

# DRONĀ

Certification Scheme for Teaching Professionals in Higher Education Institutions

## Applicant Manual

*A Learning Reference for Applicants*

Version 1.0

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*This manual walks you through the entire DRONĀ certification journey — from checking your eligibility to receiving your certificate — with real screen illustrations from the actual applicant portal. It complements, and does not replace, the DRONĀ Certification Scheme Manual and Competence Standard.*

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# 1. Overview: What DRONĀ Certifies

DRONĀ is a certification scheme, operated in accordance with ISO/IEC 17024, that independently assesses and certifies the competence of individual teaching professionals in Higher Education Institutions — not your institution, your department, or your qualifications on paper, but your demonstrated professional competence.

Successful applicants are certified at one of five progressive levels: Associate Faculty, Accredited Faculty, Senior Accredited Faculty, Distinguished Faculty, or Master Faculty — reflecting increasing depth of demonstrated competence, not simply years of service.

*Every submission is reviewed by qualified human Assessors against a published rubric, with an AI Assessor providing an additional, advisory review. Neither makes the final decision alone — that rests with an independent Certification Committee. You can read exactly how this works in Section 9.*

## 2. Are You Eligible?

Before registering, check that you meet two conditions:

- A minimum of two years of relevant professional experience, counted from the date you obtained the minimum educational qualification required for your teaching position or role. Experience gained before that qualifying degree does not count.
- The minimum educational qualification prescribed for your teaching position, discipline, and institution type by the relevant statutory or regulatory authority (for example, UGC or AICTE norms).

You should also be actively engaged in one or more recognized academic activities — teaching, research, academic administration with a teaching responsibility, clinical or industry-based teaching, curriculum development, student mentoring, or educational innovation.

### 3. Registering Your Application

Registration collects your basic professional details once — you won't need to re-enter them later. Along with your name, employee ID, institutional email, department, and designation, you'll be asked for:

- Your Aadhaar number — used only for identity reference on your certificate. No document upload or verification is performed at this step.
- When your teaching service began — this determines which academic years you'll report on once you start filling in domains.
- Your CV (PDF or Word) — used to cross-check your teaching experience automatically as part of the eligibility pre-qualifier.



## Accreditation Framework for Teaching Professionals in Higher Education Institutions

REGISTER & CHECK ELIGIBILITY

### STEP 1 — REGISTER

#### Register for DRONĀ - Accreditation Framework for Teaching Professionals in Higher Education Institutions

Basic details, used across your entire application. You'll enter this only once.

**Full name\***

**Employee ID\***

**Institutional email\***

**Department**

**Designation**

**Aadhaar Number\***

Used only for identity reference on your certificate — no document upload or verification is performed here.

**Institution name**

**When did your teaching service begin?\***

Used to work out which academic years you're eligible to report once you start filling domains.

Month...

Year...

### STEP 3 — ELIGIBILITY PRE-QUALIFIER

Upload your CV so we can cross-check your teaching experience automatically.

**Upload your CV (PDF or Word)**

📎 Click to attach your CV

**Confirmed teaching experience (years)\***

Register & check eligibility →

The registration form — basic details, Aadhaar, service start date, and CV upload.

Enter your teaching service start date carefully — several domain indicators calculate which academic years you need to report on directly from this date.

## 4. Paying the Application Fee

Once your eligibility pre-qualifier passes, you'll be shown your RKIP ID and asked to pay the application fee — either by bank transfer (NEFT/RTGS/IMPS) to the account shown, or by scanning the UPI QR code with any payment app.

 **DRONĀ**

Accreditation Framework for Teaching Professionals in Higher Education Institutions

PAYMENT

STEP 1 — PRE-QUALIFIER RESULT

 **Dr. Rajesh Kumar** — Eligible for DRONĀ accreditation

RKIP ID: DRN-2026-000112

STEP 2 — PAY THE ACCREDITATION FEE

**Account details**

|                     |                                           |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| Name of the Account | RajKaruna (RK) Institutional Partners LLP |
| Bank                | HDFC Bank                                 |
| Current Account No. | 50200117110121                            |
| Branch              | Paramathi Road, Namakkal                  |
| IFSC                | HDFC0008181                               |

UPI payment QR code



Or scan this QR code with any UPI app (Google Pay, PhonePe, Paytm, etc.)

