

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee
Thursday 23 May 2024 2:00pm
Cuillin Room, Charles Stewart House (hybrid meeting)

AGENDA

1.	Welcome and apologies	
2.	Minutes of the previous meeting To approve <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 21 March 2024 	APRC 23/24 7A
3.	3.1 Matters Arising <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convener's communications • Actions log 3.2 Report of Convener's Action <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary of approved concessions 	Verbal Update
4.	Board of Examiners Handbook for Taught Courses and Programmes To approve	APRC 23/24 7B and 7B Appendix 1
5.	Taught Assessment Regulations 2024/25 To approve	APRC 23/24 7C and 7C Appendix 1
6.	Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees 2024/25 To approve	APRC 23/24 7D and 7D Appendix 1
7.	Committee membership 2024/25 For information	APRC 23/24 7E
8.	Senate Committees' Internal Effectiveness Review For comment	APRC 23/24 7F
BREAK (5 minutes)		
9.	Curriculum Transformation: Taught Postgraduate (PGT) Curriculum Framework and Programme Archetypes For comment	APRC 23/24 7G
10.	Performance Sport Policy To approve	APRC 23/24 7H and 7H Appendix 1
11.	Academic misconduct investigation procedures To approve	APRC 23/24 7I and 7I Appendix 1
12.	Programme and Course Handbooks policy To approve	APRC 23/24 7J and 7J Appendix 1

13.	Exceptional Circumstances policy communications plan To note	APRC 23/24 7K and 7K Appendix 1
14.	Pass/fail arrangements for HCA year abroad courses To approve	APRC 23/24 7L
15.	Any Other Business	
Date of next meeting Thursday 19 September 2024, 2-5pm, location TBC		

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee
Thursday 21 March 2024 2:00pm
Boardroom, Chancellor's Building, BioQuarter Campus (hybrid meeting)

UNCONFIRMED MINUTES

<p>Present: Dr Aidan Brown Dr Adam Bunni Professor Jeremy Crang Lisa Dawson Dr Murray Earle Lucy Evans Professor Patrick Hadoke (Convener)</p> <p>Clair Halliday Karen Howie</p> <p>Alexandra Laidlaw Professor Antony Maciocia Callum Paterson Rachael Quirk Dr Deborah Shaw Professor Tim Stratford Dr Emily Taylor</p> <p>Professor Stephen Warrington (Vice-Convener) Kirsty Woomble</p> <p>Substitute members: Lauren Byrne on behalf of Carl Harper Olivia Eadie on behalf of Donna Murray Valentina Ferlito on behalf of Uzma Tufail-Hanif Philip Larkman on behalf of Jamie Davies</p> <p>In attendance: Cristina Matthews Amy Willis</p> <p>Apologies: Professor Jamie Davies Carl Harper Dr Donna Murray Dr Uzma Tufail-Hanif</p>	<p>Elected member of Senate (CSE) Head of Academic Policy and Regulation, Academic Services Dean of Students (CAHSS) Academic Registrar, Registry Services Elected member of Senate (CAHSS) Deputy Secretary, Students (Co-opted member) Director of Postgraduate Research and Early Career Research Experience (CMVM) The Advice Place, Deputy Manager Head of Digital Learning Applications and Media, Information Services Head of Academic Affairs (CSE) Dean of Postgraduate Research (CSE) Academic Engagement Coordinator, Students' Association Head of Taught Student Administration & Support (CAHSS) Dean of Students (CMVM) Dean of Learning and Teaching (CSE) Dean of Quality Assurance and Curriculum Validation (CAHSS) Dean of Student Experience (CSE) Head of PGR Student Office (CAHSS)</p> <p>Vice President Welfare, Students' Association Co-Director (IAD)</p> <p>Elected member of Senate (CMVM)</p> <p>Director of Teaching, Biomedical Sciences (CMVM)</p> <p>Academic Policy Officer, Academic Services Academic Policy Officer, Academic Services</p> <p>Dean of Taught Education (CMVM) Vice President Education, Students' Association Head of Taught Student Development (IAD) Elected member of Senate (CMVM)</p>
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1.	<p>Welcome and apologies</p> <p>The Convener welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted the substitute members present. Reminder to the Committee that members can propose a substitute member, to be approved by the Convener, if they are unable to make the meeting.</p> <p>The Convener noted that Amy Willis would join the meeting from item 6 onwards.</p>
2.	<p>Minutes of the previous meeting - APRC 23/24 6A</p> <p>To approve</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25 January 2024 <p>The Committee approved the minutes of the 25 January 2024 as presented and no objections were raised.</p>
3.	<p>3.1 Matters Arising - Verbal update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convener's communications <p>The Convener noted there were no communications to report. Two items were noted as matters arising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approval for taught-only Masters programmes <p>At previous meetings, APRC has reviewed and approved or rejected exemptions to the requirement for Masters programmes to have a research component, i.e. the Committee has been asked to approve the option of having fully taught Masters programmes. In the past few years, all these concession requests have been approved.</p> <p>We have recently received a request of this type, whereby one of the options for completing a Masters programme is a fully taught option. The programme still retains the option of offering a 60-credit dissertation.</p> <p>Given that the Committee has now approved a substantial number of Masters programmes being delivered with fully-taught options, and in light of the forthcoming changes to PGT programme archetypes as part of Curriculum Transformation, the Committee agreed that these requests can be approved by Convener's action hereon. These approvals will be reported to the Committee via Convener's actions.</p> <p>This concession request was therefore noted as approved via Convener's action.</p> <p>The Committee noted that should the proposed new PGT archetypes come into effect as part of the Curriculum Transformation programme, there would no longer be a need to consider requests for concessions to offer fully-taught programmes, as these would be standard archetypes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special circumstances final deadlines for August 2024 resits and PGT dissertations <p>This was pending Committee business from May 2023, where the Committee agreed that the late special circumstances deadlines for the resit diet and for PGT dissertations for summer 2024 would follow at a later date.</p>

The proposed dates are based on the equivalent dates used last year and have been approved by the ESC team. The Committee agreed that the dates be circulated to the Committee for comment, before they are approved by Convener's action.

Action: APRC Administrator to circulate these dates for comment, before they are approved via Convener's action.

- **Actions log**

The Convener provided an update on the actions in the actions log. There were no questions or comments on the action log.

Action	Responsible	Target date	Action status
Update the list of programmes with non-standard dates and request an update to these on the University website.	APRC administrator	February 2024	Complete
Follow up with Nichola Kett regarding updates to the Programme and Course Approval and Management policy.	Academic Services	March 2024	Complete - this policy is due for periodic review in AY24/25 and changes to major/minor amendments will be considered as part of the consultation.
Review and update APRC concession forms.	APRC Convener and Administrator	Not defined	Ongoing
Confirm whether we can obtain data on degree completion rates for PGR students with concessions, as well as numbers of College-level concessions	APRC administrator	Not defined	Ongoing
Request a 'for information' update from SQAC on the output of annual quality assurance monitoring processes and the impact of the temporary variations to the regulations	Academic Services	Not defined (in discussion with SQAC)	Ongoing - SQAC will be looking at data at their May meeting. For information update to APRC to follow after this.

3.2 Report of Convener's Actions

- **Summary of approved concessions**
- Total number of individual student concessions approved: 23 (16 PGR, 5 PGT, 2 UG). Two of these cases were reviewed by the full Committee due to impact from industrial action.
- Total number of cohort concessions approved: 2. These cases were reviewed by the full Committee as they related to arrangements for External Examiners, which affected whole cohorts.

The Committee was consulted prior to the meeting regarding the approach to uncomplicated concessions for individual students requested in the context of

	<p>industrial action, the proposal being that these could be reviewed and approved by Convener's action, rather than circulating to the full Committee. This would help to minimise the number of people accessing personal, and often highly sensitive, student data. The majority of feedback received from Committee members supports reviewing these by Convener's action, going forward, on the understanding that complex or more contentious cases will continue to be circulated to the Committee. These will also continue to be reported under Convener's actions at each meeting so the Committee will continue to have sight of these outcomes.</p> <p>The Committee agreed to amend the approach to approving these concessions as described.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concessions for Academics Beyond Borders The concessions for extending the visitor access registration period for PhD students under the Academics Beyond Borders scheme can now be approved by the College, rather than by the Committee. The extension period may be up to, but no longer than, the duration of the student's PhD programme. • Update to list of Student Discipline Officers Two new student discipline officers have been added in order to replace staff no longer undertaking this role.
4.	<p>Update on Watch That Gap project - APRC 23/24 6B To note</p> <p>This paper was presented by Lucy Evans, Deputy Secretary, Students.</p> <p>The Watch That Gap project was commissioned following work from this Committee's Extensions and Special Circumstances (ESC) Task Group in 2022/23. The Task Group identified a gap in the support provided to student carers and student parents, whose needs are not currently covered by ESC or by the Disability and Learning Support Service.</p> <p>The project report has not yet been finalised; however, the paper provides an update on the project and a number of preliminary recommendations. The Committee was asked to note that these recommendations had not yet been approved through the appropriate governance routes and should therefore not be considered final. The Deputy Secretary, Students, noted special thanks to the EUSA Student Parent Representative who had been very helpful and supportive with the project.</p> <p>Members of the Committee welcomed the update on the project and its preliminary recommendations. The Committee noted the following points for consideration for the final project report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality of lecture recordings is particularly important for these student groups; feedback suggests that the quality of recordings is sometimes inadequate. It would be helpful to consider whether there is scope to have some quality assurance checks on these. • The reference to childcare support was welcome. While the focus of the preliminary recommendations is on creche support, it was noted that out-of-school support for older children is also important. • Although the aim is to do this for all students, it is particularly important for student carers and parents to be able to avoid sitting exams on

	<p>consecutive days. The new timetabling software that has gone live this week allows for improved modelling which should help to avoid students sitting exams on consecutive days.</p> <p>Although discussions had not yet been held about the implementation of the recommendations, the Deputy Secretary, Students, noted that she was hopeful that some of the immediate recommendations could be implemented for the next academic year.</p> <p>There was discussion regarding the new student case management platform (Simplicity). The platform is due to go live in June 2024 for its first two services (Student Wellbeing Service and Residential Life), and is planned to be rolled out more widely after that. One of the benefits of the new platform is that the right staff will have access to right data, which should avoid the need for students to share their issues multiple times with different staff.</p>
5.	<p>Exceptional Circumstances policy - APRC 23/24 6C To approve</p> <p>The Convener noted that this policy is presented to the Committee for approval, following significant feedback, consultation and discussion since the last Committee meeting in January 2024 with colleagues in Colleges, Registry Services, the Students' Association, the Disability and Learning Support Service, the Student Counselling Service and the Wellbeing Service. The proposed policy aims to address concerns with the current Special Circumstances policy, which is not sustainable moving forward. It is noted that the policy is not able to incorporate all of the feedback received where this is in conflict with fundamental positions presented in the new policy. Nevertheless, a number of revisions have been made since the last Committee meeting which seek to address feedback and concerns where possible.</p> <p>This paper was presented by Adam Bunni, Academic Services.</p> <p>To note that should the Committee approve the proposed policy, the Committee is also requested to agree to delegate to the Convener the approval of minor amendments to policies and regulations to change references to the Special Circumstances policy in order to align with the new terminology in the proposed Exceptional Circumstances policy. Amendments needed to the Taught Assessment Regulations (TAR) will be approved alongside other changes to the TAR at the next Committee meeting in May.</p> <p>The Committee had an extended discussion regarding the proposed amendments. The key points discussed were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complexity of the policy: Feedback on the policy has noted its complexity. It was acknowledged that the policy area it covers is complex and that this requires a balance between providing clarity and providing a level of detail that is sufficiently comprehensive to enable decision-making across a wide variety of situations. There will need to be training and guidance for staff who are responsible for implementing and advising on the policy, and plans for this will be presented at the next Committee meeting. It was also noted that students will interact with the policy primarily through the guidance and webpages, through interactions with staff and through interactions with the EC applications system, rather than by interacting with the policy document

itself. A number of simplifications are being made to the system, which will make it more accessible for students.

- **Benchmarking within the Higher Education (HE) sector:** The ESC Task Group had previously commented that we should not be bound by how other Universities approach special circumstances, and that we should aim to be sector leading. It was also suggested, however, that the impact of special circumstances policies can result in inflationary assessment and degree outcomes, so there is a limit to how much we can depart from the HE sector without compromising on the value of the degrees. The presenter stated that the proposed policy is still more generous than policies implemented by other UK Universities.
- **Extensions for groupwork assessments:** The Committee noted the challenges regarding extensions for groupwork assessments, and that these will differ depending on the type of group assessment. Discussions with Registry Services have confirmed that the system does not have a mechanism to recognise who is in a given group. The Committee agreed that discussion on this would continue outside of APRC, with a relevant proposal for wording for the Taught Assessment Regulations brought to the next Committee meeting in May.
- **Supporting evidence and seeking medical attention:** Feedback provided through consultation indicated some support for allowing Student Advisers to provide statements to be used as evidence for Exceptional Circumstances, whilst others were against this. Considerations against allowing this included the fact that some students did not want to involve Student Advisers in these discussions, as well as concerns about Student Adviser workloads. On balance, the Committee considered that allowing this as an option seemed favourable, given that students in some situations may have difficulties in obtaining other forms of evidence.

Members representing the Students' Association commented that at the Committee meeting on 25 January 2024, they had noted that the option to allow statements provided by friends and family was confusing, and that it would be best to either fully accept these or not accept them. Given the amendments to evidence requirements in the current proposed policy, the Students' Association requested to retain the option for friends and family to provide statements, rather than remove this option.

- **Employment grounds:** Members of the Committee were supportive of including changes in employment commitments as valid grounds for exceptional circumstances. The Committee agreed that communication plans regarding the proposed policy must ensure that these changes are highlighted to staff, many of whom are used to advising that extensions or special circumstances on the grounds of employment will not be accepted.

Some members noted that more work should be done across the University in order to support students in employment. It was noted that this is a challenge across the HE sector, and that there is a balance to be had between employment and academic priorities. The presenter stated that the consideration of employment commitments in the proposed policy is a more progressive position than that of equivalent policies for other Russell Group Universities.

- **Period for coursework extensions:** Members of the Committee noted that extensions based on calendar days could result in assessment deadlines that fall on a weekend, and that this would be problematic for Schools that have assessments which require the submission of physical work (e.g. art portfolios, lab assessments), and therefore need staff to be on-site to receive the submission. The Committee considered a range of options, including amending the wording to note that where the assessment submission needs to be in-person and the date of the extended deadline falls on a weekend, the deadline could be on the next working day. Alternatively, Schools could manage these via concessions. The Committee agreed that the approaches available could be included in guidance, but that it would be at the discretion of the School to manage this.
- **Student circumstances not sufficiently covered by Disability and Learning Support Service (DLSS) adjustments:** Members representing the Students' Association noted that the recommendations arising from the Watch That Gap project have yet to be approved and implemented, and that the timeline for this is not clear. They further stated that, until the recommendations are in place, there would be gaps in support for students whose circumstances are neither covered under the new EC policy nor by DLSS adjustments, e.g. students with mental health issues who are not registered with DLSS, students who are registered under DLSS but who do not have a diagnosis, or students who fall outside of the remit of DLSS. The Students' Association considered that there are student groups who would be penalised as a result of the proposed amendments, and would like to see these issues addressed before approving this policy.

The presenter noted that data regarding use of extensions collected via the ESC Strategic Data Dashboard did not indicate significant differences in usage amongst students with protected characteristics, although it was acknowledged that the dashboard cannot report on student groups for which we do not have recorded data, e.g. student parents, students with undiagnosed health issues. Members also noted that there are options for students who have used the three self-certifications to apply for further extensions, e.g. by speaking with their Student Adviser.

The Academic Registrar noted that, as part of the system development updates, Registry Services are developing and testing user cases to see how students in a variety of situations would interact with the proposed policy and application system, and that so far this exercise had not flagged any cases of students who would not be able to make use of the policy as amended.

The Deputy Secretary, Students, acknowledged a number of the concerns raised by the Students' Association in that there are groups of students who are not sufficiently supported within our current policies. Nevertheless, she noted that the current Special Circumstances policy is not fit for purpose, and the proposed policy puts us in a better position to address the outstanding issues via other policies and services.

- **Better inclusivity of PGR students:** Members noted that the references to support provided by Student Advisers is not inclusive to postgraduate research students, some of whom take taught courses and would therefore

be eligible for exceptional circumstances, but who do not have Student Advisers.

- **Defining ‘best academic interest’:** Members requested clarification regarding the options available for Boards of Examiners considering outcomes for exceptional circumstances, particularly in situations where there was not enough evidence that learning outcomes had been achieved. The position of the policy is that Boards of Examiners must be satisfied that learning outcomes have been met, and that if these had not been met, exceptional circumstances outcomes should provide an opportunity for the student to meet these, e.g. via a null sit. Boards of Examiners may also recommend that the affected course mark is not included in the degree classification, if a null sit is not provided.
- **Seeking medical attention and medical evidence:** Members of the Committee noted that the University should not be giving guidance to students on whether or not to seek medical attention. The Committee agreed to remove the first and final sentences of 8.4 in the proposed policy.
- **Late submissions and early submissions:** There was discussion regarding the deadline for Exceptional Circumstances, and whether this should be the deadline for the School in which the student is registered (i.e. the School that manages the student’s programme of study) or the School which manages the course for which the exceptional circumstances are being requested. This amendment aimed to address the fact that students may not be clear about which courses sit in which Schools, and are more likely to be aware of the School with which they are registered.

The Committee agreed that there should be information on how to handle retrospective applications included in the guidance.

A member requested that consideration be given to provide exceptions to situations that would warrant earlier submissions, e.g. where a student has been a victim of a crime and would prefer to request the extension as soon as possible. It was noted, however, that there is provision and examples for this within the proposed policy.

- **Consideration for scaling late penalties:** A member requested that the Committee give further consideration to one of the recommendations from the ESC Task Group regarding scaling late penalties, i.e. whereby the first few days of a late submission would entail smaller penalties. The Committee agreed to consider proposals in relation to this when reviewing the Taught Assessment Regulations, which cover regulations regarding late penalties.

As general points, members of the Committee recognised that significant effort and work had gone into the revision of the policy since it was discussed at the last Committee meeting in January 2024, and that much of the feedback provided has been included in the revised proposal.

