



A REFERENCE PACK FOR INSTITUTIONS

(Updated December 2017)

Copyright in this Document, and any or all of its attachments unless stated otherwise, is vested in Universities UK/GuildHE.

It is licenced under Creative Commons for open use on basis of attribution - no commercial use - no derivatives.



Acknowledgements

These materials are intended to support institutional implementation of the Higher Education Achievement Report.

This updated version of the HEAR Reference Pack (December 2017) has been produced by the Centre for Recording Achievement (CRA) with support from Jisc, CETIS, HESA, the QAA and the HEA, and has been considered and discussed within the HEAR National Advisory Group (2012-7) convened by the HEA¹. It reflects decisions previously made by the Advisory Group, the facility to include GPA scores in the updated technical specification, developments in respect of the description of the HE system (section 8), and acknowledges wider sectoral and other changes.

Introduction

This introduction signposts the reader to key elements within the pack and provides links to other documents and resources, including the HEAR website maintained by the HEA at www.hear.ac.uk.

How to use the Reference Pack

Institutions should make use of the whole document in developing their approach. However, we recognise that those using this guidance will have different starting points. So:

1. If you want to start with the compilation of the HEAR click [here](#).
2. If you want to review the HEAR Template, click [here](#).
3. If you want to review the “Key principles for the Regulation of Content” for inclusion in the HEAR (Annex A) click [here](#).
4. If you want to make use of the propositions developed to support the implementation of good practice in respect of section 6.1 (Additional Information) (Annex B) click [here](#).
5. If you want to start with a checklist for Academic Registrars, developed with the active involvement of colleagues within Registry to provide a structured framework to enable those concerned with HEAR production to initiate this, click [here](#).

In addition:

- The HEAR Self-assessment Framework is at:
http://repository.jisc.ac.uk/6156/1/JD0038_HEAR_readiness_maturity_model_i2.xlsx
- The documents associated with the technical specification can be accessed at:
<http://cetis.github.io/hear/>.
- The current specification – as modified January 2017 is at:
http://cetis.github.io/hear/HEAR_1.1_Specification.html

¹ Now superseded by the HEAR Governance Group.

The Higher Education Achievement Report (incorporating the Diploma Supplement)

Guidance to inform Institutional Implementation

Introduction:

The Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR) provides a single comprehensive record of a learner's achievement as recommended by the Measuring and Recording Student Achievement Steering Group (Burgess Group),² this group producing a Final Report recommending national adoption which was endorsed by HE representative bodies.³ It is envisaged as an electronic document produced by a higher education institution (HEI) which provides a record of student achievement during their period of study.⁴ If issued in paper form it will be no longer than six pages⁵. Where published in PDF or hard copy it will adhere to the template contained here and be verified by the Academic Registrar or equivalent officer. It may be accessed at any time during a student's career with the institution and afterwards.

The HEAR is designed as a record of student achievement which also meets the purposes of the Diploma Supplement (DS)⁶. It serves two functions through the consistent use of a single consistent process:

1. **as a formal, exit document**, made available at the point of graduation⁷ from undergraduate study, at whatever level that may be. For this purpose the HEAR:
 - is intended to capture more fully the totality of the student's performance and to enable students to represent a wider range of their achievements to employers and postgraduate tutors, thereby enhancing their employability;
 - provides details within section 6.1 of the wider achievements of the holder.
2. **as a formative document** which may be available and used from the point of a student's entry to HE onwards throughout their HE experience⁸:
 - as a basis for reviewing progress and planning future activities, whether individually or with support from a tutor;
 - to support student engagement in opportunities beyond the curriculum;
 - as an *aide memoire* for students in making applications which may be needed before the final award is made, e.g. for sandwich placements and internships; permanent employment; further study or training opportunities;
 - subject to the appropriate permissions, for verification by employers and postgraduate tutors of statements made by the student.

² Beyond the Honours Degree – the Burgess Group Final Report, October 2007:

<http://www.hear.ac.uk/reports/Burgess2007>

³ Bringing it all together: introducing the HEAR. The final report of the Burgess Implementation Steering Group.

<http://www.hear.ac.uk/tools/bringing-it-all-together>

⁴ This does not exclude the possibility that the document will be made available to students in hard copy.

⁵ The exception being where institutions issue such documents in a bilingual format.

