

College Guide to the Academic Professional Programme For Admin and Workload Planning

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Introduction

This is a short overview of the Academic Professional Programme (APP) for colleagues including Heads of Discipline, line-managers, and workload planning teams. It is designed to set out key information about the administration of the programme in terms of enrolment and workload allocation.

Information about the syllabus, programme content and module descriptors, can be found on the programme webpages, and a Participant Handbook is available for participating Lecturers. This is hosted on ELE and can be accessed once enrolled.

Please note that a separate [quick guide](#) is available for Academic Leads who are supporting participants on the Academic Professional Programme.

Further Information

For further information please see our [webpages](#) or email: academicprofessional@exeter.ac.uk

About the Programme

The Academic Professional Programme is a L7 Degree Apprenticeship. It has been designed with two complementary frameworks in mind and is mapped against them: the UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF) and the Academic Professional (Level 7) Apprenticeship Standard - the End Point Assessment Plan for this Standard.

Successful completion of the programme leads to the award of a Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice (60 credits at level 7), ASPIRE Fellowship, and Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy (FHEA), as well as a certificate from the Institute for Apprenticeships (for those who are eligible for apprenticeship funding from the government).

Who is the APP for?

Mandatory Participation

The APP is **mandatory** for new lecturers at Grade F (E&R and E&S), provided they have:

- An employment contract lasting the duration of the programme (18 months) from a programme start-date
- Are contracted at a minimum of 0.8 FTE
- Are not exempt from the programme

Completion of the programme is usually a probationary milestone for E&R Lecturers, and engagement with the programme (i.e. having started it) is usually a probationary milestone for E&S Lecturers.

Optional Participation

The APP is **optional** for Research Fellows at Grade F, and for those on Proleptic Lectureships.

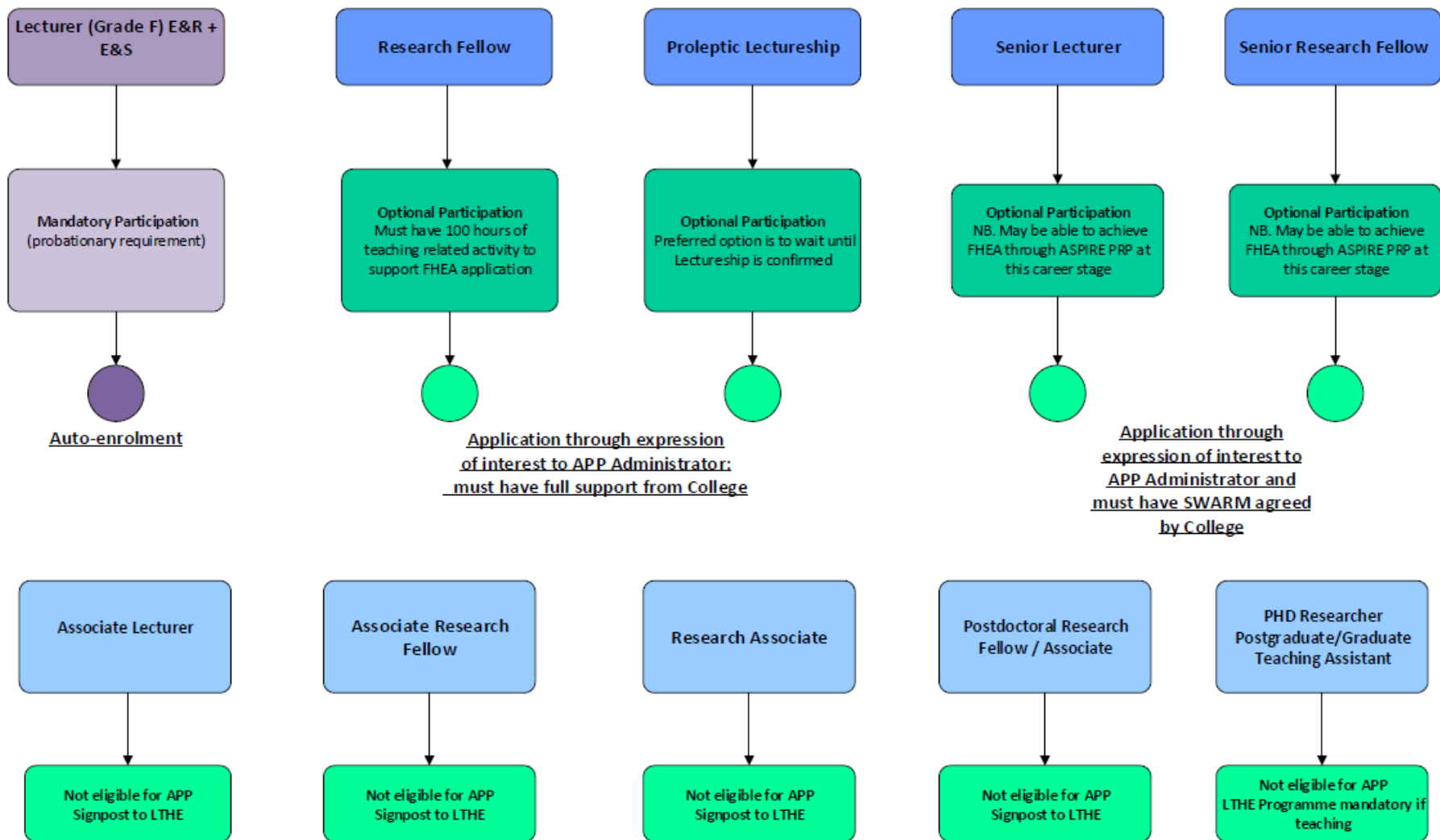
The APP is also **optional** for part-time staff at Grade F (i.e. contracted for less than 80% FTE), who can follow an APP part-time pathway.

