



University of Essex



VISITING AND HONORARY  
ACADEMIC TITLES  
**POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

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**HUMAN RESOURCES**

# VISITING AND HONORARY ACADEMIC TITLES **POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

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## **AIM**

The University may confer visiting and academic titles on those whom have either made an outstanding contribution to the life of the institution or with whom the University wishes to work to further its goal of excellence in research and excellence in education and who are not employed at the University. All titles must be conferred in line with the criteria in order to maintain standards of excellence, and accompanied by an agreement setting out obligations and entitlements.



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## INTRODUCTION

**1.** This policy and procedure sets out the criteria and process for conferring honorary titles. The criteria have been updated with the launch of this guidance, and include a new title of Associate Fellow. The criteria must be applied strictly and faithfully in order to maintain standards of excellence.

**2.** The procedure is managed by Heads of Department, seeking approvals as necessary. Honorary agreements must be issued by Departments to clarify obligations and entitlements. Those with an honorary title are, normally, not able to undertake paid work for the University and we must take care not to treat them as if they are employees.

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

**3.** Departments are responsible for:

- Applying the criteria and obtaining necessary supporting evidence.
- Completing the nomination form and submitting to the Executive Dean.
- Issuing an honorary contract and keeping a record.
- Checking the individual has the relevant immigration permission, if appropriate.

**4.** HR is responsible for:

- Managing and advising on the policy and procedure.
- Checking that nominations comply with the rules (Faculty HR Advisors)

## RECORDS

**5.** Departments should keep records of nomination forms and honorary agreements for the period of the appointment and for six months thereafter.



## BENCH FEES

**6.** Bench fees may be charged at the discretion of Departments, most likely where consumables are used in laboratories. If a visitor with an honorary title is not charged bench fees but does consume University resources, they must be held to account each year for what they produce for the University's benefit.

## LENGTH OF ENGAGEMENT

**7.** Most titles may be for any length of time to a maximum of 3 years but subject to annual review, with the exception of Emeritus Professor which is not subject to a formal time limit but will be reviewed periodically. Associate and Community Fellows are limited to one year. Extensions (which are for a maximum three years and are not available to Associate Fellows) may be made on production of a case by the Head of Department which demonstrates contribution during the preceding years.

**8.** Extensions must show that the honorary academic has achieved the following and are able to demonstrate that they will continue to achieve:

- a.** Substantial contribution to the University's life demonstrated by joint authorship of books and/or papers and/or
- b.** Successful annual VF/EF lectures to an interested group of University under and/or postgraduate students and/or
- c.** Provision of career advice to students, peer mentorship to colleagues or other, similar activities and/or
- d.** Demonstrable addition to the research environment which has direct benefit to the University's REF submission.

## NOMINATION PROCEDURE

**9.** Those nominated should provide their up-to-date CV to the Head of Department, who should then complete a nomination form which is duly signed and approved and sent with the CV and passport with visa (where applicable) to **Employee Relations Department in HR** who, on checking that the nomination complies with the rules and that the individual has the relevant immigration permission, will return it to the Department for forwarding to the Executive Dean for approval.

**10.** All of these titles should be approved by the Executive Dean and the Head of Department. Honorary and Emeritus Professors should, additionally be approved by the relevant Pro-Vice-Chancellor (dependent upon whether the individual will be principally involved in research or in educational activities and both Pro-Vice-Chancellors where this is appropriate) and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor.

**11.** Ordinance 44 states that Senate grants the title of Emeritus Professor. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor will therefore make a recommendation to the Vice-Chancellor, who as Chair of Senate, will normally take Chair's action to grant the title. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor will then write to the Professor to confirm that the title has been granted.

**12.** The Head of Department will ensure that an honorary contract is issued. The Faculty HR manager or officer will ensure that IT is informed so that an IT account is provided. Individuals should visit HR to have a campus card issued.

## HONORARY AGREEMENTS

**13.** Departments must issue an honorary agreement for each honorary title. This makes clear the obligation to comply with University policies and procedures, and also gives a notice period of three months on either side.

## VISA REQUIREMENTS

### 14.

Although there is no requirement for right to work checks as these individuals are not working, a person who wishes to enter the UK and undertake activities as a visiting academic must have permission to do so. Depending on country of origin and length of stay, a visitor or other visa may be required. This link will confirm if an individual requires a visa [www.gov.uk/check-uk-visa](http://www.gov.uk/check-uk-visa)

### 15.

Academic visitors can stay for a maximum of 12 months, while business visitors can normally stay for a maximum of 6 months. These maximum periods cannot be extended and academic and business visitors cannot switch into other immigration categories without leaving the UK first. Academic and business visitors may only receive payments which cover reasonable expenses, travel or honoraria. This link provides more information about the academic visitor route [www.gov.uk/standard-visitor-visa/eligibility](http://www.gov.uk/standard-visitor-visa/eligibility)

### 16.

If any visitors are on a Tier 4 visa, any hours of activity e.g. guest lectures will count towards the limit on working hours.

### 17.

Honorary titles may also be conferred on those with a Tier 5 visa "Government Authorised Exchange". The limit of stay on these visas is 24 months. It is expected that these visitors would be at the level of 'Visiting Fellow' although the criteria set out in this policy must still be met.

