LTC11D054

Title:	***Implementation of the Higher Education Achievement Record (HEAR)***
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Date:	19th March 2012
Circulation:	Learning and Teaching Committee – 28 March 2012
Agenda:	LTC11A004
Version:	Final
Status:	Open

Issue

The University will be required to produce a HEAR for all undergraduate students and this University is aiming to commence the issue of HEARs for those undergraduate students starting their courses in September 2012. We will consider how postgraduate students are handled once the undergraduate implementation has taken place. To facilitate this a small working group has been working with a consultant from Tribal (the University's Student Records System suppliers). This paper aims to update Learning and Teaching Committee on progress and seeks a decision on some key points.

Recommendation

Recipients are asked to note the contents of this document and make decisions where appropriate. The key decision requirements are detailed in Appendix 1.

Resource Implications

Development of the HEAR is being undertaken as part of the annual programme of work for the Student Records System and is taking place with colleagues from the Planning Office, Careers Centre and Learning and Teaching Service. Tribal consultancy has been obtained from within the existing consultancy budget. It is clear that there will be ongoing maintenance requirements but it is not yet clear they extent of these. These will be identified during the development phase.

When considering items for inclusion in section 6.1 it will be important to consider the workload across the entire University (including the Students' Union) and the likely availability of resource. It should also be remembered that the HEAR will evolve over time and students who commence in September 2012 will not graduate until July 2015 and by that time they will have had several iterations of their HEAR. Of course, we should be seeking to optimise the impact of the drafts that are visible to students during their studies but there is this overriding opportunity to improve the product during its life cycle.

Risk Implications

The University has to produce a HEAR for every undergraduate student. Currently we are in the middle tranche of Universities working towards HEAR projection but we have decided to aim to deliver a HEAR to all students who enter the University on, or after, 1st September 2012. Whilst there is some scope to manage slippage in this timetable such slippage would put at risk our ability to provide a HEAR and would also potentially jeopardise other development projects requiring support from the Student Administrative Systems team.

Equality and Diversity

A HEAR will be provided to every undergraduate student and production of the document in itself is not anticipated to have a detrimental effect on any student. However, some of the decisions in respect of section 6.1 of the HEAR could have equality and diversity implications and these will need to be considered when making those decisions.

Timing of decisions

The aim is to have the HEAR available for all students who commence courses during or after September 2012. Specific decisions requested in this paper will, unless otherwise noted, need to be taken at this meeting of LTC to ensure that the next consultancy event with Tribal is fully utilised.

Further Information

Further information is available from Ian Callaghan, Director of Planning (i.callaghan@uea.ac.uk extension 2227).

Background

Learning and Teaching Committee have discussed HEAR in July 2011. Relevant items may be found at: LTC (29.06.2011) (LTC10D100), Minute 93 (LTC10M007)

Discussion

Background to the HEAR
The HEAR is designed to offer enhanced information about a student's experience at University. The base data for the HEAR is the same as would be used for the EU Diploma Supplement (transcript) but there are some important differences. These are:

1. The HEAR is restricted to six pages in length (though in practice it will be delivered electronically);
2. It will include information about UK Higher Education (this is standard information);
3. It will include succinct information about the programme aims of the student's course, skills, attributes and knowledge associated with the programme of study. This will be combined with the results for the modules studied on the course (with the final overall mark being recorded, not the component parts);
4. It will include a new section, "Section 6.1" which will for the first time allow inclusion of information about student involvement in activities outside their course.

An example of the content of a HEAR and potential sources of data is shown at Appendix 2.

Matters to be resolved
During discussions about implementing the HEAR and as a result of the initial consultancy session a number of potential issues have been identified. These are detailed in Appendix 1 to this document. It will not necessarily be possible to obtain a definitive response at this meeting but the working group would welcome hearing the preferred direction of this Committee.

Production and publication of the HEAR
The HEAR will be published via a software solution called Gradintel. This is the preferred partner of Tribal (owner of SITS). This will require all students to register with Gradintel and this process will be managed from the Planning Office. From the point at which registration with Gradintel is undertaken the student will be able to view any HEAR based information that has been published by the University. Gradintel also offers a service which enables the student to build and maintain a standard CV which can then be tailored to suit any jobs for which they wish to apply. They will also be able to take part in other activities offered by Gradintel and these include areas such as personal profiling. Gradintel works with a number of employers and also offers a service where employers can search an anonymised database

of students registered to identify any who might match their recruitment requirements. If this facility is used by the student it can mean that they will receive an email or text message suggesting that their skills/profile matches with an employer's search profile and the message would invite the student to make contact with the employer. At no time would the employer receive the student's contact details direct and it is their choice to contact the employer.