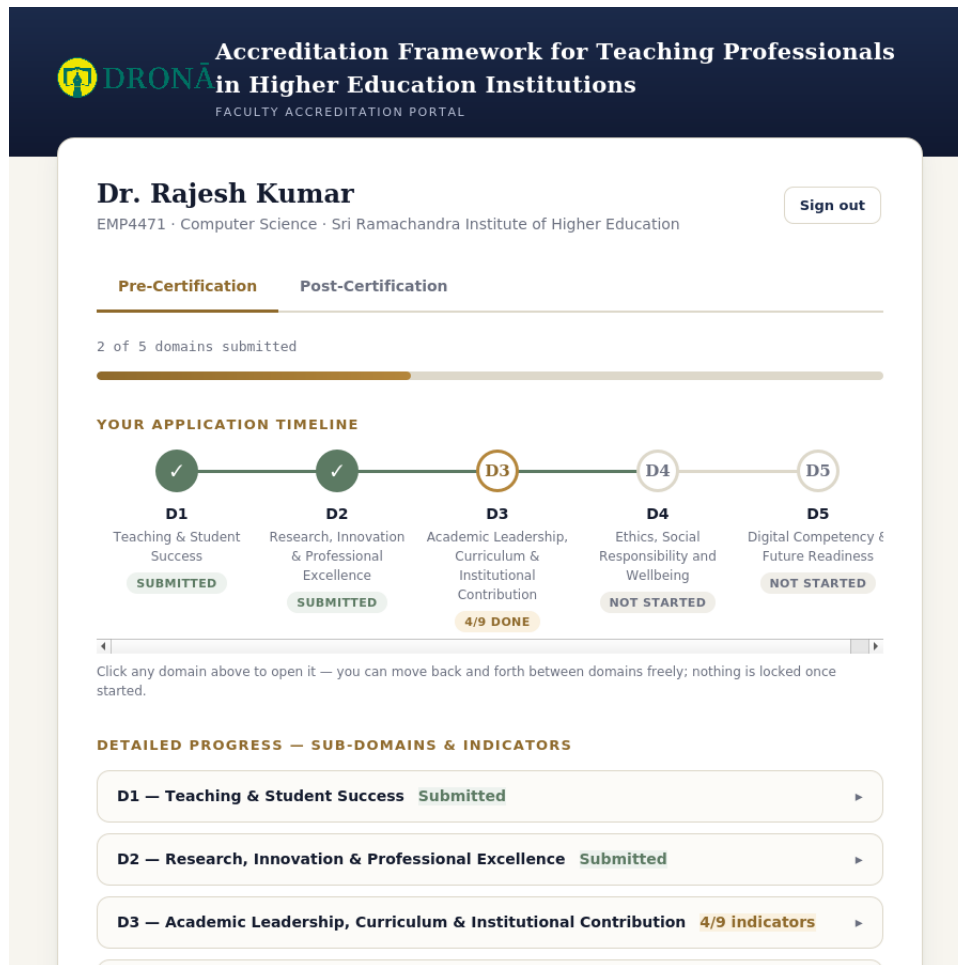
*The payment page — pre-qualifier confirmation, account details, and UPI QR code.*

After paying, enter your transaction details on this same page. Your payment is then verified manually against bank records by the Financial Admin — you'll receive your application portal link once that's confirmed.

*The application fee covers assessment and certification, but paying it does not itself guarantee certification, and it is non-refundable once paid — including if you later withdraw your application.*

## 5. Your Accreditation Hub

Once your access link arrives, the Accreditation Hub is where you'll spend most of your time. It shows a visual timeline across all five domains, your overall progress, and a detailed breakdown by sub-domain and indicator.



*The Accreditation Hub — your five-domain timeline and detailed progress.*

You can move between domains freely and in any order — nothing is locked until you actually submit that specific domain. Save a draft and come back later; your progress is preserved. Once all five domains show “Submitted,” you’ll see a prompt to finalize your accreditation category (Section 8).

## 6. Filling Out a Domain

Each domain is a step-by-step sequence of indicators — the progress bar at the top shows exactly how far through you are. Every indicator states its own maximum marks and, briefly, what it is actually assessing.