⁶ Further information and guidance on the Diploma Supplement can be found in the UK Europe Unit Guide to the Diploma Supplement:

<http://www.ecctis.co.uk/Europass/documents/Europe%20Unit%20Diploma%20Supplement%20Guide.pdf>

⁷ Or at an intermediate exit point. Students will usually be issued with HEARs alongside a recognised exit award, such as a Certificate of Higher Education or a Bachelor's degree, but not for smaller amounts of undergraduate credit.

⁸ To facilitate this HEAR data should be updated in line with normal institutional practice but at least once every academic year and twice in the final year, with the institution providing students with clear guidance as to when data will be available.

Initially the HEAR applies to undergraduate studies (including Integrated Masters) only – e.g. – e.g. levels 4-7 in the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) and levels 7-11 in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). A number of institutions are, however, widening use to other levels, including Postgraduate Taught and Postgraduate Research Students, and to issue for part-time students.

Guidance:

This document builds directly upon the extensive trial and development work undertaken by universities and others in the HE sector representing a diverse range of types, size and mission. It is designed to support all UK higher education institutions and those organisations that work with them (such as third party software system providers). It provides a framework to ensure that the HEAR as implemented is ‘fit for purpose’, by establishing:

1. a core data set that should appear in all exit document HEARs; and
2. the opportunity for universities to add ‘additional information’, within clearly defined and regulated parameters agreed by the institution, to reflect the wider achievement of their students.

The Guidance is based upon **a set of principles** agreed by the Implementation Steering Group (2007-12⁹) to regulate the implementation of the HEAR¹⁰.

The HEAR should:

- adhere to the prescribed template;
- ensure that information is presented once only;
- contain a clear and consistent core element for all institutions, providing a comprehensive, verifiable record of the academic learning and achievement of an individual student;
- refer to the full period of undergraduate study at or under the auspices of, the providing HEI;
- define the content for all core data fields (with the exception of 6.1 [Additional Information], where entries will be made according to defined structures focused upon achievement verifiable by institutional staff and underpinned by the quality assurance processes of each institution);
- be produced by the institution not by the student. The institution is responsible for the production and storage of the data, and for the attestation of the contents that relate to the named individual, who is the subject of the document. This principle should be presented in an institutional statement about HEAR content and student access rights¹¹;
- be complementary to Personal Development Planning processes;¹²
- permit comparisons to be made between graduates by an external audience;
- ensure compliance with the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) guidance – which has legal standing - in terms of information supplied, see:
http://www.hefce.ac.uk/media/HEFCE,2014/Content/Learning,and,teaching/Guide,to,providing,info,to,students/Guide_to_providing_info_to_students.pdf

Prospectus statement in respect of Implementation:

The statement below has been produced through a process of consultation with those institutions involved in HEAR trial work. Others may wish to use it directly or as the basis for developing their own statements.

⁹ See <http://www.hear.ac.uk/about/history-development>

¹⁰ Developed with respect to undergraduate students in the first instance, these are also applicable to those undertaking Taught Postgraduate Programmes.

¹¹ Best practice would involve students a) being informed via the institutional prospectus, and again on confirmation of a place, b) signing up to the requisite permissions on registration c) being consulted over the potential for individual opt-out for entries in section 6.1 only at the point of issue of the HEAR (see 6.1 below), perhaps by the use of protocols for identifying entries that may be subject to exclusion.

¹² Particularly where PDP or Portfolio records are entirely maintained by the student. Where Personal Development Planning processes e.g. of target setting and review, feature in accredited activity, the outcomes are likely to be reflected within the HEAR under credit-based achievements.

The University of Easthampton is committed to implementing the new Higher Education Achievement Report for all undergraduate students. This will be developed from the time students arrive at the University, and is intended to capture more fully their performance. It will also enable final year students and graduates to present a wider range of their achievements to employers and postgraduate tutors, thereby potentially enhancing their employability or opportunities for further study.

The 'HEAR' will sit alongside the degree certificate and contain:

- *A detailed academic record of modules undertaken and marks obtained.*
- *A record of additional achievements, such as in volunteering or representative roles, particular additional University awards, and/or academic or professional prizes.*

Collaborative Provision:

Collaborative provision embraces a wide range of activities where an awarding body may collaborate with a partner organisation in providing learning opportunities. The awarding body should ensure that it has sole authority for awarding certificates and records related to study delivered through collaborative arrangements. If it devolves responsibility for issuing either of these documents to a partner organisation it should ensure that it has retained the means to exercise proper control over the issue of these and it is advisable for this arrangement to be incorporated into the formal agreement between partners. In all cases the Degree Awarding Body should satisfy itself that the quality assurance processes at the partner organisation are acceptable.

