

Employers' **DETAILED GUIDE** to the Higher Education Achievement Report

**The Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR) provides a detailed record of a student's achievement during their time in higher education. This Employers' Detailed Guide to the HEAR provides a detailed guide to using the new document.**

The Detailed Guide has been prepared by Universities UK and Guild HE, the representative bodies for the UK higher education sector, which is implementing the HEAR.

[www.universitiesuk.ac.uk](http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk)

[www.guildhe.ac.uk](http://www.guildhe.ac.uk)

Introductory information is also available, along with further information for employers and including examples of different HEARs, at [www.heacademy.ac.uk/hear](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/hear)

## Summary of the changes

- From now onwards, increasing numbers of new graduates leaving higher education will do so with a Higher Education Achievement Report – a HEAR.
- The HEAR provides a detailed record of a student's achievement during their time in higher education.
- Higher education institutions start compiling the HEAR when the student enrolls so it is a cumulative document, but is final when issued at graduation.
- The HEAR will be accessible by potential employers (with the student's permission) at any point during the student's academic career and afterwards.
- The HEAR will allow employers to access better, more detailed, information about the performance of student/graduate applicants.
- The HEAR is a formal document produced, and signed off, by a higher education institution.
- The HEAR follows a standard format and is a maximum of six pages long. All higher education institutions issuing a HEAR are using this template.
- The HEAR is issued as an electronic document with hyperlinks to other useful information.
- Students and graduates are likely to use their HEAR in a variety of circumstances, not least to support applications before the final award is made. In all cases, however, employers will be able to make a direct and authenticated interaction with the awarding institution, holding the true HEAR record, to confirm any assertion made regarding the HEAR.
- Graduates will continue to leave higher education with a traditional degree certificate, in addition to the HEAR.

## What is the HEAR?

The HEAR is an electronic document, prepared and signed off by a higher education institution, which provides a record of a student's achievement during their time in higher education. All HEARs follow a standard template, updated at specific points. The HEAR can be accessed at any time, during a student's career with the institution and afterwards.

It is an electronic document and will not be longer than six pages.

The HEAR contains new, more detailed, information which contextualises the overall honours degree classification or other award.

- The HEAR provides details about **the contents of the programme studied**. This includes: details of the course coverage, knowledge and understanding the student can be expected to have gained; year-by-year breakdown of modules studied and marks obtained; and the main intellectual, practical and key transferable skills that the student should have developed during their studies.
- One whole section of the HEAR provides **additional information** – rounding out the picture of the student beyond traditional academic achievement. This is verified and validated by the institution in three categories of:
  - additional awards
  - additional recognised activities; and
  - university, professional and departmental prizes.

## Detailed guide to the HEAR

The HEAR comprises contextual information and eight main sections. All sections of the HEAR are numbered and follow the same sequence as described below. An at-a-glance-guide – the Employers' Quick Guide to the HEAR – providing an overview of the sections, is on pages 8-10.

**The 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 including:**

**Section 4.3** detailed programme information

**Section 4.5** overall classification of the final qualification (eg the honours degree classification)

**Section 5. Information on the function of the qualification**

**Section 6. Additional information including:**

**Section 6.1** additional information

**Section 7. Certification of the HEAR**

**Section 8. Information of the national higher education system**

## Explanation of sections

### Contextual information

Contextual information, broadly explaining the purpose of the HEAR and its contents, features on the first page of the HEAR. The HEAR must meet certain European Commission requirements, in order to incorporate the European Diploma Supplement, and this is confirmed here.

### Section 1. Information identifying the holder of the qualification

This section confirms personal information about the student including their name, date of birth (a requirement of the European Diploma Supplement – this can be hidden where necessary), student identification/matriculation number etc.

### Section 2. Information identifying the qualification

This section confirms the name of the qualification gained and the title conferred (eg 'Bachelor of Arts'). It lists the main field or fields of study for the qualification (eg 'Modern History and Politics'). It also confirms the name and degree-awarding status of the awarding institution and the language of instruction/examination.

### **Section 3. Information on the level of the qualification**

This section indicates the level of the qualification gained and its place in the relevant national qualifications framework. This will be cross-referenced to the information in Section 8 which either explains or links to an up-to-date version of that qualifications framework. This section confirms the official length of the programme of study in weeks or years. Details of the qualifications required to access the course are also given here (eg 'a typical offer would be A-levels: 320-300 points, including AB-BB at A-level; Scottish Highers AAAB-AABB; International Bacc: 34-32 points'). In some cases these detailed requirements might instead be available by a link to specific documents held electronically.