The screenshot shows a web interface for a domain assessment. At the top, there's a 'Sections' menu and a progress bar at 4%. Below this, the user's name 'Dr. Rajesh Kumar' is displayed, along with buttons for 'Save draft', 'Resume with your email...', and 'Resume'. The main content area is titled 'STEP 2 OF 24 · D1.1' and 'D1.1.1 — Courses Handled per Academic Year'. It indicates '10 marks' and describes the assessment: 'Assesses teaching workload — number of courses, UG/PG mix, student strength, and completion authenticity.' A note states: 'All 3 assessment years required (12 years of service). Unhandled years count as 0.' The form contains three sections for the years 2025-26, 2024-25, and 2023-24, each asking 'Did you handle any courses in [year]?' with 'Yes' and 'No' buttons. At the bottom, there is a checkbox for a truthfulness declaration: 'I am solely responsible for the truthfulness of the information entered on this page. I understand DRONĀ may verify this data through any mode with the authorities of the institute I am associated with.' Navigation buttons 'Back' and 'Continue' are at the bottom.

*A multi-year indicator — D1.1.1, Courses Handled per Academic Year, across three assessment years.*

### Multi-year indicators

Several indicators ask about the same thing across multiple academic years — calculated automatically from the service start date you gave at registration. If you didn't handle any courses in a given year, answer “No” for that year rather than leaving it blank — unhandled years count as zero, not as missing data.

### Evidence links

Most indicators ask for a link to supporting evidence — a Google Drive folder, an institutional record, a screenshot repository. Assessors open these directly during review, so make sure links are actually accessible to someone outside your own account, not restricted to “only me.”

### The truthfulness declaration

*Before you can continue past certain indicators, you must confirm: “I am solely responsible for the truthfulness of the information entered on this page. I understand DRONĀ may verify this data through any mode with the authorities of the institute I am associated with.” This is not a formality — evidence is independently verified, and misleading or fabricated evidence is treated as a serious integrity breach.*

## 7. The Five Domains at a Glance

Every applicant, regardless of category, is assessed across the same five domains, together worth a maximum of 1000 marks at their base weighting:

| Domain                                                            | Focus                                                                         | Base Marks   |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| D1 — Teaching & Student Success                                   | Teaching effectiveness, learning outcomes, mentoring, student development     | 350<br>(35%) |
| D2 — Research, Innovation & Professional Excellence               | Research impact, innovation, consultancy, professional recognition            | 350<br>(35%) |
| D3 — Academic Leadership, Curriculum & Institutional Contribution | Academic governance, curriculum innovation, institutional quality, leadership | 100<br>(10%) |
| D4 — Ethics, Social Responsibility & Wellbeing                    | Professional ethics, inclusivity, societal contribution, sustainability       | 100<br>(10%) |
| D5 — Digital Competency & Future Readiness                        | Digital transformation, AI integration, future-oriented academic practice     | 100<br>(10%) |

*There is no minimum score required in any single domain — what matters is your aggregate across all five. A genuine weakness in one domain does not automatically disqualify a strong application overall.*

# 8. Finalizing: Choosing Your Category

Once all five domains are submitted, you choose one of three certification categories. All three are assessed against the same five domains — the difference is how D1 and D2 are weighted relative to each other:

| Category                      | D1 / D2 Weighting                                                 |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Teaching-Intensive Faculty    | $D1 \times (500/350) \cdot D2 \times (200/350)$ — D3–D5 unchanged |
| Research-Intensive Faculty    | $D1 \times (200/350) \cdot D2 \times (500/350)$ — D3–D5 unchanged |
| Teaching and Research Faculty | All domains retained as-is                                        |

 **DRONĀ** FINAL STEP FACULTY ACCREDITATION

Dr. Rajesh Kumar

Switch applicant

STEP 1 — CHOOSE YOUR ACCREDITATION CATEGORY

All five domains are submitted. Based on your scores, we suggest a category below — but the choice is yours.

☒ **Category 1 — Teaching-Intensive Faculty**  
For applicants whose contribution is strongest in teaching and student success.  
D1:  $\times (500/350)$  · D2:  $\times (200/350)$  · D3–D5 unchanged

☐ **Category 2 — Research-Intensive Faculty**  
For applicants whose contribution is strongest in research and innovation.  
D1:  $\times (200/350)$  · D2:  $\times (500/350)$  · D3–D5 unchanged

☐ **Category 3 — Teaching and Research Faculty**  
For applicants with a well-rounded contribution across teaching and research.  
All domains retained as-is

| Domain                                       | Score         |
|----------------------------------------------|---------------|
| D1 — Teaching & Student Success              | 442.86        |
| D2 — Research & Innovation                   | 108.57        |
| D3 — Academic Contribution & Leadership      | 78            |
| D4 — Professionalism & Social Responsibility | 65            |
| D5 — Digital & Future Readiness              | 70            |
| <b>Final Total</b>                           | <b>764.43</b> |

764.43

STEP 2 — ADDITIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS

These aren't scored automatically — a super-admin will apply appropriate weightage during final assessment.