In respect of recording additional achievement in section 6.1 of the HEAR, activities will normally be included only when they can be verified by the awarding institution. Some institutions may wish to develop an arrangement whereby such achievements at the partner institution may be recorded and reported in the HEAR issued by the awarding institution. Any such arrangement (setting out explicitly how this is to be accomplished) should be included in the formal agreement with the partner institution/s.

Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL)/ Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL):

When students who already have a HEAR are admitted to a programme with advanced standing, this will normally be treated as an entirely separate document and will not be added to by the new institution. However the recognition of this as the basis for such advanced standing should be identified within the HEAR provided by the new institution.

Where students are admitted to a programme with advanced standing on the basis of prior experiential learning, or on the basis of undergraduate credit previously obtained for which the student does not have a HEAR, the recognition of this learning towards an award should similarly be identified within the HEAR provided by the new institution. However, any work towards the recording of additional activities (section 6.1) undertaken at the previous institution is unlikely to be carried forward into the new institutional record, unless a specific mechanism has been agreed to allow for this.

Disputes:

Disputes in relation to entries within the HEAR should be resolved through institutional processes.

The International Context:

The HEAR has been recognised by the European Commission as the UK equivalent of the Diploma Supplement. It also connects to other initiatives, such as that concerned with Digital Student Data Portability (the Groningen Declaration) <http://www.groningendeclaration.org/>, European work on academic qualifications and the sharing of academic data in Stork 2.0 (Secure idenTity acrOss boRders linKed 2.0) <https://www.eid-stork2.eu/>, and the My eQuals work involving 46 participating institutions in Australia and New Zealand <https://www.myequals.edu.au/>.

COMPILING THE HEAR

Overview:

The HEAR comprises eight main sections as well as contextual information. This reference pack 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 should¹³ 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 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.

¹³ We are advised that the ‘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’.

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.¹⁴
- 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 number¹⁵, 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.

Institutions may also wish to include the institution's own student ID.

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/qualification¹⁶.
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 status¹⁷ of the institution awarding the qualification. Where a degree is issued jointly by two or more institutions, the names of the

¹⁴ 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.

¹⁵ The HESA unique student identifier (HUSID) is the preferred identifier. Institutions may also include a HEAR document identifier for confirmation purposes.

¹⁶ The HEAR is intended to relate to a qualification not to a period of learning within which more than one qualification might be achieved.

¹⁷ Institutions that have been granted legal powers 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.

institutions issuing the joint degree should be indicated, with indication of the institution at which the major part of the qualification has been obtained, if applicable.

- 2.4 Name and status of institution (*if different from 2.3*) administering studies: 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.

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 national Qualifications Frameworks on QAA's website, at:

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code>

In the case of Integrated Master's 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 described¹⁸. 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.¹⁹
- 4.2 Programme requirements: Draw upon their definitive records, in simplified form²⁰, 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.

¹⁸ This may refer to 'typical' requirements.

¹⁹ 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.

²⁰ Such material is likely to require review to ensure it communicates meaning appropriately to a wide/non HE audience.

- 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).

4.3 Programme details: (e.g. modules or units studied), and the individual grades/marks/credits obtained.²¹

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.²²) and components and their relative weighting towards the final summary mark or grade.

If the qualification is a joint or double/multiple degree, or if it was earned under a transnational or borderless education arrangement, this should be noted here, with an indication as to what parts of the qualification have been earned at which institution.

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.²³ Where a student completes three years of study but does not achieve success in the final year and is therefore awarded a DipHE a full (three-year) HEAR should be issued, including the marks which did not generate success in the final year, but including the final year for the purposes of section 6.1.

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%*. Where more than one grading scheme is used, e.g. degree classification plus GPA, detail the relationship between these."
- 4.5 Overall classification of the qualification: Indicate, as appropriate, any overall classification, grade, mark or level for the final qualification, and how this overall classification is derived.²⁴

²¹ Institutions may wish to include the date of commencement of study in this section.

²² Where possible and supported by institutional regulation and practice, HEIs may need to provide separate explanations of the types of assessment.

²³ 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.

²⁴ In the short term at least this is currently likely to remain the degree classification.

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.²⁵
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.

SECTION 5. INFORMATION ON THE FUNCTION OF THE QUALIFICATION

In this section institutions should indicate:

- 5.1 Access to further study²⁶: 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'²⁷ in ways which comply with the CMA guidance in terms of information supplied.

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:

- **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

²⁵ 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, mootings 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.

²⁶ The exit award reflected within the HEAR is of course also an end award.

²⁷ 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).

