Guidance for writing HEAR protocols for section 6.1 of the HEAR

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✉ myliv@liverpool.ac.uk

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Careers and Employability

What is the Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR)?

The HEAR is a national employer-led initiative, driven by a need from employers to receive 'institutionally verified' information about the details of a student's degree programme, including all modules studies and marks gained in all years of study, and, certain co- and extra- curricular activities that the student has participated in.

Eligibility criteria for activities to be considered for inclusion in section 6.1 of the HEAR:

- The activities provide a minimum of 7 hours of learning opportunity/skill development.
- The students are unpaid, unless in the service of the university (i.e. paid roles such as a Student Open Day Ambassador, or summer assistant on a research project are eligible for inclusion on the HEAR.
- Paid co-curricular discipline-related activities would include roles such as Student Advocates; students engaged on e.g. vacation department research projects, or internships; students employed by the Disability support team to support fellow students in the same discipline
- Paid 'Vocational' roles would include activities such as communications assistant in the Guild, or a member of the Green Team in the Guild
- Extra- curricular paid roles (such as part-time bar jobs) are not eligible for inclusion on the HEAR.
- Have an approved protocol statement which has been produced either by the University or Guild and verified by the HEAR protocol approval panel

As far as possible, all co- and extra- curricular activities offered by the University will appear on the relevant University webpages and within the 'My Liverpool' App.

In order to develop a standardised means of recording information about co- and extra-curricular activities in section 6.1 of the HEAR, a standard format has been agreed, called a protocol.

What is a HEAR protocol?

A HEAR protocol is a set of information containing the following:

- The title of the activity (e.g. student representative)

- The name of the 'organisation' that owns and is verifying the activity - this could be e.g. The Guild of Students, or a named department

- The academic year that the activity took place

- A list of (a maximum of 6) short bullet points which provide a good overview of the role to an employer reading the protocol (i.e. essentially as though it was a CV entry), but are also sufficiently specific and meaningful such that it is relatively straightforward for a specified staff member from the owning organisation to 'verify' that a particular student has completed all the bullet point statements listed on the protocol.

- It is important to consider when writing these bullet point statements how a staff member will be able to verify that a specific student has completed each statement, hence it is advisable to make the statements as simple and straightforward as possible)

- The number of students able to participate in the activity. This is a practical upper limit of how many students could take part in this opportunity before you would have to start turning students away. If an exact number cannot be pinpointed, provide an as accurate as possible estimate or range. This allows us to see how many opportunities there are for students across the institution and within schools/departments.

A protocol template with a draft example is given in **Appendix 1** of this guide.

Appendix 2 gives examples of previously approved protocols for information.

A full list of currently approved protocols is available **on our website**.

How are protocols approved for inclusion on the HEAR?

Once an activity owner has drafted the protocol for a specified activity the protocol can be then be filled via an **online form**.

A panel of academics and professional services staff then meet twice per year, once in September to approve protocols for Semester 1 onwards, and once in January to approve protocols for Semester 2.

Therefore, proposed activities must be submitted via the **online form** on the dates specified on the form to be considered for the following semester.
(End of August for Semester 1, End of December for Semester 2).

Activity owners will then be informed whether the protocol has been approved or if further amendments are recommended for the activity to be HEAR accredited.

How do approved protocols appear on the HEAR?

Once the protocol has been approved, you will need to inform your **Departmental HEAR Administrator** who will transfer the details onto their 'Activity Owners Spreadsheet', which is where details of all of the students who have successfully completed/achieved all the protocol elements will be recorded.

Details to be added to the spreadsheet will include all the protocol information submitted via the **online form**, plus the list of students who have completed all of the bullet point statements/role description.

Information from the 'activity owners' spreadsheets will be uploaded twice a year prior to graduation. The information download function is built into the spreadsheet and will result in the specified protocol appearing against the nominated students. Prior to graduation, students will be able to select within Liverpool Life which of their approved set of activities (up to a maximum of 5) that they then wish to appear on their individual HEAR which accompanies their university transcript.

You may find it helpful to have a longer list of bullet points that more fully describe the role being completed and which can be used for verification/recording purposes, with a shorter list that comprises a maximum of 6 bullet points that will appear on the HEAR.

