

The University of Edinburgh
The Moray House School of Education
School Postgraduate Studies Committee

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HEA Fellowship accreditation route for Digital Education

Brief description of the paper

From September 2014, there will be an optional route through the Digital Education programme which meets the requirements of the UK Professional Standards Framework, and results in accreditation as a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy. This route is open to those working in Higher Education. This paper describes the route, and gives information for other programme teams who may be interested in pursuing accreditation.

Action requested

For information

Resource implications

Does the paper have resource implications? No

If 'Yes', in which section(s) of the paper are they described?

Risk assessment

Does the paper include a risk analysis? No

If 'Yes', in which section(s) of the paper is it set out?

Equality and diversity

Does the paper have equality and diversity implications? No

If 'Yes', in which section(s) of the paper are they described?

Freedom of information

Can this paper be included in open business? Yes

Any other relevant information

Originator of the paper

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HEA Fellowship accreditation route for Digital Education

The IAD and the Senate Learning and Teaching Committee have been working on an initiative, led by Dr Velda McCune, to secure Higher Education Academy accreditation for a small number of programmes in the University with significant numbers of students working in the Higher Education sector. The Digital Education programme is one of the newly accredited programmes. This initiative is part of The University of Edinburgh's Continuing Professional Development Framework for Learning and Teaching¹, which encompasses a range of credit bearing courses and programmes as well as non-credit bearing CPD opportunities.

The Digital Education team has, in parallel, been working towards 'individual recognition route' HEA accreditation for those who teach on the programme and were not already accredited. The aim is for the core team and most of our extended team members to be accredited in time for the 2014/15 academic year, and we are on track to meet this goal.

From September 2014, for new entrants to the programme who are working in Higher Education, there is an optional route through the programme which meets the requirements of the UK Professional Standards Framework, and results in accreditation as a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy. The course requirements for this route are the same as for the Certificate stage of the programme – the 40-credit Introduction to Digital Environments for Learning (IDEL) course, plus one additional 20-credit option course from the programme.

Those following the HEA route will need to meet an additional requirement in their IDEL coursework – they will write at least three of their blog posts on topics that evidence how the course material intersects with issues of assessment and feedback in their own HE context; and demonstrates understanding, based in evidence, of the diversity of how students learn and what makes online environments effective and participatory. Tutors will provide formative feedback and assess these blog posts as normal, and will, in addition, fill in a brief form at the end of the course that confirms that these topics were covered in the blog in a satisfactory way. Blog posts are already part of the course requirements, and students write each week on topics of their choice, so requiring students to focus on these areas in a few of their posts will not necessitate a change in the assessment for the course.

We anticipate that this new route will make the programme even more attractive to people working in UK higher education settings, which will be good for building on our strong recruitment of UK-based applicants.

For other programme teams who are interested in HEA accreditation - there are two key criteria which programmes would have to meet in order to be successful in getting accredited as a route to Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy:

- 1) At least some programme participants would need to be currently teaching in HE.
- 2) Programmes must be able to show explicitly how they can ensure that participants are being assessed against the relevant descriptor of the UK Professional Standards Framework².

Programme coordinators should be aware that this can be a time consuming process and that the Higher Education Academy are quite strict about explicitly addressing all of the relevant parts of the UKPSF and making this explicit for participants. The next University wide application for accreditation will be in 2016. Interested programme coordinators should contact: velda.mccune@ed.ac.uk

If you would like any further information about the Digital Education accreditation process or plans, please feel free to contact Jen. jen.ross@ed.ac.uk

¹ <http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/institute-academic-development/learning-teaching/cpd>

² <http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/ukpsf>