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 out with formally accredited activities.²⁸
- **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 exists²⁹ 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 HEAR³⁰

In this section institutions should indicate:

- 7.1 Date: Identify the date the qualification was awarded and – if different – the HEAR was issued. ³¹
- 7.2 Signature: The name and signature of the individual official certifying the HEAR (normally the Academic Registrar or equivalent).
- 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.

²⁸ For example, a student, building on their formal learning, setting up a(n) 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.

²⁹ 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.

³⁰ Such formal certification is only likely to be relevant at the point of qualification.

³¹ Feedback from institutions suggests that the emphasis on the date of issue of the HEAR (i.e., the date of graduation) may cause problems, particularly for postgraduate students. Specifically, if graduation does not actually take place for several months after the student completes the degree it may appear to the reader as though the student has not completed until that point, which can cause problems with potential employers or with UKBA/sponsors etc. To ensure that this does not present difficulties, institutions may wish to consider inserting the date of completion and/or conferment of Study: (approval of the relevant award) alongside the date of issue of the HEAR, where these differ.

If documents are viewed online the security is provided by the digital signature and the document origin. Institutions may therefore choose to omit the graphics of the stamp and signature. However printed copies of the website page will not provide a validated and institutionally authenticated copy; if a student requires an official printed copy including seal and signature this should be requested from the provider.

SECTION 8. INFORMATION ON THE NATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM³²

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

However the Higher Education Description for England, Wales and Northern Ireland' (description and accompanying diagram) at <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/National-Description-EWNI.pdf> and contained within previous editions of the HEAR Reference Pack dates from 2008 and is now significantly out of date, particularly in respect of England where the regulatory landscape is currently undergoing significant change. Colleagues may wish to note the text at <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code/qualifications> which reads: *Please note that the regulatory landscape for England is changing in 2017/18; Northern Ireland will make a decision about participation in some of those changes. This description will be updated once full details of the new approach are available. The regulatory landscape in Wales has changed and the descriptor will be updated to reflect those changes. There is a separate descriptor for Scotland. For further information in the meantime, please contact QAA.*

This description will be updated to reflect the detail of new regulatory landscape for England once this is available and circulated once available. For the interim period, working with colleagues at the QAA, we suggest that colleagues make use of the updated diagram (table 1) from:

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/qualifications-frameworks.pdf> and a version of that is therefore included in the exemplar above

In addition those issuing the HEAR may also refer to the most recent version of the QAA 'qualifications can cross boundaries leaflet' at:

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/Qualifications-can-Cross-Boundaries.pdf> .

A description of the system in Scotland can be found at:

https://www.naric.org.uk/Europass/documents/ds_description_scotland.pdf

³² Such links will need to be versioned and be permanently accessible.

Annexe A: Key Principles for the Regulation of Content of the HEAR.³³

1. The HEAR document is generated from data within the University's central Student Records System (SRS)³⁴, in which format it is "regulated" by the University; electronic storage of the documentation will be retained by the University or by another third party with delegated authority³⁵, and access to it should be controlled by University-authorized staff only.³⁶
2. A student's assessment results, marks and other data, which may be measured quantitatively, alongside non-quantitative data, should be derived from the official SRS³⁷ by recognised/authorized staff only.
3. All data should be verifiable institutionally, factually based and non-evaluative except in cases of recorded grades where the grade records an explicit judgement in respect of academic standards. Students should be made aware of their rights to remove, challenge or amend items in cases of proven inaccuracy.
4. A HEAR document-set will normally be initiated immediately after registration for a higher education award, thereby retaining the relationship with the current Minimum Data Set for the HE Transcript. This should be a complete record of a student's performance within HE i.e. including all module assessment results, which contribute to the final award in ways which comply with relevant institutional regulations. It will include the opportunity for detailed information of achievement in respect of different forms of assessment at a level appropriate for the programme/institution. This should include component marks where there is explicit need (e.g. for PSRB purposes, where an examination component must be passed for accreditation purposes).
5. Achievement deriving from the formal curriculum and counting towards the final award will be reported upon in section 4.3.
6. The HEAR will include a section (6.1) which should contain, as agreed, authorized statements of student achievement not included elsewhere, whether:
 - a. assessed and/or accredited by the University;
 - b. verified by appropriate and authorized University personnel;³⁸
 - c. approved by the University for inclusion on the basis of criteria confirmed under the relevant quality assurance procedures of the institution.Where the institution is 'working towards' but has not yet been able to fully implement the collection and presentation of information for this section this should be indicated.