Process for keeping LTC updated
The working group will keep LTC updated as the consultancy continues and the implementation phase is entered.

Appendix 1: Items requiring a decision

Item	Pros and cons	Approved Recommendation

What should be included in section 6.1?
It is important that items for inclusion are easily identified, easily verified and representative of the institution's aims/requirements. The HEAR is information that Universities are able to **validate** on behalf of students. They are **not** replacements for well written and targeted application forms and curriculum vitae. It is for the student to "sell" how they match the recruitment criteria for posts they wish to apply for.
 	
The following is a menu of potential options that might be included in section 6.1:
   (a) Students holding a committee role in a student society;
   (b) Membership of Staff/Student Liaison Committees;
   (c) Membership of University/Students' Union Committees;
   (d) Prizes gained during all stages of study;
   (e) Sports achievements;
   (f) Volunteering logbooks;
   (g) NUS Award
	(a) Membership of student societies might also be included. However, many students will sign up for many societies at the start of term and may never attend any meetings. Collecting information on those who hold a committee role shows some commitment to the group. However, there are some societies where students may not wish their membership to be included on the HEAR. Is it better to exclude society membership in its entirety and state that students will need to incorporate these into their CVs? We are investigating with Tribal whether it is possible for students to suppress items that are entered into Section 6.1.
	(b) Membership of SSLC appears straightforward. However, there is an issue about whether a judgment should be made on attendance/contribution at meetings.
	(c) As for SSLC this is relatively straightforward to capture but again the issue is how to manage attendance and contribution at meetings.
	(d) Prizes awarded in the final year are already captured as part of the congregation process. This should be relatively straightforward to deliver for all prizes awarded.
	(e) This falls into the same category of membership of student societies. It would require a feed from the Students' Union	

	and there are resource implications for them.	
	(f) Volunteering logbooks require a considerable amount of time to verify the data and capture it in a format which is suitable for entry into the HEAR. There is also an issue about how volunteering which takes part outside the University organised events is captured. On balance it is believed that we should only reflect on the HEAR that which may be captured and verified and that any other volunteering should appear in the students' CV or job application.	
	(g) This is currently being trialled at UEA with a relatively small cohort of students. Results have yet to be received but if it were to be successful there would need to be a much bigger pool of assessors and it is unlikely that this could be resourced solely by the SU. On the more positive side it would be a national award rather than an award specific to this University which could gain greater recognition from employers.	
When would a HEAR be revoked?	There are options to revoke a published HEAR. These could be on the following grounds: (a) Subsequent identification of academic misconduct: if this were the case who would make the decision and how would it be communicated? (b) Failure to complete sufficient study: HEAR templates will be produced at the start of a student's time with the University. There will be occasions where a student drops out before completing the assessment in	

	any modules and so would be ineligible for any credit that could subsequently be transferred to another course/institution e.g. for APEL/APCL. In these cases it is recommended that the HEAR be revoked. (c) It is recommended that, where we are informed, a HEAR should be revoked on the death of the student/graduate.	
Who will be responsible for providing the course specific text?	There is a requirement (section 4.2) for text to be included describing the course . This information will need to be sourced (it is currently held in Word documents but there is a suitable place in the system). Who will have the authority to edit the current data to fit the requirements of the HEAR?	
There are a growing number of occasions where course and module information is being published or required to be published. This point is not specific to the HEAR but there should probably be a complementary project established to look at all of the areas where data is currently being drawn from, the purpose of that information and whether it can be rationalised. This includes (but is not limited to): HEAR, KIS, Admissions CMS, prospectus, course brochures, student handbooks, Blackboard etc.		

Appendix 2: COMPILING THE HEAR

Overview
The HEAR comprises eight main sections as well as contextual information. This Guidance defines data fields, content and protocols for completion.

All sections of the HEAR should be numbered and follow the sequence and explanatory guidance as indicated below. This is essential for its national and international recognition as a Higher Education Achievement Report incorporating a Diploma Supplement document.

These sections are:
        Contextual information.
        Section 1. Information identifying the holder of the qualification.
        Section 2. Information identifying the qualification.
        Section 3. Information on the level of the qualification.
        Section 4. Information on the contents and results gained.
        Section 5. Information on the function of the qualification.
        Section 6. Additional information.
        Section 7. Certification of the HEAR.
        Section 8. Information on the national higher education system.

The information required for each section is detailed below. 'Should' indicates that this is necessary to meet the HEAR specification, 'may' denotes additional guidance which institutions are encouraged to take into account.

CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION
In this section institutions should[1] include the following statements:

This Higher Education Achievement Report incorporates the model developed by the European Commission, Council of Europe and UNESCO/CEPES for the Diploma Supplement.

The purpose of the Supplement is to provide sufficient recognition of qualifications (diplomas, degrees, certificates etc). It is designed to provide a description of the nature, level, context and status of the studies that were pursued and successfully completed by the individual named on the original qualifications to

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[1]   We are advised that the new (03/11) 'rules' on the preamble for the DS are:
- It can be omitted, or#
- It can be inserted in its original form, or#
- It can be modified but the modification must be 'minimal' and must not 'change the meaning'. #

which this Supplement is appended. It should be free from any value judgements, equivalence statements or suggestions about recognition. Information in all eight sections should be provided. Where information is not provided, an explanation should give the reason why.

Where a hard copy version is made available reference should also be made to all appropriate security features, for example:

This Higher Education Achievement Report is printed in black ink on paper watermarked with the crest of the University and carries the official University stamp. It is not valid unless in this format.

Where access is only available to the document in electronic format, institutions should reference this here, for example:

The University of Easthampton only produces HEARs in a digital format. Only HEARs accessed via edocs@eastham.ac.uk can be considered valid and verified.

SECTION 1. INFORMATION IDENTIFYING THE HOLDER OF THE QUALIFICATION

In this section institutions should indicate:
1.1   Family name: Provide the full family or surname.
1.2   Given name(s): Include all given/first names.[2]
1.3   Date of birth *(day/month/year)*: Indicate day, month and year of birth, in numeric format.
1.4   Student identification number or code: Identify the individual as a student enrolled on the particular programme covered by the HEAR. The student identification number will in most cases be their HESA number[3], and should be followed by the statement:

HUSID (HESA Unique Student Identifier) is the unique national identifying number for students registered at a UK university. It is defined by HESA, the UK's Higher Education Statistics Agency.

SECTION 2. INFORMATION IDENTIFYING THE QUALIFICATION

In this section institutions should indicate:
2.1   Name of qualification and *(if applicable)* title conferred:
Give the full name of the award/qualification.
Indicate if the award confers any nationally accepted title on the holder and what this title is, for example: *Bachelor of Science (Honours); Foundation Degree (Arts); Master of Engineering.*

Include the statement:
The power to award degrees is regulated by law in the UK.

If the qualification is a dual award, for example between a UK and European institution conjointly, this should also be stated here.

2.2   Main field(s) of study for the qualification: Show the major field(s) of study (disciplines) that define the main subject area(s) for the qualification, for example: *Politics and History, Human Resource Management, Business Administration, Molecular Biology, Medicine.*

2.3   Name and status of awarding institution: Indicate the name and status[4] of the institution awarding the qualification.

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[2]   Implementers are asked to note that the European Learner Mobility technical specification will additionally enable a human readable representation of any name in the correct order for all international names, and that in the medium term the HEAR will enable this format to be presented.
[3]   The HESA unique student identifier (HUSID) is the preferred identifier. Institutions may also include a HEAR document identifier in addition to a learner identifier for confirmation purposes.

2.4   Name and status of institution *(if different from 2.3)* administering studie*s*: This refers to the institution which is responsible for the **delivery** of the Programme if different from 2.3 above. In some cases this can be different from the institution awarding the qualification (see 2.3 above). If so, indicate the status of the institution delivering the studies.

2.5   Language(s) of instruction/examination: Indicate the language(s) by which the qualification was delivered and examined.

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[4]   Institutions that have been granted legal powers by the Privy Council to award UK degrees are designated as 'recognised bodies'. Other institutions, which do not have the power to award their own degrees, but may through partnership arrangements deliver full programmes that lead to a degree that is awarded by a 'recognised body', are designated as 'listed bodies'. This is the correct QAA terminology and should be used for sections 2.3 and 2.4. #

SECTION 3.   INFORMATION ON THE LEVEL OF THE QUALIFICATION

In this section institutions should indicate:

3.1   Level of qualification: Give the level of qualification and its place in the relevant national qualifications framework. This information needs to be explained and cross-referenced to the information in Section Eight, below.

Refer to nationally devised 'level indicators' which relate to the qualification as contained within The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, (QAA, 2008), at: http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/FHEQ/EWNI08/FHEQ08.pdf.
Or, for Scotland, at: http://www.scqf.org.uk/ .[5]

In the case of Integrated Masters level qualifications, a reference to compatibility with Bologna FQ-EHEA 2nd cycle degree or diploma should be included. e.g. *the XXX is an integrated Masters degree that is Bologna FQ-EHEA 2nd cycle degree or diploma compatible.*

3.2   Official length of programme: The official duration of the programme, using the institution's normal description of the length, e.g. 'three years'; 'five years'.

