

Policy on the Provision of References for Students	
Department	Strategic Planning and Student Administration
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1. This procedure is intended to be used by staff who compile employment and other references and students who wish to obtain references from the University when applying for jobs or further study.

2. For the purposes of this policy, attention is drawn to the distinction made between the Higher Education Degree Datacheck (Hedd) reference checks and personal references. The Hedd online verification service for employers and agencies is the correct mechanism to verify Wrexham Glyndwr University awards. Please note that this service is only for third parties. The University cannot accept liability for personal references.

3. The Strategic Planning and Student Administration department (SPSA) is responsible for maintaining the Hedd collaboration in which third parties can obtain quantitative verification checks on behalf of the University.

4. The Hedd system has been developed by JISC, in consultation with universities, employers and screening agencies. Funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) and launched by Graduate Prospects, Hedd is now being used by many institutions throughout the UK.

5. The online candidate verification service allows registered enquirers, to input data provided by applicants (name, date of birth, institution, year of graduation, qualification classification etc). To make an enquiry the third party needs to register with Hedd by visiting www.hedd.ac.uk. Select Wrexham Glyndŵr University from the list of UK higher education institutions and choose the option to 'verify a degree award'. There is a charge of £12 per enquiry. If further assistance is required, please email Heddhhelp@prospects.ac.uk. Enquirers will also be required to upload a consent form.
6. All student references should be given and requested in writing. Oral requests for references will not be accepted.
7. For qualitative checks, requiring a personal character reference, current or former students should first make contact with an appropriate professional or academic staff member to ask permission, prior to any documentation being sent by a third party. Staff members will be able to advise on whether they are able to provide a suitable reference and advise on the timeline for provision.
8. Students who are studying or who have completed studies, through a partner college in the UK or overseas, should contact that institution for a personal character reference request in the first instance.
9. For GDPR purposes, students will also be required to provide written consent allowing the University to disclose information to a third party. All staff must ensure that when a third party requests a reference or check on student information, permission has been obtained from the student (Data Protection Act 2018 requirement). A reference should not be given unless that permission is obtained. Staff should consult employmentreferences@glyndwr.ac.uk if there are any queries with a reference request.

Should a staff member be unable to complete a reference request, they may exercise their right to decline the request or they may direct the applicant to an alternative staff member, where appropriate. In these instances care should be taken not to convey a negative message through the refusal.
10. If there has been a significant lapse of time since a student started/completed their studies, there may not be an appropriate member of staff available, to provide a qualitative reference. In such instances, a quantitative verification check via Hedd may be provided, if possible.
11. Please note that Wrexham Glyndwr University was established in 2008 and the University can only guarantee provision of student records from 2008. Former students who started or completed their studies under N.E.W.I. (North East Wales Institute of Higher Education) should contact employmentreferences@glyndwr.ac.uk prior to requesting a reference check.
12. Staff should ensure that quantitative data provided is correct by contacting employmentreferences@glyndwr.ac.uk. References should provide consistent and accurate information limited to that which is necessary to evaluate suitability for future employment or study. Third parties should note that due to the varying nature of information requested, it may not be possible to fully complete a question, therefore

