current approaches to professional and career development need to change to effectively meet the needs of those in RT and TF positions?); and (h) **recognition and reward processes** (e.g., How might our criteria, indicators, evidence and standards need to change to appropriately recognize excellence in teaching for those in RT and TF positions?). Institutional leaders of learning and teaching may use the TSF to **support conversations to introduce or expand teaching-focused roles**, to **devise or adapt promotion** pathways, or to **benchmark individual teaching contributions or performance** with those in other institutions. Academic Development Units may use it to **design professional learning and support activities** for faculty members. Individuals may use it to **locate themselves and chart a career trajectory** with their institutions.

How was it developed? The framework was developed from **systematic analysis of current practices across U21 member institutions**, based on data collected via: (a) **document analysis** (e.g., promotion policies/processes, promotion criteria/applications; criteria for teaching excellence awards); and (b) **interviews, focus groups and workshops** (e.g., with stakeholders including senior academic managers with responsibilities for academic promotion; those who are recognized within their institutions as educational leaders regardless of their rank or level or appointment, and those promoted to Professor on the basis of their teaching and educational leadership). The validity of the framework was determined (a) via a **survey of staff from U21 member institutions** to determine respondents perception’s of the appropriateness, comprehensiveness and usefulness of the proposed framework, (b) **mapping of the content of promotions applications onto the framework**; and (c) via the **use of the framework in workshops** with those seeking to put together applications for promotion on the basis of their teaching.

The structure of the framework. The U21 TSF is based on a construct of teaching that recognizes that those involved in teaching in research intensive universities typically *engage in four different DIMENSIONS of teaching related activity*: (a) **Learning Facilitation**; (b) **Educational Design**; (c) **Reflective Practice**; (d) **Scholarly Practice**, and *do so via contributions in one or more of three different ROLES*, that of: (a) **Teacher Practitioner**, (b) **Teacher Leader**, or (c) **Teacher Manager**.

U21 Conceptual Framework for Teaching

Dimension of Teaching		Teaching Role		
		Practitioner (Do)	Leader (Influence Develop)	Manager (Enable)
		Focus on the work the individual does in any of these areas of teaching to facilitate and support the learning of their students	Focus on the work the individual does to influence and support others to innovate or change their practice in any of these areas of teaching	Focus on the work the individual does to create the organisational conditions necessary to enable and support learning and the development of teaching in any of these areas of teaching practice.
Learning Facilitation	That dimension of teaching that involves <u>engaging, challenging, scaffolding, supporting and providing students with feedback</u> on their learning	1	2	3
Educational Design	That dimension of teaching that involves <u>designing, developing & deploying resources, learning activities, support, and assessment tasks within physical and/or digital environments</u> to enable and support learning	4	5	6
Reflective Practice	That dimension of teaching that involves the <u>collection & analysis of data to inform ongoing efforts to assure and improve</u> the quality of one's teaching, learning & curricula.	7	8	9
Scholarly Practice	That dimension of teaching that involves <u>engaging in and with, and/or contributing to, the scholarship of learning and teaching</u> through the <u>dissemination of teaching approaches and/or enhancements</u> .	10	11	12

The **particular combination of dimensions and roles** that best describes an individual’s involvement in teaching at any given time **depends on a number of factors** including: (a) the **nature of their appointment** (i.e., whether they hold a RT, or TF position); (b) their **job description** (i.e., whether their responsibilities are those of a professional instructor/tutor, academic, head of school, dean or institutional manager); and (c) the **stage of their career** (i.e., whether they are an early career, mid-career or later career teacher). The process of using the TSF to assess contribution or performance via teaching **begins with the development of a personal teaching portfolio** that clearly articulates one’s roles and responsibilities in relation to teaching in terms of the roles and dimensions included in this framework.