The Convener noted that some members of the Committee were supportive of the direction of the proposed policy, and that other members were not. There were also concerns from members about the gap analysis and recommendations arising from the Watch That Gap project being underway but not yet in place. Members of the Committee representing the Colleges and Senate agreed to

	<p>approve the proposed policy with the agreed amendments to 8.4. The three members of the Committee representing the Students' Association objected to the approval of the proposed policy, on the basis that the recommendations from the Watch That Gap project are yet to be approved and implemented, and that they regard the proposed policy as more punitive to students than the current policy.</p> <p>Given that the majority of members agreed to approve the proposed policy, the Convener noted that the proposed policy was approved for implementation for 2024/25. The objection from the Committee members from the Students' Association was noted.</p> <p>Given the concerns raised regarding students with long-term circumstances which would not be covered under the proposed policy, and the fact that the recommendations arising from the Watch That Gap project report were still to be approved and implemented, the Committee agreed to make it a Committee priority to focus on how policies under its remit could incorporate the recommendations from the project (see notes under agenda item 10 for further detail).</p> <p>The next steps prior to the implementation of the policy will focus on preparing the guidance, implementing the communications and training plan, and working on the updates required to the system, all of which are already underway.</p>
6.	<p>Student Maternity and Family Leave policy - APRC 23/24 6D</p> <p>To approve (given that the policy is not tied into the academic year dates, proposal is for this to be effective 1 April, if approved)</p> <p>This paper was presented by Cristina Matthews, Academic Services. The policy was last approved in 2013 and was therefore in need of a significant review and update. The proposed amendments incorporate feedback from a wide consultation with key stakeholders. Most of the proposed amendments relate to the reorganisation and rewording of the information to provide more clarity and also to bring it up to date with current practices and terminology within the University. The proposed amendments included a number of substantive amendments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of the title of the policy • Updates to the information on maternity pay and conditions for postgraduate research students in receipt of scholarships or stipends with full maintenance, where the funding is provided or administered by the University. This update brings the policy into alignment with the position already agreed by the University Executive in February 2022. It was noted that further details on this are available from the Doctoral College. • Amended position in order to allow students to request to bring children into private University spaces, including classrooms, in emergency situations within defined parameters. Consultation has indicated significant support to allow for this more flexible position in the policy, as well as the fact that some Schools already have similar local policies in place. <p>The Students' Association and other Committee members noted their support of the proposed amendments, in particular regarding the more flexible position on children in classrooms.</p> <p>There was discussion regarding a number of points, and the Committee agreed to amend the following points:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarify that Schools have responsibility for providing breastfeeding facilities • Include a link to Health and Safety policy in section 25 • Include more information on the types of adjustments that could be put in place, and the limitations of these. <p>The Committee also discussed a number of points and noted that further advice on these would be helpful:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion regarding whether or not the University could require students to take two weeks off (section 8) given that the legislation applies to employees not students. Some members noted that even if it was not legally required the Committee could still consider this position as one that is of benefit to students. • Discussion regarding cases in which students were also members of staff, e.g. tutors and demonstrators, and how the student and staff maternity policies would apply in these cases. • Consideration should be given to whether there are exceptions where students would need to disclose the pregnancy, e.g. for Fitness to Practice or health and safety reasons. • There was a lack of clarity regarding whether some of the loan funding was available only to Scottish students or to all students. <p>The Committee agreed to approve the proposed policy, and that minor amendments as noted above could be approved by Convener's action, with any substantive amendments to be circulated to the Committee. If necessary, the date that the policy comes into effect should be delayed until the necessary amendments have been approved.</p>
7.	<p>Undergraduate Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study - APRC 23/24 6E To recommend to Court</p> <p>This paper was presented by Cristina Matthews, Academic Services. The paper contains proposed minor amendments to the Undergraduate Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study (DRPS) for 2024/25, which are presented to the Committee on an annual basis.</p> <p>The request from the Committee is to endorse the amendments to the DRPS before they are presented to the University Court via a Court resolution. Court will then consult with Senate and the General Council before the regulations return to Court for approval.</p> <p>The Committee supported the recommendation of the proposed amendments to Court, subject to one amendment. The amended text for regulation 88 (BVM&S Progression) has been further amended by the CMVM Undergraduate Learning and Teaching Committee following the circulation of papers to the Committee. The Committee agreed to incorporate this latest amended text in the recommendation to Court.</p> <p>Action: Academic Services to amend as agreed and prepare papers for Court resolution.</p>
8.	<p>Postgraduate Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study - APRC 23/24 6F To recommend to Court</p>

	<p>This paper was presented by Cristina Matthews, Academic Services. The paper contains proposed minor amendments to the Postgraduate Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study (DRPS) for 2024/25, which are presented to the Committee on an annual basis.</p> <p>As for the item above, the request from the Committee is to endorse the amendments to the DRPS before these are recommended to Court for consideration and approval via the Court resolution process.</p> <p>The Committee agreed that the proposed amendment to regulation 33 should clarify that for students on part-time continuous programmes, the maximum allowable end date will be extended to correspond with the extension to the maximum period of authorised interruption of study.</p> <p>The Committee supported the recommendation of the proposed amendments to Court, subject to one amendment. The Committee agreed to incorporate this amended text in the recommendation to Court.</p> <p>Action: Academic Services to amend as agreed and prepare papers for Court resolution.</p>
9.	<p>Student Appeal Regulations - APRC 23/24 6G To approve</p> <p>This paper was presented by Amy Willis, Academic Services.</p> <p>The proposed amendments incorporate feedback from consultation with stakeholders including the Students' Association, as well as staff experience in managing appeals and enquiries in relation to appeals. The number of appeals has been increasing year-on-year; part of the increase is likely due to misunderstanding of the scope and regulations for appeals. A number of amendments therefore relate to the reorganisation of the information in the regulations and to provide clarification. There are also a number of more substantive amendments, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarification of the scope and grounds for appeals • Simplification of the process to have a single Appeal Committee, rather than a Full Committee and a Sub-Committee. This includes the removal of the ability for the Appeal Committee to vary a decision taken by a Board of Examiners. The Committee noted that this power had not been put into use over the last ten years. • Clarification that decisions made by a Board of Examiners in relation to academic misconduct can be appealed. The Committee noted the importance of providing information on this in the updated guidance. <p>The Students' Association noted their support for the proposed amendments and that the early review of the policy was welcome.</p> <p>Members of the Committee agreed on minor changes to the proposed policy, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adding wording to regulation 29 to cover situations where students may not have been able to respond;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amending the phrase 'exceptional circumstances' in regulation 35 due to potential confusion with the new exceptional circumstances policy; • Replacing 'PhD supervisors' with 'Research Supervisors' <p>The Committee recommended that a number of points should be covered in separate guidance, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information for Schools on when and how to reconvene Boards of Examiners under TAR 64, including examples • Clarification of calendar days vs working days • Guidance and examples of cases where students or Schools can request extensions to the deadlines. <p>The presenter confirmed that appeals that are two or more years late cannot be accepted, even if this includes a period of interruption of studies.</p> <p>The Committee agreed to approve the proposed policy, including a number of agreed amendments as above.</p>
10.	<p>Committee priorities for 2024/25 - APRC 23/24 6H To comment</p> <p>The Convener presented this paper and outlined the proposed priorities.</p> <p>The Committee discussed the scope of the second priority, focussing on postgraduate research students, and clarified that the sub-group had so far focussed on cases of students who were experiencing adverse personal circumstances over a prolonged period of time. Nevertheless, the sub-group would not exclude considering other types of cases. The Convener clarified that any policy proposals arising from the work of the sub-group would be brought for review and approval of the full Committee.</p> <p>The Committee agreed to include an additional priority to focus on recommendations to follow from the Watch That Gap project report that have implications for policies within the remit of this Committee.</p> <p>Action: Academic Services to add additional priority to the Committee priorities and circulate to the Committee for comment.</p> <p>A member queried why Senate only endorses, but does not approve, the Committee priorities. It was noted that this is a result of the fact that the Senate Standing Orders state that Senate approves the membership of the Committees, but do not mention Committee priorities.</p>
11.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>The Committee noted that some staff and students may have difficulties in reading the policy documents with the amendments in tracked changes. The consensus across the Senate Standing Committees is that it is important to share the document versions including the tracked changes, and that including both versions in the Committee papers would make the papers undesirably long. The Committee agreed that the versions with tracked changes should continue to be shared, but that options for sharing versions without tracked changes could also be considered, e.g. via the Committee Sharepoint site.</p>

	<p>Action: APRC Convener and Administrator to consider options for sharing policy documents without tracked changes.</p> <p>The Convener noted that this would be the last committee meeting for Rachael Quirk, and thanked Rachael for her contributions over the past years.</p> <p>The Convener also noted that, given that the Committee meetings are hybrid, we would not be able to hold Committee meetings on any campus which did not have suitable hybrid meeting facilities.</p>
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DRAFT

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee**23 May 2024****Updates to the Handbook for Boards of Examiners****Description of paper**

1. The paper proposes amendments to the Handbook for Boards of Examiners for Taught Courses and Programmes, following a periodic review conducted by Academic Services. The proposed amendments are designed to clarify matters relating to the operation of Boards and reduce duplication and potential conflict between the Handbook and the Taught Assessment Regulations.

Action requested/recommendation

2. APRC is asked to approve the proposed amendments to the Handbook. The proposed amendments are presented in the discussion section of the paper, with the Handbook as amended provided in Appendix 1.

Background and context

3. Academic Services conduct periodic reviews of the University's academic policies to ensure that they remain current and fit for purpose, and to promote enhancement to our processes. The Handbook for Boards of Examiners for Taught Courses and Programmes is scheduled for review during the 2023/24 academic session.
4. Academic Services initially carried out informal consultation with a group of critical friends from Schools and Colleges (including Conveners of Boards of Examiners, Heads of Student Services/Teaching Organisation Managers, College Deans, College Heads of Academic Affairs) in order to formulate and test proposed amendments to the Handbook. A version of the Handbook showing the proposed amendments along with a summary and rationale for the proposed amendments was circulated to Schools for comment. The final proposals take account of the feedback received from Schools during the consultation process.

Discussion

5. The proposed amendments to the Handbook are presented in tracked changes in Appendix 1. The key amendments are summarised below.

Reduced duplication between TAR and Handbook

6. There is currently an unhelpful duplication of information about some aspects of the operation of Boards between the Handbook and the TAR, with slightly different wording used in each. This risks causing confusion to those involved

in running Boards, and could lead to the policy and regulations falling out of alignment with each other. We propose to remove from the TAR the detailed content about appointment of office-holders (TAR 2, TAR 4), the responsibilities of the Convener of the Board (TAR 8), and quorum at meetings (TAR 39), and instead incorporate this into the Handbook. The existing regulations will be retained in the TAR, but will simply signpost to the Handbook for the relevant detail.

7. The Handbook and TAR have equal status as mandatory policy, so the proposed change presents no increased risk of non-compliance with policy.

Appointment of Convener: Cohort Leads (4.5)

8. Existing content within TAR 4.3 has been moved to section 4.3 of the policy. The existing regulation states that “Programme Directors, Cohort Leads and Course Organisers” cannot be appointed as Convener of the Board of Examiners, in order to avoid a potential conflict of interest. We have proposed to remove Cohort Leads from the list of roles which disqualify a staff member from fulfilling the role of Convener. Schools have commented that the role of the Cohort Lead is very different from those of Course Organiser or Programme Director, and does not entail the same kind of involvement in course or programme delivery. Including Cohort Leads within the list of roles disqualifying someone from acting as Convener can also severely narrow the pool of potential candidates to act as Convener. Where a Cohort Lead is also a Programme Director or Course Organiser, they would remain disqualified from acting as Convener for the relevant course or programme. As such, we would suggest that this change does not pose an increased risk of leading to potential conflicts of interest.

Operation of Boards of Examiners (4.15-4.16)

9. This is a new section designed to provide greater clarity about the ways in which Boards of Examiners fulfil their responsibilities. The existing policy implies that all of the work of Boards is carried out at formal “meetings”, with all Examiners participating. The proposed additional wording explains that much of the work which supports decision-making by Boards (e.g. modelling of students’ outcomes) takes place in advance of the formal meeting, involving the Convener or a subset of members of the Board working with professional services staff. This section makes clear, however, that all final decisions are made by the Board with a quorum of members, and that they must have sufficient information about any work done in advance of the meeting to be confident that their decisions are robust.
10. The proposed additional wording reflects existing practice in Schools, and does not reduce expectations regarding the approach to decision-making. It does not therefore present any risk to the quality of decisions taken by Boards.

Appointment of Internal Examiners (4.6-4.7; TAR 2)

11. We propose to change the policy and regulations to state that Internal Examiners (and substitutes) can be appointed by the relevant Head of School, rather than Head of College. Our understanding is that this is already standard practice. There is no specific benefit from College input in this process, and it is already the case that Heads of School appoint Conveners of Boards. We propose to retain the College role in appointing External Examiners, given the function these Examiners fulfil in providing external scrutiny to the School.
12. We have also proposed some additional text in section 4.7 explaining that there is no requirement that all Course Organisers or teaching staff should be appointed as Internal Examiners. This supports efforts by Schools to promote efficient operation of Boards by streamlining the membership, provided that the Board retains sufficient expertise across the breadth of its remit.

Role of Internal Examiners (4.29-4.30)

13. In addition to the text in 4.6-4.7, we have proposed to add a section covering briefly the responsibilities of Internal Examiners. Initial feedback from Schools and Colleges noted the absence of clarity regarding the role of Internal Examiners in the Handbook.

Role of Course Organisers in Boards (4.40)

14. The policy currently implies that Course Organisers should always directly take part in the Board to present the results for their courses. It is common practice in some areas that subject area or year representatives present the results for a number of courses at Boards on behalf of the Course Organiser, or that the Secretary to the Board does this. This ought to be permissible, where it is compatible with the Board having sufficient expertise and information to make decisions, so we are proposing to amend the policy to reflect this. We are also removing the expectation that Course Organisers should take notes of decisions relating to their courses, since this would be expected to be the responsibility of the Secretary to the Board.

Communication of outcomes to students (8.14)

15. 8.14 currently suggests that explanations Schools provide to students about their results should be "limited to" what is recorded in the minutes. This is unnecessarily restrictive and could prevent Schools from being able to provide greater clarity and reassurance to students about how decisions were taken, without departing from what has been recorded in relevant minutes.

Resource implications

16. Some of the proposals may promote a reduction in the size of Boards of Examiners in some areas, which would lead to a reduction in the overall staff time expended upon Boards of Examiners meetings. However, as is

emphasised throughout the Handbook, Heads of School and Conveners must have confidence that the Board has sufficient expertise across the range of subjects within its remit to support robust decision-making. It is essential, therefore, that Boards retain a membership large enough for this purpose.

Risk Management

17. The potential risks of the proposed amendments are covered in the discussion section, and in section 16, above.

Equality & Diversity

18. The proposed amendments do not present any equality and diversity implications.

Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed

19. If the proposed amendments to the Handbook are approved, Academic Services will include these as part of the annual New and Updated Policies email communication to Schools and Colleges in the summer. The amendments will also be covered as part of annual briefings for Boards of Examiners hosted by the Colleges.

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Freedom of Information *Open*



Handbook for Boards of Examiners for Taught Courses and Programmes

Purpose of Policy

The policy provides information regarding the role and operation of Boards of Examiners in order to enable them to carry out their responsibilities effectively.

Overview

Boards of Examiners take an overview of each student's academic performance on a relevant course or programme, and make a final academic judgement on the appropriate outcome. This Handbook provides information regarding the remit and operation of Boards of Examiners, and outlines the responsibilities of key roles in supporting Boards of Examiners.

Scope: Mandatory Policy; Appendices are Guidance (Guidance is not mandatory)

This policy applies to Boards of Examiners, and those who support the work of Board of Examiners. Tasks associated with the administrative processes of the Board may be delegated to appropriate academic or administrative staff, but responsibility remains with the Convener of the Board of Examiners.

Contact Officer

[Registry Academic Services](#)

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Document control

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Approving authority

Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC)

Consultation undertaken

Curriculum and Student Progression Committee (predecessor to APRC) and Colleges

Section responsible for policy maintenance & review

[RegistryAcademic](#)-Services

Related policies, procedures, guidelines & regulations

This policy is subsidiary to the Taught Assessment Regulations.
<http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/taughtassessmentregulations.pdf>
 There is a policy for External Examiners for Taught Programmes.
<https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/externalexaminerstaught.pdf>
 There is additional policy for Undergraduate Progression Boards.
http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/ug_progression_boards.pdf

UK Quality Code

Expectations for Boards of Examiners are covered in the UK Quality Code Advice and Guidance on "Assessment"

Policies superseded by this policy

Overarching Principles for Taught Course and Programme Board of Examiners
 Overarching Remit for Board of Examiners
 Board of Examiner Roles: Convener
 Board of Examiner Roles: Course Organiser
 Board of Examiner Roles: Regulations Expert
 Board of Examiners Guidance: Minuting

Alternative format

If you require this document in an alternative format please email Academic.Services@ed.ac.uk or telephone 0131 651 4490.

Keywords

Board of Examiners



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Handbook for Boards of Examiners for Taught Courses and Programmes

Handbook for Boards of Examiners for taught courses and programmes

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- 10 Key timelines and processes associated with Boards of Examiners
- 11 Sources of support and information

Appendices

- Appendix A - Template Board of Examiners Agenda and Minutes
- Appendix B - Key timelines and processes associated with Boards of Examiners



Handbook for Boards of Examiners for Taught Courses and Programmes

Handbook for Boards of Examiners for taught courses and programmes

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Handbook sets out the main responsibilities of Boards of Examiners and key role-holders involved in the operation of the Board, and provides information on the principles and remit of the Board of Examiners and guidance to help run effective Boards.
- 1.2 The Handbook should be read in conjunction with the University's Taught Assessment Regulations, [Special Exceptional Circumstances Policy](#), Policy on External Examiners for Taught Programmes and other relevant policies and regulations. The main part of this Handbook is mandatory policy and the information provided in the Handbook Appendices is guidance and not mandatory.
- 1.3 For sources of support and information in relation to this Handbook, see Section 11.

2 Why we have Boards of Examiners

- 2.1 A Board of Examiners is a body with membership approved by the relevant [College Head of School](#) whose role it is to take an overview of each student's academic performance on a course or programme, and to make a final academic judgement on the appropriate outcome. Boards of Examiners are a key part of enabling the University to judge that students have achieved their intended learning outcomes in a consistent, fair and reliable way, using agreed evidence and processes to reach their decisions.

3 Board of Examiners' Principles and Remit

Principles for Boards of Examiners

- 3.1 The following principles underpin the operation of Boards of Examiners:

Principle 1 The role of the Board of Examiners is to take an overview of each student's academic performance on a relevant course or programme based primarily on assessment results, and to make a final academic judgement on the appropriate outcome.

Principle 2 Boards of Examiners ensure that all students are treated with consistency and fairness, that the assessment process runs smoothly and correctly, that appropriate standards are set and maintained, and that the External Examiner plays an appropriate role.



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- Principle 3* The effective administration of assessment underpins the University's quality of learning and teaching.
- Principle 4* Boards of Examiners are conducted according to standard operational procedures defined by the University and using University systems.
- Principle 5* Working within the scope of the overarching remit (see 3.2), and agreed models and accompanying guidance, Schools structure Boards of Examiners according to their own requirements.
- Principle 6* Members of Boards of Examiners and those working in support of Boards of Examiners receive appropriate support for and recognition of their role.

Board of Examiners' Remit

3.2 The overarching remit of Boards of Examiners for Taught Programmes and Courses is:

- to oversee and conduct the entire assessment process according to the University's Taught Assessment Regulations and other relevant regulations and policies, along with the principles approved by the appropriate Board of Studies;
- to ensure that suitably detailed marking criteria are prepared for every item of assessment under the authority of the Board;
- to take responsibility for determining outcomes for students across all elements of courses or programmes for which the Board has responsibility;
- to manage the outcomes of [special/Exceptional Circumstances Committees](#) appropriately;
- to produce a set of outcomes appropriate to the assessments and to record and transmit these as required by regulations and procedures in force at the time;
- to minute its decisions in accordance with current regulation and guidance and ensure that archives of its decisions/minutes and those of any of its subsidiaries are maintained for the appropriate retention period.

4 Who does what?

Authority

4.1 This Handbook, along with the Taught Assessment Regulations and other University regulations and policies set out the authority and responsibility of key office-holders in relation to Boards of Examiners. Schools may delegate tasks associated with the administrative processes of the Board to appropriate academic or administrative staff, but responsibility for the delivery of those tasks rests with the



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formal office-holders. Whenever a specific role is delegated, this must be agreed with the person who has responsibility for the role, and a record kept of the delegations that are in place.