If you would like further advice/guidance, please **contact us**.

Advice and guidelines on writing the protocol statements

We recommend that proposed protocol statements follow the below criteria.

- Write points as though they are an entry on a student's CV. This is very important. Use past tense. Write them from the student's perspective.

- Include as much as possible what the student will have done without bloating the statements. 2-3 sentences per statement is ideal.

- Give numbers of sessions or events, usually expressed as a 'A minimum of X…' e.g 'Attended a minimum of 4 workshops' or 'Ran a minimum of 3 study skills sessions'.

- Try and give examples of activities undertaken at events or skills that were aimed to be developed. E.g: 'Attended a business skills workshop to develop a broader understanding of the current business trends and enhance communication strategies.' or 'Developed skills such as writing, research, interviewing, presenting and technical skills editing and producing'.

- Make sure that you can guarantee everything you write, hence why we use 'a minimum of...'. For this reason we advise to say 'Given the opportunity to learn skills such as communication, team working and leadership.'

Guidance for PGR students who participate in activities

Whilst all of the above is specifically applicable to UG and PGT students who receive a HEAR transcript upon graduation, PGR students are encouraged to add activities to their portfolio of activity during their time at university.

As far as possible, all co- and extra- curricular activities offered by the University will appear on the relevant **University webpages** and within the **'My Liverpool' App**.

Are there any eligibility criteria for activities?

The PGR portfolio of activity requires no activity although activities should really be a minimum of 1 hour. However, if the activity owner wishes to use the UG and PGT HEAR (Higher Education Achievement Report) protocol criteria as a guideline, then they can follow the main criteria as follows: the activity provides a minimum of 7 hours of learning opportunity/skill development, and are unpaid, unless in the service of the university (i.e. paid roles such as a Student Open Day Ambassador, or summer assistant on a research project).

How do approved protocols for PGR students appear in the PGR Toolbox?

Once the protocol has been approved, the departmental HEAR Administrator will transfer the details onto their 'Activity Owners Spreadsheet', which is also where details of all the students who have successfully completed/achieved all the protocol elements will be recorded. Details to be added to the spreadsheet will include all the protocol information submitted via the online form, plus the list of students who have completed all the bullet point statements/role description. Information from the activity owners' spreadsheets will be uploaded twice a year. The information download function is built into the spreadsheet and will result in the specified protocol appearing in the relevant students' PGR Toolbox.

Appendix 1 – HEAR Protocol

Please use this table as a guide to what information will be required to be submitted. Please delete and input as appropriate. Draft versions of the table below can be sent to myliv@liverpool.ac.uk for feedback prior to the proposal being submitted via the **online form** for consideration by the panel.

Title of Activity Skills Enhancement Programme

Name of department/school verifying the activity Careers and Employability

Name of activity owner Iwan Williams

Academic year that the activity will take place from 202122

Mini job description comprising a maximum of 6 bullet points describing the role/activity
Worked in a cross-faculty team of fellow students, completed a 30 hour project. This employer-led challenge required exceptional levels of commitment and determination as this was an extracurricular activity that sat alongside already demanding normal study requirements.

Project allowed development of a range of employability skills and experiences that reflect the realities of the world of work. These included teamwork and collaboration in a digital environment, proactive problem solving and sourcing creative solutions and communicating ideas and challenges to diverse audiences.

Developed key employability skills, also able to develop an enhanced commercial awareness, gain direct experience of enterprise and entrepreneurship principles and enhance knowledge and understanding of the challenges faced in any future job roles.

Worked with a mentor throughout to support reflective learning, the completion of this experience is evidence that the student takes their own professional and personal development very seriously; that they have high resilience and self-confidence levels as well as the attitude required to see tasks through to completion.

Completed a short reflection following completion of the Skills Enhancement Programme of no more than 500 words. This included a brief overview of the project completed, highlighting any specific role or responsibilities undertaken and an outline of skills used or developed.

Number of students able to participate in activity. A minimum of 50 Number of hours of participation (minimum of 7)

Appendix 2 – Examples of Approved Protocols for Section 6.1 of the HEAR.