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The Standards. The *standards* included in the U21 Teaching Standards Framework are *defined*:

- in terms of the **roles** (*Teacher Practitioner, Teacher Leader* and *Teacher Manager*) included in the U21 Conceptual Framework for Teaching;
- for five **levels** of *academic appointment/promotion*:
Level I – Tutor
Level II – Lecturer;
Level III – Assistant Professor;
Level IV – Associate Professor;
Level V – Full Professor.
- for two **types** of *academic appointment*:
Research and Teaching (RT)
Teaching Focused (TF)
- for **appointments** that:
 - include formal management responsibilities** for aspects of teaching and learning *beyond* those directly associated with the subjects the individual may teach. (e.g., those associated with roles such as Subject Convenor, Program Director, Head of School, Faculty Dean).
 - do not include** such responsibilities.
- in terms of **four indicators** of *performance* and *contribution*:
 - the **esteem** in which the individual is held *by students* and peers in relation to the work they do as a Teacher Practitioner, Teacher Leader, and /or Teacher Manager in each of the four core dimensions of teaching (learning facilitation, educational design, reflective and scholarly practice).
 - the objective measurable **impact** the individual has had on *improving* those things to which teaching, either as a practitioner, leader or manager, is directed - improvements in student learning outcomes; student experience/satisfaction of/with learning, teaching, curricula, or the organisational (administrative, technological, physical, social or cultural) conditions in support of same.
 - the **influence** the individual has had on another's thinking, practice or development as a teacher.
 - the **sustainability** of the *individual's performance or contribution*.
- using as the principal **metrics** for differentiating expected standards of performance and contribution for different levels of appointment:
 - the **size** of an individual's *sphere* of esteem, impact, and influence, *and*
 - the **period** over which their performance or contribution has been made.

The distinction between **impact** and **influence** should be noted: *the former* refers to the *measurable effects* of teaching (whether as practitioner, manager or leader) on students learning outcomes/experience, the structure of curricula, or the organisational conditions in which teaching and learning take place, *while the latter* refers to the less easily measurable effects that an individual has on the ways others *think* about their practice and development as teachers.

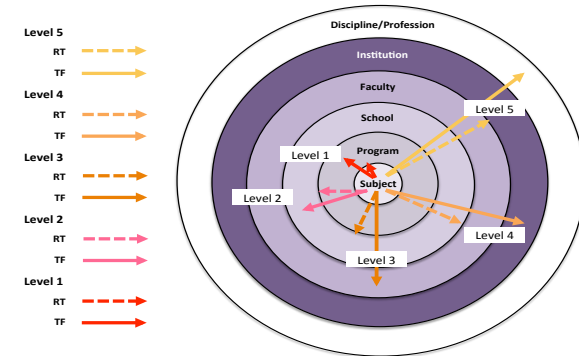
Table 1 below summarizes the full *range of appointments* addressed by the Teaching Standards Framework, **Table 1**

Appointment Type	Level of Appointment / Promotion					Responsibilities Include FPMR*
	Level I	Level II	Level III	Level IV	Level V	
Research and Teaching	Tutor	Lecturer	Assistant Professor	Associate Professor	Full Professor	Yes
						No
Teaching Focused	Tutor	Lecturer	Assistant Professor	Associate Professor	Full Professor	Yes
						No

* FPMR - Formal Position of Management Responsibility - any position that includes responsibility for managing aspects of teaching and learning beyond those associated with the Subjects/Courses/Modules/Topics for which the individual is responsible.

while **Figure 1** that follows, illustrates the *scope or size of the various spheres of esteem, impact and influence* expected of individuals seeking promotion or appointment to each of the five levels included in the Teaching Standards Framework.

Figure 1: Spheres of Esteem, Impact and Influence Expected at Different Levels by Type of Appointment



These *spheres of esteem, impact and influence* are summarized in more detail in **Table 2**, along with the *periods of time* over which individuals are expected to demonstrate this level of performance and/or contribution to be eligible for promotion or appointment to each level of appointment. **Table 3** provides a high level description of the *overall standards* that pertain to each type and level of appointment.