3.3   Access requirement(s): List or explain the nature and length of qualification(s) or periods of study required for access to the programme described[6]. These will normally be done by a link to specific documents held electronically e.g.:
Detailed information regarding admission to the programme is available in the University's on-line Prospectus at:
www.easthampton.ac.uk/admissions/ugprospectus/06.

SECTION 4.   INFORMATION ON THE CONTENTS AND RESULTS GAINED

This section should be used to show the modules and credits studied for the qualification stated in section 2, the assessment taken, and the marks/grades achieved. Institutions should indicate:

4.1   Mode of study: Identify the mode of study e.g. full-time, part-time, mixed mode.[7]

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[5]   There are two separate higher education qualifications frameworks in the UK: one for Scotland - The framework for qualifications of higher education institutions in Scotland, 2001 (FQHE); and one for England, Wales and Northern Ireland - the 2008 revised Framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (FHEQ). Both have been verified as compatible with the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area (FQ-EHEA). The verification report for FHEQ is available at:
http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/FHEQ/selfcertification09/FHEQSelfCert.pdf.
The verification report for FQHE is available at: http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/FHEQ/SCQF/2001/ .

[6]   This may refer to 'typical' requirements.#

4.2 Programme requirements: Draw upon their Programme Specifications, in simplified form[8], in order to:

- Provide details of the regulations covering the minimum standards required to secure the qualification. In most instances this will be 360 credits, at least 100 (minimum) at level 6, but some students may do more.
- Include details of any particular features that help define the qualification, including information on the requirements for successfully passing it.
- Provide succinct details of programme aims or learning outcomes, skills, attributes and knowledge associated with the Programme of Study (not for every module).

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[7] Where students have attended via more than one mode this should be indicated. For example the entry might be: Level 4 (full time), Level 5 (part time), Level 6 (full time). The transcript dates would show how long each year of study actually was.⌗

[8] Such material is likely to require review to ensure it communicates meaning appropriately to a wide/non HE audience.⌗

4.3   Programme details: (e.g. modules or units studied), and the individual grades/marks/credits obtained.[9]

Include qualification start and finish dates.

Give details of each of the individual elements or parts of the qualification (e.g. modules or units studied), and, where possible, the form of assessment (timed examination, essay, project, dissertation etc[10]) and components and their relative weighting towards the final summary mark or grade.

Cover **all** examinations and assessments, including any dissertation or thesis element, i.e. a student's performance within HE including all module assessment results which contribute to the final award. Where more than one attempt has been made, the number of attempts which have led to the result displayed should be indicated.[11]

Include details of any credit for prior learning.

Include where possible the title(s) of any dissertation or major project element(s).

Include information on the credit allocation between course components and units where available, and link these to national credit frameworks and equivalent ECTS credit values.

4.4   Grading scheme and, if available, grade distribution guidance: Provide information on the grading scheme and pass marks relating to the qualification, e.g. *marks are out of a possible 100% and the minimum pass mark is 40%.*

4.5   Overall classification of the qualification: Indicate any overall classification for the final qualification, and how this overall classification is derived.[12]

In addition, institutions may wish to include succinct details of:
1.   Significant opportunities for formal learning off-campus (e.g. within the workplace or community) where these are not explicitly evident from the academic record presented in 4.3 above.[13]

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[9]   Institutions may wish to include the date of commencement of study in this section.⌗
[10]   Where possible and supported by institutional regulation and practice, HEIs may need to provide separate explanations of the types of assessment.⌗
[11]   Institutional decisions will be made in compliance with the respective institutional regulations. As a minimum, any zeros or mark reductions for academic malpractice, non-submission, etc. should be recorded with the reason. Any later assessment attempts would generate a new module mark entry, which would overwrite the original entry and simply record an additional attempt number with the (capped) mark. If the assessment is not attempted subsequently, then the original would necessarily remain on the record.
[12]   In the short term at least this is currently likely to remain the degree classification.⌗

2. A short statement in respect of expected graduate attributes derived from undergraduate study.
3. Additional information to help a user assess the nature, level and use of the qualification and/or about aspects of delivery which might contribute to outcomes and skills (for example delivered through enquiry or problem-based learning, or involving field/study trips, study abroad or work-based learning).
4. Further relevant details about the higher education institution where the qualification was taken.