Title of Activity Emerge: Social Enterprise Programme

Name of department/school verifying the activity Careers and Employability

Academic year that the activity will take place from 202021

Mini job description comprising a maximum of 6 bullet points describing the role/activity
Applied for and attended sessions over an eight week period requiring self-motivation through coming up with a social enterprise idea.

Demonstrated an ability to understand and value their own skills and knowledge in the context of Enterprise. Developed an understanding of impact upon a community, both positive and negative.

Gained a full understanding of the concept of feasibility and 3rd sector governance/ organisational structure. Created a robust financial model with a 5 year forecast.

Presented a video recording of enterprise ideas at the end of the project, demonstrating a high level of presentation and communication skills to convey an idea and technical ability.

Enhanced communication and team working skills. Worked collaboratively to brainstorm, problem solve and generate ideas using the skip set of the group. For example, developing an enterprise idea, creating and comprehensive business plan for the enterprise.

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Title of Activity Peer Assisted Learning (PAL) Facilitator for English Language

Name of department/school verifying the activity English Language Centre

Academic year that the activity will take place from 202021

Mini job description comprising a maximum of 6 bullet points describing the role/activity
Completed initial training session with experienced language teacher in preparation for leading English Language conversation clubs.

Facilitated a minimum of seven conversation clubs with small groups of non-native speakers of English.

Developed strategies to maintain engagement of participants in speaking activities

Improved communication and organisational skills as well as acquiring an insight into the role of the teacher in the language classroom

Worked independently and in small groups to design a program of themes and topics for conversation clubs.

Title of Activity Clinical Skills Ambassador

Name of department/school verifying the activity School of Medicine

Academic year that the activity will take place from 202021

Mini job description comprising a maximum of 6 bullet points describing the role/activity
Was a member of the Clinical Skills working group - attended a minimum of two meetings aimed at improving the service provided for students across teaching sessions and The Learning Zone (TLZ).

Liaised with peers to gather questions and feedback in relation to Clinical Skills and The Learning Zone, raising these at Clinical Skills working group meetings.

Supported the preparation of and represented Clinical Skills at open days/freshers events

Worked with the Clinical Skills team to prepare and deliver taster day activities.

Given the opportunity to develop communication skills and organisational skills.

Given the opportunity to develop understanding of project delivery.

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Title of Activity International Experience Advocate (ULMS)

Name of department/school verifying the activity Management School

Academic year that the activity will take place from 202021

Mini job description comprising a maximum of 6 bullet points describing the role/activity
Undertook an initial briefing and communication training session

Created a blog or web profile (with pictures of their experience) for the University website, to promote an international experience

Took part in the "In Conversation With…" project. This involved talking about the skills and experiences developed whilst studying abroad and presenting these as part of a recorded interview. This interview was then used by the ULMS Study Abroad team as part of recruitment events and promotional campaigns

Assisted student recruitment efforts by representing the Management School during Study Abroad Week and engaged with prospective Study Abroad, Year in China and Summer School applicants by answering questions and talking about their experience

Worked in a team and liaised with staff to develop and run an interactive session with inbound exchange students, providing advice, support and general information about student life and Liverpool

Produced a report detailing their experience of being an International Experience Ambassador to help recruit future ambassadors

Appendix 2 – Examples of Approved Protocols for Section 6.1 of the HEAR.

Title of Activity Professional Networking Event Coordinator

Name of department/school verifying the activity School of Law

Academic year that the activity will take place from 202021

Mini job description comprising a maximum of 6 bullet points describing the role/activity

Worked as part of a team to develop a networking event concept, plan logistics, and define relevant target audience(s).

Identified appropriate external guest contributors from outside of the School of Law & Social Justice and liaised with those external contributors to agree the suitable focus, format, and conditions of the networking event.

Contributed to hosting the network event including: facilitating guest contributors' participation and (where relevant) travel etc; promoting the event to students and securing desired attendance levels; managing interactions/questions between the guest and students.

Reflected on the value and impact of the networking event, scope for improvement, and potential follow-up events or activities.

Developed organisational skills, an ability to research and analyse employability/networking needs and opportunities, and interpersonal skills.