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Table 2: The standards that apply to each level of appointment?

Level	Appointment Type	Teacher Practitioner	Teacher Leader	Teacher Manager	Formal Position of Management Responsibility
Level 1 (Tutor)	Research and Teaching (RT)	Sphere of esteem, impact, Influence: <i>Within the <u>subjects</u> taught</i> Period : <i>Period of contract</i>	Sphere of esteem, impact, Influence: <i>Within the <u>subjects</u> taught</i> Period of contribution: <i>Period of contract</i>	Sphere of esteem, impact, Influence: <i>Within the <u>subjects</u> taught</i> Period of contribution: <i>Period of contract</i>	Sphere of esteem, impact, Influence: <i>Not Generally Applicable</i> Period of contribution:
	Teaching Focused (TF)	Sphere of esteem, impact, Influence: <i>Within and possibly beyond the <u>subjects</u> taught</i> Period of contribution: <i>Period of contract</i>	Sphere of esteem, impact, Influence: <i>Within and possibly beyond the <u>subjects</u> taught</i> Period of contribution: <i>Period of contract</i>	Sphere of esteem, impact, Influence: <i>Within and possibly beyond the <u>subjects</u> taught</i> Period of contribution: <i>Period of contract</i>	Sphere of esteem, impact, Influence: <i>Not Generally Applicable</i> Period of contribution:
Level 2 (Lecturer)	Research and Teaching (RT)	Sphere of esteem, impact, Influence: <i>Within and possibly beyond the <u>subjects</u> taught</i> Period of contribution: <i>At least 3 years</i>	Sphere of esteem, impact, Influence: <i>Within and possibly beyond the <u>subjects</u> taught</i> Period of contribution: <i>At least 3 years</i>	Sphere of esteem, impact, Influence: <i>Within and possibly beyond the <u>subjects</u> taught</i> Period of contribution: <i>At least 3 years</i>	Sphere of esteem, impact, Influence: <i>Not Generally Applicable</i> Period of contribution:
	Teaching Focused (TF)	Sphere of esteem, impact, Influence: <i>Within the <u>subjects</u> and <u>programs</u> in which they teach</i> Period of contribution: <i>At least 3 years</i>	Sphere of esteem, impact, Influence: <i>Within the <u>subjects</u> and <u>programs</u> in which they teach</i> Period of contribution: <i>At least 3 years</i>	Sphere of esteem, impact, Influence: <i>Within the <u>subjects</u> and <u>programs</u> in which they teach</i> Period of contribution: <i>At least 3 years</i>	Sphere of esteem, impact, Influence: <i>Not Generally Applicable</i> Period of contribution:
Level 3 (Assistant Professor)	Research and Teaching (RT)	Sphere of esteem, impact, Influence: <i>Within the <u>subjects</u> and <u>programs</u> in which they teach</i> Period of contribution: <i>At least 3 to 5 years</i>	Sphere of esteem, impact, Influence: <i>Within the <u>subjects</u> and <u>programs</u> in which they teach</i> Period of contribution: <i>At least 3 to 5 years</i>	Sphere of esteem, impact, Influence: <i>Within the <u>subjects</u> and <u>programs</u> in which they teach</i> Period of contribution: <i>At least 3 to 5 years</i>	Sphere of esteem, impact, Influence: <i>Within the organisational unit for which they are responsible</i> Period of contribution: <i>For the period of appointment</i>