### **Section 4. Information on the contents and results gained**

This is a large section. For the qualification stated in Section 2, it shows:

- the mode of study (eg full time)
- programme requirements – details of the minimum standards required to obtain the qualification (eg 'the degree is obtained after three years of full-time study the achievement of 360 credits including 100 at Level 5 or above and 120 at Level 6');
- succinct details about programme aims, learning outcomes, skills, attributes and knowledge associated with the overall programme of study at Section 4.3. Section 4.3 also provides details of all the components that have contributed to the final summary mark or grade. It incorporates tables providing the particulars of each of the individual elements or parts of the qualification (e.g. modules or units studied) and the individual grades/marks/credits obtained. It will also identify – as far as systems allow – the form of assessment (eg timed examination, essay, project, dissertation etc) and the relative weighting of each component towards the final summary mark or grade. This section includes all examinations and assessed components including resits or fails;
- details of the grading scheme used (eg 'marks are out of a possible 100% and the minimum pass mark is 40%');
- at Section 4.5, the overall classification of the final qualification. In the case of an honours degree, for example, this is where the final honours degree classification mark can be found (eg "Class II Division 2"). It also contains details of how this overall mark has been derived, as appropriate.

### **Section 5. Information on the function of the qualification**

This section contains details of whether and, if so, what, access to further academic and/or professional study, or levels of study the qualification normally provides. The section indicates if the qualification is an end award or part of a hierarchy of awards. In addition, the section gives details of any rights to practise, or professional status accorded to the holders of the qualification, if applicable.

It describes what access, if any, the qualification gives in terms of employment or professional practice and indicates which competent authority allows this. It indicates if the qualification gives access to a 'regulated profession'. The responsibility for ensuring accurate information in respect of the relationships between Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies and programmes of study rests with institutions themselves.

### **Section 6. Additional information**

Section 6.1 is a key aspect 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 student achievement related to wider academic and non-academic contexts, upon which the institution is prepared to sign off. This additional information will be recorded under one of three category headings:

- additional awards – accredited performance in non-academic contexts measured/ assessed by, or with external accreditation recognised by, the University. This category 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. For example credit-bearing volunteering;
- additional recognised activities – roles and activities undertaken by students which demonstrate achievement but for which no recognition is provided in terms of academic credit. For example volunteering, student union representative roles, representation at national level in sport or training courses run internally, which do not attract credit; and
- university, professional and departmental prizes – rewarding both academic and non- academic achievement.

#### ***Equal opportunities***

Each entry in section 6.1 will be on the basis of considerations of access and equity. The section should include only opportunities open on an equal basis to all students on the same course or programme (including those available across the institution as a whole). Students will, of course, choose to, or be able to, undertake different activities depending on their personal circumstances.

All institutions producing a HEAR are engaging with the spirit of the exercise and actively seeking ways to make use of Section 6.1. However, they will not complete this section for its own sake. If there is no record appropriate to one of the three bulleted headings, the heading will not be included.

This section also includes, at Section 6.2, an indication of further useful information sources and references where more details on the qualification could be sought.