Appointment of key office-holders

Convener of the Board of Examiners

- 4.2 The relevant Head of School is responsible for appointing the Convener of the Board of Examiners, along with Internal and External Examiners are appointed to the Board of Examiners by the relevant
- 4.3 The Head of School informs the College Office about the appointment of the Convener by the beginning of the relevant Semester for the Board of Examiners responsible for courses assessed in each Semester, and by the beginning of Semester 2 for the Board responsible for programme decisions for each programme.
- 4.4 For combined (formerly joint) degrees the “owning” Head of School liaises with other relevant Heads of School. In the case of any disagreement on the appointment of a Convener of a combined Board of Examiners, the Convener is nominated by the relevant Heads of College or their nominee.
- 4.5 Programme Directors and Course Organisers are not the Convener of the Board of Examiners for their programmes or courses. This is to ensure appropriate separation of roles. If the Convener is also a Course Organiser, formal chairing of the Board of Examiners is delegated to another member of the Board for discussion of that course.

Internal Examiners

- 4.6 The relevant Head of School is responsible for appointing Internal Examiners. Internal Examiners are teaching and/or honorary staff of the University who teach on SCQF level 7 to 12 courses which are awarded for credit. Honorary staff in this context include:
- Teachers and senior staff from partner schools to the Moray House;
 - Academic staff from research pooling partners who are appointed as an internal examiner by APRC on the basis of a recommendation from the relevant College;
 - and NHS staff.
- 4.7 There is no requirement that all Course Organisers, or teaching staff involved in teaching courses in a given Semester should be appointed as Internal Examiners.



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In appointing Internal Examiners, Heads of School must balance the efficient operation of the Board with the need to ensure sufficient expertise across the range of subjects within the Board's remit.

External Examiners

- 4.8 The relevant College appoints External Examiners ~~College~~ on the basis of nominations from the relevant Head of School. External Examiners are members of the Board who are not staff of the University. Their role, powers and responsibilities are set out in the External Examiners for Taught Programmes Policy:
www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/externalexaminerstaught.pdf ~~The Taught Assessment Regulations and the External Examiners for Taught Programmes Policy provide further information regarding the process and timescales for appointment.~~

Lists of Examiners

- 4.9 Heads of School approve the list of Examiners for Boards of Examiners for each diet of Boards to be held. Boards need not comprise the same set of Examiners for each diet of Boards to be held, for example following Semester 1 and Semester 2. Any objection to the proposed examiners must be made to the Head of School or their nominee in good time before the relevant exam diet. Complete final lists of examiners are maintained by the relevant School and are available for inspection by members of staff.

Exceptional Circumstances Committees

- 4.10 The Head of School is responsible for appointing the **Convener and members of the Special-Exceptional Circumstances Committee**.

Regulations Expert

- 4.11 The ~~Head of School~~ relevant School is responsible for appointing a **Regulations Expert** for each Board of Examiners. The Regulations Expert does not need to be a member of the Board of Examiners, and may be a member of academic or professional services staff. Schools may appoint a Regulations Expert to operate across the School or across a number of Boards of Examiners. The role may be combined with another role in the Board.

Secretary to the Board of Examiners

- 4.12 Schools are responsible for appointing a **Secretary** for each of their Boards of Examiners.



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The Board of Examiners

- 4.13 A Board of Examiners is composed of the Internal and External Examiners for the courses and/or programmes covered by the Board. The Convener can also invite to attend Board meetings those markers or others involved in teaching or assessment who are not Internal Examiners, but they are not involved in decision making at the Board.
- 4.14 The Board of Examiners is chaired by a Convener and supported by a Secretary of the Board and a Regulations Expert.

Operation of the Board of Examiners

- 4.15 Boards of Examiners hold formal meetings to make final decisions regarding the course and programme outcomes for students. The quorum and operation for formal meetings of Boards of Examiners is covered in 4.12 to 4.17 below.
- 4.16 Much of the work which supports decision-making by Boards of Examiners, including modelling of students' outcomes, takes place outside of the formal meeting of the Board, and may involve only a subset of members of the Board, working with professional services staff (see Appendix B for further information). Preparatory meetings held as part of this work do not constitute "meetings" of the Board of Examiners, and do not therefore require a quorum of members to participate. However, it is essential that Boards have access to relevant information considered as part of these preparatory meetings and processes in order to support final decision-making at the formal meeting of the Board.

Quorum of the Board of Examiners

- 4.8-17 A Board of Examiners meeting is quorate if at least half the Internal Examiners participate and at least one External Examiner participates in and approves the decisions of the Board. No Board may have fewer than two Internal Examiners participating, in addition to the Convener. In order for a meeting of a Board of Examiners to be quorate, at least half the Internal Examiners (and no fewer than two) must be present, and at least one External Examiner must participate.
- 4.18 In exceptional circumstances and by prior written agreement with the Head of the School, the Convener of the Board may substitute Internal Examiners, providing the substitute members meet the criteria in 4.3.
- 4.19 Each subject area covered by the Board of Examiners must be represented and, whenever practicable, an External Examiner from each subject area should participate. Where more than one School is involved, the composition of the Board



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[reflects the contribution of the Schools to the assessment of the courses or programmes.](#)

[4.20 The University's External Examiners for Taught Programmes Policy outlines External Examiners' participation in Boards of Examiners meetings.
www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/externalexaminerstaught.pdf](#)

[4.21 It is not necessary for the same members of a Board of Examiners to attend all meetings of the Board in an academic year, provided each meeting is quorate.](#)

[4.22 Meetings of Boards of Examiners may be held in-person, virtually, or in hybrid format, at the discretion of the relevant Convener. Where meetings are held virtually, these should operate synchronously wherever possible, with all present members participating in real-time. However, virtual meetings may operate asynchronously where necessary, provided that a quorum of members participate. Any External Examiner must have sufficient information and access to the Board's deliberations to allow them to approve the decisions taken by the Board. The minute needs to reflect the nature of their participation.](#)

Convener of the Board of Examiners

[4.923](#) The Convener of the Board of Examiners has overall responsibility for the assessment process for courses and programmes covered by the Board, for ensuring that the Board operates within University regulations, and for corresponding on behalf of the Board. The Convener may delegate specific tasks to the Course Organiser, Programme Director, School Teaching Organisation (or equivalent), but the Convener has responsibility for the activities set out in [4.40-19](#) to [4.1423](#).

[4.1024](#) Ensuring the Board meets deadlines for the administration of assessment:

- In consultation with the College, School, [Student Systems and Student Administration Registry Services](#) as appropriate, and in line with the key University dates, setting outline dates for meetings of the Board of Examiners at least one year in advance;
- Commenting on the draft examination timetable distributed by [Student Administration Registry Services](#);
- Ensuring that all assessment administration deadlines are met, including those for recording course and programme outcomes in the EUCLID student record.



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- 4.4125 Ensuring that the necessary activities take place in preparation for assessment:
- Approving the content of examination papers, taking account of the comments of External Examiners;
 - Ensuring that the statement of assessment provided to students of how and when each of their courses and programmes is to be assessed includes information about the Board of Examiners' standard setting and moderation methods;
 - Ensuring the security of, and arrangements for, setting [examination](#) papers and assessments, including the robustness of and resources for electronic assessment, examining and marking of assessed work, processing and storing marks and grades;
 - Approving the use of email or other electronic transfer for transmission of draft examination papers and other information to external examiners for their evaluation of the assessment of students provided that appropriate security measures have been taken within the scope of current University computer security guidance;
 - Considering, with the relevant College Dean and Student Administration, cases of extenuating circumstances which prevent a student from sitting a scheduled examination, e.g. religious reasons, elite participation in sport.
- 4.4226 Ensuring the appropriate conduct of marking and moderation processes prior to the Board:
- Ensuring the quality and standards of marking [and moderation](#) of members of the Board, as well as those markers who are not members;
 - With the Head of School, advising on whether there is a potential conflict of interest for a member of staff, internal examiner, External Examiner, or marker, which means they should not be involved in a student's assessment;
 - Coordinating arrangements for marking assessed work and ensuring that all Internal and External Examiners and markers are aware of their responsibilities and of the relevant common marking scheme;
 - Ensuring the operation of appropriate internal moderation processes, and providing examples of students' summative assessments to External Examiners in line with the University's policies / procedures on Moderation;
 - Deciding what action to take if markers consider a student's work to be illegible;
 - Investigating cases where a student has failed to complete all assessment components of a degree programme, and ensuring that they are dealt with under the appropriate policy;
 - Ensuring that any academic misconduct offences are referred to the School Academic Misconduct Officer for investigation.



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- 4.1327 Ensuring the effective operation of Board of Examiners meetings within University regulations, including:
- convening meetings, and informing the Head of School in writing when they delegate this responsibility to another member of the Board (eg where the Convener is also a Programme or Course Organiser, they must delegate formal chairing of the Board of Examiners to another member of the Board for discussion of that programme or course.);
 - confirming that the Board is quorate;
 - ensuring that summary information about the decisions and recommendations of the [Special Exceptional Circumstances Committee](#) is reported to the Board by, or on behalf of, the [SCGECC](#) Convener;
 - applying any penalty imposed by the College/[School](#) Academic Misconduct Officer for academic misconduct;
 - ensuring that the Board reaches decisions in line with University degree and taught assessment regulations, and, where relevant, any supplementary College rules;
 - confirming the detailed assessment results;
 - ensuring as part of the formal proceedings of the Board that External Examiners are invited to comment on the structure, content, teaching and [examinations assessment](#) of the course(s) and/or programme(s) under scrutiny;
 - guiding the Board of Examiners to reach a collective decision (decisions do not need to be unanimous).
- 4.1428 Ensuring appropriate follow-up after the meeting of the Board:
- ensuring that results and decisions are recorded in the EUCLID student record and communicated to students within the deadlines published by Student Systems, and that an accurate minute of the Board of Examiners meeting is produced;
 - completing any follow-up activity, concessions, or Convener's action business stemming from the Board meeting, ensuring that this is minuted and recorded appropriately;
 - in the event of an academic appeal, providing the minutes of the Board of Examiners' meeting and commenting on the appellant's case;
 - in the event that new information comes to light about a decision of the Board, deciding whether to reconvene the Board.



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Internal Examiner

4.29 An Internal Examiner must participate as required in meetings of the Board of Examiners. Where an Internal Examiner is unable to participate in a meeting of the Board of Examiners, they must notify the Convener or Secretary to the Board of this as soon as possible.

4.30 Internal Examiners are responsible for reaching a collective decision with other members of the Board of Examiners regarding the course and programme outcomes for students within the Board's remit. Where an Internal Examiner has questions or concerns about provisional results being presented to the Board, for example regarding the processes of marking and moderation which have taken place prior to the Board meeting, they should raise these with the Convener.

External Examiner

4.31 One or more External Examiners are appointed to the Board of Examiners (see 4.4). External Examiners participate as a member of the Board and agree jointly the decisions of the Board. Full details of the role and responsibilities of External Examiners are provided in the External Examiners for Taught Programmes Policy: www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/externalexaminerstaught.pdf

Convener of the Special-Exceptional Circumstances Committee

4.1532 The Convener of the Special-Exceptional Circumstances Committee (SCGECC) has responsibility for ensuring that the Special-Exceptional Circumstances Committee operates within University regulations and the Special-Exceptional Circumstances Policy.
www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/special_circumstances.pdf

Regulations Expert

4.1633 The role of the Regulations Expert is to act as an immediate source of knowledge and advice to the Board of Examiners about the relevant University regulations and guidance and their academic application.

4.1734 The Regulations Expert will attend or be available to all meetings of the Board of Examiners and ensures that the relevant regulations and guidance are available for reference at all meetings.

4.1835 Where the Regulations Expert gives advice outwith the context of a Board meeting, for example in the course of Special-Exceptional Circumstances Committees



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and academic misconduct investigations, they should consult as necessary with the Convener of the Board of Examiners.

Course Organiser

- 4.1936 The Course Organiser carries out the detailed administration of the course on behalf of the Head of School, including various administrative aspects of arrangements for assessment. Information in 4.20 to 4.24 sets out the Course Organiser's main responsibilities in relation to Boards of Examiners.
- 4.2037 Preparation for assessment:
- monitoring and checking the timely setting of examination and in-course assessment work.
- 4.2138 Marking and moderation processes:
- co-ordinating arrangements for marking assessed work, ensuring that marks are collected and recorded (in most instances via the Teaching Organisation or equivalent) and that markers are aware of their responsibilities;
 - ~~considering requests for late submission of coursework (some Schools may assign this role to the Programme Director, or equivalent);~~
 - in line with the University's policies and procedures on moderation, organising and supervising moderation at the course level, and taking action, in conjunction with the Convener of the Board of Examiners if necessary, where inconsistency or unsatisfactory practice is identified, and supervising the recording of the occurrence and the outcome of moderation decisions;
 - liaising with the External Examiners on matters relating to the assessment of the course and arrangements for the Board of Examiners meeting.
- 4.2239 Preparing material for the Board of Examiners meeting in line with relevant timelines in the School or Deanery. This includesing:
- collating or supervising the collation of marks;
 - checking marks (together with the Course Secretary/Administrator or other colleague as appropriate);
 - preparing reports on cases of academic misconduct identified in their course;
 - liaising with the Secretary to the Board of Examiners on the presentation of provisional results to the Board;
 - briefing the Convener of the Board of Examiners on any complex issues, either directly or via the Secretary to the Board;
 - maintaining continuity in the event of sabbatical leave in the following Semester by ensuring that marks are collected and recorded before their departure, or arrangements made for this to be done, and that all correspondence with



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students and notes about the assessment are handed over to their successor, with appropriate briefing.

- 4.2340 Contributing to Board of Examiners' meetings including:
- presenting the provisional results for their course/programme, noting any particular issues regarding the marking; [Course Organisers may present their results directly to the Board, or via a subject area/year representative or equivalent, who presents a number of courses in their area;](#)
 - ~~keeping a note of all decisions made by the Board in relation to individual students, particularly where a change to any initial recommendation of pass/fail status is involved, and where recommendations of the Special Circumstances and academic misconduct processes have an impact on a student's final result (these notes are informal but may provide useful support for the minute-taker in preparation of the formal minute and record of the Board of Examiners' decisions).~~
- 4.2441 Following-up after the meeting of the Board:
- carrying out actions as directed by the Board of Examiners;
 - ensuring that arrangements are made as necessary for re-assessment, whether re-submission of coursework or resit examinations, and that students are aware of any requirements relating to these over and above those notified by Student Systems;
 - ensuring that the Course Handbook, EUCLID Course Descriptor and other published information are updated in the light of any relevant decisions of the Board of Examiners, Board of Studies, and changes to University regulations and guidance relating to assessment.

Head of School

- 4.2542 The main responsibilities in relation to Boards of Examiners of the Head of the School that owns the programme or course are:
- [Nominating Appointing](#) the Convener of the Board of Examiners, along with the Internal and External Examiners (see Appointment of Key Office-Holders, above);
 - Appointing the Convener and members of the [Special Exceptional Circumstances Committee](#);
 - Appointing markers;
 - Appointing Regulations Experts (see Appointment of Key Office-Holders, above);
 - With the Convener of the Board of Examiners, advising on whether there is a potential conflict of interest for a marker, Examiner or member of staff, which means they should not be involved in a student's assessment.



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Head of College or nominee (typically a Dean)

4.2643 The main responsibilities in relation to Boards of Examiners of the Head of the College or nominee are:

- Appointing ~~Internal and~~ External Examiners on the basis of nominations from Heads of Schools;
- Ensuring that all elements which contribute to the award of a degree from the University are represented by the appropriate number of External Examiners;
- Advising the Convener of the Board of Examiners ~~or~~ Head of School, or Regulations Expert on the interpretation and application of the relevant University Regulations and guidance regarding Boards of Examiners;
- Considering, with the Convener of the Board of Examiners and Student Administration, cases of extenuating circumstances which prevent a student from sitting a scheduled examination, e.g. religious reasons, elite participation in sport;
- Handling concession requests submitted by Boards of Examiners.

5 The principle of anonymity

5.1 Anonymity is an important principle for the operation of Boards of Examiners and assessment processes. The Taught Assessment Regulations outline the requirements for:

- Marking work anonymously when possible (the marker should not know the identity of the student);
- Anonymising marks and grades during processing;
- Retaining the anonymity of a student's work at the Board of Examiners, until the best interests of the student are no longer served by anonymity;
- A final check of the un-anonymised marks and decisions;
- Anonymity for examiners (the views of a particular examiner at a Board of Examiners should not be made known to a student);
- Anonymity of results (there should be no public display in any media of any formative or summative assessment results from any course or programme).

6 Avoiding conflicts of interest

6.1 No member of University of Edinburgh staff, internal examiner, External Examiner, or marker shall be involved in any assessment or examination in which they have a personal interest, for example a current or previous personal, family or legal relationship with a student being assessed.



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6.2 For advice regarding what to do in the event of a potential conflict of interest, see the Taught Assessment Regulations.

7 Business to cover at meetings of Boards of Examiners

7.1 Appendix A provides a Template Board of Examiners Agenda / Minute, which sets out core items to cover at Board meetings. Schools may wish to supplement these with additional items where appropriate.

8 Minutes for Boards of Examiners and [Special/Exceptional](#) Circumstances Committee meetings

Responsibility for minute-taking

8.1 Conveners of Boards of Examiners and [Special/Exceptional](#) Circumstances Committees are responsible for agreeing an accurate record for each meeting.

8.2 The School should decide who is responsible for taking the minutes of a Board of Examiners or [Special/Exceptional](#) Circumstances Committee meeting (most commonly this will be the Secretary to the Board of Examiners). Conveners of Boards of Examiners should ensure that the minute-taker is properly briefed for any specific issues that may arise in a meeting.

Minutes of Boards of Examiners meetings

8.3 Appendix A provides guidance regarding how to record meetings of Boards of Examiners. When recording the proceedings, follow these general points:

- do not attribute views to an identifiable individual member of the Board;
- use a student's examination number rather than name when referring to an individual student;
- record the outcome of any vote taken during the meeting;
- where relevant, note any guidance or regulations consulted or invoked.

Minutes of [Special/Exceptional](#) Circumstances Committees

8.4 The general points regarding recording Board of Examiners meetings (see 8.3) and many of the core elements covered in Appendix A (eg Date of Meeting, Attendance and Quorum, Scope of the Meeting) also apply to the minutes for [Special/Exceptional](#) Circumstances Committees.



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- 8.5 The minutes of the [Special/Exceptional](#) Circumstances Committee (SCC) will also include:
- ~~A list of the evidence received and considered by the Special Circumstances Committee in relation to each case;~~
 - The decision taken in relation to each case and the reasons for this decision, along with any recommendations for appropriate action to be taken by the Board of Examiners in response to the circumstances.
- 8.6 The minutes of the [Special/Exceptional](#) Circumstances Committee are not circulated to the Board of Examiners. Instead, the Convener should provide a written report of its decisions and recommendations on these matters to the relevant Board of Examiners.

Minutes and Data Protection and Freedom of Information

- 8.7 While the Board of Examiners and [Special/Exceptional](#) Circumstances minutes are confidential, there are circumstances in which some of their content must be made available on request:
- Under Data Protection legislation a student can make a Subject Access Request (SAR) for the disclosure of comments about themselves.
 - Under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act (FOISA) anyone can request information contained in the minutes or reports but comments about individual candidates are exempt from disclosure. For example, comments about the general standard of the candidates must be disclosed on request.
- 8.8 Prior to disclosing information contained in minutes in response to a SAR or FOISA request, School Information Practitioners should ask the Convener of the Board or SCC:
- Whether the minutes are draft or approved (this should be stated when releasing the documentation); and
 - Whether there are any concerns regarding releasing any particular content in the minutes (this should be taken into account when applying any exemptions and advice sought from the Records Management Section).
- 8.9 When releasing information contained in minutes in response to a SAR, Schools must only provide identifiable personal information about the requestor - personal information about other individuals must be anonymised. When releasing information contained in minutes in response to a FOISA request all personal information about students must be anonymised. Information is considered



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anonymised if there are at least 4 individuals to whom the information could refer. Guidance on anonymisation is available on the Records Management website: www.ed.ac.uk/records-management/data-protection/guidance-policies/anonymisation.