³³ As developed through trial work. This section of the Guidance has been reviewed by the Information Commissioners Office <https://ico.org.uk/>

³⁴ Though data may be drawn in from elsewhere.

³⁵ Such as security software systems used to issue and authenticate official electronic graduation documents and other documents online.

³⁶ Institutions will need to ensure that the DPA collection and use notice for their institution is appropriate for the uses envisaged here. As the data controllers for the HEAR document and therefore responsible for data protection compliance, the fairness and transparency requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA98) will be the responsibility of the University. Institutions should be satisfied that students whose data they hold as part of the HEAR are aware of any changes to how their data is dealt with.

³⁷ Such entry of data might include the electronic transfer of appropriately verified statements from existing data sources, for example an electronic portfolio.

³⁸ Such "appropriate personnel" might include: personal tutor; careers advisor; student guidance staff; learner-support staff; recognised staff in partner organisations, which could include employer-partners; staff in accrediting organisations external to the University.

For this section only, institutions should consider the appropriateness of allowing an 'opt-out' by students in respect of individual activities.³⁹

7. The final HEAR document-set provided to the student as a summative statement at the end of their Programme of Study should be stored electronically. It may be presented in hard-copy and/or made available electronically, as authorised by the University. It should take full account of Guidance on accessibility.⁴⁰

Where a paper copy is presented:

- a. a contextual statement will continue to have an important function, but the use of electronic links to other sources of information, both within the institution's website and elsewhere, may enable a briefer entry in the formal HEAR documentation;⁴¹
 - b. the overall length of any paper document should not be more than six pages.
8. In order to keep the length of the document within reasonable bounds and to maintain its focus on individual verifiable achievement, generic information related to the institution itself, and to the UKHE system may be referenced in the HEAR with the detail accessible through an accompanying document or hyperlink.
 9. The institution should consider making the final HEAR document accessible via the internet, subject to the document management policies of the institution. The university is responsible for giving access to the HEAR data if students request it, and institutional policies in relation to this must address appropriate security and access measures for HEAR data to ensure that unauthorised access does not occur.
 10. In light of the expectation that the HEAR will become the definitive institutional record the most appropriate course of action would be for institutions to deal with HEAR records on the basis of current institutional policies for data retention and disposal.⁴²
 11. The student/graduate may be enabled to grant permission for access to other organisations or individuals to view and/or search the contents, as appropriate.⁴³ With regard to such third party access to the HEAR (by employers, for example), consent from the student must be obtained.

³⁹ References raised within the trial process include roles within political societies or groups with an explicit concern to support the needs of lesbian, bisexual, gay and transgender students. Students should be made aware that this type of information could be shared as part of the HEAR so that they can make an informed choice as to whether to opt out of sharing that information.

⁴⁰ See: <https://www.jisc.ac.uk/guides/using-assistive-and-accessible-technology-in-teaching-and-learning>

⁴¹ If use is made of such links, the institution will need a very clear policy to ensure that links remain valid indefinitely. (For more information, see <http://www.w3.org/Provider/Style/URI>). If held electronically in PDF format this may include web links that take any reader to additional information should they require it. If held as an electronic data set capable of being searched electronically, e.g. within an online recruitment process, the amount of data can be more substantial.

⁴² A record will need to be kept in perpetuity in whatever format the institution chooses to use for historical purposes. See 'Guidance on managing student records.' (2007, page 7), as follows: '*Institutions accept that they have an obligation, during a student's working life, to provide factual information on what they have studied and achieved... The proposed lifelong learning record ... would also include additional data on relevant non-academic achievements and activities). The retention period for these records should reflect the need to fulfill this obligation over long periods of time, perhaps for the lifetime of the student.*' At:

<http://tools.jiscinfonet.ac.uk/downloads/bcs-rrs/managing-student-records.pdf>

⁴³ http://cetis.github.io/hear/technical_architecture_considerations_for_implementing_the_HEAR.html presents five complementary models for distributing and verifying electronic HEAR documents. In terms of HEAR security, this document also recommends that '*implementations conform to the European Telecommunications Standards Institute (ETSI) standards for Advanced Electronic Signatures. These standards build upon the W3C XML Digital Signatures specification, and are recognised under European Union Directive 1999/93/EC.*'

Annex B: Completing Section 6.1 (Additional information).

This section is a crucial element in realising the potential of the HEAR. It is intended to allow institutions to add additional information in order to create a HEAR which provides a richer picture of graduate achievement. Before completing this section, institutions are recommended to consider and implement the **Propositions** identified below, which have been developed within trial institutions and refined by the Burgess Implementation Steering Group, to support the implementation of good practice.

