

COMMON AWARDS

Update for TEIs

24th September 2018

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For Action by TEIs:

1. October & November deadlines

We would be very grateful if TEIs could take a note of the following upcoming deadlines for submission of data or information relating to student records and curriculum development processes:

5th October: the deadline for TEIs to submit [new student programme registration data](#). Please note that for those TEIs using Moodle, you no longer need to use our template spreadsheets but should be able to download the data in the required format from Moodle, and send us the .csv or .excel file

31st October: the deadline for TEIs to submit Board of Examiners membership lists

31st October: the deadline for TEIs to submit [curriculum development](#) changes for late programmes

3rd November: the deadline for TEIs to submit student photographs for [campus card production](#). Please note that our IT department have been very clear this year that any photos received after this deadline won't be printed until the next production in May.

Further deadlines can be found in our [2018/19 calendar of deadlines and events](#)

2. Submission of TEI policies

TEI's are reminded to submit any policies relating to Common Awards which may have been amended by TEI's over the summer, in anticipation of the new academic year. Changes to Policies relating to matters such as Admissions, APL, Complaints and Appeals, Placements etc. require approval by the Chair of the Management Board. Please contact the Common Awards team if you are unsure if a policy needs consideration by Prof. Higton.

3. Student Representation

If you haven't already done so, we would be grateful if you could **send us the names and email addresses of your TEI student representatives elected for 2018-19** (with their permission), and any information on your student representation structure if possible.

We will be putting the Common Awards Management Board student representatives in touch with TEI student representatives to share good practice, and look at how best feedback can be shared between students in TEIs and the Management Board.

For Information:

4. Update to TEI Board of Examiners' responsibilities

The Common Awards team updated the [Accreditation of Prior Learning \(APL\) guidance](#) in early 2018, and the revised guidance included a clarification that TEIs should ensure that judgement about APL applications should be made by competent people. This would normally mean that any given APL application would be scrutinised by someone in the TEI who assesses work in the relevant area and at the relevant levels within Common Awards, and that this person's recommendation would be confirmed by a subcommittee of the Board of Examiners.

Following this update, the [terms of reference for TEI Board of Examiners](#) have been updated to include the following responsibility:

- 'considering and ratifying the approval of applications of Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL)'

TEIs are asked to ensure that their own records and processes are updated to reflect this. Please note that for the purposes of this process specifically, a TEI's Management Committee may act as a sub-committee of the Board of Examiners. Please note that all approved APL requests should be reported at the TEI's Board of Examiners.

5. Amended entry requirements for international students entering Level 4 programmes

The University's Quality and Standards Sub-Committee approved a recommendation from the Common Awards Management Board to **raise the Common Awards IELTS requirements to 6.5 with no component under 6** for programmes V60446 (CertHE 120), V60346 (CertHE 180) and V60444 (Foundation Award).

The new entry requirements will apply from January 2019 entry onwards, and bring Common Awards in line with Durham University, who require an IELTS of 6.5 with no component under 6 for direct entry to Level 4 programmes.

The overarching Common Awards 2018/19 entry requirements can be found [here](#).

6. ASE Form (Section B)

TEIs are asked to note that the Section B Annual Self Evaluation Form (ASE) has been updated. The form now asks TEIs to provide an early indication of any expected curriculum development requests likely to be submitted to the University in January 2019 or May 2019. This will enable the Common Awards team to provide tailored support to TEIs. Please note that this does not preclude TEIs from requesting curriculum development changes if unknown at the time of completing the ASE form.

To help further support TEIs in this area, the form has also been updated to request the identification of any good practice within TEIs in relation to student engagement and student representation (for more information see Item 3). Please note that this is in addition to the general identification of good practice within TEIs.

