



University of Essex



Visiting and Honorary Academic Titles

Policy and Procedure

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Aim

The University may confer visiting and academic titles on those who 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 be accompanied by an agreement setting out obligations and entitlements.

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.
3. If sponsorship is required by the individual in order for them to obtain a Government Authorised Exchange visa, please refer to the section on visa requirements and contact righttowork@essex.ac.uk as soon as possible, who will advise about additional required documentation and manage the sponsorship process. Please consider current visa processing times when considering start dates. People & Culture will require at least 2 weeks' notice to be able to issue a Certificate of sponsorship. Once an individual has sponsorship for a Government Authorised Exchange visa People & Culture will issue the honorary agreement. Please contact The Employee Relations Advisory Team in People & Culture for more information.

Roles and responsibilities

4. 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

- providing People & Culture with all requested documentation if visa sponsorship is required
- adhering to compliance obligations if the individual has a Government Authorised Exchange visa, including informing righttowork@essex.ac.uk if the individual ends the arrangement early

5. People & Culture are responsible for:

- managing and advising on the policy and procedure
- advising that nominations comply with the rules
- managing the visa sponsorship process for Government Authorised Exchange visas, including checking the individual has the relevant immigration permission
- making required Home Office reports in relation to individuals on a Government Authorised Exchange visa

Records

6. Departments should keep records of nomination forms and honorary agreements for the period of the appointment and for six months thereafter. Where an individual has sponsorship for a Government Authorised Exchange visa, these will also be held within People & Culture.

Bench fees

7. Bench fees are additional charges which may be charged to visiting academics or those holding honorary titles, 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 consumes University resources, they must be held to account each year for what they produce for the University's benefit.

Length of engagement

8. Most titles may be for any length of time up to a maximum of 3 years but after 3 years are subject to annual review, with the exception of Emeritus Professor which is not subject to a formal time limit but will be reviewed periodically, and in line with the individual's fulfilment of the criteria for the title, and Associate and Community Fellows, which are limited to a one year engagement with no option to extend further. Extensions, where permitted, can be granted normally for up to an additional three years (subject to annual review) and may be made on production of a case by the Head of Department which demonstrates contribution during the preceding years.

9. Providing there is no break between engagements, extensions do not require the resubmission of photographic ID or a CV but a nomination form must confirm that the honorary academic has maintained the requirements listed below throughout their engagement and will continue to meet the requirements during the period of extension
- (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

10. 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 photographic proof of ID with visa (where applicable) to People & Culture 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.
11. All titles must 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.
12. 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 Emeritus Professor to confirm that the title has been granted.
13. The Head of Department will ensure that an honorary contract is issued (unless the individual requires sponsorship for a Government Authorised Exchange visa). The Employee Relations

Advisory team (hrrer@essex.ac.uk) will ensure that IT is informed so that an IT account is provided. For existing employees, IT access ceases on the last day of employment. In order to maintain email access, the application for an academic or honorary title will need to be completed and processed before their last day of employment. Please allow a minimum of 4 weeks for end to end processing. Individuals should visit People & Culture to have a campus card issued.

Honorary agreements

14. 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

15. Although there is no requirement for right to work checks as these individuals are not employed by or working for the University, 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 type of visa may be required. This link will confirm if an individual requires a visa www.gov.uk/check-uk-visa. Individuals with sponsorship under a Government Authorised Exchange visa will have their visa checked by People & Culture as this is mandatory.
16. Academic visitors from outside of the UK 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
17. Those with sponsorship for a Government Authorised Exchange visa will be granted a title length in line with the current maximum length of leave that can be granted by the Home Office.
18. Extensions requiring an additional period of visa sponsorship will only be granted in line with the current maximum length of leave that can be granted by the Home Office. Additional documentation may be required in line with current requirements. As above, a new nomination form will need to be submitted. Please contact righttowork@essex.ac.uk for further information