Proposition 1⁴⁴: Decisions about what to include within section 6.1 will be made by individual institutions in accordance with:

- the overall HEAR framework as set out in the final report of the Burgess Steering Group (at <http://www.hear.ac.uk/tools/bringing-it-all-together>);
- principles governing implementation as set out on page 3 above.

Proposition 2: A set of protocols, or criteria, for selection of content for Section 6.1 should be agreed in advance and published across the institution. Such information should be included in information, such as prospectuses, and made available to potential applicants.

Proposition 3: A body with appropriate representation reflecting the diverse constituencies with an interest in the HEAR⁴⁵ should be charged with establishing the necessary protocols. This may be by incorporation within the institution's existing quality assurance arrangements or by the establishment of an additional body. In either case such a body may also:

- advise the institution on resourcing issues associated with HEAR development and implementation;
- oversee the quality issues associated with HEAR processes, and evaluate its 'fitness for purpose', as systems are developed; and
- advise on issues of access and equity to opportunities which may be reported upon within this section, including information gained through any formal Equality Impact Assessment.

Proposition 4: The University should reach an agreement with the Students Union (or other comparable representative body) on the inclusion in section 6.1 of activities in which the Students Union has a role in delivery and/or verification. Such activities should in all cases meet agreed institutional criteria in terms of evidence provided, and subsequent verification.⁴⁶

Proposition 5: Each entry in section 6.1 should:

- on the basis of considerations of access and equity cited above, include only opportunities open on an equal basis to all students on the same course/programme (including those available across the institution as a whole);
- be recorded with reference to one of three headings related to wider academic and non-academic contexts:
 - **Additional Awards.**
 - **Additional recognised activities.**
 - **University, Professional and Departmental prizes.**

⁴⁴ These propositions need not be mutually exclusive.

⁴⁵ While this may differ between institutions, it might include Academic Registrars, those with responsibilities for institutional IT systems and for Teaching and Learning, and Careers Service and student representatives.

⁴⁶ Within the trial process student representatives have recognised the value of receiving institutional recognition of a wider range of achievements. Some have also identified concerns associated with boundaries, manageability and equity of access to opportunities. Some have seen activities recognised through the SU as important to integrate into the HEAR, while others would wish to maintain separateness in terms of how such provision is reported.

Where such entries are made they may be accompanied by a short contextualising statement to ensure that the meaning of the entry can be appreciated by an external audience. For example:

The Easthampton Graduate award recognises achievement in six key areas: Enterprise; Student Jobs and Work Experience; Volunteering; Cultural and Social Awareness; Extending International Horizons; Activities Supporting the University. Candidates must undertake activity in at least four areas: work experience or volunteering are compulsory. Assessment is by final award portfolio.

HIGHER EDUCATION ACHIEVEMENT REPORT (Diploma Supplement)

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, and so on). 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 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.

In hard copy format 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.⁴⁷

1 INFORMATION IDENTIFYING THE HOLDER OF THE QUALIFICATION

1.1 Family name(s):

1.2 Given name(s):

1.3 Date of birth (day/month/year):

1.4 Student identification number or code:

2 INFORMATION IDENTIFYING THE QUALIFICATION

2.1 Name of qualification and (if applicable) title conferred:

2.2 Main field(s) of study for the qualification:

2.3 Name and status of awarding institution:

2.4 Name and status of institution (if different from 2.3) administering studies (in original language):

2.5 Language(s) of instruction/examination:

3 INFORMATION ON THE LEVEL OF THE QUALIFICATION

3.1 Level of qualification:

3.2 Official length of programme:

⁴⁷ This entry will be determined by the format in which the document is made available and by any decisions within the Institution; see Institutional Guidance: Compiling the HEAR (page 5).

3.3 Access requirements(s):

4 INFORMATION ON THE CONTENTS AND RESULTS GAINED

4.1 Mode of study:

4.2 Programme requirements:

4.3 Programme details, and the individual grades/marks/credits obtained:

4.4 Grading scheme and, if available, grade distribution guidance:

4.5 Overall classification of the qualification (in original language):

5 INFORMATION ON THE FUNCTION OF THE QUALIFICATION

5.1 Access to further study:

5.2 Professional status (if applicable):

6 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

6.1 Additional information:

- Additional Awards (Accredited performance in non-academic contexts);
- Additional recognised activities undertaken by students which demonstrate achievement;
- University, Professional and Departmental prizes.