### 18.

It is the responsibility of both the Department and the visiting academic to make sure that they understand any visa restrictions the visitor may have, and confirm that dates of the visit do NOT exceed the end date of any visa.

## PAID WORK

### 19.

Visiting academics will hold contracts of employment with other institutions and will therefore not have the capacity to carry out paid employment with us. There may be unusual circumstances where a part-time employed visiting fellow is appointed to undertake employed work with us. If this work is similar in nature to their visiting role, then that (the visiting fellow) role automatically drops away whilst they are employed. If the work is substantially different in nature, they may continue to work as a visiting fellow simultaneously.

### 20.

The honorary agreement makes very clear that this is not an employment relationship. However, it is important that how we treat people in practice supports this - an employment tribunal will look at how the relationship works day to day as much as what might have been agreed on paper. It is possible for someone to claim that that they have effectively been employed by us even though there is no paperwork to support this. An employment relationship may be created where there is mutuality of obligation to provide and accept work (e.g. they are required to perform specified research and may receive some payment in kind); there is a duty to perform work personally; the University has day to day control over the activities of the individual, and where the individual is integrated into the organisation (e.g. listed on the website as a member of teaching staff).

### 21.

Mixing periods of paid work with service in an honorary capacity creates a risk that their entire association with us is viewed under law as being that of an employment relationship, creating risks and liability for the University.



# ANNEX 1:

## CRITERIA FOR THE AWARD OF TITLES

All recipients of visiting and honorary titles are expected to make a substantial contribution to the University's mission to provide excellence in research and excellence in education.

For example, one or more of the following:

- Substantial contribution to the University demonstrated by joint authorship of books/papers
- Provision of career advice to students, peer mentorship to colleagues
- Provision of occasional (e.g. termly) lectures or seminars to students
- Demonstrable addition to the research environment which has direct benefit to the University's REF submission
- Provision of presentations, curriculum development, collaborative working and access to a wider network of practitioners/contacts enabling provision of internships/placements for students

These are unpaid appointments by their very nature although expenses may be claimed.

Extensions to appointments as Visiting/Executive Fellow (which are for a maximum of three years) must show they have achieved the following and are able to demonstrate that they will continue to achieve:

- a. Substantial contribution to the University's life demonstrated by joint authorship of books and/or papers and/or
- b. Successful annual VF/EF lectures to an interested group of University under and/or postgraduate students and/or
- c. Provision of career advice to students, peer mentorship to colleagues or other, similar activities and/or
- d. Demonstrable addition to the research environment which has direct benefit to the University's REF submission

TITLE	AWARDED TO
<b>VISITING/EXECUTIVE FELLOW</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Post-doctoral (or equivalent) academic of standing employed within another HEI who is demonstrably able to make a significant contribution to the intellectual life of the University in an area in which the University specialises.</li> <li>■ Has proven ability of high quality research, evidenced by a range of publications and teaching and by supportive references from their home institution. References may be verbal but will be transcribed as a record of receipt.</li> <li>■ Reaches the same standards as would be expected of a substantive appointee at the same level.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>or</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Post-doctoral (or equivalent) academic employed in another sector who is continuing with research activities and complies with the criteria above albeit in the recent past.</li> <li>■ Senior practitioners in business, industry, the public sector and the wider community who are associated with, and contributing to a department through talks, presentations of their work, career guidance, mentoring, professional advice and so on.</li> </ul>
<b>HONORARY LECTURER OR HONORARY SENIOR LECTURER</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Professionals of equivalent standing to the substantive title, employed in other organisations who demonstrably add to the development of students educationally, through lectures and professional advice.</li> </ul>
<b>VISITING PROFESSOR</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Professor from another HEI institution visiting for a defined period of time to contribute to research or education activities.</li> <li>■ Two external references from the home institution required before this title can be conferred.</li> </ul>
<b>HONORARY PROFESSOR</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The individual must hold the equivalent status in a comparable profession. Two external assessors' reports are required before this title is conferred</li> <li>■ Signed approval of the relevant PVC (s). Final approval is with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor.</li> </ul>
<b>ASSOCIATE/COMMUNITY FELLOW</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Early career academics who are making a substantial contribution to Essex, during their studies and whose contribution will continue.</li> <li>■ Post-doctoral students continuing work on research started as part of their PhD studies.</li> <li>■ Community based individuals who provide a valuable contribution to students' recruitment, education and research experience possibly through giving talks, hosting visits to their home organisations, providing career advice and so on.</li> <li>■ Appointments to Associate Fellow limited to one year for those without paid employment elsewhere.</li> <li>■ Appointments to Community Fellow will normally be limited to one year but may be reviewed annually.</li> </ul>
<b>EMERITUS PROFESSOR</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Distinguished professors who retire from the University, in recognition of their past contribution and have potential and intention to continue to contribute to the success of the University.</li> <li>■ Continued association with the School/Department and the University and contribution as appropriate through, for example, guest lectures, association with research activities, acting as an ambassador for the University, attendance at events.</li> <li>■ Membership of Court.</li> <li>■ Signed approval of the relevant PVC(s).</li> <li>■ Ordinance 44 states that Senate grants the title of Emeritus Professor. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor will therefore make a recommendation to the Vice-Chancellor, who as Chair of Senate, will normally take Chair's action to grant the title.</li> <li>■ Appointment subject to periodic review.</li> </ul>

**POLICY CREATOR: HUMAN RESOURCES**

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