Have you cleared a competitive exam (GATE / NET / SLET / etc.)?

Yes

No

Do you hold a proficiency certificate (TOEFL / GRE / IELTS / AI-related / etc.)?

Yes

No

Finalize my application →

*Choosing your category — a category is suggested from your own scores, but the choice is yours.*

The system suggests a category based on your actual D1/D2 scores, but you can choose any of the three. You'll also declare any competitive exams cleared (GATE/NET/SLET, etc.) or proficiency certificates held (TOEFL/GRE/IELTS, etc.) — these aren't scored automatically, but are considered during final assessment.

*Choose thoughtfully: this category determines how your D1 and D2 scores are scaled into your final total, and therefore which certification level you're likely to reach.*

## 9. What Happens After You Submit

Once you finalize, your application moves into assessment — a structured, multi-layered review where no single person or system makes the final call alone.

- An Assessor, assigned specifically to your application, independently reviews every indicator across all five domains against the published rubric.
- An AI Assessor also reviews the same evidence — its role is advisory only; it never makes or influences the final decision on its own.
- A Lead Assessor consolidates the Assessor's and the AI's findings for each domain into a single, reconciled position.
- Once all five domains are consolidated, an independent Certification Committee reviews the complete case and decides whether to grant certification. Nobody who assessed your application takes part in this decision.
- Your result is published, and if successful, your certificate is issued with a unique DRONĀ ID, a verifiable QR code, and your certification level.



**DRONĀ**  
Faculty Accreditation Framework  
Certification Scheme for Teaching Professionals in Higher Education  
Institutions

# Certified Teaching Professional

This is to certify that

*Dr. Rajesh Kumar*

Associate Professor, Department of Computer Science, Sri Ramachandra Institute of Higher Education  
Aadhaar: XXXX XXXX 0123

has satisfied the requirements of the DRONĀ Certification Scheme,  
operated in accordance with the principles of ISO/IEC 17024 —  
Conformity assessment: General requirements for bodies operating  
certification of persons — and is hereby awarded the credential of  
Certified Teaching Professional.

**Certification Level: Senior Accredited Faculty**

**Scope of Certification Category: Teaching-Intensive Faculty**

|                   |               |               |            |
|-------------------|---------------|---------------|------------|
| DRONĀ ID          | ISSUED        | VALID UNTIL   | SCORE      |
| DRONĀ/2026/000112 | 14 April 2026 | 14 April 2029 | 620 / 1000 |



**Authorised Signatory**  
Certification Body at DRONĀ



Scan to verify



NABCB  
National Accreditation Board

ISO/IEC 17024  
Conformity Assessment

IAF  
Int'l Accreditation Forum

**DRONĀ CERTIFICATION — CATEGORIES & LEVELS REFERENCE**

| CERTIFICATION CATEGORIES                                                                  | CERTIFICATION LEVELS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |       |                           |                             |         |                              |         |                                     |         |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|---------|------------------------------|---------|-------------------------------------|---------|
| Teaching-Intensive Faculty<br>Research-Intensive Faculty<br>Teaching and Research Faculty | <table><tr><th>Level</th><th>Aggregate Score (of 1000)</th></tr><tr><td>Level 1 — Associate Faculty</td><td>200-350</td></tr><tr><td>Level 2 — Accredited Faculty</td><td>351-500</td></tr><tr><td>Level 3 — Senior Accredited Faculty</td><td>501-650</td></tr></table> | Level | Aggregate Score (of 1000) | Level 1 — Associate Faculty | 200-350 | Level 2 — Accredited Faculty | 351-500 | Level 3 — Senior Accredited Faculty | 501-650 |
| Level                                                                                     | Aggregate Score (of 1000)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |       |                           |                             |         |                              |         |                                     |         |
| Level 1 — Associate Faculty                                                               | 200-350                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |       |                           |                             |         |                              |         |                                     |         |
| Level 2 — Accredited Faculty                                                              | 351-500                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |       |                           |                             |         |                              |         |                                     |         |
| Level 3 — Senior Accredited Faculty                                                       | 501-650                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |       |                           |                             |         |                              |         |                                     |         |

Your certificate — with your masked Aadhaar reference, DRONĀ ID, level, category, and final score.