19. If any visitors are on a Tier 4 or Student visa, any hours of activity, e.g. guest lectures, will count towards the limit on working hours.
20. Honorary titles may also be conferred on those requiring a Government Authorised Exchange visa. The limit of stay for individuals holding these visas is currently 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. Departments must contact righttowork@essex.ac.uk as soon as possible (and prior to issuing any invitation letters or honorary agreements) to discuss the process and the documentation required. Departments will be issued with their compliance obligations in relation to any sponsored individual.
21. 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, ensure that any restrictions on working hours are strictly adhered to, and confirm that dates of the visit do NOT exceed the end date of any visa.
22. Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS) certificates – Some visitors to the UK will require an ATAS certificate prior to undertaking any research activities in the UK. The individual should read the [current guidance](#) to understand if a certificate is required. The ATAS certificate can be applied for after the visa application has been made; however, the individual should apply well in advance of their visit as the ATAS process can take up to a month.
23. Any individuals sponsored under a Government Authorised Exchange visa can undertake additional, paid work in certain circumstances. Please contact righttowork@essex.ac.uk prior to any paid work being accepted/undertaken for guidance.

Paid work

24. 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 exceptional circumstances where a part-time employed visiting fellow is appointed to undertake employed work for the University. Where this occurs, the visiting or honorary agreement will be suspended whilst the individual partakes in paid work and a separate fixed-term contract issued to cover the paid work role. Once the fixed-term contract has ended, the honorary title can be reinstated, but not before. Mixing periods of paid work with service in an honorary capacity creates a risk that an individual's entire association with the University is viewed under law as being that of an employment relationship, creating risks and liability for the University.
25. 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 is created where there is mutuality of obligation to provide and accept work (e.g. an individual is 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).

Monitoring

The People, Culture and Inclusion Advisory Group (PCIAG) will monitor the impact of this policy.

Equality impact assessment

The University has conducted an Equality Impact Assessment on this policy and is satisfied that its application should not result in a differential and negative impact on any groups of employees identified under the Equality Act 2010.

Related university policies and procedures

- [Whistleblowing Policy](#)

University sources of information

- [Code of Student Conduct](#)
- [Student Concerns and Complaints Procedure \(.pdf\)](#)
- [Bullying and Harassment: Our Zero Tolerance Approach](#)
- [Intellectual Property Policy](#)

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.

Title	Key information
Associate/ Community Fellow	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Early career academics who are making a substantial contribution to Essex, during their studies and whose contribution will continue.■ Post-doctoral students continuing work on research started as part of their PhD studies.■ 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.■ Appointments to Associate Fellow limited to one year for those without paid employment elsewhere.■ Appointments to Community Fellow will normally be limited to one year but may be reviewed annually.

Title	Key information
Visiting/ Executive Fellow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 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. ■ 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. ■ Reaches the same standards as would be expected of a substantive appointee at the same level. <p>Or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 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. ■ 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.
Honorary Lecturer or Honorary Senior Lecturer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 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.
Honorary Professor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The individual must hold the equivalent status in a comparable profession. Two external assessors' reports are required before this title is conferred. Please use the External Assessor Report Template. ■ Signed approval of the relevant PVC (s). Final approval is with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor.
Visiting Professor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Professor from another HEI institution visiting for a defined period of time to contribute to research or education activities. Two external assessor reports from the home institution required before this title can be conferred. Please use the External Assessor Report Template.
Emeritus Professor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Distinguished professors who retire from the University, in recognition of their past contribution and have potential and the intention to continue to contribute to the success of the University.

Title	Key information
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. Membership of Court. Signed approval of the relevant PVC(s). 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. Appointment subject to periodic review.

Documents required to send with application for each type of honorary title

Title	Nomination Form	Identity Check	CV	2x External Assessor Reports	PVC sign off	DVC sign off	VC sign off	Time limit
Associate / Community Fellow	X	X	X					1 year
Visiting / Executive Fellow	X	X	X					Up to 3 years
Honorary Lecturer or Honorary Senior Lecturer	X	X	X					Up to 3 years
Honorary Professor	X	X	X	X	X	X		Up to 3 years

Title	Nomination Form	Identity Check	CV	2x External Assessor Reports	PVC sign off	DVC sign off	VC sign off	Time limit
Visiting Professor	X	X	X	X				Up to 3 years
Emeritus Professor	X				X	X	X	None

Please note: Additional documentation will be required for individuals who are sponsored under a Government Authorised Exchange visa. Please contact righttowork@essex.ac.uk for details

Document Control Panel

Field	Description
Title	Visiting and Honorary Academic Titles Policy and Procedure
Policy Classification	Policy
Security Classification	Open
Security Rationale	None required
Policy Manager Role	Policy and Engagement Lead
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