- 8.10 When releasing minutes in response to FOISA requests, the names of the individuals that attended the meeting should be disclosed unless there is a justifiable reason not to do so. If the School is aware of a reason not to release the name of an individual, their Information Practitioner should seek exemption advice from the Records Management Section.
- 8.11 School Information Practitioners (www.ed.ac.uk/records-management/foi-practitioners) may seek advice from the Records Management Section regarding the handling of information requests, recordsmanagement@ed.ac.uk.

Minutes and Student Academic Appeals and Complaints

- 8.12 The minutes or relevant extract from the minutes of Board of Examiners or [Special/Exceptional](#) Circumstances Committee meetings can be taken account in the course of student academic appeals, and may also be relevant to a student complaint. Material produced during an appeal or complaint may receive external scrutiny by the

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman if a student is not satisfied with the outcome of the University procedures and takes their case to the SPSO.

- 8.13 Where a student requests minutes to assist them with an appeal or complaint, Schools should only provide extracts relevant to the Board or SCC's decisions on the individual's case, along with extracts containing any general remarks which might be held by the student to be relevant to their appeal (e.g. on the involvement of supervisors in the assessment process). When supplying minutes to students as part of an appeal or complaints process, Schools should follow the principles set out above in relation to Data Protection and Freedom of Information.

Interaction between minutes and communications to students

- 8.14 Where Schools communicate with individual students following the publication of course or programme results (often relating to failure to progress), they should ensure that the explanation that they provide the student for the results should [accurately](#) reflect ~~and be limited to~~ that recorded in the minutes.

9 Retention of Minutes and Papers of Boards of Examiners and [Special/Exceptional](#) Circumstances Committees



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- 9.1 Minutes and Papers of Board of Examiners and [Special/Exceptional](#) Circumstances meetings should be retained for 5 years after graduation, withdrawal or other permanent departure from University, or, in the case of lapsed students, 8 years after last contact with students:

www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/records-management-section/records-management/staff-guidance/retention-schedules/student-records

10 Key timelines and processes associated with Boards of Examiners

- 10 Appendix B provides an indicative timeline and a summary of key processes associated with Boards of Examiners.

11 Sources of support and information

- 11.1 The Handbook forms part of a suite of support and advice for Boards of Examiners, which also includes briefing and training sessions presented by College Offices and Academic Services, and student record training provided by Student Systems.

- 11.2 Boards of Examiners are supported by office-holders who can provide advice on the interpretation and application of this Handbook and related University Regulations and policies. Each Board of Examiners will have a Regulations Expert (see above). In addition:

- Each College will designate College Office or other College level staff to be available for consultation by Regulations Experts and by Conveners of Boards of Examiners;
- Academic Services will provide advice on the academic application of regulations;
- Student Administration and Student Systems can advise on matters regarding examinations and student systems.

- 11.3 In general, queries should be directed in the first instance to the College.

- 11.4 The University provides other sources of information about specific aspects of the assessment process.

- Appeals: www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/appeals
- Exam Hall Regulations: www.ed.ac.uk/student-administration/exams/regulations
- External Examining: www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/quality-unit/quality-assurance/external-examining
- Glossary of terms: www.drps.ed.ac.uk



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- Policy and terms of reference for Progression Boards:
www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/ug_progression_boards.pdf
- [Special/Exceptional](http://www.edinburgh.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/special_circumstances.pdf) Circumstances Policy:
http://www.edinburgh.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/special_circumstances.pdf
- Student Systems: www.ed.ac.uk/student-systems/support-guidance/admin-support-staff/student-admin-colleges-schools

~~1st November 2016~~ [23 May 2024](#)



Handbook for Boards of Examiners for Taught Courses and Programmes

Appendix A - Template Board of Examiners Agenda and Minutes

Confidential
[Name of School]
[Name of Courses/Degree Programmes Covered by BoE]
[Academic Year]
[Date and venue of BoE meeting]
AGENDA / MINUTES

1 Introduction

At meeting:

- Confirm BoE quorate; confirm those present, including Convener, External Examiner(s) and Secretary, and whether members or “in attendance”; confirm Regulations Expert is present or available.

In minutes:

- Record that the BoE was quorate, record the names of those present according to whether they are members of the Board or are in attendance, and note any change in the capacity in which a member is attending (e.g. appointment of an Acting Convener).
- If External Examiner(s) was not present, record the reason, together with alternative arrangements made for their input.
- If the Regulations Expert was not present, confirm that they were available for consultation.

2 Apologies

At meeting and in minutes: note any apologies.

3 Confidentiality and Anonymity

At meeting:

- Remind members that discussions at BoE are confidential.
- Confirm whether the marking processes have been conducted anonymously.

In minutes:

- Record these points.

4 Minutes of Previous Board of Examiners meeting(s) of [Date(s)]

At meeting:

- Invite Board to endorse the minutes as an accurate record.
- Report any Convener’s Actions or matters arising.

In minutes:

- Record these points.

5 Special/Exceptional Circumstances

At meeting:



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- Invite Convener/representative of SCC to present summary report.
- Invite Board to [determine-agree](#) outcomes for each candidate.

In minutes:

- Record that the Board considered the report.
- Record each decision along with the main reasons (when recording decisions for individual students, record the examination number of the candidate and set out the main points advanced during the discussion and the final reasons for the decision reached). Where the Board has rejected the recommendation(s) of the SCC, record the reasons for this.

6 Confirmation of course/programme results

At meeting:

- For each course/programme, invite the Course Organiser / Programme Director / [Subject or Year representative](#) to introduce the provisional results and to note any particular issues regarding the marking, and paying particular attention to borderline cases.
- Decide on final course or award / progression outcomes.
- Invite External Examiner(s) to confirm that they support the outcomes.

In minutes:

- List each course/programme, with appropriate reference number, and note final results. [\(Alternatively, the minutes may be supplemented by the Board reports produced in BI Suite.\)](#)
- Record details of any modification of provisional marks, grades, or award / progression decision, together with the reasons for these.
- Record the discussion and outcome for any borderline cases.
- Where not all results are available by the time of the meeting, record information on the availability of results for individual students and record the reasons for an award or absence of award.
- In Honours years other than final, record any particular circumstances that will subsequently be relevant to classification.
- When recording decisions for individual students, record the examination number of the candidate and set out the main points advanced during the discussion and the final reasons for the decision reached.
- Should there be circumstances in which feedback on work has not been available which would normally have been used by students in their preparation for examinations, this must be noted in relation to the individual students concerned.



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- Record comments by the External Examiner(s) about the examination of the course(s) or programme(s), the performance of the students in general, and their approval of results agreed by the Board.

7 Anonymity

At meeting:

- Once decisions have been taken on course and programme outcomes, lift anonymity and substitute student names for examination numbers, then conduct a final check and agree the results as final.

In minutes:

- Record when anonymity is lifted, and any change made to marks, grades or class of degree in the event of detection of an error which was not detectable when examination numbers were used.

8 Withdrawals and Exclusions

At meeting and in minutes: note student withdrawals and cases where students may be excluded for unsatisfactory progress.

9 Convener's Action

At meeting and in minutes: note any matters to be dealt with by Convener's Action following the meeting.

10 External Examiner(s) comments

At meeting: invite External Examiner(s) to comment on the structure, content, teaching and examinations of the course(s) and/or programme(s).

In minutes: record their main comments.

11 Any Other Business



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Appendix B - Key timelines and processes associated with Boards of Examiners

Main annual timelines

The following is a summary of the main annual timelines associated with Boards of Examiners. It is indicative, and Schools will be informed of the precise timelines for particular processes on an annual basis. The summary is not exhaustive as Boards may have additional activities in local remits. The timeline is based on the standard University academic year structure and examination diets, and programmes with different assessment cycles may need to adapt the checklist.

August / September

- UG resit assessment diet
- Marking and moderation of UG resit diet and PGT [assessments \(including dissertations\)](#)
- UG resit [Special/Exceptional](#) Circumstances Committee (SCC) and Board of Examiners (BoE) meetings
- Record UG resit and progression decisions on EUCLID student record
- PGT SCC and BoE meetings
- Course Organisers check that course handbooks, with assessment statements, are up to date and available to students

Note that Board of Examiner activities in August / September associated with the UG resit diet and PGT assessments should be conducted according to the previous session's assessment regulations and associated policies.

October

- Schools consulted on Semester 1 examination timetable
- Semester 1 examination timetable published
- Record PGT award decisions for November/December graduations on EUCLID student record

November

- Heads of School [inform the College Office of the names of appoint](#) examiners for S1 examination diet (by 1 November)
- Latest date for preparing examination papers for S1 examinations [and agreeing them with External Examiner](#). It is good practice to prepare reassessment papers if a resit is probable.

December

- S1 examination diet
- Marking and moderation of S1 assessment (continues into January)



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January

- Heads of School ~~inform the College Office of the names of~~appoint examiners for S2 examination diet (by 15 January)
- SCC and BoE meetings for S1 courses
- Record S1 course results on the EUCLID student record
- Latest time for setting date for the next year's January Board of Examiners meetings

February

- Schools consulted on Semester 2 exam timetable

March

- Semester 2 exam timetable published

April

- Latest date for preparing examination papers for S2 examinations ~~and agreeing them with External Examiner~~. It is good practice to prepare reassessment papers if a resit is probable.
- S2 examination diet starts
- Marking and moderation of S2 assessment (continues into May)

May / June

- SCC and BoE meetings
- Record course results, progression and degree awards on EUCLID student record
- Latest time for setting date for the next year's May / June Board of Examiners meeting
- Communicate progression and award decisions to students
- Taught Assessment Regulations for following academic year published

July

- Schools consulted on resit examination timetable
- Resit examination timetable published

Key dates for recording results on EUCLID student record

The key dates for recording results into the EUCLID student record and communication of results to students is available from Student Systems. Requirements for communicating results to students are provided in the Taught Assessment Regulations.



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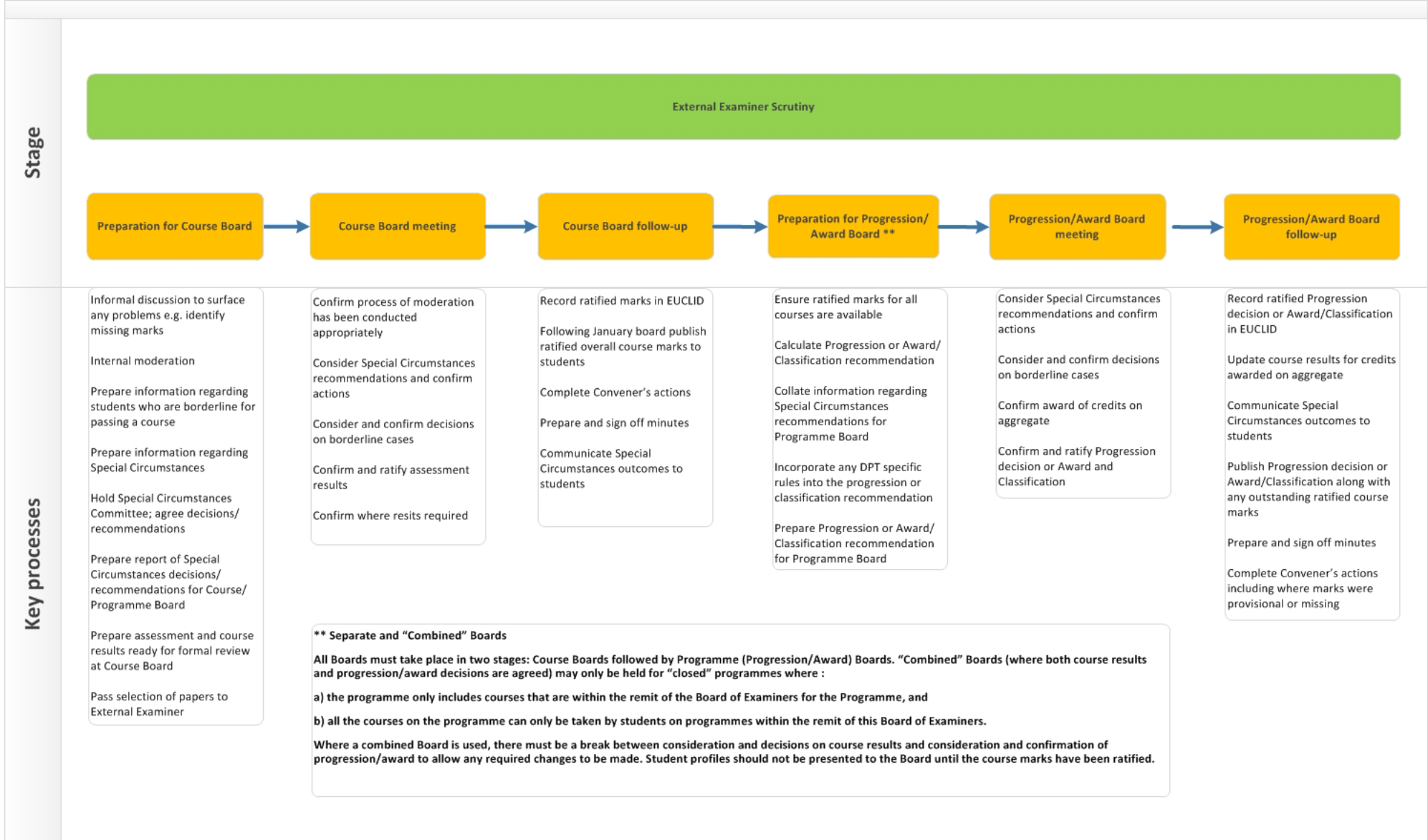
www.ed.ac.uk/student-systems/key-dates

www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/assessment/assessment-regulations

Key processes for operation of Boards of Examiners

The diagram on the following page provides a summary of key processes to be carried out in the operation of Boards of Examiners.

Key processes for Boards of Examiners



Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

23 May 2024

Taught Assessment Regulations 2024/25

Description of paper

1. This paper contains the draft Taught Assessment Regulations for 2024/25. A “Key Changes” section is included to draw the Committee’s attention to the key changes. The Taught Assessment Regulations contribute to the University’s Teaching and Learning focus of Strategy 2030.

Action requested / recommendation

2. The Committee is requested to approve the proposed Taught Assessment Regulations for 2024/25.

Background and context

3. The Taught Assessment Regulations are reviewed annually to ensure that they remain fit for purpose and that enhancements can be made on a cumulative basis.

Discussion

4. APRC is invited to comment on, and approve, the draft Taught Assessment Regulations for academic year 2024/25. Appendix 1 includes only those regulations which include proposed changes. Following this meeting, Registry Services will amend the draft regulations to take account of any Committee comments.
5. In April 2024, all Colleges were invited to submit proposals for changes to the Taught Assessment Regulations, with the intention of identifying any necessary updates due to changes in related policies or practices, and to address any errors or lack of clarity. Colleges were also invited to recommend areas for potential enhancement to the Regulations.

Key Changes to Taught Assessment Regulations 2024/25

Links within the regulations to other information and changes in terminology have been updated as necessary. Other minor changes to wording are included in Appendix 1.

Regulation Updated	What has changed
TAR 2: Examiners: appointment; TAR 4: Convener of the Board of Examiners: appointment; TAR 8 Convener of the Board of Examiners: responsibilities; TAR 38 Board of Examiners meetings;	The detail of these regulations has been removed, and these now refer to the Handbook for Boards of Examiners for Taught Courses and Programmes in order to avoid the duplication of information.

TAR 39 Board of Examiners: quorum	
TAR 23: Oral assessment	<p>Reference to examiners being present for oral assessment has been removed, given that assessment may take place remotely and/or asynchronously. It is the School's responsibility to ensure that, where necessary, appropriate arrangements are in place for in-person oral assessments.</p> <p>The amended wording is more inclusive of students on online programmes.</p>
TAR 27 and 27.5: Resit assessment	<p>Following feedback from Colleges regarding misinterpretation of the assessment attempts, the proposed amended wording removes the phrase "a maximum of" when referring to the number of assessment attempts. This therefore clarifies that students in pre-Honours years are entitled to four assessments attempts for courses, and that Boards of Examiners do not have discretion to reduce this (except where PSRB requirements apply).</p> <p>27.5 has also been amended to provide further clarity on the timing of the resit assessments, and mode of study, where applicable. The amended content makes clear that, where students are resitting a course in the year following the one in which they originally took the course, their School will determine whether they resit on an assessment-only basis, or with attendance.</p>
TAR 28: Late submission of coursework	<p>Sections of this regulation have been amended and/or removed in order to align with the new Exceptional Circumstances policy.</p> <p>28.3 clarifies the arrangements for deadlines for groupwork, where one or more of the students in the group have an extended deadline under the Exceptional Circumstances policy. In line with 28.2, Schools retain discretion not to permit late submission for group assessment, where late submission will not be practicable. Where late submission is permitted, Schools also have the option to offer students requiring an extension an alternative form of assessment, as is the practice in some Schools. Where an extension is applied to the deadline for all students in the group, the regulation places an expectation on Schools to communicate the revised deadline to students, rather than the student who has received the deadline.</p>
TAR 30.4: Academic misconduct	<p>Addition of section 30.4 regarding the use of Generative AI tools and a link to the University guidance on this.</p>

TAR 33.3: Security of marks	Some of the detail in 33.3 has been removed as it is now out of date, and links now included to the latest Information Security guidance and policies.
TAR 50: Award of degrees, diplomas and certificates	<p>The proposed amendment to delegate the award of degrees from Senate to Boards of Examiners is being considered for approval at Senate at its meeting on 22 May 2024. The process of requesting Senate to approve degrees is too burdensome administratively for Schools, Colleges, Registry Services and Senate, to be proportionate as a means for handling all such requests, particularly where this is to award degrees to individual graduands.</p> <p>Boards of Examiners are the relevant bodies within the University with the expertise to make a judgement as to whether individual students should receive an award, and the function which Senate performs in awarding or conferring degrees does not appear to add value to the process.</p>
TAR 52.6: Undergraduate honours assessment progression; TAR 54.7 Undergraduate honours degree award; TAR 56.8 Postgraduate assessment progression; TAR 57.8 Postgraduate degree, diploma and certificate award	Addition of 52.6, 54.7, 56.8 and 57.8 to clarify that information about any courses which must be passed, and for which credit cannot be awarded on aggregate, must be published in advance.
TAR 58 and 58.6: Resubmission of postgraduate dissertations or research projects	Further detail added to clarify resubmission arrangements where the dissertation or research project consists of more than one assessment component.
TAR 64.1: Status of decisions	Addition of a timeline of two years for requests for Boards of Examiners to review their decisions. The two year period is in line with the approved timeline for appeals.
All – links to Exceptional Circumstances policy and Board of Examiners Handbook	<p>Throughout the regulations, references to 'special circumstances' have been updated to 'exceptional circumstances' and links to the policy are to be updated once this policy is published.</p> <p>If the Committee approves the amendments to the Board of Examiners Handbook, the links to this policy will also need to be updated.</p>

Resource implications

6. The proposed amendments do not present resource implications, with the exception of the amendment to TAR 50 to allow Boards of Examiners, rather than

Senate, to award degrees. The amended proposal presents a reduction in staff time required for Schools, Colleges, Registry Services and Senate to award degrees.

Risk management

7. The proposed amendments do not present any new risks, and some amendments reduce risks, for example, by providing updated links or by providing further clarity to regulations which Colleges and Schools have indicated are open to misinterpretation.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

8. The paper does not contribute to the Climate Emergency and Sustainable Development Goals.

Equality & diversity

9. Most of the proposed amendments do not reflect changes in underlying policy, and do not therefore present equality and diversity implications. The amendment to TAR 23 is the only amendment which has equality and diversity implications, which make the amended regulation more inclusive, and this is noted in the 'Key Changes' table above.

Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed

10. Registry Services will communicate approved regulations in the annual email update to Schools and Colleges on regulations and policies. Registry Services will also cover any changes to regulations in Boards of Examiners briefings and other relevant briefing events for staff in Schools and Colleges.

Author

Cristina Matthews
Academic Policy Officer
Registry Services

Presenter

Cristina Matthews

Freedom of Information Open



Taught Assessment Regulations

Academic Year 2023/242024/25

Purpose of Policy

The assessment regulations set minimum requirements and standards for students and staff, expressing in practical form the academic goals and policies of the University.

Overview

These regulations:

- (i) replace the previous undergraduate and taught postgraduate assessment regulations;
- (ii) set out the rules which must be followed in taught student assessment; and
- (iii) provide links to other sources or guidance and related regulations.

Scope: Mandatory Policy

These regulations are University-wide. They apply to assessment of **all** taught full-time and part-time students, studying degrees, diplomas and certificates at Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework (SCQF) levels 7 – 12 which are awarded for credit at the University of Edinburgh. They apply to undergraduates, taught postgraduates and research postgraduates studying taught components. The regulations apply to undergraduate and taught postgraduate assessment for courses assessed in the current academic year.

Contact Officer	Olivia Hayes Academic Registry Services	Academic Services	Email Olivia.Hayes@ed.ac.uk Email academicpolicy@ed.ac.uk
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Document control

Dates	Approved: 256.05.2023 32XXXXXX	Starts: 0119.089.2342	Equality impact assessment:	Amendments:	Next Review: 2023/24 2024/25 252/23
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Approving authority	Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC)
Consultation undertaken	Assessment Regulations Working Group, Colleges, Edinburgh University Students' Association, APRC, Student Disability Service Disability and Learning Support Service (DLSS) , HR, College Academic Misconduct Officers, Records Management, Distance Learning and Student Systems .
Section responsible for policy maintenance & review	Academic Registry Services
Related policies, procedures, guidelines & regulations	Student Appeal Regulations, Assessment and Feedback Principles and Priorities , Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study, Policies for Boards of Examiners and Progression Boards, Examination Hall Regulations, External Examiner for Taught Programmes Policy, Special Exceptional Circumstances Policy , DRPS Glossary of Terms , DRPS Glossary of Terms Student Systems guidance for staff: www.studentsystems.ed.ac.uk/staff/
UK Quality Code	Consistent with guiding principles outlined in the UK Quality Code for Higher Education November 2018 (assessment).
Policies superseded by this policy	Previous versions of the taught assessment regulations
Alternative format	If you require this document in an alternative format please email Academic.Services@ed.ac.uk or telephone 0131 651 4490.

Taught Assessment Regulations

Academic Year 2024/25 32/243



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Additional guidance

This document should be read in conjunction with University's Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study. These are available via: www.drps.ed.ac.uk/

The regulations apply to all forms of summative assessment, including examination, take home examination, coursework, electronic and online assessment, oral assessment and peer and self-assessment.

The regulations must be applied, unless a concession has been awarded by the Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC) on the basis of a case proposed by a College. The boxed "Application of the regulation" below must also be applied, unless the College has approved an exemption on the basis of a case proposed by a School. These concessions and exemptions are recorded by APRC and Colleges as appropriate.

The regulations operate in accordance with legislation and University policies on Equality and Diversity: www.ed.ac.uk/equality-diversity/about/legislation

Members of staff who need additional guidance may consult their Head of College or their nominee, their College Office, ~~Registry~~Academic Services, or Student Administration. Student Administration oversees the procedure relating to the provision of question papers, registration for degree examinations, the receipt and notification of results, examination timetabling and the provision of examination accommodation.

Where reference is made to 'the relevant Dean' this should be taken as being the Dean with responsibility for undergraduate or postgraduate matters, depending on the circumstances. Where reference is made to 'the Head of College' or 'Head of School' this may also in some cases be a designated representative of that individual.

Definitions of key terms can be found in the glossary of terms:

<http://www.drps.ed.ac.uk/22-23/GlossaryofTerms2023-24.pdf>

<http://www.drps.ed.ac.uk/GlossaryofTerms.pdf>

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Taught Assessment Regulations

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Regulation 54	Undergraduate honours degree award
Regulation 55	Undergraduate degree classification
Regulation 56	Postgraduate assessment progression
Regulation 57	Postgraduate degree, diploma and certificate award
Regulation 58	Resubmission of postgraduate dissertations or research projects
Regulation 59	Award of postgraduate merit
Regulation 60	Award of postgraduate distinction
Regulation 61	Award of credit from other Universities
Regulation 62	Minuting of decisions of Boards of Examiners
Regulation 63	Board of Examiners: return of marks
Regulation 64	Status of decisions
Regulation 65	Convener's Action
Regulation 66	Failure to complete all the assessment requirements of a degree programme
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Section F.	Interpretation and Significant Disruption
Regulation 69	Interpretation of regulations
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Section A. Roles and Responsibilities

[...]

Regulation 2 Examiners: appointment

~~Examiners are appointed to the Board of Examiners by the relevant College. There are internal examiners, who are staff of the University nominated by the relevant Head of School, and External Examiners. The process for appointment of Examiners to a Board of Examiners is defined in the Handbook for Boards of Examiners for Taught Courses and Programmes:~~

~~www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/boe_handbook.pdf~~

Application of the regulation

~~2.1 Policy, principle and operational guidance is available for Boards of Examiners: www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/staff/assessment/boards-examiners~~

~~2.2 The list of examiners making up each Board is certified by the Head of the College, or their nominee, and is definitive unless an appeal to the relevant College committee is made by an interested party challenging the composition of the Board.~~

~~2.3 Heads of Schools inform the College Office of the names of those internal and External Examiners who it is proposed will constitute the Board. For the December diet of examinations this is by 1 November and for later diets it is by 15 January. Names are made available by the College Office on request. Where there is more than one diet of examination in an academic year the Board need not comprise the same examiners for each diet. Any objection to the proposed examiners must be made to the Head of College or their nominee in good time before the relevant exam diet. Complete final lists of examiners are maintained by the relevant College Office and are available for inspection by members of staff.~~

~~2.4 Internal examiners are teaching and/or honorary staff of the University who teach SCQF level 7 to 12 courses which are awarded for credit and are listed in the Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study: www.drps.ed.ac.uk/index.php~~

~~2.5 Honorary staff in this context include:
— Teachers and senior staff from partner schools to the Moray House School of Education and Sport;
— Academic staff from research pooling partners who are appointed as an internal examiner by APRC on the basis of a recommendation from the relevant College;~~



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and NHS staff.

2.6 External examiners are appointed by Colleges. Their roles, powers and responsibilities are set out in the External Examiners for Taught Programmes Policy:

www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/externalexaminerstaught.pdf

[...]

Regulation 4 Convener of the Board of Examiners: appointment

The Head of School that owns the programme or course has responsibility for appointing the Convener of the Board of Examiners, the Convener of the Progression Board and the Convener of the Special/Exceptional Circumstances Committee. More information about the appointment of key office holders involved in Boards of Examiners is provided in the Handbook for Boards of Examiners for Taught Courses and Programmes:
www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/boe_handbook.pdf

Application of the regulation

4.1 The Head of School informs the College Office about the appointment of the Convener by the beginning of the relevant Semester for the Board of Examiners responsible for courses assessed in each Semester, and by the beginning of Semester 2 for the Board responsible for programme decisions for each programme.

4.2 For combined (formerly joint) degrees the “owning” Head of School liaises with other relevant Heads of School. In the case of any disagreement on the appointment of a Convener of a combined Board of Examiners, the Convener is nominated by the relevant Heads of College or their nominee.

4.3 Programme Directors, Cohort Leads and Course Organisers are not the Convener of the Board of Examiners for their programmes or courses. This is to ensure appropriate separation of roles. If the Convener is also a Course Organiser, formal chairing of the Board of Examiners is delegated to another member of the Board for discussion of that course.

4.4 Undergraduate Progression Boards Policy and Special Circumstances Policy:

www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/ug_progression_boards.pdf

www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/special_circumstances.pdf

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[...]

Regulation 8 Convener of the Board of Examiners: responsibilities

The Convener of the Board of Examiners has responsibility for the assessment process for courses and programmes covered by the Board and for ensuring that the Board operates within university regulations. The responsibilities of the Convener of the Board of Examiners are outlined in the Handbook for Boards of Examiners for Taught Courses and Programmes:

www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/boe_handbook.pdf

Application of the regulation

8.1 The responsibilities of the Convener of the Board of Examiners are outlined in the Handbook for Boards of Examiners for Taught Courses and Programmes:
www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/boe_handbook.pdf

These include:

- (a) approving the content of examination papers, taking account of the comments of External Examiners;
- (b) the security of and arrangements for setting papers and assessments, including the robustness of and resources for electronic assessment; examining and marking assessed work; and processing and storing marks and grades;
- (c) the quality and standards of marking;
- (d) ensuring all examiners and markers are aware of their responsibilities;
- (e) effective operation of the meeting of the Board and the Special Circumstances Committee;
- (f) participation of the External Examiners;
- (g) accurate recording, minuting and reporting of decisions of the Board; and
- (h) meeting relevant deadlines.

8.2 Conveners must act in accordance with these Taught Assessment Regulations; the Degree Regulations and Programme of Study; and the External Examiners for Taught Programmes Policy.

www.drps.ed.ac.uk/

www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/externalexaminerstaught.pdf

8.3 In practice, Conveners may delegate operation of some responsibilities to Course Organisers, Programme Directors and School Teaching Organisations. They are supported by the Regulations Expert. See taught assessment regulation 9.

www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/staff/assessment/boards-examiners

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8.4 — Definitions of some of the main terms used in assessment are given in the Glossary of Terms:
www.drps.ed.ac.uk/21-22/GlossaryofTerms.pdf

[...]

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Section B. Conduct of Assessment

[...]

Regulation 17 Assessment deadlines: student responsibilities

It is a student's responsibility to ascertain and meet their assessment deadlines, including examination times and locations.

Application of the regulation

- 17.1 The examination timetable is based on students' course choices. To avoid examination timetabling clashes, it is students' responsibility to ensure that their record of courses is accurate by the end of week 3 of each semester.
- 17.2 Students who have a clash in their examination timetable need to contact the Examination Office, Student Administration, through their ~~Personal Tutor or~~ Student Adviser or Student Support Team, as soon as possible to allow alternative arrangements to be put in place.
www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/student-administration/exams/overview
- 17.3 As examinations may be scheduled at any time during the semester, it is students' responsibility to be available throughout the semester, including the whole of the revision period, examination diet and the resit diet, if the student has scheduled examinations. Examinations will not be scheduled during winter or spring vacations. Occasionally assessments may need to be rescheduled with very little notice. If ~~special~~ **Exceptional** circumstances mean that a student is unavailable for the rescheduled assessment, Boards of Examiners may consider using an alternative method to assess the relevant learning outcomes.

[...]

Regulation 19 Reasonable adjustments

Reasonable adjustments will be made to assessments for disabled students.

Application of the regulation

- 19.1 Reasonable adjustments must be determined in advance by the ~~Student Disability Service (SDS)~~ **Disability and Learning Support Service (DLSS)**. They are recorded



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in the student's Schedule of Adjustments by the [DLSSSDS](#), which communicates the Schedule of Adjustments to the student, the student's ~~Personal Tutor or~~ Student Adviser, the School's Co-ordinator of Adjustments, Student Administration (if examination adjustments are recommended) and other relevant areas.

- 19.2 The School's Co-ordinator of Adjustments (CoA) has responsibility for overseeing the implementation of the Schedule of Adjustments. The Co-ordinator of Adjustments will liaise with academic colleagues who are responsible for putting the adjustments in place in the School.
- 19.3 The Co-ordinator of Adjustments will liaise with the [DLSSSDS](#) should any adjustments require further discussion, clarification or alteration. If there are any amendments to the Schedule of Adjustments the [DLSSSDS](#) will communicate these and ensure that the student is informed.
- 19.4 The [DLSSSDS](#) provides examples of reasonable adjustments, deadlines and support:
www.ed.ac.uk/student-disability-service/students/support-we-provide
- 19.5 Reasonable adjustments can be made for a variety of assessment methods, depending on the needs identified and recorded in the student's Schedule of Adjustments, e.g. assessed coursework, take-home examinations, online examinations, invigilated examinations. The [DLSSSDS](#) supports students in the preparation and review of their Schedule of Adjustments. It is a student's responsibility to ensure that their Schedule of Adjustments covers all types of assessment methods relevant to their courses. For example, if a student discovers that an aspect of their course is likely to have an impact on their support needs, they should contact the [DLSSSDS](#) as soon as possible in case any amendment is required to be made to their Schedule of Adjustments.
- 19.6 Arrangements can be made via the [DLSSSDS](#) for students with temporary injuries or impairments, e.g. broken arm or leg, on the submission of relevant medical information. Students should contact the [DLSSSDS](#) as soon as possible to allow the [DLSSSDS](#) to determine any relevant adjustments and support.

[...]

Regulation 23 Oral assessment

Oral assessments may only be used to assess all students on a course as part of the assessment of a specific component, such as a dissertation or practical skill.

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~~A minimum of two examiners must be present if~~ 50% or more of a course is assessed orally, a minimum of two examiners must assess the student's performance.

Application of the regulation

- 23.1 If oral performance is to be assessed the assessment statement (taught assessment regulation 13) must include information on how it is to be assessed.
- 23.2 Conveners of Boards of Examiners need to make available sufficient information about oral assessments to External Examiners and Boards of Examiners.
- 23.3 The examiners may assess work asynchronously based on a recording of the oral assessment.
- 23.43 A Bachelor of Nursing with Honours student who fails an honours course, for which a pass is required for professional registration, will be required to resit the examination and/or to resubmit the coursework (see taught assessment regulation 27). If the student does not achieve a pass at resubmission, an oral examination will be scheduled. If the student fails to satisfy the examiners in the oral assessment, professional registration will not be possible and the student will not be awarded the degree of Bachelor of Nursing with Honours but may be eligible for another award.

[...]

Regulation 25 Examination timetable

Students are only permitted to sit examinations at the times and in the venues that are detailed on the relevant examination timetable.

Application of the regulation

- 25.1 Examinations may be scheduled outside normal University teaching hours.
- 25.2 Students who believe that religious reasons or participation in elite-level sport prevent them from ~~completing an assessment~~ sitting an (including examinations) at the scheduled time or venue should contact their ~~Personal Tutor or~~ Student Adviser and Student Support Team. Their case is considered by the relevant Dean and Student Administration in consultation with the Convener of the Board of Examiners. Further information regarding flexibility which may be offered to students taking part in elite-level sport is provided in the Performance Sport Policy: www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/performance_sport_policy.pdf

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- 25.3 A student who is permitted to appear for examination at a time other than that prescribed may have to sit a specially prepared examination paper or alternative method of assessment.
- 25.4 If examinations are disrupted, for example due to adverse weather conditions, then Boards of Examiners may decide to use an alternative assessment method, rather than rescheduled examinations, to assess the learning outcomes.
- 25.5 Other than online assessment and assessment opportunities offered via Student Administration, students are not allowed to sit examinations away from Edinburgh.

[...]

Regulation 27 Resit assessment

The number of assessment attempts students are entitled to for each course depends upon the type of programme the student is taking and the SCQF level of the course.

Honours undergraduate students are entitled to:

- ~~a maximum of~~ four assessment attempts for courses at Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework level 7 and 8;
- one assessment attempt for courses at SCQF level 9 to 11 unless Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB) requirements apply, in which case a maximum of four assessment attempts are permitted.

Non-Honours undergraduate students on Ordinary and General degree programmes (~~excluding Visiting Undergraduate Students~~) are entitled to:

- ~~a maximum of~~ four assessment attempts for courses at SCQF level 7 to 11.

Visiting undergraduate students are entitled to:

- ~~a maximum of~~ two assessment attempts for courses at SCQF level 7 to 11.

Taught postgraduate students are entitled to:

- one assessment attempt for courses at SCQF level 9 to 12 unless specific Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB) requirements apply, in which case a maximum of four assessment attempts are permitted.

Application of the regulation



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- 27.1 Boards of Examiners must publish the requirements for resits for those courses that they are responsible for. Boards must take the same approach to resits for all students on a particular course, except where a student's previous attempt is a null sit.
- 27.2 Boards of Examiners must set requirements at resit that are as demanding as those made of students at the first attempt.
- 27.3 Boards of Examiners will inform students who are required to undertake resit assessment of the format of their resit assessment. Resit methods need not be the same as those used to assess the learning outcomes at the first attempt, but all relevant learning outcomes must be assessed. Resit arrangements must give students a genuine opportunity to pass the course. Boards of Examiners choose between two options to achieve this:
- (a) Carry forward any component of assessment (coursework or examination) that has been passed already and require the student to retake the failed element;
 - (b) Set an assessment covering all learning outcomes for the course, and weight this as 100% of the course result.
- 27.4 Students are not allowed to resit a course or components of a course that they have passed, unless the relevant Board of Examiners has permitted this under [Special/Exceptional Circumstances](#) by granting a null sit for the attempt that the student has passed (see 27.9).
- 27.5 ~~The~~ Where students are entitled to four assessment attempts ~~are offered, these will consist of the initial assessment attempt and a further assessment attempt in the same academic session, followed where necessary~~ required by a further two assessment attempts in the next academic session. Where a student is undertaking a resit attempt in the year following the one in which they initially took the course, their School will determine whether they undertake the course on an assessment-only basis, or with attendance. ~~the initial assessment and a maximum of three further assessment opportunities, of full assessment, examination or coursework only basis, at the next available opportunities.~~ There may be PSRB requirements which mean that fewer than four assessment attempts are permitted.
- 27.6 The first sitting and any subsequent attempts must take place over no more than two academic sessions, unless the relevant College grants an exemption.
- 27.7 Non-attendance or non-submission is considered an assessment attempt.

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- 27.8 Some Honours programmes require students to pass specified courses at the first attempt in the first or second year in order to progress to Junior Honours. Any such requirements will be specified in the Degree Programme Table or Programme Handbook for the relevant programme.
- 27.9 Where an assessment attempt has been affected by special circumstances, a Board of Examiners may declare this attempt a null sit. Null sits do not count towards the maximum number of permitted attempts. Where a student receives a lower mark in a subsequent assessment attempt than that achieved in the attempt declared as a null sit, they may be awarded the higher mark for the relevant assessment.
- 27.10 Re-assessment attempts are not generally permitted for courses at SQCF level 9 and above for Honours and taught postgraduate students since Honours and taught postgraduate programmes permit the award of credit on aggregate (see Taught Assessment Regulations 52, 54, 56, 57). Where resits are permitted for Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body requirements, any classification decision must use the result obtained on the first attempt.
- 27.11 The Academic Policy and Regulations Committee decides whether a programme may offer resits which are required for Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body requirements for courses at SCQF level 9 and above for Honours and taught postgraduate students. This decision is based on a case proposed by the relevant College.
- 27.12 Students who are subject to immigration control have restrictions on their entitlement to resit as a result of being in the UK on a Student visa. Students on a Student visa can only take a fourth assessment attempt where they have valid ~~special~~ Special-Exceptional ~~C~~ circumstances (in line with the ~~Special-Exceptional~~ Special-Exceptional Circumstances Policy), and specific additional conditions are met (as outlined below).