	Teaching Focused (TF)	Sphere of esteem, impact, Influence: <i>Within and beyond the <u>subjects</u> & <u>programs</u> in which they teach</i> Period of contribution: <i>At least 3 to 5 years</i>	Sphere of esteem, impact, Influence: <i>Within and beyond the <u>subjects</u> & <u>programs</u> in which they teach</i> Period of contribution: <i>At least 3 to 5 years</i>	Sphere of esteem, impact, Influence: <i>Within and beyond the <u>subjects</u> & <u>programs</u> in which they teach</i> Period of contribution: <i>At least 3 to 5 years</i>	Sphere of esteem, impact, Influence: <i>Within the organisational unit for which they are responsible</i> Period of contribution: <i>For the period of appointment</i>
Level 4 (Associate Professor)	Research and Teaching (RT)	Sphere of esteem, impact, Influence: <i>Within & possibly beyond the <u>school</u>, discipline & profession</i> Period of contribution: <i>At least 5 to 7 years</i>	Sphere of esteem, impact, Influence: <i>Within and possibly beyond the <u>school</u>, discipline & profession</i> Period of contribution: <i>At least 5 to 7 years</i>	Sphere of esteem, impact, Influence: <i>Within the <u>subjects</u> and <u>programs</u> in which they teach</i> Period of contribution: <i>At least 5 to 7 years</i>	Sphere of esteem, impact, Influence: <i>Within and beyond the org unit for which they are responsible</i> Period of contribution: <i>For the period of appointment</i>
	Teaching Focused (TF)	Sphere of esteem, impact, Influence: <i>Within and possibly beyond the <u>faculty</u>, discipline & profession</i> Period of contribution: <i>At least 5 to 7 years</i>	Sphere of esteem, impact, Influence: <i>Within and possibly beyond the <u>faculty</u>, discipline & profession</i> Period of contribution: <i>At least 5 to 7 years</i>	Sphere of esteem, impact, Influence: <i>Within the <u>subjects</u> and <u>programs</u> in which they teach</i> Period of contribution: <i>At least 5 to 7 years</i>	Sphere of esteem, impact, Influence: <i>Within and beyond the org unit for which they are responsible</i> Period of contribution: <i>For the period of appointment</i>
Level 5 (Full Professor)	Research and Teaching (RT)	Sphere of esteem, impact, Influence: <i>Within and possibly beyond the <u>faculty</u>, discipline & profession</i> Period of contribution: <i>At least 7 years</i>	Sphere of esteem, impact, Influence: <i>Within and possibly beyond the <u>faculty</u>, discipline & profession</i> Period of contribution: <i>At least 7 years</i>	Sphere of esteem, impact, Influence: <i>Within the <u>subjects</u> and <u>programs</u> in which they teach</i> Period of contribution: <i>At least 7 years</i>	Sphere of esteem, impact, Influence: <i>Within and beyond the unit for which they have responsibility.</i> Period of contribution: <i>For the period of appointment</i>
	Teaching Focused (TF)	Sphere of esteem, impact, Influence: <i>Within and possibly beyond the <u>institution</u>, discipline/profession</i> Period of contribution: <i>At least 7 years</i>	Sphere of esteem, impact, Influence: <i>Within and possibly beyond the <u>institution</u>, discipline/profession</i> Period of contribution: <i>At least 7 years</i>	Sphere of esteem, impact, Influence: <i>Within the <u>subjects</u> and <u>programs</u> in which they teach</i> Period of contribution: <i>At least 7 years</i>	Sphere of esteem, impact, Influence: <i>Within and beyond the org unit for which they are responsible</i> Period of contribution: <i>For the period of appointment</i>



