

Access News



December 2015



Welcome to the December edition of the LASER Access to HE Newsletter.

It has been a busy term and we hope that you have all settled into the new academic year.

As we approach the end of the calendar year we are already looking at the end of the academic year and changes to Final Moderation and Awards Boards—more information can be found on page 2 of this newsletter.

This issue combines a review of information from the autumn term with new developments and reminders for 2016, and as always we would love to hear from you about future articles for Access News.

**LASER would like to wish all our Access colleagues
Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!**

In this issue

- * Final Moderation and Awards Boards
- * New policies on Use of English and Examinations
- * Reminders and Guidelines
- * Spring APG and Conference dates
- * LASER Access Student prize





LASER Annual Report Summary 14-15



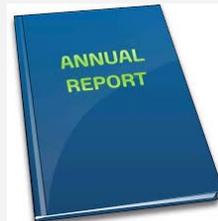
EM Reporting & Final Awards Board Changes for 2015-16

Following guidance issued by QAA in September 2015, LASER will be changing moderation processes across the scope of the AVA's activities and in particular, in relation to Final Awards Board processes.

A briefing detailing the full extent of the changes has been circulated to Access contacts and is available [HERE](#)

The developments include:

- ⇒ the introduction of new External Moderation documents—meaning there will only be one report completed over the course of a year rather than two;
- ⇒ increased use of 'in-year' moderation and standardisation of work;
- ⇒ new procedures for Final Awards Board—whereby moderators will be required to attend for final moderation in advance of the examination board—please note, they will still only need to attend the centre once. It will mean that any issues can be resolved prior to final sign-off of RACs and will ensure results are completed and ready to be processed; and
- ⇒ a revised system of annual reporting, which will see the Annual Centre Report being significantly reduced and supplementary evidence gathered by the AVA as part of the Final Awards Board meeting.



LASER will be issuing supplementary guidance, for all the above, early in 2016 and these developments will be discussed in more detail as part of the Access Practitioner Group meeting agenda in March.

Centres will shortly receive a copy of the LASER Annual Report Summary 14-15.

This document combines a number of papers produced by LASER as part of their Annual Self Evaluation Report for QAA and provides feedback to the reports requested from external moderators and centres.

There is a section on AVA statistics and a report on grading and together these documents give a general overview of Access provision across the region in 14-15.

Individual centre feedback will be collated and sent to providers in the Spring.

If you would like further details on this publication, please contact s.martin@laser-awards.org.uk

Amended IAS Units

Just a reminder! The Independent Academic Study (IAS) units have been updated and revised following feedback over the summer.

The updated versions of the units, including indicative content, are available on the LASER Access web pages [HERE](#)

A guidance document to accompany the revised units is also available, click the picture, left, to download!



Please take the time to read the briefing and circulate to your colleagues. If you have any queries regarding the new processes, please contact Ken Duckett, k.duckett@laser-awards.org.uk



LASER Access to HE Student Prize 2014/15

LASER has great pleasure in announcing the winners of the 2014/15 Access to HE Student Prize. For Outstanding Commitment to Study the First Prize was awarded to Dylan England nominated by **East Surrey College**, the runner-up is Simon Arthurs from **University of Kent** and Aminatu Crisp from **The College of Richard Collyer** was highly commended.

Guidelines & Policies



The Impact of the use of English on the Grading of Work on Access Diplomas

This document was generated as a result of a consultation process instigated by the AVA at the autumn round of Access Practitioner Group Meetings 2014-15. To download a copy of this document, please click [HERE](#)



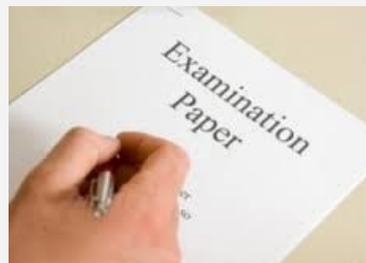
Examination Policy for Access to HE Diplomas

New policy for implementation 2016-17

Following discussion at the 14-15 APGs a new 'examinations' policy will be implemented from 2016/17.

All students will be expected to have a minimum of 4 opportunities to experience examinations—which can be offered in a variety of formats. Full details can be downloaded [HERE](#).

Rules of Combination will be amended for all centres to include reference to this requirement.



In-year RAC Completion and Student Portal

As registrations are now complete, LASER will shortly be issuing guidance on 'in-year' RAC completion and the new student portal.

Look out for updates, due to be circulated in January 2016.



In Outstanding Academic Achievement, first place went to Jamie Allington nominated by **City College Brighton** with Hannah Blake, **University of Kent** as runner-up. There were 2 highly commended nominations for Sarah Oldfield from **Northbrook College** and Laura McQuillian-Grayham from **Chichester College**.

The judges agreed that all the nominations were of a very high standard and once again it had been a difficult decision. There were 9 nominees for Commitment to Study and 13 for Academic Achievement.

The winner in each category will be put forward for the national Keith Fletcher Access to HE Student Prizes and the winners and runner-ups will be invited to the annual conference to receive their prizes.



****Upcoming Events****

Access Practitioner Group

The spring round of Access Practitioner Group meetings will take place between 7-18 March 2016. There will be 5 venues in this round—4 have been confirmed as follows:

Tuesday 8 March, time tbc, West Kent College, Tonbridge

Friday 11 March, 12.30pm, Southampton City College

Tuesday 15 March, 10am, Bracknell & Wokingham College

Thursday 17 March, time tbc, City College Brighton

A further meeting is still to be confirmed but will be around those 2 weeks and will be located to be accessible for our centres based in the north of the region.

Further details to follow shortly.

LASER Access to HE Conference



The LASER Annual Access to HE Conference will take place on **Friday 8 July 2016, 10am—4pm**, Friends House, Euston Road, London. The agenda for the day is being finalised and will be circulated in the New Year.

Sociology Unit Bank Questionnaire

Following the development of a new suite of Sociology units, LASER would like to invite interested parties to review them and offer any developmental comments as appropriate via the completion of an online survey.

Emails with the links have been sent to all Access Co-ordinators to be passed on to Sociology specialists.

The units can be viewed [HERE](#) and to complete the survey, please follow [this link](#)

Any queries contact: k.duckett@laser-awards.org.uk

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