In each case, participation must be agreed with the College. An application can be made to join the programme by contacting academicprofessional@exeter.ac.uk and requesting an Expression of Interest form.

Senior Lecturers, Associate Professors and Professors are welcome to join the programme, however it is likely that at this point in their careers they may choose to make an application for fellowship via the Professional Recognition Pathway (ASPIRE).

The illustration below (page 3) shows who is eligible for the APP and for whom it is mandatory.

Eligibility for APP by Job Role



Auto-enrolment

New lecturers will be auto-enrolled onto the programme. This means that new lecturers will be notified through their job offer letter that the APP is a mandatory part of their professional development programme.

Employee Services will send a monthly list of new appointments for whom APP participation is mandatory to the APP Administrator, who enrolls them.

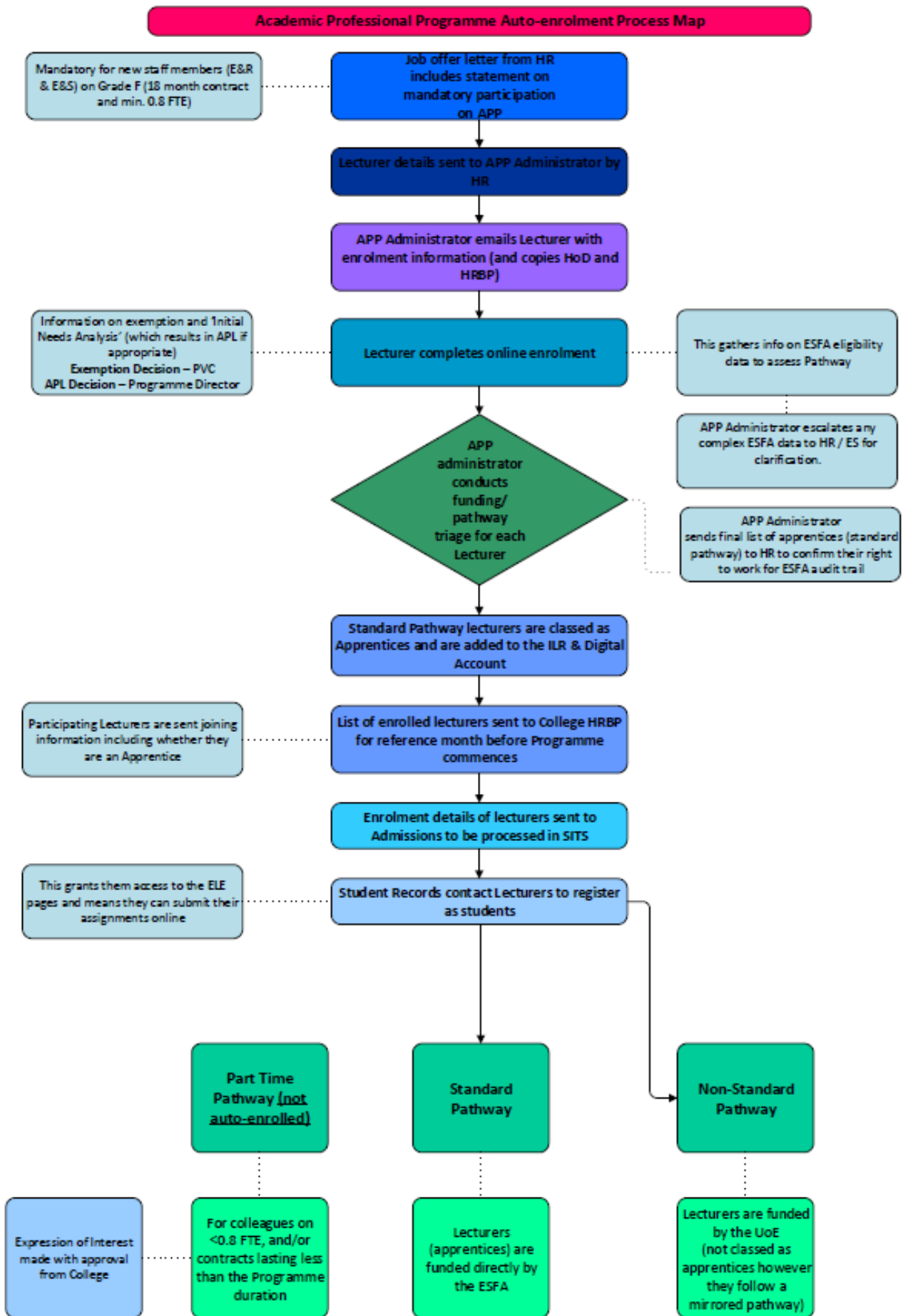
- Those accepting job offers between 26 February and 15 August in any calendar year will usually join the immediately following September cohort.
- Those accepting job offers between 16 August and 25 February in any calendar year will usually join the immediately following March cohort.

The timing of the auto-enrolment process means that some Lecturers will be enrolled onto the programme before they begin their post, although the programme will not begin until they are in post.

Please note: all programme participants have the option to defer to the following cohort as long as this is supported by their department and will not affect the completion of their probation.

The auto-enrolment process directs lecturers towards information on [exemption](#) and APL/APeL.

An illustration of the auto-enrolment process is shown below (page 5).



Exemption, Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL)

Exemption and APL forms (both APCL for credits and APEL for prior experience) must be requested from the APP Administrator by contacting academicprofessional@exeter.ac.uk. It is helpful to the APP if exemption and APL requests are made prior to beginning the programme, or as soon as is possible thereafter.

Exemption

If a lecturer is already a Fellow of the HEA, has an equivalent qualification from another higher education institution (at least 60 credits at Level 7) and/or have more than 3 years full-time equivalent HE teaching experience in the United Kingdom, they may be exempt from the Academic Professional Programme.

It is for the Pro-Vice Chancellors in each College to decide whether this is appropriate or not, based on a single piece of evidence (e.g. Fellowship, a qualification) or a portfolio of evidence (e.g. experience plus courses). Pro-Vice Chancellors are invited to discuss such situations with the Programme Director and the ASPIRE Framework Director.