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Table 3: Overall standards that apply to each type and level of appointment

	Level of Appointment				
Standard	Level I – TUTOR	Level II – LECTURER	LEVEL III – ASSISTANT PROFESSOR	LEVEL IV – ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR	LEVEL V – FULL PROFESSOR
Overall Standards for R&T and TF appointments at each level	The individual should be recognised and possibly ESTEEMED as an EFFECTIVE and REFLECTIVE teacher practitioner, with positive IMPACT and INFLUENCE on student learning and experience, WITHIN the SUBJECTS they teach.	The individual should be recognised and ESTEEMED as an EFFECTIVE and REFLECTIVE teacher practitioner, leader and manager, with positive SUSTAINED IMPACT and INFLUENCE on student learning and experience, WITHIN and possibly BEYOND the SUBJECTS they teach.	The individual should be recognised and ESTEEMED as an EFFECTIVE, SCHOLARLY, and REFLECTIVE teacher practitioner, leader and manager, with positive SUSTAINED IMPACT and INFLUENCE on teaching and learning, WITHIN and possibly BEYOND the PROGRAM(S) in which they teach.	The individual should be recognised and ESTEEMED as an ACCOMPLISHED, SCHOLARLY, and REFLECTIVE teacher practitioner, leader and manager, with positive SUSTAINED IMPACT and INFLUENCE on teaching and learning, WITHIN and possibly BEYOND their SCHOOL .	The individual should be recognised and ESTEEMED as an EXPERT, SCHOLARLY, and REFLECTIVE teacher practitioner, leader and manager, with positive SUSTAINED IMPACT and INFLUENCE on teaching and learning, WITHIN and possibly BEYOND their FACULTY .
General Standards in terms of Key Indicators for each level	RT Appointments The individual should provide evidence from their STUDENTS and PEERS , of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recognition and possibly ESTEEM for being an EFFECTIVE teacher practitioner in their discipline/profession, in the areas of learning facilitation and reflective practice. 2. Their positive IMPACT on the learning outcomes and experiences of their students. 3. Their positive INFLUENCE on the approaches to learning adopted by their students. 4. SUSTAINED and regular: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review and reflection, based on feedback from students and peers, on their teaching and its IMPACT on their students' learning and experience. • participation in PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT activities focused on effective facilitation of student learning. TF Appointments In addition to the above, the individual should provide evidence, from students and peers WITHIN and possibly BEYOND the SUBJECTS in which they teach, of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Recognition and possibly ESTEEM for their: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • capacity to design learning activities, assessment tasks, feedback strategies and learning environments that EFFECTIVELY scaffold and support student learning. • reflective, EVIDENCE BASED approach to the ongoing development of their teaching. 6. Their INFLUENCE on the approaches to teaching adopted by their peers as a result of them sharing their approaches to teaching with others. 	RT Appointments The individual should provide evidence from their STUDENTS and PEERS of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recognition and ESTEEM for being an EFFECTIVE teacher practitioner in their discipline/profession, in the areas of learning facilitation, educational design, and reflective practice. 2. Their positive IMPACT on the learning outcomes and experiences of students and on the continuing development of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • learning activities • assessment and feedback strategies • learning environments deployed and utilized WITHIN the SUBJECT(S) for which they are responsible. 3. Their positive INFLUENCE on their students' approaches to learning. 4. SUSTAINED performance as an EFFECTIVE teacher practitioner in the areas of learning facilitation, educational design, and reflective practice for at least 3 years. TF Appointments In addition to the above, the individual should provide evidence, from WITHIN and possibly BEYOND the PROGRAMS in which they teach, of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Recognition and ESTEEM from peers for their engagement with, understanding and use of, the scholarship of teaching and learning in their discipline/ profession, in exercising their roles as teacher practitioner, leader and manager. 6. The positive IMPACT and INFLUENCE of their KNOWLEDGE of the scholarship of teaching and learning on the design, development and adoption of research or evidence-based approaches to educational design, learning facilitation, and review/evaluation of learning/ teaching/curricula WITHIN and possibly BEYOND the SUBJECTS they teach. 	RT Appointments The individual should provide evidence from STUDENTS and PEERS from WITHIN the PROGRAM(S) in which they teach of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recognition and ESTEEM for being an EFFECTIVE, scholarly, and reflective, teacher practitioner, leader, and manager in their discipline/profession. 