

## Use of Titles by Honorary Visiting Professors

### Summary

Following discussion at Senate and Academic Governance Committee, the Governance Team has developed the attached paper.

The paper sets out AGC's recommendations on how to best ensure that Honorary Visiting Professors do not misuse their titles and/or their association with City, University of London. The policy on the 'Appointment of Visiting Staff' has been amended to reflect AGC's recommendations.

One action required.

### Recommended Action

Senate is asked to **approve** the proposed changes to the policy and to **consider** the paper.

**Publication: Open**

## Use of Titles by Honorary Visiting Professors

In the course of a discussion of proposed revisions to the policy on the *Appointment of Visiting Staff* at its July meeting (at which Senate agreed that approval should no longer be required from Boards of Studies or Senate for the appointment of paid Visiting Lecturers), Senate asked AGC to consider the use of Professorial Titles at City by Honorary Visiting Professors.

In the course of an initial discussion at September's AGC meeting, AGC asked the Governance Team to a) check Russell Group Universities' processes in relation to the appointment of unpaid staff, and b) to propose recommendations to the Committee about how titles should in future be used by unpaid staff lecturing at City.

### Practice at Russel Group Universities

The Governance Team found it harder than might have been anticipated to discover what standard practice was at Russell Group institutions for the titles used by unpaid visiting staff. Some institutions either did not publish or did not have a policy on Honorary Visiting Professors or unpaid Visiting Professors.

Some Russell Group institutions do not use the term 'Honorary Visiting Professor' but have a common policy and a common terminology for what at City we would call Honorary Visiting Professors and Visiting Professors. The University of Leeds has a policy entitled 'Academic Visitors and Titles for Persons not Employed by the University' and shows that Honorary Visiting Professors at City would be called 'Visiting Professors' at Leeds.

Some Russell Group institutions use the term 'Honorary Visiting Professors' in very much the same way as City: For example, Queen Mary University of London published guidelines similar to City's.

Queen Mary University of London states in its 'Procedure for Honorary or Visiting Title Applications':

*An individual with honorary or visiting status has QMUL's permission to use QMUL-headed paper, business cards, etc, provided that the full description of the Honorary/Visiting title is used (e.g. Honorary Lecturer in the School of Mathematical Sciences). The individual's name alone preceded by the academic or research title should not be used. Individuals whose academic contribution to QMUL is restricted to work within the NHS are not permitted to use QMUL stationery.*

### AGC discussion and recommendations

In the following discussion, at its November meeting, AGC noted that a degree of confusion was inevitable over the use of the title Honorary Visiting Professor. On balance, however, there was a case for City following the model adopted by Queen Mary. It was also noted that it would be helpful to include additional guidance, in City's policy on the use of the titles Visiting Professor and Honorary Visiting Professor.

AGC therefore recommended for City to take further action and prescribe clearly in a variety of contexts how the title Honorary Visiting Professor should be used. City should:

- a) amend the letters sent to HVPs confirming their appointment by adding a few words on how to use their title. The below paragraph has been extracted, as an example, from a letter sent to an Honorary Visiting Professor in 2008:

*We have found it valuable for each Visiting Professor to have one initial point of contact. Professor X will ensure that you meet other relevant colleagues, introduce you to how City works and help to ensure that the relationship is fruitful. You should find that you have access to the same news about the university, e-mail capabilities etc as*

- those enjoyed by City employees. We suggest that the title should be used in the following format, 'John Smith, Honorary Visiting Professor, City, University of London'.*
- b) amend the 'Appointment of Visiting Staff Policy' to include specific information on how Visiting Staff may use their title, along the lines set out at a) above.
  - c) it change the name of the policy from 'Appointment of Visiting Staff' to 'Appointment of Visiting Staff and Honorary Visiting Staff' to make clearer that it refers to both unpaid and paid appointments.

The policy on the Appointment of Visiting Staff has been amended to reflect the above recommendations and it attached as Annex A.

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Governance Administrator

**Appointment of Visiting Staff and Honorary Visiting Staff**

**Scope**

All programmes at City, University of London

**Date approved/re-approved**

Last published in November 2010

**Date for review**

To be reviewed on a periodic basis, with allowance for minor annual updates of roles and responsibilities by Education and Student Committee, as required.

**To be read in conjunction**

Programme Approval Policy in Section 3 of the Quality Manual.

## Appointment of Visiting Staff and Honorary Visiting Staff

Prospective Visiting Appointees are required to complete an application form/CV and attend a formal interview. In the case of visiting professors who do not already hold professorial appointments, supporting statements from two external assessors are also required. Successful appointees will be entered on to the School or Department's list of "Accredited Visiting Lecturers and Tutors".

Before the period of the contract commences, the Visiting Appointee will be given the opportunity of discussing the contract personally with a senior member of staff able to speak on the authority of the University.

New visiting appointees are invited to attend the Induction Programme organised by the University.

Visiting staff with teaching responsibilities are required to demonstrate competence prior to appointment, for example by giving a lecture or presentation (Senate 191.29, June 1999). The reappointment of visiting staff should be conditional upon them demonstrating ability in the position, for example completing some form of assessment satisfactorily (Senate 157.23, June 1992).

The following types of visiting staff have been identified (Senate 102.7, December 1982):

- *Visiting professor*: for those who have achieved distinction in their profession
- *Visiting Senior Fellow*: equivalent to Senior Lecturer/Reader
- *Visiting Fellow*: equivalent to Lecturer/Research Fellow (predominantly research appointment).
- *Visiting Lecturer*: equivalent to Lecturer (predominantly teaching appointment).
- *Visiting Scholar*: normally status below that of lecturer e.g. research assistant.
- *Honorary positions*: unpaid appointments

Heads of Department or equivalent will interview candidate for visiting appointments and ensure that this includes a process that can demonstrate competence of the candidate for a teaching role. Heads of Department also liaise with HR over the production of contracts and address the development needs of visiting staff.

All visiting staff appointments are made in accordance with the relevant employment legislation.

Board of Studies will approve the appointment of honorary non-professional visiting staff and recommend to Senate the appointment of honorary professorial visiting staff.

Senate approval is required for the appointment of Honorary Visiting Professors. Other visiting appointments should be sent directly to Human Resources.

Human Resources produces contracts for visiting staff, provides guidance on visiting staff appointments and maintain records of visiting staff appointments.

Honorary Visiting Professors (HVPs) and Visiting Professors (VPs) have City's permission to use City's brand provided that the full description of the Honorary/Visiting title is used. Specifically, City suggests that the title should be used in the following format, '*John Smith, Honorary Visiting Professor, City, University of London*'. The individual's name alone preceded by the academic or research title should not be used (Senate 276, December 2016).