It is requested that exemption is recorded by the College in the lecturer's probation review and in their Professional Development Review (PDR) to ensure that a centrally held record is kept.

Further information about exemption can be found on the [APP webpages](#).

APCL and APEL

All lecturers will be asked to complete an 'Initial Needs Analysis' (INA) which is an apprenticeship-specific assessment of credits and experience which could reduce the amount of time spent on the programme, the number of assignments submitted, the teaching attended, and also the fee the University of Exeter can charge the Education and Skills Funding Agency if the participant is an apprentice.

Lecturers will be asked to complete the INA whether they are on the Standard or Non-Standard Pathway (i.e. whether or not they are [funded as an apprentice](#)).

APCL/APEL decisions are taken by the Programme Director.

Where APCL/APEL is granted, the SWARM allocation for participation will need to be reduced accordingly.

Deferment

It is possible to defer participation. The decision to grant deferment is taken by the Programme Director, with the HR Business Partner of the Lecturer's College confirming that this will not affect probation timelines. Lecturers wishing to defer should email academicprofessional@exeter.ac.uk and copy their Head of Discipline.

Interruption

This is allowed by agreement of the Programme Director, the HR Business Partner for the relevant College, and the Lecturer's line-manager or Head of Discipline, for substantive reasons, including long term illness. In Degree Apprenticeship terms this is known as 'break-in-learning'.

Travel from Penryn

A Penryn-based cohort will be run each March. If a Lecturer based in Penryn would prefer to join the September cohort in Exeter and start the process sooner, the Lecturer's College would be expected to cover their travel expenses, with a business case made to the College by the Lecturer and their line-manager.