2. Their positive IMPACT on the learning outcomes and experiences of students and on the quality of the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • learning activities • assessment and feedback strategies • learning environments deployed and utilized WITHIN the PROGRAM(S) in which they teach. 3. Their positive INFLUENCE on students' approaches to learning. 4. SUSTAINED performance in ALL FOUR core dimensions of teaching (learning facilitation, educational design, reflective and scholarly teaching) for at least 3 to 5 years. TF Appointments In addition to the above, the individual should provide evidence, from WITHIN and possibly BEYOND their SCHOOL , of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Recognition and ESTEEM from peers for their SUBSTANTIAL engagement with, understanding of and developing capacity for contribution to, the scholarship of teaching and learning WITHIN the area of their disciplinary/ professional expertise. 6. The positive IMPACT and INFLUENCE of their LEADERSHIP on the design, development, dissemination and adoption of INNOVATIVE approaches to educational design, learning facilitation, and the review/evaluation of learning/teaching/curricula, WITHIN and possibly BEYOND their SCHOOL. 	RT Appointments The individual should provide evidence from STUDENTS and PEERS from WITHIN their SCHOOL of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recognition and ESTEEM for being an ACCOMPLISHED, scholarly and reflective teacher practitioner, leader and manager in their discipline/profession. 2. Their positive IMPACT on the learning outcomes and experiences of students, and on the quality of the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • learning activities • assessment and feedback strategies • learning environments deployed and utilized WITHIN their SCHOOL in their area of disciplinary/ professional expertise. 3. Their positive INFLUENCE on students' approaches to learning. 4. SUSTAINED performance in ALL FOUR core dimensions of teaching (learning facilitation, educational design, reflective and scholarly teaching) for at least 5 to 7 years. TF Appointments In addition to the above, the individual should provide evidence, from WITHIN and possibly BEYOND their FACULTY , of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Recognition and ESTEEM from peers for their DEEP engagement with, understanding of and regular contributions to the scholarship of teaching and learning WITHIN and possibly BEYOND the area of their disciplinary/ professional expertise. 6. The positive IMPACT and INFLUENCE of their LEADERSHIP on the design, development, dissemination and adoption of INNOVATIVE approaches to educational design, learning facilitation, and the review/evaluation of learning/ teaching/curricula, WITHIN and possibly BEYOND their FACULTY, for a SUSTAINED period. 	RT Appointments The individual should provide evidence from STUDENTS and PEERS from WITHIN their FACULTY of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recognition and ESTEEM for being an EXPERT, scholarly and reflective teacher practitioner, leader and manager in their discipline/ profession. 2. Their positive IMPACT on the learning outcomes and experiences of students, and on the quality of the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • learning activities • assessment and feedback strategies • learning environments deployed and utilized WITHIN their FACULTY in their area of disciplinary/ professional expertise. 3. Their positive INFLUENCE on students' approaches to learning. 4. SUSTAINED performance in ALL FOUR core dimensions of teaching (learning facilitation, educational design, reflective and scholarly teaching) for at least 7 years. TF Appointments In addition to the above, the individual should provide evidence, from WITHIN and BEYOND their INSTITUTION , of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Recognition and ESTEEM from peers for their DEEP and EXTENSIVE engagement with, understanding of, and contributions to the scholarship of teaching and learning WITHIN and BEYOND the area of their disciplinary/ professional expertise. 6. The positive IMPACT and INFLUENCE of their LEADERSHIP on the design, development, dissemination and adoption of INNOVATIVE approaches to the governance, management and/or practice of teaching, WITHIN and BEYOND their INSTITUTION, for a SUSTAINED period.

More information concerning:

- the **standards for assessing teaching from the perspective of each of the different roles** (teacher practitioner, teacher leader and teacher manager) that teachers engage in at different levels and in different types of appointment;
- the **types of evidence** that might be provided by applicants in support of promotion, appointment, or performance review at each of these levels in terms of each role and dimension of teaching;
- the **research process or evidence-base** upon which the TSI has been developed, or
- the **definitions of key terms** used throughout this document

can be found in the **full description of the framework**, and the **project reports** produced while the framework was in development.

For these and further information concerning the U21 Teaching Standards Framework and its development see the [U21 Teaching Indicators](#) website.

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