

# Bulletin

## COMMON AWARDS - DECEMBER 2020

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### Covid-19

Please continue to check the [FAQs](#), which outlines the advice and guidance from the Common Awards Team, as often as you are able. Please keep the Common Awards Team, and the National Ministry Team, up to date with your delivery plans for 2020/21. If you need to notify us of any changes please use the forms you originally submitted and indicate any updates using tracked changes.

All communications, updates and changes regarding Covid-19 will be communicated on [this FAQ section](#) and through emails to TEI Key Contacts and Principals. Please remember that the best way to contact the team is via the [common.awards@durham.ac.uk](mailto:common.awards@durham.ac.uk) email address. We continue to work from home and do not have access to the office phones.

Please note that the Common Awards No Detriment Policy is only approved for 2019-20 modules affected by Covid-19. It is hoped that the changes TEIs have made to delivery for 2020-21 will mitigate, proactively, for any future or continued effects of Covid-19. Students who were affected by

the effects of Covid-19 in 2019-20 but who are not yet due to complete their programme will still be considered for their award under the No Detriment Policy. More information be found [here](#).

## Upcoming Deadlines

1st December - Deadline: TEIs to submit changes of registration (to be captured in the Census)

1st December - Census Date

3rd December - DU Overarching Board of Examiners (Winter)

14th December - TEIs asked to circulate information on the Common Awards Management Board (CAMB) Student Representative nomination/election process

29th January - Deadline: TEIs to submit Common Awards Management Board (CAMB) Student Representative Nominations

29th January - Deadline: TEIs to submit Curriculum Development documents for new programmes and modules

## Curriculum Development

TEIs are required to submit Curriculum Development documents for new programmes and modules by 29th January 2021.

Further information on the approvals process is available [here](#).

## APL Policy Update

The Common Awards Team has made a small number of changes to our APL guidance. Most of these changes are intended to rectify small omissions, or to clarify things left implicit in our existing guidance. One element introduces a new restriction, to bring us into alignment with the University's wider APL policy, but the limit it imposes is one that only a tiny number of APL decisions made by TEIs have exceeded in the past. We are not expecting TEIs to revisit any APL decisions already made, but do expect the new rules to be used for all fresh APL applications from now on. Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any queries about these changes. Further details of the changes can be found in the communication sent to TEI key contacts on 8th December 2020.

The new guidance can be accessed [here](#).

## CAMB Student Elections

The Common Awards Management Board (CAMB) is a committee with responsibility for and oversight of the quality and standards of the overarching Common Awards partnerships and programmes. The membership of the Board includes students from TEIs who represent the whole of the Common Awards student body. Student representatives are able to contribute to Common Awards decision-making, policy development and the ongoing monitoring and development of Common Awards on a national level.

TEIs have recently been sent a communication for students on how they can nominate themselves for a CAMB representative position. Please ensure all communications are circulated to students. The deadline for student nominations for 21/22 is January 29<sup>th</sup>.

## Staff Development

Following on from the success of online professional development opportunities for TEI staff, the Durham Centre for Academic Development has now streamlined their programme to enable Common Awards staff to gain accreditation as teachers in Higher Education without having to enrol as students at the University. The new programme will commence on February 1st 2021 and provide participants with the opportunity to work through interactive online content in their own time, to discuss their learning with colleagues across the UK and with facilitators from DCAD, and to submit an Account of Professional Practice for the award of Associate Fellow of the HEA.

An introductory session was held on December 4th. For those who are interested in pursuing the course, please follow the registration guidance posted [here](#). The deadline for registrations is January 11th.

## Winter Congregation

TEIs were made aware of the following changes to the Winter Congregation 2021 ceremonies in November.

Due to the ongoing significant measures designed to manage the spread of Coronavirus and the latest advice available from Public Health England, the University has taken the decision to postpone Winter 2021 Congregation ceremonies. We acknowledge that this is very disappointing news. Many students and staff will have planned for these dates for some time. However, with the uncertain national situation, we feel that the health and safety of graduands and guests should be paramount.