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[13] We have in mind here the possibility that some graduates may acquire significant experience through work or community-based learning within their degrees, (for example substantial field trips, mooting in Law, placements in Health, a course in politics/business course which includes a (compulsory) study visit to Strasbourg) but that such contexts may not be recognised within the academic transcript.⌗

SECTION 5.   INFORMATION ON THE FUNCTION OF THE QUALIFICATION

In this section institutions should indicate:

5.1   Access to further study[14]: Indicate if, within the country of origin, the qualification normally provides access (not admission) to further academic and/or professional study, especially leading to any specific qualifications, or levels of study.   For example:
Access to postgraduate study: Bologna FQ-EHEA 3rd cycle PhD or MD.
Access to postgraduate study: Bologna FQ-EHEA 2nd cycle degree or diploma.

(If applicable). Specify:
- If the qualification is a terminal (end) award or part of a hierarchy of awards.
- The grades or standards normally necessary to allow progression within the EHEA.

5.2   Professional status *(if applicable)*: Give details of any rights to practise, or professional status accorded to the holders of the qualification.

Describe what access, if any, the qualification gives in terms of employment or professional practice and indicate which competent authority allows this.

Indicate if the qualification gives access to a 'regulated profession'.[15]   The responsibility for ensuring accurate information in respect of the relationships between PSRBs and programmes of study rests with institutions themselves.

SECTION 6.   ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

6.1   Additional Information

This section is intended to realise the full potential of the HEAR by enabling institutions to include additional information which provides a richer verified picture of student achievement. Such information should be recorded in relation to one of three headings related to wider academic and non-academic contexts:

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[14]   The exit award reflected within the HEAR is of course also an end award.#
[15]   For example by the use of a generic statement of the order of:
Successful completion of this award leads to recognition by (add name of professional body)
or
Successful completion of this award leads to partial exemption from the professional requirements of (add name of professional body).
or
Successful completion of this award meets the requirements for progression of (add name of professional body).

- **Additional Awards** (Accredited performance in non-academic contexts measured/assessed by, or with external accreditation recognised by, the University). For the avoidance of doubt, this also provides the opportunity for the inclusion of individual units/modules studied, in addition to the main degree programme, if these do not already appear in section 4.3.
- **Additional recognised activities** undertaken by students which demonstrate achievement but for which no recognition is provided in terms of academic credit. This may include volunteering, representative roles or training courses provided or recognised within the institutional context which do not attract credit. It may also include significant additional verifiable roles; for example representation at national level in sport, or participation in activities encouraged within formal learning but demonstrated through individual student effort outwith formally accredited activities.[16]
- **University, Professional and Departmental prizes,** rewarding both academic and non- academic achievement.

Where institutions choose not to include section 6.1 at all the resultant document should not be termed a HEAR.

Where institutions do not, as a matter of policy, provide any of these opportunities, this should be indicated on the student HEAR.

For this section only, students should be provided with the opportunity to indicate any elements they would not wish to be included.

In addition, institutions may choose to include (with the student's permission) a web link from the student's electronic portfolio, where this exists[17] to the HEAR.

6.2   Further information sources: Indicate any further useful information sources and references where more details on the qualification could be sought, e.g. the HEI website; the department in the issuing institution; UK NARIC.

SECTION 7.   CERTIFICATION OF THE HEAR[18]

In this section institutions should indicate:
7.1   Date: Identify the date the qualification was awarded and – if different – the HEAR was issued.

7.2   Signature: The name and signature of the individual official certifying the HEAR (normally the Academic Registrar or equivalent).

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[16]   For example, a student, building on their formal learning, setting up a ensemble/group/business which then undertakes significant activity in its own right as an off-shoot from the HEI (e.g. performances, education work, commercial/business development initiatives) which do not receive credit but which can be verified.

[17]   This may be particularly relevant when related to professional development, being used to demonstrate that requirements for progression are met or to provide evidence for recognition by PSRBs.

[18]   Such formal certification is only likely to be relevant at the point of qualification.

7.3   Capacity: The official post of the certifying individual.

7.4   Official stamp or seal: The official stamp or seal of the institution that provides authentication of the HEAR.

SECTION 8.   INFORMATION ON THE NATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM[19]

A description of the relevant national HE system should be referenced – by web link or by inclusion – here.

The 'Updated Higher Education Description for England, Wales and Northern Ireland' (description and accompanying diagram) are available within: http://www.europeunit.ac.uk/sites/europe_unit2/resources/E-09-04Description_HE(EWNI).pdf.

The description alone can be accessed at: http://www.uknec.org.uk/documents/ds description.pdf.

A description of the system in Scotland can be found at: http://www.europeunit.ac.uk/sites/europe_unit2/resources/ScotHEDesc2010Final.pdf.

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[19]   Such links will need to be versioned and be permanently accessible.#