7. Updates to Common Awards policies and processes

TEIs are asked to note the following updates to policies and processes:

a) External Examiners

The University's Quality and Standards Sub-Committee approved proposals to allow TEI staff to act as External Examiners for other TEIs. External Examiner appointments are in the process of being made for 2018-19.

b) Assessment Information

Assessment patterns

Amendments have been made to the Common Awards Assessment Patterns guidelines. In particular, the guidelines have been updated to reflect upper and lower parameters to permit TEIs further flexibility when setting their assessments. However, please remember that wherever a range is given for duration or word length (e.g., '2,000–2,500 words'), the TEI should choose from that range the word length to be set as a limit for students. This should be reflected on T4 Module Overview Tables.

[Module Assessment Patterns: Undergraduate Modules](#)
[Module Assessment Patterns: Postgraduate Modules](#)

Assessment types

A new Assessment Types overview document has been produced and published on the Common Awards website.

Assessment types

Assessment Guidelines

Assessment guidelines have been amended for portfolios, projects and oral presentations, and new guidance produced on assessed conversation.

Assessment Guidelines

Assessment criteria

Assessment criteria for assessed conversations has been created and published on the Common Awards website.

Assessment Criteria

c) Research Ethics Policy

The [Research Ethics Policy](#) has recently been amended to reflect the requirements of the new General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

d) Academic Conventions

The academic conventions guidance document has been revised. It is advisable – but not obligatory – for TEIs to adopt these conventions in order to promote parity across the Common Awards. The title of the document has also been updated to reflect the content of the information within.

[Academic Conventions, Quotations, References and Style for the Common Awards](#)

8. Winter Graduation 2019

Students

Students eligible for graduation (those who have successfully completed the BA, MA, Postgraduate Diploma or Postgraduate Certificate) will be invited to attend the graduation ceremony at 10am on **10th January 2019**, at Durham Cathedral. We will shortly be sending student invitation letters to TEIs, and registration will open in the middle of October.

We will also be hosting a post-ceremony **celebration event** in Durham for those attending graduation; further information will follow shortly.

TEI Staff

Members of staff in TEIs are also welcome to attend the Durham University graduation ceremony; the registration link will be sent to TEIs when it opens in October.

Academic Procession

Members of staff in TEIs who hold an undergraduate degree are eligible to participate in the academic procession for the Common Awards students. If you are interested in this please let the Common Awards team know as soon as possible.

9. Student parchments – reprint costs

From 1st October 2018, the Durham University parchments team will no longer be able to offer free re-print services to students who have lost their degree certificates or transcripts, or to TEIs who request reprints due to incorrect information being provided to the Common Awards team. Currently, Durham University students are charged for re-prints and so Common Awards students who have lost their documents will be charged in the same way.

The charges will be as follows:

- Replacement transcript: £12
- Replacement parchment: £35

The process will be as follows:

- Students who have misplaced their documents or who require a second copy will be able to visit the [Online Document Store](#) and purchase replacements themselves
- TEIs who have misplaced documents, or require reprints due to incorrect information being reported to the Common Awards team (eg incorrect DOB or spelling of name) will be charged annually as part of the invoicing processes.

Please note – TEIs will not be charged if Durham University or the Common Awards team are responsible for the error. To avoid TEI errors, please ensure that you send us **students' full legal names** and carefully check their date of births when providing us with registration details.

10. 2018/19 Calendar

We are pleased to let you know that the [Common Awards 2018/19 calendar of events and deadlines](#) is now available on our website.

11. TEI Forum

TEIs are asked to note that the next TEI Forum will take place on **10th October 2018** at Durham University. TEI Forum members can register their place [here](#). Please contact Dr Steve Summers directly with any agenda items.

12. Staffing Update

TEIs are asked to note that Leona Clarkson joined the team as Common Awards Assistant on 1st August 2018. Leona looks forward to working with you all.

Further information

If you have any questions relating to the Common Awards, please contact the team: common.awards@durham.ac.uk. With thanks and best wishes,

Rhianne Jones
24th September 2018