These ceremonies will be rescheduled and are currently anticipated to take place in April 2021. Awards will still be legally conferred on 7th January 2021 'in absentia' and documents will be dispatched after this date. We expect that registrations for rescheduled ceremonies for Common Awards students will open in early 2021. The Common Awards Team will confirm this with TEIs in due course.

In anticipation of the registration process, we would ask that TEIs re-confirm contact details with all students eligible to attend the Congregation ceremony. This will ensure that all students who are eligible to attend the rescheduled ceremony will receive notification of the registration process when it opens. Please note that the University does not hold contact details for Common Awards students and we will therefore need to rely on TEIs being able to contact their students to advise them of the formal registration process.

Please note, the processes for registering for Congregation for Common Awards students differ to those registered directly at Durham University. Therefore, we would ask TEIs and students to follow this process, rather than any other information shared by the wider University (e.g. on the University website).

Students who previously deferred their attendance to the January 2021 ceremonies (from previous ceremonies e.g. July 2020) should have been contacted directly by the University's Ceremonies team

with further information and guidance on how to register. Students who have been contacted by the Ceremonies team will be required to follow information communicated with them directly, and not follow the process explained above.

We would ask that TEIs distribute this information to their Common Awards students and ask that students confirm their contact details for the purposes of registering for Graduation.

We will contact TEIs in the New Year to confirm the registration process.

## Transcripts and Parchments (Summer 2020)

Transcripts and parchments for Common Awards students who were considered by the Summer Overarching Board of Examiners (September) have been produced, packaged, and posted. TEIs have been contacted regarding this, and should expect to receive these documents shortly.

## Entry Requirements 2021-22

The standard entry requirements for all approved Common Awards programmes for 2021-22 have been approved by the Quality and Standards Sub-Committee. The entry requirements can be found on the [Common Awards website](#).

## God and Study Skills' Resources

These resources, which can be found on the Common Awards Hub, have been designed to help Common Awards students reflect theologically on some of the core skills involved in academic study, such as reading, writing and referencing.

More information about the God and Study Skills project can be found [here](#). The project team would be grateful if you could direct students to these resources as part of existing study skills provision within your TEI.

If you would like to develop a resource for the God and Study Skills project, we would be delighted to hear from you. To access the resources and for contact details, please click [here](#).

## Quoracy Requirements Guidance (TEI CAMC)

TEIs are asked to note that guidance on quoracy requirements for TEI Management Committees has been enhanced. The revised guidance provides further clarification in the areas of student representation, multi-centre TEI attendance, and what to do if a meeting is inquorate. You can find the enhanced guidance on the [Common Awards website](#).

TEIs are asked to note that the Management Board recommended that current TEI student representatives be invited to share their experiences in order to encourage other students to stand for election.

## TEI Management Committee Meeting Dates

TEIs are reminded to please provide the Common Awards Team with details of TEI Management Committee meetings for the remainder of 2020-21, if they have not done so already.

## Response to TEI Annual Self-Evaluations

The Common Awards Team is trialling a new process for responding to TEI Annual Self-Evaluation reports. The University's formal response to the submission and the ULO's annual report will be replaced by a conversation between a TEI and their ULO, which will be facilitated by the Common Awards Team. The conversation will provide an opportunity for both parties to reflect on the previous academic year, and highlight anything from the ASE report that they would like to discuss further.

A member of the Common Awards Team will take a record of the meeting, and provide a written report summarising the discussion following the meeting. We will be in touch shortly to arrange these meetings.

If you have not sent in your submission yet, please send to David Hanson at your earliest convenience.

## Christmas Office Closure

TEIs are asked to note that the Common Awards Office will close on the afternoon of Friday 18th December and reopen on Monday 4th January. TEIs are strongly advised to flag any urgent queries before 18th December.

We'd like to take this opportunity to thank our colleagues across all TEIs for their hard work throughout a unique year and to wish you all a Merry Christmas.

## Further Information

The full 20/21 academic calendar is available [here](#).

With thanks,

Mike, Frances, Eve, Alyson, Emma, Deborah, Rhianne and Adam