If a student on a Student visa does seek a fourth assessment attempt, they should apply for this via the ~~Special-Exceptional~~ Special-Exceptional ~~C~~ circumstances process. Where the student has valid ~~special~~ Special-Exceptional ~~C~~ circumstances, the relevant Board of Examiners will determine what action to take. Where the Board of Examiners decides to award the student a null sit for the affected assessment attempt, this will not count as one of the four assessment attempts; null sits for any previous attempts are also not counted towards the total permitted attempts. Where the Board does not award a null sit, but wishes to offer the student a fourth assessment attempt, they may only do so where:

- i) the student has provided satisfactory ~~'greater weight'~~ independent evidence of their circumstances ~~(in line with para 6.2 of the Special Circumstances Policy);~~

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ii) the circumstances that had disrupted the student's previous attempt(s) have been mitigated or no longer apply.

The Student Immigration Service provides advice and guidance to students and staff in relation to the immigration regulations. It is able to support students on Student visas should permission to undertake a fourth assessment attempt affect their visa status (for example, by requiring an extension), and can also support students to understand their immigration status in the event that they are not granted a fourth assessment attempt.

27.13 If repetition of the in-course assessed work is not possible outwith semester time, the student, with the permission of the relevant Head of School, may be allowed to repeat any coursework on its own in the following year. Students who do not receive such permission may be permitted by the relevant Head of School to repeat the course, including examination, in the following year.

27.14 The full range of marks offered by the relevant Common Marking Scheme is available at resit assessment. Resit marks are not capped.

27.15 Where a degree programme's Honours classification is based on the final year only, students are permitted ~~a maximum of~~ four assessment attempts for courses in non-final years.

27.16 In the case of collaborative degrees, where not otherwise stipulated in the collaborative agreement, any permitted resit attempt must be within two years of the first attempt.

Regulation 28 Late submission of coursework

Students need to submit assessed coursework (including research projects and dissertations) by the published deadline. [Where a student submits work late, this will normally lead to a marking penalty being applied. Under the Exceptional Circumstances policy, students meeting certain criteria may be granted an extension to the submission deadline for a coursework assessment.](#)

[LINK TO EC POLICY](#)

~~Where the student meets the criteria for late submission, the Extensions and Special Circumstances Team will consider accepting late submission of up to seven calendar days without applying a penalty.~~

Application of the regulation

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- 28.1 If assessed coursework is submitted [after the relevant deadline \(including a deadline adjusted by a coursework extension\)](#)~~late without an agreed extension to the deadline for an accepted good reason~~, it will be recorded as late and a penalty will be applied by the School. The penalty applied is a reduction of the mark by 5% of the maximum obtainable mark per calendar day (e.g. a mark of 65% on the Common Marking Scheme scale would be reduced to 60% up to 24 hours later). This applies for up to seven calendar days (or to the time when feedback is given, if this is sooner), after which a mark of zero will be given. The original unreduced mark will be recorded by the School and the student informed of it.
- 28.2 Schools may choose not to permit the submission of late work for particular components of assessment where the specific assessment and feedback arrangements make it impractical or unfair to other students to do so. If Schools do not permit the submission of late work for particular components of assessment, they must publicise this to students on the relevant course.
- [28.3 Where an individual student is granted an extension under the Exceptional Circumstances Policy to a deadline for a coursework assessment which consists of a single submission by a group of students, the revised deadline will apply to the submission for all students in the group, except where the student offered the extension is given an alternative form of assessment. Schools will inform other students in the group of the revised deadline.](#)
- ~~28.3 Where Schools accept late submissions of coursework, the Extensions and Special Circumstances Team will consider cases for accepting late submissions up to a maximum of seven calendar days without applying a penalty. Schools will indicate where components of assessment have a maximum permitted extension of less than seven days. This will be in addition to any extensions offered in line with a student's Schedule of Adjustments. Students are responsible for submitting their requests in advance of the published deadline for the coursework, using the relevant online system.~~
- ~~28.4 The Extensions and Special Circumstances Team decides whether the student has provided an accepted reason to justify an extension.~~
- ~~28.5 Self-certification will provide sufficient evidence in all circumstances. The Extensions and Special Circumstances Team are responsible for ensuring a record is kept of the decision and the information provided by the student with their request.~~
- ~~28.6 Accepted reasons for coursework extensions are unexpected short-term circumstances which are exceptional for the individual student, beyond that student's control, and which could reasonably be expected to have had an adverse~~

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~~impact on the student's ability to complete the assessment on time. Accepted reasons may include:~~

- ~~• Recent short-term physical illness or injury;~~
- ~~• Recent short-term mental ill-health;~~
- ~~• A long-term or chronic physical health condition, which has recently worsened temporarily or permanently;~~
- ~~• A long-term or chronic mental health condition, which has recently worsened temporarily or permanently;~~
- ~~• The recent bereavement or serious illness of a person with whom the student has a close relationship;~~
- ~~• The recent breakdown in a long-term relationship, such as a marriage;~~
- ~~• Emergencies involving dependents;~~
- ~~• Job or internship interview at short notice that requires significant time, e.g. due to travel;~~
- ~~• Victim of a crime which is likely to have significant emotional impact;~~
- ~~• Military conflict, natural disaster, or extreme weather conditions;~~
- ~~• Experience of sexual harassment or assault;~~
- ~~• Experience of other forms of harassment;~~
- ~~• Exceptional and significant change in employment commitments, where this is beyond the student's control;~~
- ~~• Exceptional (i.e. non-routine) caring responsibilities;~~
- ~~• Severe financial difficulties;~~
- ~~• Exposure to a difficult/challenging home environment;~~
- ~~• Significant problems with access to teaching and learning materials, e.g. due to connectivity, power, or equipment issues;~~
- ~~• Catastrophic technical failure preventing submission of an online assessment by the relevant deadline;~~
- ~~• Lack of access to library resources, where there are no viable alternatives.~~

~~28.7 In addition to these unexpected circumstances, the Extensions and Special Circumstances Team will also consider requests for coursework extensions in relation to:~~

- ~~• A student's disability where the student's Schedule of Adjustments includes relevant provisions;~~
- ~~• Representation in performance sport at an international or national championship level, in line with the University's Performance Sport Policy: www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/performance_sport_policy.pdf~~

~~28.8 The following are examples of circumstances which are unlikely to be accepted reasons for coursework extensions:~~



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- A long-term or chronic health condition (including mental ill-health or similar ill-health) which has not worsened recently or for which the University has already made a reasonable adjustment;
- A minor short-term illness or injury (e.g. a common cold), which would not reasonably have had a significant adverse impact on the student's ability to complete the assessment on time;
- Occasional low mood, stress or anxiety;
- Circumstances which were foreseeable or preventable;
- Holidays;
- Pressure of academic work (unless this contributes to ill-health);
- Poor time-management;
- Proximity to other assessments;
- Lack of awareness of dates or times of assessment submission.

28.9 Where a student has a good reason for requiring a coursework extension of more than seven calendar days, the student should apply via the Special Circumstances process to request an alternate deadline. Accepted applications relating solely to extensions of more than seven days can be handled under the "expedited decisions" function of the Special Circumstances Policy (7.6).

[...]

Regulation 30 Academic misconduct

It is an offence for any student to make use of unfair means in any University assessment, to assist a student to make use of such unfair means, to do anything prejudicial to the good conduct of the assessment, or to impersonate another student or allow another person to impersonate them in an assessment. Any student found to have cheated or attempted to cheat in an assessment may be deemed to have failed that assessment and disciplinary action may be taken.

Application of the regulation

30.1 Marks or grades can only be given for original work by students at the University. Plagiarism is the act of copying or including in one's own work, without adequate acknowledgement, intentionally or unintentionally, the work of another or one's own previously assessed original work. It is academically fraudulent and an offence against University discipline. Plagiarism, at whatever stage of a student's course, whether discovered before or after graduation, may be investigated and dealt with appropriately by the University. The innocent misuse or quotation of material without formal and proper acknowledgement can constitute plagiarism, even when there is no deliberate intent to deceive. Work may be deemed to be plagiarised if it consists of close paraphrasing or unacknowledged summary of a source, as well as

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word-for-word transcription, or if it involves the use of essays or answers produced by another individual or service. Any failure adequately to acknowledge or properly reference other sources in submitted work could lead to lower marks and to disciplinary action being taken.

- 30.2 It is academically fraudulent and an offence against the University's Code of Student Conduct for a student to invent or falsify data, evidence, references, experimental results or other material contributing to any student's assessed work or for a student knowingly to make use of such material. It is also an offence against University's Code of Student Conduct for students to collude in the submission of work that is intended for the assessment of individual academic performance or for a student to allow their work to be used by another student for fraudulent purposes.
- 30.3 Students need to be careful when asking peers to proof-read their work. Proof-readers should only comment on the vocabulary, grammar and general clarity of written English. They should not advise on subject matter or argumentation. Proof-reading and use of translation services may constitute academic misconduct where it includes rewriting or rewording of the student's original work.
- 30.4 Students need to be careful when using Generative AI tools to help with their assessments. The use of Generative AI tools (such as ChatGPT or others) to generate an assignment (or part of an assignment) and submit this as if it were one's own work, without adequate referencing, will be regarded as academic misconduct and treated as such. Programme and/or course handbooks will provide additional guidance in cases where AI tools might form part of an assessment task. Further guidance on the use of Generative AI tools can be found at: <https://www.ed.ac.uk/sites/default/files/atoms/files/universityguidanceforstudentsonworkingwithgenerativeai.pdf>
- 30.54 Students need to be careful to avoid academic misconduct when submitting group projects and to be clear about their individual contribution to the submission.
- 30.65 Information on academic misconduct and plagiarism, and how such cases will be handled, is given on the Academic Services website.
www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/discipline/academic-misconduct
- 30.76 Exam hall regulations can be found at:
www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/registry/exams/ExamHallRegs.pdf

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Section C. Marking of Assessment

[...]

Regulation 33 Security of marks

Assessed work, marks and grades must be handled, transported, recorded and stored securely.

Application of the regulation

- 33.1 The Convener of the Board of Examiners has responsibility for the security of arrangements. In practice, the operation of this may be delegated to the Teaching Organisation or equivalent.
- 33.2 Security arrangements must also include sending assessed work and marks and grades to examiners, including External Examiners; marking arrangements for online assessment; and correspondence about marks, which may be by email.
- 33.3 ~~Marks or grade information about more than 50 individuals is classified as medium risk information under the University's policy on taking sensitive information and personal data outside the secure computing environment. Under this policy,~~ If exam scripts, marks or grade information leave University premises or University computing systems then additional security measures, ~~such as encryption or locked cabinets,~~ must be used, in line with the University guidance and policies on Information Security: <https://infosec.ed.ac.uk/information-protection-policies>.

[...]

Regulation 37 Final marks

Boards of Examiners confirm marks as final in the minutes of the Board of Examiners meeting. A Board of Examiners must not revise marks agreed as final by a previous Board of Examiners (except in line with Taught Assessment Regulation 64).

Application of the regulation

- 37.1 For undergraduates and postgraduate students, the Board of Examiners agrees marks as final in the year in which they are obtained.

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37.2 The Board of Examiners is required to apply any penalty determined by the College Academic Misconduct Officer (CAMO) or School Academic Misconduct Officer (SAMO). The Board cannot adjust the penalty or ~~It cannot apply any additional penalty for the offence.~~ Following the application of the penalty, ~~if the student has submitted valid~~ Special/Exceptional Circumstances relating to the affected assessment the Board will follow Regulation 43 of the Taught Assessment Regulations. ~~take into account the decision of the Special Circumstances Committee when reaching its decision/deciding what action to take, in accordance with the Special Circumstances Policy /~~ Further information can be found in the Academic Misconduct Procedure: <https://www.ed.ac.uk/sites/default/files/atoms/files/academicmisconductprocedures.pdf>

37.32 The Board of Examiners for final year students is responsible for determining the award of degree. The Board of Examiners, in determining final classifications and awards, may exercise discretion by taking into account special/Exceptional circumstances. See taught assessment regulation 43.

37.43 The Board of Examiners approves a single mark for each component of assessment for which final marks are to be released; marks for components of assessment are not rounded. The final component marks are used by the Board of Examiners when determining the overall result for the course. Rounding is only applied to final course marks (see regulation 63).

37.54 Students are informed of the status of the marks released and are reminded that the Board of Examiners, in determining the final marks or award, may have exercised discretion by taking into account additional relevant information.

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Section D. Operation of Boards of Examiners

Regulation 38 Board of Examiners meetings

Meetings of Boards of Examiners are held to reach assessment, progression and award decisions. [Information about the operation of Boards of Examiners is provided in the Handbook for Boards of Examiners for Taught Courses and Programmes: \[www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/boe_handbook.pdf\]\(http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/boe_handbook.pdf\)](#)

Application of the regulation

~~38.1— See taught assessment regulation 8.1 for additional information on responsibilities of the Convener of the Board of Examiners. Further information can also be found in the Handbook for Boards of Examiners for Taught Courses and Programmes www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/boe_handbook.pdf~~

~~38.2— The minutes of the Board of Examiners meeting needs to be an accurate record of the meeting and the approved results and decisions. Guidance on minuting Board of Examiners meetings is available: www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/boe_handbook.pdf~~

~~38.3— Students are informed in advance about progression and award criteria.~~

Regulation 39 Board of Examiners: quorum

~~A Board of Examiners meeting is quorate if at least half the internal examiners participate and at least one External Examiner participates in and approves the decisions of the Board. No Board may have fewer than two internal examiners participating. See taught assessment regulation 2.4 for the definition of an internal examiner. [Quorum for a meeting of a Board of Examiners is defined in the Handbook for Boards of Examiners for Taught Courses and Programmes: \[www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/boe_handbook.pdf\]\(http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/boe_handbook.pdf\)](#)~~

Application of the regulation

~~39.1— Meetings of Boards of Examiners may be held in-person or virtually, at the discretion of the relevant Convener. Where meetings are held virtually, these should operate synchronously wherever possible, with all present members participating in real-time. However, virtual meetings may operate asynchronously where necessary, provided that a quorum of members take part. Any External Examiner must have~~



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~~sufficient information and access to the Board's deliberations to allow them to approve the decisions taken by the Board. The minute needs to reflect the nature of their participation.~~

~~39.2 In exceptional circumstances and by prior written agreement with the Head of the College and the Convener of the Board, representatives nominated and authorised by them may substitute for internal examiners.~~

~~39.3 Each subject discipline must be represented and, whenever practicable, an External Examiner from each subject should participate. Where more than one School is involved, the composition of the Board reflects the contribution of the Schools to the assessment of the courses or programmes.~~

~~39.4 The University's External Examiners for Taught Programmes Policy outlines External Examiners' participation in Boards of Examiners meetings.
www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/externalexaminerstaught.pdf~~

~~39.5 It is not necessary for the same members of a Board of Examiners to attend all meetings of the Board in an academic year, provided each Board is quorate.~~

[...]

Regulation 43 Special-Exceptional circumstances

Where a student's performance in assessment has been affected by illness, accident or circumstances beyond their control, it is the student's responsibility to submit an application containing an account of these special-Exceptional Circumstances, along with supporting evidence, for consideration by the Extensions and Special-Exceptional Circumstances (ESC) service. ~~Where the ESC service accepts an application, it is referred to the relevant Board of Examiners, who decide what action to take.~~

Application of the regulation

43.1 The Special-Exceptional Circumstances Policy sets out the arrangements for students to request consideration of special-Exceptional Circumstances, types of circumstances which are and are not likely to be accepted by ESC, requirements for evidence to support special-Exceptional circumstances, the composition and operation of Special-Exceptional Circumstances Committees, and the actions available to Boards of Examiners (including Progression Boards) in relation to an accepted Special-Exceptional Circumstances application. The policy is available at: www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/special_circumstances.pdf LINK

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Regulation 44 Borderlines

Boards of Examiners must consider students whose marks are borderline for progression, award or classification purposes. Boards of Examiners can also consider students whose marks are borderline for passing a course, where [special Exceptional Circumstances](#) apply. Borderline marks are defined as marks from two percentage points below the class or grade boundary up to the boundary itself, e.g. 58.00% to 59.99% for an undergraduate 2.1 classification or 38% to 39% for a pass in a course. Boards of Examiners and Progression Boards must use the University borderline definition and must not set and use a different definition.

Application of the regulation

- 44.1 Boards of Examiners must publish in advance the factors that will be taken into account for borderline progression, award, or classification decisions, which can include:
- (a) cases in which a student has performed better in courses at a higher level;
 - (b) cases where the amount of credited assessed work to be used for classification or award decisions is less than the norm (e.g., where credits have been awarded for progression purposes only in recognition of [special Exceptional Circumstances](#)); and
 - (c) individual student profiles of performance.
- 44.2 Boards of Examiners cannot selectively use any additional assessment to reach assessment decisions for specific students. See taught assessment regulation 19.
- 44.3 Examples of borderlines for progression decisions include:
- (a) where a student has a final mark of 38% or 39% for a course in first year that they need to pass to progress to second year;
 - (b) where a student is within two percentage points of a requirement for progression into honours or postgraduate dissertation, for example where the Degree Programme Table specifies the attainment of 50% as an average across a number of courses, the progression borderline is 48.00% to 49.99%;
 - (c) where a student being considered for progression on a postgraduate taught programme has achieved an average of 50% or more across 120 credits of taught courses, and a mark of 50% or more in 60 or 70 credits, with a further course or courses carrying a mark of 48 or 49%; and
 - (d) for the award of credit on aggregate, where a student has an average of 38.00% to 39.99% over their 120 credits.
- 44.4 Boards of Examiners may award a pass for a course where a student has a borderline fail mark (i.e. 38% to 39%) and has had a request for consideration of

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special circumstances approved (see the [Special/Exceptional](#) Circumstances Policy: www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/special_circumstances.pdf).

Regulation 45 Confidentiality

All discussion at a Board of Examiners' meeting is confidential.

Application of the regulation

- 45.1 Boards of Examiners reach a collective decision. The decision does not need to be unanimous.
- 45.2 No comments or remarks which are not included in the minutes should be reported to any students, whether or not they are unattributed.
- 45.3 The views of a particular examiner should not be made known to a student. If a student makes a request to see the minutes of a Board of Examiners meeting, the information recorded in the minutes on that particular student will need to be disclosed. In doing so examiners' comments should be anonymised, e.g. assigned to "Examiner1, Examiner2". Further information is available at: http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/boe_handbook.pdf
- 45.4 Students have a right to see information about themselves recorded in minutes of Board of Examiner meetings.
- 45.5 Other than with the written permission of the student concerned, members of staff should not make available information about marks to persons or bodies outside the University except when necessary in the context of a reference.
- 45.6 Guidance on disclosing information on students can be found at: www.ed.ac.uk/data-protection/data-protection-guidance/sharing-personal-data

Regulation 46 Release of marks

Students are informed of marks or grades for each discretely identified unit of assessment used by the Board in reaching its final mark for the course or its progression or award decision.

Application of the regulation

- 46.1 Marks and grades are made available to the student, together with guidance on their meaning.

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- 46.2 Boards of Examiners are not obliged to provide this information if the request is made more than one year after the date of the assessment.
- 46.3 Assessed coursework marks which contribute to the overall result for a course are provided to students at the time that the assessment is marked, as a guide to each student's performance, together with guidance on the meaning of the marks.
- 46.4 Throughout the year, before consideration by a Board of Examiners, marks for examinations and assessed coursework are provisional and have no status until they are approved or modified by the Board. If such marks are released before confirmation by the Board of Examiners, students must be advised that the marks are provisional and may be modified when considered at the Board of Examiners meeting.
- 46.5 **Undergraduate non-honours degree examination marks; and professional degree examination marks or grades in Medicine and Veterinary Medicine (other than final professional degree examination marks): Overall marks:** The final overall mark agreed by Boards of Examiners for diets of examinations for graduating courses of study will be made available to the student via EUCLID Student View.
- 46.6 **Undergraduate Honours degree examination marks; and final professional degree examination marks in Medicine and Veterinary Medicine: Overall classification:** The final overall classification of honours degrees will be communicated to students via EUCLID Student View. The professional degrees may be awarded with honours in Medicine, or with distinction in Veterinary Medicine, for students who matriculated in or prior to the 2022/23 academic year, but are not otherwise classified.