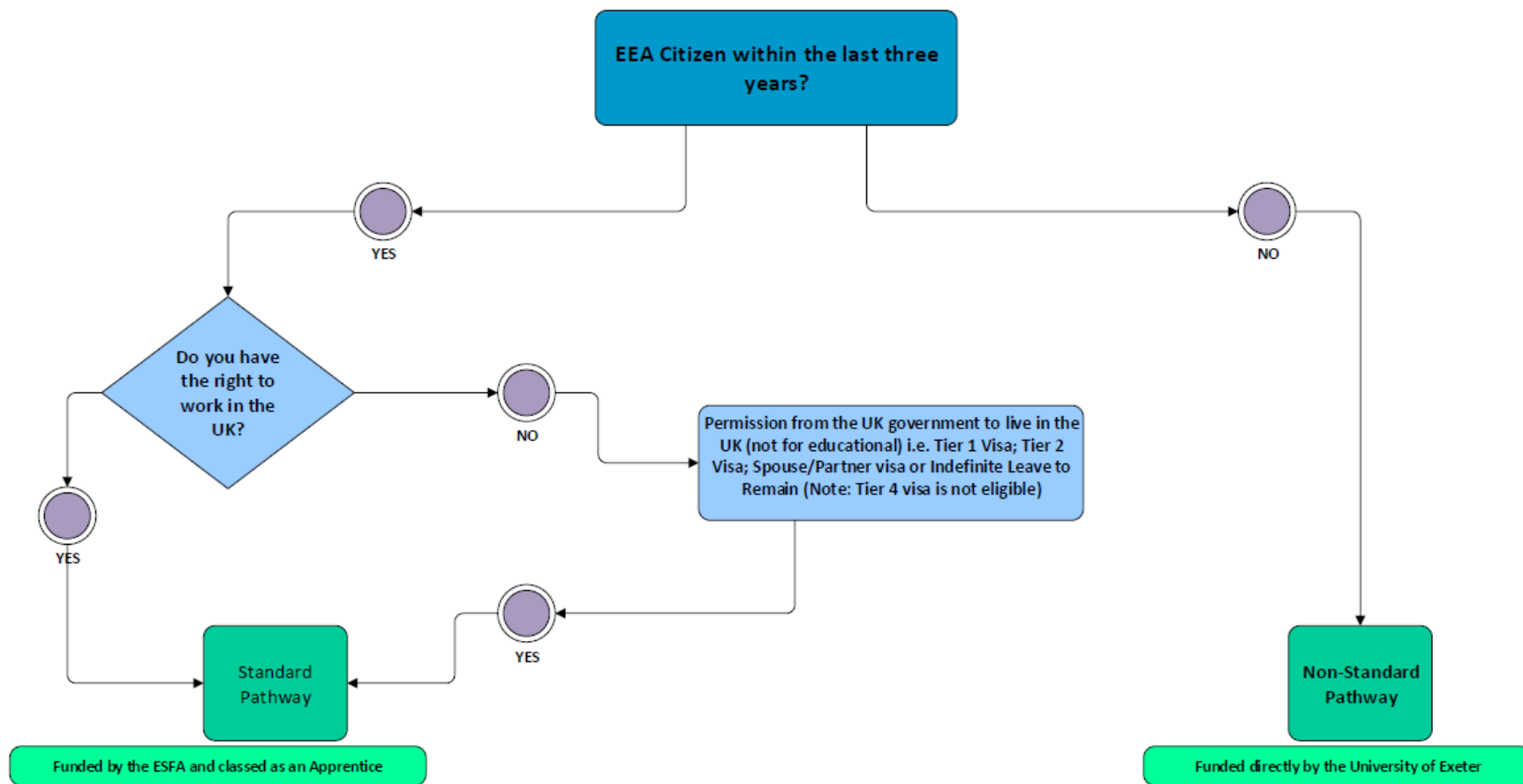
Funding Eligibility

Not all Lecturers will be eligible for apprenticeship funding from the government, through the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). Eligibility for funding is based on the last three years residency being in the EEA, rather than on nationality.

Those Lecturers not eligible for funding as an apprentice from the ESFA will follow a parallel pathway, directly funded by the University of Exeter.

A funding eligibility triage is conducted by the APP Administrator as part of the auto-enrolment process. The eligibility criteria is outlined in this illustration:

Funding Eligibility Triage – determines APP Pathway – conducted by APP Administrator



European Economic Area (EEA):
 EU (28 EU countries, including UK) + Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway
 Switzerland is neither an EU nor EEA member but is part of the single market meaning Swiss nationals have the same rights to live and work in the UK as other EEA nationals

SWARM – workload allocation for APP

The APP Administrator will confirm which Lecturers have been auto-enrolled in the month before the programme starts, by sending a list to each College (HoDs and HRBPs).

However, with regard to planning SWARM, the advice to Colleges is to assume that new Lecturers will be joining the programme (September or March cohort as per their job offer acceptance date) and to plan their SWARM on that basis.

UoE have committed to giving Lecturers a total of **495 hours** over 18 months to complete the programme. This is **20%** of a FTE E&R contract over 18 months (the same calculation is used for E&S contracts), and is a condition of the degree apprenticeship funding.

This accounts for the mandatory 20% ‘Off the Job’ training (OTJ) that apprentices must complete, as per the ESFA’s funding rules. OTJ can include a mix of:

- (i) Programme-specific activities, such as attending workshops and completing assignments, and;
- (ii) Teaching or research development activity that would take place as part of the new Lecturer’s usual workload, and can count towards the OTJ.

A rule of thumb to help determine whether an activity can count as off-the-job is: **can the participant reflect on the activity as a learning experience that helps them to work towards being an academic professional in higher education (mapped to the academic professional standard)?** (i.e. are they doing it for the first time, or trying a new approach). We call this Teaching or Research Practice Development or ‘indirect engagement with the programme’.

