

Common Awards Bulletin

Summary of recent activity

The TEI Handbook

Recently we launched our online [TEI Handbook](#).

The handbook is designed to house all the most important information about the Common Awards policies, processes, and structures. It will also provide general guidance and supporting documents to help TEIs manage their programmes in line with the partnership agreement.

The *TEI Handbook* has 8 main sections:

Curriculum design & review	Admissions & enrolment
Assessment & exam boards	Student support
Student progress	Committees & governance
Partnership & contracts	Staffing & development

We will be adding more information to the handbook over the coming months. To keep up-to-date with any recent additions or changes to the handbook, sign-up to our [Common Awards Announcements](#) RSS feed.

We would be keen to know what you think about the handbook.

We have created a very [short online feedback form](#) to you to send us your thoughts and suggestions. We will review all feedback as and when it is received so that we can make sure we are providing you the information you want and need.

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Consultations

During June/July we launched 3 [consultations](#) in the following areas:

- **academic complaints**;
- **accreditation of prior learning** (APL);
- **the *TEI Handbook*** (see p.1).

We are very grateful to those members of staff in TEIs who provided feedback in response to the consultations.

We considered all the feedback carefully and updated our guidance in light of the constructive comments we received.

Consultation on Academic Complaints

The consultation on academic complaints was open from 12th June - 4th July.

The [outcomes of the consultation on academic complaints](#) are summarised on our website. Our guidance on academic complaints has been finalised and published in the *TEI Handbook*.

Action points for TEIs

TEIs are advised to:

- familiarise themselves with the [guidance on academic complaints](#);
- note the requirement for TEIs to produce their own academic complaints policy and procedure in line with the above guidance (*we have developed a flexible template to facilitate this*);
- submit their draft TEI academic complaints policy and procedure to the Common Awards Team for approval before **8th August 2014** (*as requested in our email to TEIs on 8th July, and in our [recent announcement](#)*);
- contact the Common Awards Team if there are any concerns regarding the submission of the TEI's academic complaints policy and procedure by the deadline stated above.

Consultation on APL

The consultation on APL was open from 19th June - 4th July.

The [outcomes of the consultation on APL](#) are summarised on our website. Our guidance on APL has been finalised and published in the *TEI Handbook*

Action points for TEIs

TEIs are advised to:

- familiarise themselves with the [guidance on APL](#);
- begin the process of considering individual APL claims in line with the guidance and template documents in the *TEI Handbook*;
- note the requirement for TEIs to produce their own brief APL policy in line with the above guidance;
- submit their draft APL policy to the Common Awards Team for approval once the document has been drafted (read our recent [announcement on APL](#) and [announcement on admissions/APL](#)). *TEIs are asked to note that they may wish to submit their APL policy at the same time as they submit their brief admissions policy (see p.5); however, this is not a requirement;*
- contact the Common Awards Team if there are any concerns regarding the submission of the TEI's APL policy.

Frequently Asked Questions

This month we expanded our '[Frequently Asked Questions](#)' (FAQs) pages of the Common Awards website. We hope that this bank of questions and answers will be a useful resource for staff in TEIs.

If you would like to see a particular question and answer on our website, the FAQs page enables you to [submit a question to the Common Awards Team](#). We will publish the question and answer on the FAQs page. (If your query is urgent, you might prefer to [contact us](#) directly.)



Management Board & Committees

We have published the full [Membership for the Common Awards Management Board](#) in the *TEI Handbook*. The only remaining members to be confirmed are:

- two members of the TEI Forum (we are in the process of electing two individuals to act as representatives in the interim);
- one student representative (to be appointed by the TEI Forum at its first meeting)

At present, we are working on a 'Schedule of Business' that will summarise the key items that will be considered at each meeting of the [Management Board](#) during 2014/15. Once it has been finalised, we will publish this document in the *TEI Handbook*.

Over the summer we will be developing a set of supporting documents that [TEI Management Committees](#) may wish to use to help them manage their business and report to the Management Board (e.g. agenda templates; action log templates; report templates).

If you have any suggestions of documents or materials you might find useful, please [contact us](#).

TEI Forum

During June we asked the Principals of each TEI to nominate 4 members of staff who would serve as members of the [TEI Forum](#). We are grateful for the quick responses we received. We have published the full [Membership of the TEI Forum](#) in the *TEI Handbook*.

An election process is being set up for the TEI Forum to appoint from among its members:

- [the chairperson of the TEI Forum](#);
- [two interim representatives on the Common Awards Management Board](#).

Members of the TEI Forum are invited to express an interest in standing for election to either or both of the above roles by **Mon. 21st July**.

Members of the TEI Forum can express an interest by completing the short online form via the hyperlinks above.