[...]

Section E. Assessment decisions

Regulation 50 Award of degrees, diplomas and certificates

Degrees, diplomas and certificates are awarded by the [Senatus on the basis of relevant Board of Examiners to students meeting published criteria recommendations](#). Each honours programme of study, the MBChB and the BVM&S, has a Board of Examiners responsible for [recommending](#) the award of the degree and determining the classification of the degree. Each postgraduate degree, diploma or certificate examination has a Board of Examiners responsible both for determining progression to diploma/masters dissertation

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(on programmes where there is an identifiable taught component followed by a dissertation/research project) and for determining the final award of the qualification.

Application of the regulation

50.1 Information on the criteria for award of degrees, diplomas and certificates is published in advance.

[...]

Regulation 52 Undergraduate honours assessment progression

The Undergraduate Progression Board has the responsibility to decide which students can progress to the next year of honours study. Progressing students must:

- (a) pass at least 80 credits at SCQF level 9 or above in junior honours and level 10 or above in senior honours for undergraduate Masters degrees; and
- (b) have an overall average of 40% or more for the 120 credits of study taken in the relevant honours year; and
- (c) must satisfy any other specific requirements for the degree programme, as published in the programme handbook.

When all the marks for the taught components of the relevant year of the programme (120 credits) are available, if the student has achieved PASS marks in at least 80 credits and has an overall average of 40% or more over the full 120 credits, then they will be awarded credits on aggregate for the failed courses.

Application of the regulation

- 52.1 The Undergraduate Progression Board has responsibility for ensuring that students have met the requirements for progression, on the basis of information provided by Boards of Examiners.
www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/ug_progression_boards.pdf
- 52.2 The requirements for degrees are set out in the University's Curriculum Framework:
www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/models_for_curricula.pdf
- 52.3 In general failed courses are not included in the student's transcript, but any failed course for which the student has been awarded credits on aggregate must be shown in the transcript as a fail but with credit on aggregate. In reporting course marks, Schools are required to upload a fail but with credit on aggregate outcome on to the student record system, in addition to other final course marks.

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- 52.4 PASS marks are defined in the “PASS” section (A1 to PS) of “Recording of Course Assessment Results within EUCLID”, as are EUCLID grades for Credit on aggregate (AA, CA and UA).
www.studentsystems.ed.ac.uk/Staff/FAQ/Assessment_Results.html
- 52.5 Where a student studies abroad for a single semester in the junior Honours year, decisions regarding eligibility for credit on aggregate are made separately for the semester spent studying abroad and the semester spent in Edinburgh. Students are eligible for up to 20 credits to be awarded on aggregate in each semester, in line with the criteria above.
- [52.6 In line with 52 \(c\), Boards of Examiners must publish in advance information about any courses which must be passed, and for which credit cannot be awarded on aggregate.](#)

Regulation 53 Award of undergraduate Ordinary and General degrees

Students registered for an Ordinary or General (non-Honours) degree may be awarded the degree if they satisfy the requirements in the Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study.

Application of the regulation

- 53.1 The Board of Examiners or Undergraduate Progression Board may propose the award of an Ordinary or General degree to those students who have met the requirements of one of these degrees but who do not satisfy the honours degree requirements.
- 53.2 The Board of Examiners or Undergraduate Progression Board should take account of the recommendations of the [Special/Exceptional](#) Circumstances Committee and the student’s general academic record when determining the award of a degree. However, it is not within the power of a Board of Examiners or Undergraduate Progression Board to recommend the award of a degree without substantial evidence of attainment to at least the lowest level required for the award of that qualification. Boards of Examiners or Undergraduate Progression Board may not be generous in cases of failure other than within the limits already set out in these regulations.

Regulation 54 Undergraduate honours degree award

The Board of Examiners has the responsibility to decide which students can be awarded a classified honours degree. To graduate students must:

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- (a) pass at least 80 credits at SCQF level 10 or above in their final honours year; and
- (b) have an overall average of 40% or more for the 120 credits of final honours; and
- (c) must satisfy any other specific requirements for the degree programme, [as published in the programme handbook](#).

When all the marks for the taught components of the final year of the programme (120 credits) are available, if the student has achieved PASS marks in at least 80 credits and has an overall average of 40% or more over the full 120 credits, then they will be awarded credits on aggregate for the failed courses.

Application of the regulation

- 54.1 The requirements for degrees are set out in the University's Curriculum Framework: www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/models_for_curricula.pdf
- 54.2 In general failed courses are not included in the student's transcript, but any failed course for which the student has been awarded credits on aggregate must be shown in the transcript as a fail but with credit on aggregate. In reporting course marks, Schools are required to upload a fail but with credit on aggregate outcome on to the student record system, along with other final course marks.
- 54.3 The Board of Examiners may propose the award of an Ordinary or General degree be made to students who do not achieve the honours classification requirements, on the basis of their honours achievements.
- 54.4 The Board of Examiners may propose the award of an honours degree to students who do not achieve the requirements for an undergraduate masters, on the basis of their senior honours achievements.
- 54.5 The Board of Examiners should take account of the recommendations of the [Special Exceptional Circumstances Committee](#) and of the student's general academic record, when determining the classification and award of a degree. However, it is not within the power of a Board of Examiners to recommend the award of a degree without substantial evidence of attainment to at least the lowest level required for the award of that qualification or classification. Boards of Examiners may not be generous in cases of failure other than within the limits already set out in these regulations.
- 54.6 PASS marks are defined in the "PASS" section (A1 to PS) of "Recording of Course Assessment Results within EUCLID".

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54.7 In line with 54 (c), Boards of Examiners must publish in advance information about any courses which must be passed, and for which credit cannot be awarded on aggregate.

Regulation 55 Undergraduate degree classification

The Board of Examiners for assessment of students in their final year is responsible for deriving the classification for award of an honours degree. Degree classification is derived by calculating the mean of marks of the individual courses, weighted by the number of credit points of each course. Exceptions are outlined in the guidance on the regulation.

Application of the regulation

- 55.1 The assessment weighting of a course within the classification calculation is proportional to its credit value.
- 55.2 For degrees with two honours years, including degree programmes with an obligatory period of residence/study abroad, the classification is based on a credit-weighted average of performance across both honours years, except for:
- (a) modern language degree programmes with a prescribed period of residence abroad where credit points for language acquisition through residence are aggregated with those associated with the language learning in the final year and where the classification is based on two honours years in line with this aggregation;
 - (b) degree programmes where students can opt to spend a period of residence/study abroad, where credits will be allocated for the study abroad but these are weighted zero in the final classification;
 - (c) the MA in International Business and the LLB in Global Law, where the classification for these students is based solely on the final honours year; and
 - (d) the BSc Honours degrees in the School of Biological Sciences and Deanery of Biomedical Sciences which are weighted 2:1 Senior: Junior Honours; and the BSc degrees in Chemistry which are weighted 2:1 Senior: Junior Honours.
- 55.3 Integrated Masters degrees have three honours years and their classification is based on all these years, in which the three honours years are weighted respectively 20, 40, 40 (in percentage terms), with the exception of: ~~the MChem and MChemPhys degrees "with Industrial Experience" and "with a Year Abroad", and the MPhys degrees "with a Year Abroad"~~ which are weighted 20, 20, 60; and the Geophysics degrees (with a placement year) which are weighted 30,30,40.

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- 55.4 The relevant Board of Examiners will specify which courses will be used for classification purposes for students who exit with a BSc who were previously on an Integrated Masters degree.
- 55.5 Intercalated honours degrees have a one-year honours component and their classification is based solely on the honours year. Degree classification is derived by calculating the mean of marks of the individual courses, weighted by the number of credit points of each course.
- 55.6 Honours degree programmes in the Art and Design subject areas (except the MA Fine Art) within Edinburgh College of Art calculate classification based solely on performance the final honours year.
- 55.7 Classification models for credit for study abroad are contained in the College Progression Boards for Optional Study Abroad: Terms of Reference.
www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/studyabroadcollegeboards-termsofreference.pdf

Regulation 56 Postgraduate assessment progression

For programmes where there is an identifiable taught component followed by a project or dissertation component, students must pass the assessment requirements of the taught stage at an appropriate level at the first attempt before progression to the dissertation. In order to progress to the masters dissertation students must:

- (a) pass at least 80 credits with a mark of at least 50% in each of the courses which make up these credits; and
- (b) attain an average of at least 50% for the 120 credits of study examined at the point of decision for progression; and
- (c) satisfy any other specific requirements for the masters degree programme, that are clearly stated in respective programme handbooks.

When all the marks for the taught components of the programme (120 credits) are available, if the student has achieved PASS marks in at least 80 credits and has an overall average of 40% or more over the full 120 credits, then they will be awarded credits on aggregate for the failed courses. For students who have failed to meet the criteria for progression, the award of credit on aggregate can facilitate the award of a certificate or diploma.

For programmes where the taught and project or dissertation components are taken in parallel, or where there are not identifiable taught and research project or dissertation components, the requirements for progression are determined at programme level, stated in the Programme Handbook.

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Application of the regulation

- 56.1 For programmes where there is an identifiable taught component followed by a project / dissertation component (e.g. 120 credits of taught courses in semesters 1 and 2, followed by a 60 credit project / dissertation component):
- (a) Postgraduate Boards of Examiners are normally convened at least twice during the year for full-time students. The initial meeting to decide matters relating to progression (to masters), or failure, is held at the end of the coursework component. A second meeting to consider the dissertation results and the final award of degrees (or diplomas) is held soon after completion of the programme. Both meetings are equally important.
 - (b) The Postgraduate Board of Examiners has the responsibility to decide which students can progress to the dissertation required for candidature for the award of a masters degree; or, in the case of other awards, exit either directly or following satisfaction of any outstanding requirement.
 - (c) Exceptionally, with the permission of the relevant College Committee, a student who has been unable to sit an examination assessment because of illness or other extenuating circumstance may, if that circumstance is certified, be allowed to progress to the dissertation stage prior to completion of the coursework assessment on condition that the dissertation will subsequently be set aside if the student is eventually unsuccessful in the coursework element of the programme.
- 56.2 For MFA programmes (240 credits) where there is an identifiable taught component, in order to progress to masters dissertation/project the student must pass at least 120 credits with a mark of at least 50% in each of the courses which make up these credits, and attain an average of at least 50% for the 180 credits of study examined at the point of decision for progression to dissertation/project, and satisfy any other requirements as outlined in 56 (c) above.
- 56.3 For postgraduate taught programmes involving 360 credits, information regarding progression requirements is included in the relevant programme handbook.
- 56.4 The average for the courses is derived by calculating the mean of marks of the individual courses, weighted by the number of credit points of each course. Courses where credit has been obtained by recognition of prior learning are excluded from the average, except where the credit was awarded for the certificate or diploma associated with the masters degree.

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- 56.5 In general failed courses are not included in the student's transcript, but any failed course for which the student has been awarded credits on aggregate must be shown in the transcript as a fail but with credit on aggregate. In reporting course marks, Schools are required to upload a fail but with credit on aggregate outcome on to the student record system, along with other final course marks.
- 56.6 In Regulation 56(a) above, where some of the 80 credits are pass/fail courses, then where these courses are passed, they can be included in the 80 credit total. However, pass/fail courses are excluded from the calculation under Regulation 56(b). a mark of 50% is the mark that is to be applied in calculations under Regulation 56 (b).
www.ed.ac.uk/timetabling-examinations/exams/regulations/common-marking-scheme
- 56.7 PASS marks are defined in the "PASS" section (A1 to PS) of "Recording of Course Assessment Results within EUCLID"
www.studentsystems.ed.ac.uk/Staff/FAQ/Assessment_Results.html
- 56.8 In line with 56 (c), Boards of Examiners must publish in advance information about any courses which must be passed, and for which credit cannot be awarded on aggregate.
- 56.98 For MBA programmes (180 credits) where there is an identifiable taught component, in order to progress to the Capstone Project the student must pass at least 110 credits with a mark of at least 50% in each of the courses which make up these credits, and attain an average of at least 50% for the credits of study examined at the point of decision for progression, and satisfy any other requirements as outlined in 56 (c) above. If the student does not meet the progression criteria above, but is in a position to be able to meet the criteria based on the outcome of the outstanding credits, the progression decision will be deferred until the result of the outstanding credits are known.
- 56.109 For the EMBA programme and Online MBA programmes (180 credits) where there is an identifiable taught component, in order to progress to the 40 credit Capstone project the student must pass at least 100 credits with a mark of at least 50% in each of the courses which make up these credits, and attain an average of at least 50% for the credits of study examined at the point of decision for progression, and satisfy any other requirements as outlined in 56 (c) above. In order to progress to the 30 credit Capstone project, the student must pass at least 110 credits with a mark of at least 50% in each of the courses which make up these credits, and attain an average of at least 50% for the credits of study examined at the point of decision for progression, and satisfy any other requirements as outlined in 56 (c) above. If the student does not meet the progression criteria above, but is in a position to be able to meet the criteria based on the outcome of outstanding

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credits, the progression decision will be deferred until the result of the outstanding credits are known.

Regulation 57 Postgraduate degree, diploma and certificate award

In order to be awarded the certificate students must:

- (a) pass at least 40 credits with a mark of at least 40%; and
- (b) attain an average of at least 40% for the 60 credits of study examined for the certificate; and
- (c) satisfy any other specific requirements for the named certificate that are clearly stated in respective programme handbooks.

In order to be awarded the diploma students must:

- (a) pass at least 80 credits with a mark of at least 40%; and
- (b) attain an average of at least 40% for the 120 credits of study examined for the diploma; and
- (c) satisfy any other specific requirements for the named diploma that are clearly stated in respective programme handbooks.

In order to be awarded a masters degree students must:

- (a) have satisfied any requirements for progression, as laid out in taught assessment regulation 56 above, and
- (b) attain an additional 60 credits, by achieving a mark of at least 50% for the dissertation or project component (if the programme has a dissertation or project element) and
- (c) satisfy any other specific requirements for the masters degree programme, that are clearly stated in respective Programme Handbooks.

When all the marks for the taught components of the programme or diploma are available, if the student has achieved a mark of at least 40% in at least 80 credits and has an overall average of 40% or more over the full 120 credits, then they will be awarded credits on aggregate for the failed courses, up to a maximum of 40 credits. For a certificate, a maximum of 20 credits may be awarded on aggregate.

Application of the regulation

- 57.1 Boards of Examiners, including those involving subjects from two or more of the Schools, are required to establish guidelines in advance on how the results of individual papers or units of assessment are to be aggregated, averaged or profiled to produce the overall final result. These guidelines are an integral part of the disclosure process and must be published to students within one month of the start of the programme.

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- 57.2 In line with the Postgraduate Degree Regulations, postgraduate taught programmes may include some courses at SCQF levels below 11. Where courses at SCQF level 9 or below are included in a programme, marks for these courses are disregarded for the purposes of calculating averages for the award of credit on aggregate, progression, award, and the award of Merit and Distinction.
- 57.3 The average for the courses is derived by calculating the mean of marks of the individual courses, weighted by the number of credit points of each course. Courses where credit has been obtained by recognition of prior learning are excluded from the average, except where the credit was awarded for the certificate or diploma associated with the masters degree.
- 57.4 In general failed courses are not included in the student's transcript, but any failed course for which the student has been awarded credits on aggregate must be shown in the transcript as a fail but with credit on aggregate. Exam Boards must make this distinction clear when reporting course marks.
- 57.5 The Board of Examiners should take account of any relevant ~~special~~ Exceptional circumstances and of the student's general academic record, when determining the award of a degree. However, it is not within the power of a Board of Examiners to recommend the award of a degree without substantial evidence of attainment to at least the lowest level required for the award of that qualification. Boards of Examiners may not be generous in cases of failure other than within the limits already set out in these regulations.
- 57.6 The Postgraduate Degree Regulations permit a General Postgraduate Certificate or General Postgraduate Diploma to be attained by students who do not fulfil the requirements for a specific Certificate or Diploma award but who have attained the required volume and level of credits.
- 57.7 PASS marks are defined in the "PASS" section (A1 to PS) of "Recording of Course Assessment Results within EUCLID"
www.studentsystems.ed.ac.uk/Staff/FAQ/Assessment_Results.html
- 57.8 Boards of Examiners must publish in advance information about any courses which must be passed, and for which credit cannot be awarded on aggregate.

Regulation 58 Resubmission of postgraduate dissertations or research projects

Students may be permitted to resubmit the dissertation or research project in line with the provisions of the SpecialExceptional Circumstances Policy where a student's performance

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in assessment has been affected by illness, accident or circumstances beyond their control (58.1-58.2).

Students are also entitled to one resubmission of the dissertation or research project for postgraduate Masters programmes where the student has achieved a mark of 45 to 49% at the first attempt (58.3-58.9). Where the dissertation or research project consists of more than one assessment component, students are entitled to resubmit where the overall course result is 45% to 49% (see 58.406 for further information).

Application of the regulation

- 58.1 Where a student is granted the opportunity to resubmit the dissertation or research project due to ~~special~~Exceptional circumstances, the Board of Examiners will be responsible for providing the student with a statement which outlines the deficiencies in their original submission, and agreeing an appropriate deadline and appropriate supervision. The student will be granted a null sit for their first attempt, and the recorded mark for their revised dissertation or project will not be capped. Paragraphs 58.3 to 58.8 do not apply to students granted the opportunity to resubmit their dissertation or research project due to ~~special~~Exceptional circumstances.
- 58.2 Students who have been granted an opportunity to resubmit the dissertation or research project due to ~~special~~Exceptional circumstances may be permitted one further resubmission under this regulation (with reference to paragraphs 58.3 to 58.9), provided they meet the eligibility requirements.
- 58.3 Where a student receives 48 or 49% for the dissertation or research project at the first attempt, they may be considered as a borderline candidate for the award of the Master's degree, in line with published information regarding consideration of borderline cases (see Regulation 44.4).
- 58.4 Since the concept of borderlines (see Regulation 44) does not apply to the threshold for entitlement to resubmit a dissertation or research project, Boards of Examiners are not able to permit students with marks of 43 or 44% at the first attempt to resubmit their dissertation or project unless ~~special~~Exceptional circumstances apply.
- 58.5 Students who achieve a mark of 45 to 49% for the dissertation or research project at the first attempt as a result of a marking penalty, either for late submission or for academic misconduct, are entitled to one resubmission, in line with this regulation.
- 58.6 Where the dissertation or research projects consists of more than one component of assessment, and the overall course mark is 45-49%, the Board of Examiners will determine which components of assessments must be resubmitted.



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- 58.76 The relevant Board of Examiners will provide a student permitted to submit a revised dissertation or research project with a statement which outlines the deficiencies in their original submission. The student is also entitled to receive further written advice from their dissertation or research project supervisor on one occasion before resubmission. The student must include with their revised dissertation a statement outlining the changes made to the previous submission. This statement will not be marked.
- 58.87 The Board of Examiners will advise the student of the deadline for submission of their revised dissertation or research project, which will be three months from the date of the student receiving notification of their original result. Extension requests and [special/Exceptional](#) circumstances submissions in relation to this deadline will be handled in line with provisions outlined within the Taught Assessment Regulations and the [Special/Exceptional](#) Circumstances Policy. Where [special/Exceptional](#) circumstances affect the resubmission, Boards of Examiners are permitted to offer a further resubmission under the [Special/Exceptional](#) Circumstances Policy, if they consider this appropriate. The mark for a dissertation resubmitted under these circumstances will be capped at 50%, in line with Regulation 58.9.
- 58.98 Where a student declines the opportunity to resubmit the dissertation or research project, or fails to submit by the stated deadline, the mark they had received for their first attempt will be treated as final and they will be considered for a relevant exit award.
- 58.109 ————If the Board of Examiners agrees that the revised dissertation or research project meets the requirements for a pass at Masters level, the student will be awarded the Masters degree. The recorded mark for the revised dissertation or research project will be capped at 50%.
- 58.110 For MBA programmes students are entitled to one resubmission of the Capstone Project where the student has achieved a mark of 40 to 49% at the first attempt. The Board of Examiners will advise the student of the deadline for submission of their revised Capstone Project, which will be two months from the first meeting meeting/communication with the supervisor to complete the work. Since the concept of borderlines (see Regulation 44) does not apply to the threshold for entitlement to resubmit a Capstone Project, Boards of Examiners are not able to permit students with marks of 38 or 39% at the first attempt to resubmit their Capstone Project unless [special/Exceptional](#) circumstances apply. Regulations 58.1-3 and 58.5-9 also apply.