6.2 Further information sources:

7 CERTIFICATION OF THE HEAR

7.1 Date:

7.2 Signature:

7.3 Capacity:

7.4 Official stamp or seal:

8 INFORMATION ON THE NATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM

Examples of the typical higher education qualifications at levels of the Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies and their corresponding cycle in the QF-EHEA⁴⁸

<i>Typical higher education qualifications awarded by degree-awarding bodies within each level</i>	FHEQ	FQHEIS	Corresponding QF-EHEA cycle
	FHEQ level	SCQF level	
<i>Doctoral degrees (e.g., PhD/DPhil, EdD, DBA, DClinPsy)c</i>	8	12	Third cycle (end of cycle) qualifications
<i>Master's degrees (e.g., MPhil, MLitt, MRes, MA, MSc)</i>	7	11	Second cycle (end of cycle) qualifications
<i>Integrated master's degrees (e.g., MEng, MChem, MPhys, MPharm)d</i>			
<i>Primary qualifications (or first degrees) in medicine, dentistry and veterinary science (e.g., MB ChB, MB BS, BM BS; BDS; BVSc, BVMS)</i>			
<i>Postgraduate diplomas</i>			Grey
<i>Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE)g/Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE)</i>			
<i>Postgraduate certificates</i>			
<i>Bachelor's degrees with honours (e.g. BA/BSc Hons)</i>	6	10	First cycle (end of cycle) qualifications
<i>Bachelor's degrees</i>		9	Grey
<i>Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland</i>			
<i>Graduate diplomas</i>			
<i>Graduate certificates</i>			
<i>Foundation degrees (e.g., FdA, FdSc)</i>		5	NA
<i>Diplomas of Higher Education (DipHE)</i>	8		
<i>Higher National Diplomas (HND) awarded by degree-awarding bodies in England, Wales and Northern Ireland under licence from Pearson</i>	NA		
<i>Higher National Certificates (HNC) awarded by degree-awarding bodies in England, Wales and Northern Ireland under licence from Pearson</i>	4	NA	Grey
<i>Certificates of Higher Education (CertHE)</i>			

⁴⁸ From: QAA (2014) UK Quality Code for Higher Education Part A: Setting and Maintaining Academic Standards Part A The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies. At: <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/qualifications-frameworks.pdf> . For an equivalent diagram for Scotland see https://www.naric.org.uk/Europass/documents/ds_scotland_chart.pdf

Implementing the HEAR: A Checklist for Academic Registrars

Academic Registrars where institutions already produce a full Diploma Supplement and Transcript are well placed to meet the requirements of the HEAR.

This checklist is intended to offer pointers to implementation and to institutions or service providers which can offer experience and potential solutions which might be considered in creating an institutional HEAR. It should be used in conjunction with the detailed Institutional Guidance document which sets out the position in more detail, and with reference to the more detailed HEAR Readiness Self-assessment Framework at: http://repository.jisc.ac.uk/6156/1/JD0038_HEAR_readiness_maturity_model_i2.xlsx.

OVERVIEW ISSUES	ACTION
<p>RESOURCES AND PROJECT PLANNING NB Initially the HEAR applies to undergraduate studies (including Integrated Masters) only – e.g. levels 4-7 in the FHEQ) and levels 7-11 in the SCQF. A number of institutions are however seeking widened out use to other levels and to issue for part-time students.</p>	<p>Convene steering group. Devise implementation plan. Consider necessary human/physical resources to deliver. Agree academic approval stages required. Identify, purchase or commission relevant IT resource. Identify and commission relevant paper solution, if any.</p>
<p>FORMAT DECISION HEAR should be both</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A formative document • A formal, exit document <p>It will be issued in digital form but may also be issued in paper form.</p>	<p>Decide at an early stage if the HEAR can be issued in paper form or digital format or both in the initial stages of implementation, whilst bearing in mind that the ultimate goal is to issue electronically. Ensure current systems enable mid-year marks and 6.1 activities to be automatically populated within the HEAR to ensure that students are able to access their HEAR at any point during their university career.</p>
<p>PUBLICITY AND INFORMATION Communication with</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicants pre-entry • Students on-course • Alumni • Employers 	<p>Prepare prospectus statement(s) on HEAR. Prepare protocols and information for new and existing students on operation of HEAR. Communicate to graduating students how HEAR will be accommodated as an alumni service. Provide a statement for employers about HEAR and verification.</p>
<p>IT SYSTEMS</p>	<p>IT systems and the student record system are integral to the HEAR project There are also potential uses for shared services and external providers.</p>
<p>PUBLICATION AND STORAGE</p>	<p>Institutions will need to :</p>