An indicative (but by no means exhaustive) list regarding activities which may count towards this 20% off-the-job (OTJ) training are:

GREEN - definitely OTJ
Attending Academic Professional Programme delivery days
Assignment writing
Literature research/Literature reviews
Preparing for and participating in Academic Professional assessments
Course reading
AMBER - possibly OTJ
Preparing lectures and seminars where a new method is employed and reflected upon
Teaching and Supervision where a new method is employed and reflected upon
Presenting at conferences (for the research pathway)
Undertaking teaching observations (as an observer or being observed)
Discussing teaching with colleagues formally or informally; and reflecting upon this
Developing teaching materials or assessments with a more experienced colleague
Developing new modules including reading around the content and possible means of delivery
Writing a grant collaboratively and receiving feedback
Receiving and reflecting on student feedback
Responding to reviewers’ comments
Research monitoring
ASER (Annual Student Experience Review) processes
Collaborating with partners (other HEIs, industry)

Please note: that 100 hours of teaching needs to be evidenced in order to progress onto the second block of the Programme, and to support the FHEA application.

Further guidance can be requested by contacting academicprofessional@exeter.ac.uk.

The hours can be split over two SWARM categories, as follows:

- 1. ACADEMIC PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMME (20% OTJ)**
285 hours split across the 18 month programme duration. Please note this breaks down differently per cohort, as per the table below. This may be considered, and allocated, as 'direct engagement with the programme'.
- 2. APP: TEACHING OR RESEARCH LEARNING ACTIVITY (20% OTJ)**
210 hours for teaching and/or research activity that can count towards OTJ that can be used at the College's discretion. This may be considered, and allocated, as 'indirect engagement with the programme'.

September Cohorts	
ACADEMIC PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMME (20% OTJ)	APP: TEACHING OR RESEARCH PRACTICE DEVELOPMENT (20% OTJ)
Year 1 (12 months): 243 hours for direct programme activity Year 2 (first 6 months): 42 hours for direct programme activity	Remaining 210 hours of protected time for other practice and reflection (including 100 hours teaching for FHEA) can be allocated at the discretion of the College over the 18 months of the programme.
March Cohorts	
ACADEMIC PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMME (20% OTJ)	APP: TEACHING OR RESEARCH PRACTICE DEVELOPMENT (20% OTJ)
Year 1 (last 6 months): 119 hours for programme Year 2 (12 months): 166 hours for programme	Remaining 210 hours of protected time for other practice and reflection (including 100 hours teaching for FHEA) can be allocated at the discretion of the College over the 18 months of the programme.

The division of the programme hours for September and March cohorts is different because some activities are scheduled for completion within the first 12 months of the programme and the end-point assessment always takes place in the final 3 months of the programme; this means it is within one SWARM year for September starters, and divided across two SWARM years for March starters.

20% OTJ	Activity breakdown	Hours
Direct engagement with programme	Introduction workshop	2
	Tripartite review meetings	12
	Six contact days	43
	Independent study with completion of formative and summative assessments	190
	End Point Assessment	38
Indirect engagement with programme	Hours for other practice and reflection (including 100 hours teaching for FHEA)	210
Total		495

Probation, Passing Assessments and Reporting on Progress to Colleges

Probation decisions are taken by the College. The APP Programme Director can provide information to support decisions.

If a Lecturer was failing to constructively engage with the APP (i.e. not attending scheduled meetings, teaching, submitting assignments) dialogue with the College would take place at an appropriately early stage. The structure of the APP supports this with termly meetings taking place with the APP Programme, the Lecturer and their Academic Lead.

With regard to assignments: Lecturers have an opportunity to resubmit, there is extensive discussion and feedback with the Lecturer, and with the College.

Lecturers' participation on the programme will be tracked through SITS, TRENT and the APP Administrator will send a list of each cohort to each College in the month before the programme starts. Successful completion of the programme will be recorded in TRENT.

End Point Assessment

The APP Degree Apprenticeship will use an external end-point assessment (EPA) organisation, as stipulated by the Apprenticeship Standard.

The EPA organisation for the APP is likely to be Advance HE. UoE and the APP have a close working relationship with Advance HE and will work collaboratively on the development of the EPA for the programme, giving the APP team a deep understanding of the Assessment Plan. Lecturers will not be submitted for EPA until they are ready. If an EPA is failed, it can be retaken after 3 months.

Further Information

For further information please see our [webpages](#) or email academicprofessional@exeter.ac.uk with any questions.