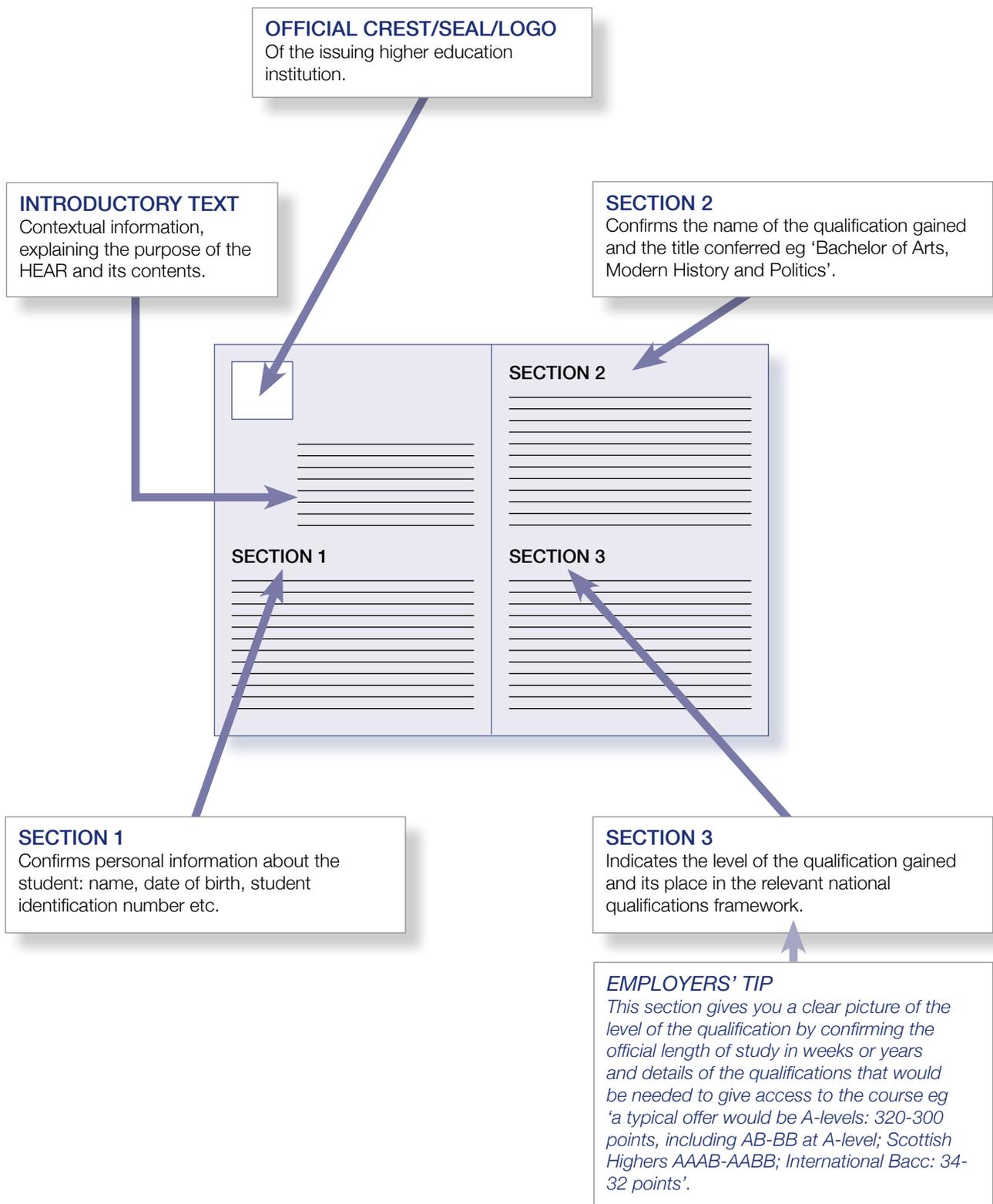
### **Section 7. Certification of the HEAR**

This section contains the formal authentication of the HEAR including date of issue; date the qualification was awarded; name and signature of the official certifying the HEAR (likely to be the Academic Registrar or equivalent); the official post of the certifying individual; the official stamp or seal.

### **Section 8. Information of the national higher education system**

This section contains a weblink reference to a description of the national higher education system to which the qualification and awarding higher education institution belongs. There are two national qualifications frameworks in the UK – one for Scotland and one for England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The frameworks incorporate all the different qualifications available to learners today and are designed to show how they relate to one another and to allow comparison between them.

## EMPLOYERS' QUICK GUIDE TO THE HEAR



**SECTION 4**  
 Details contents and results gained  
 4.1 the mode of study eg 'full time'  
 4.2 programme requirements  
 4.3 details of all the components that have contributed to the final summary mark or grade  
 4.4 details of the grading scheme used  
 4.5 the overall classification of the final qualification.

**EMPLOYERS' TIP**  
 You can use Section 4.3 to drill down into the different components of the qualification – the different modules and units studied and marks obtained. This section may also explain the form of assessment used, eg timed exam, essay, project etc, as well as the number of attempts and resits if appropriate.

**EMPLOYERS' TIP**  
 In the case of honours degree students, Section 4.5 is where you'll find the honours degree classification mark eg 'Class II Division 2'.

<p><b>SECTION 4</b></p> <p>4.1 _____                  _____                  _____</p> <p>4.2 _____                  _____                  _____                  _____</p> <p>4.3 _____                  _____                  _____                  _____</p>	<p>4.4 _____                  _____                  _____</p> <p>4.5 _____                  _____                  _____</p> <p><b>SECTION 5</b></p> <p>5.1 _____                  _____                  _____</p> <p>5.2 _____                  _____                  _____</p>
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**SECTION 5**  
 Details the function of the qualification  
 5.1 whether/what access to further academic or professional study, or levels of study, it normally provides  
 5.2 Professional status (if applicable).

**EMPLOYERS' TIP**  
 In Section 5.2 you will be able to see if the qualification confers professional status, rights to practice etc on the holder.