<p>The HEAR project envisages that the HEAR will be</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible to students and to tutors as a formative document throughout a student career • Capable of being made accessible to a potential employer as supporting documentation for a job application during and at the end of a student career. (Similarly to another university for further study) • Continue to be provided to alumni for an agreed period after graduation <p>The HEAR report may be made available in paper form (say at graduation) but will be available in digital /electronic format.</p>	<p>Provide a view of the HEAR as it develops, accessible through a student portal and being potentially shared with academic tutors.</p> <p>Agree a mechanism for the electronic HEAR to be made accessible to employers. External services might be used or the University might provide a safe email request and distribution service.</p> <p>Provide access for alumni to request and distribution service for HEAR for an agreed period.</p> <p>Agree (if they so decide) an appropriate paper format of HEAR. Agree protocol for finalisation of HEAR content (section 6.1). Include mechanisms for student to remove items of student activity and mechanisms for solving disputes. Agree archiving policy. As the data is in essence that of the student record, the expectation is that this will be held in perpetuity.</p>
DOCUMENT SPECIFIC ISSUES	ACTION
<p>CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION This section provides information which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aligns HEAR with Diploma Supplement • Outlines the publication format • Outlines security measures 	<p>Incorporate wording relevant to Diploma Supplement in template. Agree relevant wording according to your decision on publication format.</p>
<p>SECTION 1 AND 2 These sections provide information about</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The individual student • The qualification 	<p><i>Individual</i> Check format follows HEAR requirement and includes the HESA number as well as unique institutional identifier</p> <p><i>Qualification</i> Ensure award title is followed by a statement that ‘The power to award degrees is regulated by law in the UK.’</p> <p>Clarify position on HEAR for awards offered through partner institutions (which institution produces the HEAR and how is this to reported in section 2). Mention Dual awards, if applicable.</p>
<p>SECTION 4 : INFORMATION ON THE CONTENTS AND RESULTS GAINED 4.1 Mode of study</p>	<p>4.1 Provide information about full/ part time etc. 4.2 Provide information on broad modular structure and how many credits must be passed. Institutions will need to decide on what extract of information should be taken from a definitive</p>

<p>4.2 Programme requirements 4.3 Programme details 4.4 Grading scheme 4.6 Qualification awarded</p>	<p>record (e.g. programme specification) for this purpose and will need to decide how to import and store it in the data base which will produce the HEAR report.</p> <p>4.3 Institutions will need to provide information of individual student results at module level, including attempt information. This will probably be held in student record systems. The Burgess Implementation Group recommends that information on performance in assessments at the sub modular level should be included. If you decide to do this, you may need to change institutional practice on recording assessment activity. Information on project/dissertation titles and placements should be included if possible. Information on APL should be provided. This should preferably refer to source of credit although the issuing university will provide the detailed transcript.</p> <p>4.4 Information on the grading scheme and degree classification method should be provided here.</p> <p>4.5 Information on final award (including classification).</p>
<p>SECTION 5: FUNCTION OF THE QUALIFICATION This section will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place the award in the context of Bologna FEQ-EHEA hierarchy Provide information on professional accreditation if applicable 	<p>Extract relevant statements and attach to award record.</p>
<p>SECTION 6: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION This section provides fuller information on a student under the following headings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional awards Additional recognised activities University, Professional and Departmental prizes <p>NB Where institutions choose not to include section 6.1 the resultant document should not be termed a HEAR.</p>	<p>Agree protocols for recording additional awards (accredited performance in non-academic areas) or a statement that the institution does not offer such a scheme.</p> <p>Agreed protocols for the verification and storage of information about additional recognised activities or a statement that the University does not record this information.</p> <p>Agree protocols for the storage of prize information against the student record or provide a statement that prizes are not offered.</p> <p>Agreed deadlines for the timing of collection of information about relevant activity and for annual updating of the HEAR. This may require student or staff input of such data. It may require standardisation of contributing institutional databases.</p> <p>Agree systems for requesting recording or deletion of relevant activity.</p>
<p>SECTION 7: CERTIFICATION OF THE HEAR /SECTION 8 INFORMATION ON NATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM This section provides</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Certification 	<p>A web link to the NARIC database could do the job as far as the national higher education system is concerned. However, consideration has to be given to sustainability of links. If a paper document is provided, there may be scope to provide it in non-individualised pages.</p>

- Information on national higher education system relevant to Diploma Supplement.