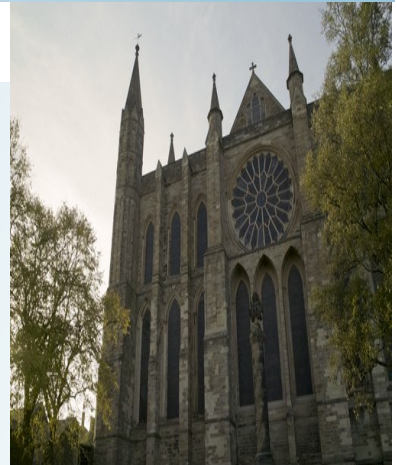


Admissions Guidance

Earlier this month we updated our guidance on [student recruitment and admissions](#) in the *TEI Handbook*.

While we have not altered substantially the guidance that was circulated to all TEIs in February, we hope that the additional information will help to clarify our expectations regarding TEI admissions policies and processes.

Alongside this, we have also developed guidance on the procedure for considering admissions complaints. Our [guidance on admissions complaints](#) is published in the *TEI Handbook*.



Action points for TEIs

TEIs are advised to:

- familiarise themselves with the updated guidance on [student recruitment and admissions](#);
- familiarise themselves with the new guidance on [admissions complaints](#);
- note the requirement for TEIs to produce their own admissions policies (*as mentioned in guidance circulated to all TEIs in February, and in a [recent announcement on admissions policies](#)*);
- submit their draft TEI admissions policy to the Common Awards Team for approval once the document has been drafted;
- (*while we have not specified a deadline for the submission of policies, we are aiming to approve as many TEI admissions policies **before September**. This is to make sure that all TEI policies can be approved before they are shared with potential applicants who are considering applying to enter the Common Awards programmes in 2015/16. If this is not possible, TEIs are reminded that they will still need to send us their admissions policies for approval before they finalise and publish them*);
- (*as mentioned on p.3, TEIs might wish to submit their draft admissions policy at the same time as they submit their draft APL policy; however, this is not a requirement.*)

Coming Soon...

The following activities are expected to be completed within the coming weeks:

Research webpages

Within the next few weeks we will be launching a new section of the Department of Theology and Religion's website that will be dedicated to the Common Awards Research Network. Once the website is fully developed, TEIs will be able to find out more about areas such as: the vision for Common Awards research; funding opportunities for staff in TEIs; current research projects; the dedicated team of researchers in Durham; online learning; events for staff in TEIs.

Update on student records developments

Durham University and Ministry Division are planning to issue a joint communication within the next couple of weeks to update TEIs on our plans for key processes (such as student records creation, programme and module registration, and marks entry) to be developed in such a way that Durham University's data requirements will be supplied via CAVLE wherever possible. The intention is that this will avoid any unnecessary duplication of effort and so also reduce the administrative burden on TEIs. While our work in this area is ongoing, we hope that TEIs will be interested to receive a brief update on the current status of these developments.

Annual Self Evaluation (ASE) consultation

Over the past few months, we have been working with Ministry Division to align our annual review processes so that TEIs will only need to complete one single annual review process for the purposes of Ministry Division and Durham University. At present we are finalising the report form and guidance. Once the documents have been finalised, a group of TEI practitioners will be 'test-running' the process. We will also publish the documents on our website as part of a wider online consultation with TEIs.

Periodic External Review (PER) schedule

Ministry Division will be contacting TEIs shortly to confirm the schedule of reviews for the joint Ministry Division and Durham University Periodic External Review process. Once TEIs have been informed of the schedule, we will publish the dates of the reviews for the Designated TEIs in the *TEI Handbook*.



Developments and Workloads

Over the summer we will be working to produce as much advice and guidance as we can in order to assist TEIs with the smooth introduction of the Common Awards programmes in September.

However, we are acutely aware that TEIs will have very limited time to respond to any requests for action over the summer period. Consequently, we will only ask TEIs to take action over the summer in circumstances where such action is urgent or unavoidable.

At this point we do not anticipate that TEIs will need to take any urgent action in areas other than those summarised in this bulletin.

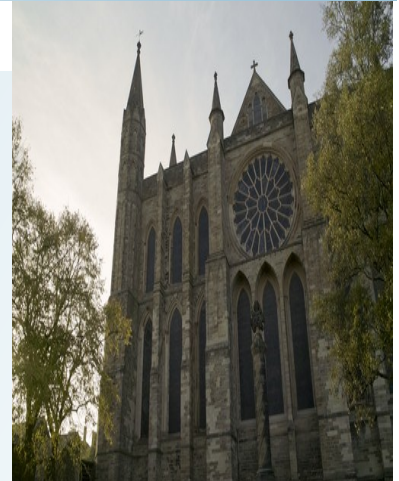
We will be updating our website regularly so that members of staff in TEIs can keep abreast of Common Awards developments. You can keep up-to-date by:

Signing-up to the RSS feed for the Common Awards announcements:

We will use the announcements to provide regular updates on all developments. Where applicable, we will provide links to other parts of our website, such as the *TEI Handbook* and the consultations pages;

Checking the bulletins webpage:

We will continue to produce bulletins to summarise key developments for TEIs. We will publish an announcement whenever we issue a new instalment of the bulletin.





Contact us

We are always interested to hear from members of staff in TEIs.

Is there something you would like us to address urgently?

Do you have suggestions to improve the way we work with you?

Please feel free to contact us using the details below.

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