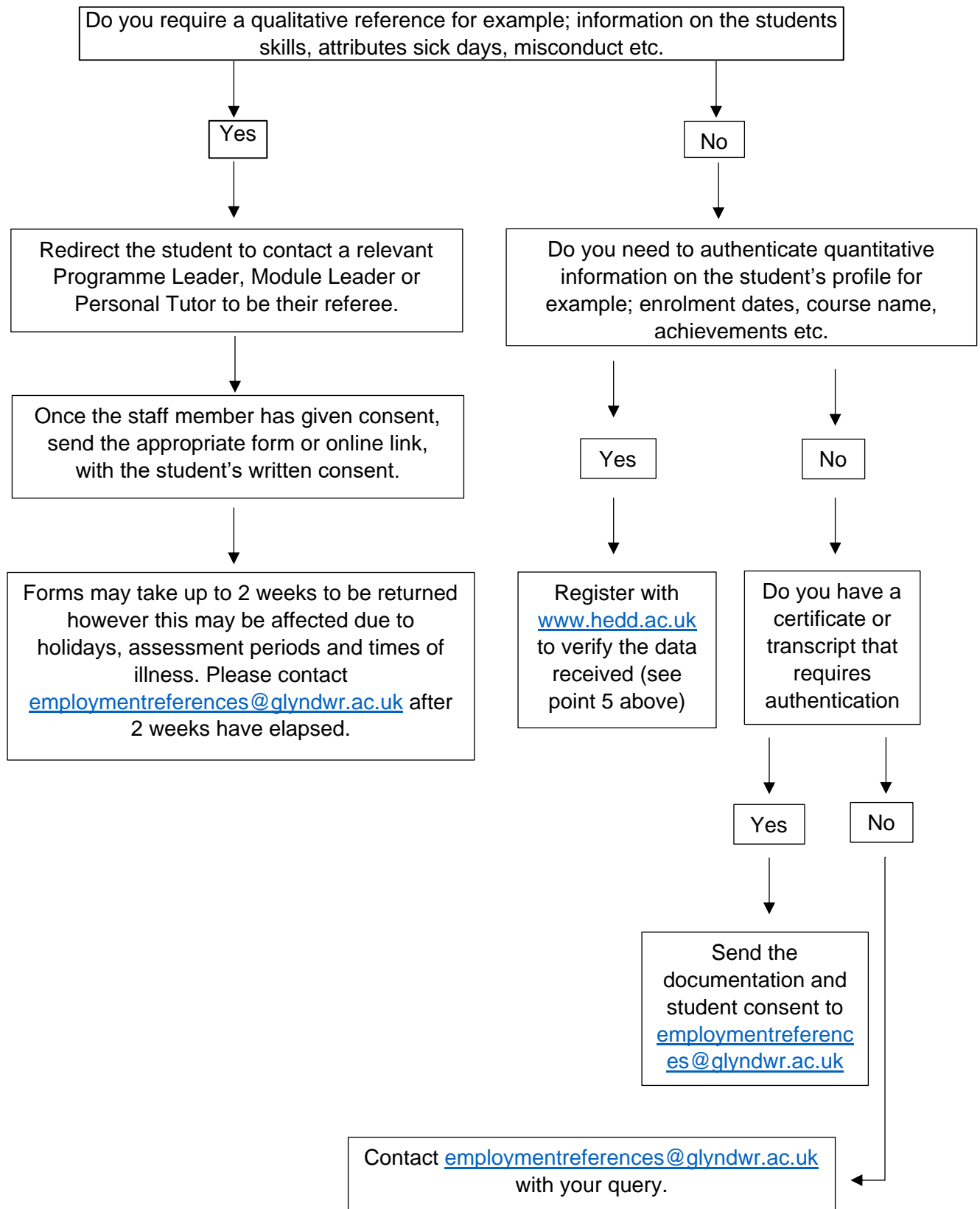
University staff may decline to answer the question in full, to prevent inaccurate information being provided.

13. Third parties and students, past and present, should also be aware that University staff are under no obligation to prioritise references and therefore applicants should expect a response, usually within two weeks. Requests to expedite reference provision should not be made.
14. When University staff provide a qualitative reference for a student, the following message should be included alongside the reference documentation

“This reference is given in good faith in the belief that its contents are true and accurate to the compiler’s knowledge. It is given without any legal liability on the part of the University. The information provided is taken from our student records. Recipients of University references should be aware that every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of information, but they need to rely on their own procedures to follow up any further queries they have regarding the suitability of candidates for employment or a place on a course of study.”
15. References should be marked as confidential when returning them to the requestor.
16. Past and present students of the University should be advised how a reference may be obtained in accordance with this policy. Programme handbooks should explain the process and programme leaders need to draw the attention of students to it.
17. In accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018, individuals have a legal right to see references written about them.
18. In cases where a third party is requesting an authenticity check against a certificate and/or transcript, the request should be directed to employmentreferences@glyndwr.ac.uk with the consent of the student. Staff will confirm the authenticity of the documents provided by referencing the students file.
19. In no circumstances should former or current students, attempt to recreate certificates, transcripts or official letters themselves. Official documents must not be tampered with or altered in any way. Under the terms of the Forgery and Counterfeiting Act 1981, a person is guilty of forgery if he/she makes ‘a false instrument’ with the intention that he/she or another shall use it to induce somebody to accept it as genuine.
www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/45
20. Replacement transcripts, results letters and certificates can be obtained, for a fee, from the online shop.
21. Glyndwr University, in partnership with Prospects Hedd, pledge to report any confirmed instances of degree fraud and fake qualifications, in or outside our institution, to Prospects Hedd and the Office for Students (OfS) degree fraud reporting service. Glyndwr University also reserves the right to disclose instances of fraud to Cifas, the Metropolitan Police Service’s Amberhill database, the Police, partner organisations, employers or third party organisations.

22. Glyndwr University will not tolerate fraudulent behaviour. In all cases, the University reserves the right to issue cease and desist letters, suspend or withdraw studies, revoke degrees and take legal action.

Procedure



Verifying Qualitative data with HEDD

Organisations will need the individual's name, date of birth, course and qualification. For graduates you'll also need their year of graduation and degree result. We recommend that you ask to see the degree certificate (if one is available) and use that as the basis of your verification enquiry, or ask individuals to give you their data as they believe it's recorded in the student records system. If the information submitted is an exact match to the information held within the student record, your request will automatically be verified. If the information does not match all fields, then the enquiry will be shared with the team at Glyndwr University for manual verification, which usually has a five working-day turnaround time.