You will not see indicator-level marks in this portal at any point — only your final result. Assessment scores are for the Assessor Panel and Certification Committee's use, not displayed back to applicants.

# 10. Certification Levels

Your final score — the sum of your verified marks across all five domains, out of 1000 — determines your certification level:

| Level   | Title                     | Score Range |
|---------|---------------------------|-------------|
| Level 1 | Associate Faculty         | 200 – 350   |
| Level 2 | Accredited Faculty        | 351 – 500   |
| Level 3 | Senior Accredited Faculty | 501 – 650   |
| Level 4 | Distinguished Faculty     | 651 – 800   |
| Level 5 | Master Faculty            | 801 – 1000  |

## 11. After Certification: Staying Certified

Certification isn't a one-time event — your Accreditation Hub has a separate “Post-Certification” tab once you're certified, covering:

- **Validity** — your certificate is valid for a defined period, subject to annual surveillance.
- **Continuing Professional Development (CPD)** — you're expected to keep developing professionally through activities like faculty development programmes, research, industry engagement, and digital skill-building, and to demonstrate this at each surveillance check.
- **Recertification** — ahead of your certificate's expiry, you go through a recertification cycle to confirm your continued competence and renew for the next period.
- **Progression** — you may apply to progress to a higher level or change category once you've held your current certification for a minimum qualifying period and meet the requirements for the level you're seeking.

## 12. If You Disagree With a Decision: Appeals

You may appeal a certification decision. Appeals must be submitted within 7 days of the decision being announced, and the Appeals Committee must communicate its own decision within 30 days of receiving your appeal.

When you appeal, you select which domain(s) you're disputing and explain your reason — be specific about which indicator(s) you believe were scored incorrectly, and why.

**DRONĀ — Appeal a Certification Result**

Your appeal must be submitted by **4/21/2026** — 7 days from when your result was announced. An appeal fee applies, and appeals are reviewed indicator-by-indicator by a new, independent assessor who was not involved in your original assessment.

**Which domain(s) are you disputing?**

☐ D1 — Teaching & Student Success

☐ D2 — Research, Innovation & Professional Excellence

☐ D3 — Academic Leadership, Curriculum & Institutional Contribution

☐ D4 — Ethics, Social Responsibility and Wellbeing

☐ D5 — Digital Competency & Future Readiness

**Reason for your appeal**

Be specific — which indicator(s), and why you believe the score should be reconsidered.

☐ I understand an appeal fee applies.

**Submit Appeal →**

*The appeal form — select the disputed domain(s), state your reason, and confirm the appeal fee.*

*An appeal fee applies, separate from your original application fee. Your appeal is reviewed indicator-by-indicator by a new, independent assessor who was not involved in your original assessment — nobody who assessed or decided your original case takes part in reviewing your appeal.*

## 13. Confidentiality of Your Information

All information you submit — your evidence, your scores, your remarks from assessors — is treated as confidential throughout the application, assessment, and certification process, visible only to the personnel directly involved in reviewing your case.

Your Aadhaar number is stored for identity reference only. When shown on your certificate, it is masked to only its last four digits — the full number is never displayed or exported.

## 14. Quick Reference

| Situation                                        | What to do                                                                   |
|--------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| You didn't handle any courses in a reported year | Answer "No" for that year — it counts as zero, not missing                   |
| You want to pause and come back later            | Save a draft — nothing is locked until you submit that domain                |
| You're not sure which category to pick           | The system suggests one from your own D1/D2 scores — but the choice is yours |
| You want to know your indicator-level marks      | You won't see them — only your final result is shown to applicants           |
| You disagree with your certification result      | Appeal within 7 days of the decision being announced                         |
| Your certificate is approaching expiry           | Complete your CPD requirements and go through recertification                |

*This manual complements, and does not replace, the DRONĀ Certification Scheme Manual, Competence Standard, and Application & Registration Policy. Where any statement here appears to conflict with those documents, the policies and the live system behavior govern.*