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Regulation 59 Award of postgraduate merit

Taught postgraduate degrees may be awarded with merit. To achieve a merit, a student must be awarded at least 60% on the University's Postgraduate Common Marking Scheme for the dissertation, if the programme has a dissertation element, and must achieve an average of at least 60% in the remaining elements. Borderlines, for both the dissertation and course average elements, are considered for merits.

Application of the regulation

- 59.1 Merit may be awarded for postgraduate taught masters, diplomas and certificates.
- 59.2 Where a student has been permitted to resubmit their dissertation or research project in line with Regulation 58 (except where [Special/Exceptional Circumstances](#) apply), they are not eligible for the award of the degree with merit.
- 59.3 For degrees which use letter grades in addition to numerical marks, the award of merit will be made where the student meets the above criteria using the numerical mark.
- 59.4 For MFA, the award of merit relates only to grades obtained at stages 3 and 4 (Year 2).
- 59.5 Borderline marks are defined as marks from two percentage points below the boundary up to the boundary itself, e.g. 58.00% to 59.99% for the dissertation and for the average of other courses. See also taught assessment regulation 44 above.
- 59.6 The average for the courses is derived by calculating the mean of marks of the individual courses, weighted by the number of credit points of each course. Courses where credit has been obtained by recognition of prior learning are excluded from the average, except where the credit was awarded for the certificate or diploma associated with the masters degree.
- 59.7 The Postgraduate Common Marking Scheme can be found at: www.ed.ac.uk/timetabling-examinations/exams/regulations/common-marking-scheme

Regulation 60 Award of postgraduate distinction

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Taught postgraduate degrees may be awarded with distinction. To achieve a distinction, a student must be awarded at least 70% on the University's Postgraduate Common Marking Scheme for the dissertation, if the programme has a dissertation element, and must achieve an average of at least 70% in the remaining elements. Borderlines, for both the dissertation and course average elements, are considered for distinctions.

Application of the regulation

- 60.1 Distinctions may be awarded for postgraduate taught masters, diplomas and certificates.
- 60.2 Where a student has been permitted to resubmit their dissertation or research project in line with Regulation 58 (except where [Special/Exceptional](#) Circumstances apply), they are not eligible for the award of the degree with distinction.
- 60.3 For degree programmes which use letter grades in addition to numerical marks, the award of distinction will be made where the student meets the above criteria using the numerical mark.
- 60.4 For MFA, the award of distinction relates only to grades obtained at stages 3 and 4 (Year 2).
- 60.5 Borderline marks are defined as marks from two percentage points below boundary up to the boundary itself, e.g. 68.00% to 69.99% for the dissertation and for the average of other courses. See also taught assessment regulation 44 above.
- 60.6 The average for the courses is derived by calculating the mean of marks of the individual courses, weighted by the number of credit points of each course. Courses where credit has been obtained by recognition of prior learning are excluded from the average, except where the credit was awarded for the certificate or diploma associated with the masters degree.
- 60.7 The Postgraduate Common Marking Scheme can be found at: www.ed.ac.uk/timetabling-examinations/exams/regulations/common-marking-scheme

Regulation 61 Award of credit from other universities

Boards of Examiners confirm the award of credit from other universities which is used in the award of a University of Edinburgh degree.

Application of the regulation

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61.1 There are two types of credit from external bodies: recognition of prior credit at admission, determined by Colleges against published criteria; and recognition of external learning whilst on programme. In both cases recognition of prior learning is recorded on admission.

www.drps.ed.ac.uk/

Regulation 62 Minuting of decisions of Boards of Examiners

The internal and External Examiners must concur in the mark and grade to be awarded to each student and in the classification and award of degree to be made. Boards of Examiners must record all decisions in the minutes of the meeting.

Application of the regulation

62.1 Once the Board of Examiners has decided on the final marks, grades and if appropriate, class of degree and award for each student, the students' names must then be made visible to the Board of Examiners. There must then be a final check of the results before the list is agreed and recorded in the minutes. Only in the event of detection of an error, which was not detectable when examination numbers were used, can changes be made to the marks, grades or class of degree at this stage. Any such change should be recorded in the minutes.

www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/staff/assessment/boards-examiners

62.2 The Convener receives and is responsible for ensuring that the minutes of the Board of Examiners' meetings are an accurate record of the meeting and of the approved results.

62.3 Minutes should include:

- (a) a record of the names of the examiners and those in attendance at the meeting;
- (b) relevant information considered at the meeting or by the [Special/Exceptional](#) Circumstances Committee, and outcomes from this;
- (c) discussion and outcomes of borderline cases;
- (d) details of any modification of marks, grades or classification, and the reasons for these; and
- (e) comments by the External Examiner(s) about the examination of the course, the performance of the students in general, and their approval of results agreed by the Board of Examiners.

62.4 The minute is a confidential document, although information on a particular student may need to be disclosed to that student under the Data Protection Act and generic information may need to be disclosed under Freedom of Information. Further information is available at:

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www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/boe_handbook.pdf

62.5 If agreement cannot be reached on concurrence of decisions then the issue is referred to the Head of College.

[...]

Regulation 64 Status of decisions

Decisions by a Board of Examiners, once certified in writing, are final. In exceptional circumstances a Convener of the Board of Examiners can reconvene the Board to review a decision.

Application of the regulation

- 64.1 A Board of Examiners may, at the request of any of its members or member of the [Special Exceptional Circumstances Committee](#), review a decision if significant information relevant to that decision, which was unavailable at the time the decision was made, comes to light, or if any error having a material bearing on that decision, or an error in the written certification of that decision, has been made. A member of the Board may request a review but it is the Convener who must review the decision in the light of any new significant information or error. Therefore it is the Convener, and not a member of the Board, who decides whether to reconvene the Board. Where the significant information presented would constitute ~~special~~ [Exceptional circumstances](#) ~~exceptional circumstances~~ under the [Special Exceptional Circumstances Policy](#), the Board of Examiners should only consider this information where it believes that there is a good reason why the student did not make the information available in advance of the Board's original decision. [Requests for review of decisions that are more than two years after the publication of the decision of the Board will not be accepted.](#)
- 64.2 If the Board is satisfied that there are grounds for varying the decision, the Board shall report its decision to Student Systems.
- 64.3 Where an error is discovered in the assessment or marking of any examination or any component of an examination or in the calculation, recording or notification of the result of any examination or any component thereof or in the classification or result of any degree or in any process connected with any of these matters, the University shall correct that error and amend its records to show the correct result or classification and that whether or not the result or classification has been published or otherwise notified to the student. The University shall notify the student of the corrected result or classification as soon as practicable and shall also correct

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any reference or statement which may have been provided by the University whether to the student or to a third party. Where such an error affects degree award or classification, the School should contact the relevant College and Academic Services for approval before notifying the student of any change. Having been notified of the corrected result or classification the student shall return to the University any documentation which may have been issued to the student notifying the original result or classification which has been corrected. The student shall have no claim against the University for any loss or damage which may have been incurred by the student as a result of any error which may have been made.

- 64.4 In proved cases of substantial and significant copying, plagiarism or other fraud, the Senatus has the power to reduce the classification of, or to revoke, any degree it has already awarded, and to require the degree, diploma or certificate scroll to be returned.
- 64.5 Any member of Senatus may request Senatus to refer for investigation any matter concerning examinations.

Regulation 65 Convener's Action

The Convener of the Board of Examiners, Progression Board, or [Special/Exceptional Circumstances Committee](#) may take decisions by Convener's Action.

Application of the regulation

- 65.1 This may occur when the Board of Examiners takes a decision in principle but needs confirmation or further information, or when the Board, or [Special/Exceptional Circumstances Committee](#) considers the possible outcomes and authorises the Convener, once relevant information is known, to apply the appropriate option. Convener's Action may also be appropriate when the decision to be made follows an existing precedent.
- 65.2 Decisions made by Convener's Action should be recorded and reported to the relevant Board or Committee.

Regulation 66 Failure to complete all the assessment requirements of a degree programme

When a student fails to complete all the assessment requirements of a degree programme the Board of Examiners or Undergraduate Progression Board will investigate the case. If there is no satisfactory reason then taught assessment regulation 67 on unsatisfactory progress applies. If the [Special/Exceptional Circumstances Committee](#) for the relevant

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Board of Examiners (including Progression Boards) is given sufficient evidence that the performance of a student has been affected for reasons of illness, accident or other circumstances beyond the student's control, the University's [Special Exceptional Circumstances Policy](#) applies.

66.1 The University's [Special Exceptional Circumstances Policy](#) is available at:
www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/special_circumstances.pdf

Regulation 67 Unsatisfactory academic progress

The University may exclude students who do not meet the criteria for progression [and award](#) on their programme.

Application of the regulation

- 67.1 Degree regulations, Degree Programme Tables, programme handbooks and/or course handbooks must contain details of the progress which students are expected to achieve within given periods. They must also include warnings that students are liable to be considered for exclusion if these expectations are not met.
- 67.2 Where a student fails to meet the published progression criteria, the Procedure for Withdrawal and Exclusion from Studies will be used.
www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/withdrawal_exclusion_from_study.pdf
- 67.3 Some degree programmes leading to a professional qualification include Fitness to Practise considerations. Any issues of unsatisfactory progress in relation to fitness to practise are dealt with according to the relevant College's published Fitness to Practise procedures.
- 67.4 A student declared to have made unsatisfactory progress under professional Fitness to Practise requirements is normally excluded from all further attendance at classes and examinations leading to the professional qualification, but is entitled to apply to the College for permission to re-enter for assessment in a suitable alternative programme which does not lead to a professional qualification.

[...]

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Section F. Interpretation and Significant Disruption

[...]

~~256 May 2023~~
23 May 2024

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

23 May 2024

Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees 2024/25

Description of paper

1. This paper contains the draft Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees for 2024/25. A table is included to draw the Committee's attention to the small number of amendments. The Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees contribute to the University's Teaching and Learning focus of Strategy 2030.

Action requested / recommendation

2. The Committee is requested to approve the proposed minor amendments to the Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees for 2024/25.

Background and context

3. The Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees are reviewed annually to ensure that they remain fit for purpose and that enhancements can be made on a cumulative basis.

Discussion

4. APRC is invited to comment on, and approve, the draft Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees for academic year 2024/25. Appendix 1 includes only those regulations which include proposed changes. Following this meeting, Registry Services will amend the draft regulations to take account of any Committee comments.
5. Consultation on the amendments to these regulations took place between February and April 2024. This included consultation with Colleges and also with the Committee's Postgraduate Research (PGR) sub-group.

Amendments to Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees 2024/25

Links within the regulations to other information and changes in terminology have been updated as necessary. Other minor changes to wording are included in Appendix 1.

Regulation Updated	What has changed
Reg. 3.3	Removed sentence "Complete final lists of examiners are maintained by the relevant College Office", as Colleges have reported that this does not happen in practice and that examiners are recorded against student records in EUCLID.

Reg. 13.3	Clarification that the sentence “Exceptionally, the first progression review may be postponed, with permission from the College. The postponement must be no longer than six months” applies to both full-time and part-time students. This is in line with the period of the first progression review, which is 9-12 months for both full-time and part-time students. Although it could be argued that part-time students should be entitled to a longer postponement, the consultation indicated that postponing the review for a longer period (e.g. 12 months) would not be in the student’s interest.
Reg. 14	Clarification that it is the Convener of the College Postgraduate Committee is responsible for making the progression decision. This amendment ensures that there is consistency with Section B in the Withdrawal and Exclusion Policy, where it always refers to the Convener as the decision maker.
Reg. 22.2	Reworded to clarify that not all students will receive a recommendation 22(b) to (h), and also that recommendation (f) does not imply further requirements.
Reg. 40	<p>The proposed amendment to delegate the award of degrees from Senate to Boards of Examiners (including College Postgraduate Committees) is being considered for approval at Senate at its meeting on 22 May 2024. The process of requesting Senate to approve degrees is too burdensome administratively for Schools, Colleges, Registry Services and Senate, to be proportionate as a means for handling all such requests, particularly where this is to award degrees to individual graduands.</p> <p>Boards of Examiners (including College Postgraduate Committees) are the relevant bodies within the University with the expertise to make a judgement as to whether individual students should receive an award, and the function which Senate performs in awarding or conferring degrees does not appear to add value to the process.</p>

Resource implications

6. The proposed amendments do not present resource implications.

Risk management

7. The proposed amendments do not present any new risks, and some amendments reduce risks, for example, by providing further clarity to regulations which may be open to misinterpretation.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

8. The paper does not contribute to the Climate Emergency and Sustainable Development Goals.

Equality & diversity

9. The proposed amendments do not reflect changes in underlying policy, and do not therefore present equality and diversity implications.

Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed

10. Registry Services will communicate approved regulations in the annual email update to Schools and Colleges on regulations and policies.

Author

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Academic Policy Officer
Registry Services

Presenter

Cristina Matthews

Freedom of Information Open



Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees Academic Year 2023/24/25

Purpose of Policy

The assessment regulations set minimum requirements and standards for students and staff, articulating the academic goals and policies of the University.

Overview

These regulations:

- (i) replace the previous Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees;
- (ii) set out the rules which must be followed in research assessment for Research Degrees; and
- (iii) provide links to other sources of guidance or related regulations.

Scope: Mandatory Policy

These regulations are University-wide and apply to all postgraduate research degrees at Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework levels 11 and 12. The regulations apply to work submitted for assessment during the current academic year. They relate to all research degrees listed in the University's Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study: www.drps.ed.ac.uk.

More detail is given in the document.

Contact Officer	Susan Hunter Academic Policy	Academic Policy Officer	Susan.hunter5@ed.ac.uk academicpolicy@ed.ac.uk
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Document control

Dates	Approved: 25.05.23 XXXXXX	Starts: 01.08.23 XXXXXX	Equality impact assessment:	Amendments: N/A	Next Review: 2024/25/24
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Approving authority	Academic Policy and Regulations Committee
Consultation undertaken	Colleges, Students' Association, Academic Policy and Regulations Committee, College Academic Misconduct Officers, Records Management, Doctoral College
Section responsible for policy maintenance & review	Academic Registry Services
Related policies, procedures, guidelines & regulations	Student Appeal Regulations, Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study, Code of Practice for Supervisors and Research Students, DRPS Glossary of Terms
UK Quality Code	UK Quality Code for Higher Education Advice and Guidance: Research Degrees, Assessment, External Expertise
Policies superseded by this policy	Previous versions of the Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees
Alternative format	If you require this document in an alternative format please email Academic.Services@ed.ac.uk
Keywords	Assessment, assessment regulations, degree award, examination, examiners, progression, research assessment, oral examination, viva



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Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees Academic Year 2024/253/24

Additional guidance

For research degree programmes that contain a significant proportion of taught courses, taught elements are governed by the University's Taught Assessment Regulations:

<https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/taughtassessmentregulations.pdf>. The regulations must be applied, unless a concession has been awarded by the Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC) on the basis of a case proposed by a College. The "Application of the regulation" must also be applied, unless the College has approved an exemption on the basis of a case proposed by a School. Concessions and exemptions are recorded by APRC and Colleges as appropriate. The regulations operate in accordance with legislation and University policies on Equality and Diversity:

<https://www.ed.ac.uk/equality-diversity/about/legislation>. Members of staff who need additional guidance may consult their Head of College or their nominee, their College Postgraduate Office, [Academic-Registry](#) Services, Student Administration or Student Systems.

Where reference is made to "the relevant Dean" this should be taken as being the Dean with responsibility for postgraduate research matters and "the Committee" is the relevant College Postgraduate Committee, or the Committee of each College which is formally identified as exercising the functions of a College Postgraduate Committee for the purposes of postgraduate research academic decisions. Where reference is made to "the Head of College" or "Head of School" this may also in some cases be a designated representative of that individual. The term MSc by Research includes Masters by Research, MTh by Research and LLM by Research.

For Edinburgh College of Art (ECA) students on courses that use the assessment grade scheme, the term "mark" in the regulations also includes "grade".

Definitions of some of the key terms in the regulations can be found in the Glossary of Terms: <http://www.drps.ed.ac.uk/GlossaryofTerms.pdf>

These research assessment regulations, and related University practices, are consistent with the Quality Assurance Agency's UK Quality Code for Higher Education, <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code>

This document should be read in conjunction with University's Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study; the Code of Practice for Supervisors and Research Students; the External Examiners for Taught Programmes Policy; and Handbook for External Examining of Research Degrees. These are available via:

www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/policies-regulations/a-to-z



Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees Academic Year 2024/253/24

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Section A Roles and Responsibilities

[...]

Regulation 3 Examiners: appointment

Examiners are appointed by the relevant College. There are Internal Examiners, who are staff of the University nominated by the relevant Head of School, and External Examiners.

Application of the regulation

- 3.1 Where appropriate, upon receipt of a student's Notice of Intention to Submit form, the College Office will contact the Head of the student's School to request that examiners are nominated for the assessment of the thesis or submitted assessment.
- 3.2 Before submitting nominations to the College, the Head of School should consult the student's supervisors over the choice of examiners. Supervisors inform students of the names of possible examiners, and students must inform their supervisor if any problems are likely to arise if particular examiners are appointed. Any comments will be taken into account but students have no right to determine the Head of School's eventual recommendation, and therefore have no right to veto any particular appointment.
- 3.3 The External Examiner will be approached informally by the Head of School to establish their willingness to act. However, the College Postgraduate Committee has responsibility for the approval of all examiners. Any objection to the proposed examiners must be made to the College committee in good time before the relevant assessment. ~~Complete final lists of examiners are maintained by the relevant College Office.~~
- 3.4 Internal Examiners are academic and/or honorary staff of the University. Honorary staff, in this context include:

Staff from Associated Institutions: <https://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/associated-institutions>;

Teachers and senior staff from partner schools to the Moray House School of Education;

Academic staff from partner higher education institutions as part of specific collaborative agreements;

and NHS staff who are honorary staff members of the University of Edinburgh.



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- 3.5 Internal Examiners are appointed by the student's School with approval by the relevant College. Staff who are or who have been a supervisor of the student at any time cannot be an Internal Examiner for that student.
- 3.6 No person who has held an appointment on the teaching or research staff or has been a student of the University, or who has been granted honorary status in the University, is eligible to act as an External Examiner until a period of four years has elapsed since the termination of the appointment or the status. In exceptional circumstances this rule may be waived by the Academic Policy and Regulations Committee. Members of affiliated or associated institutions may be Internal but not External Examiners.
- 3.7 The School must inform the student of the names of their examiners when the examiners have been approved by the College committee.
- 3.8 If more than three months have elapsed between the examiners being appointed and the student submitting the thesis, the College Office has responsibility for checking whether the commitments of any examiner have changed significantly so that consideration may be given to appointing an alternative examiner.

[...]



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Section B Conduct of Assessment

[...]

Regulation 13 Progression review

The first progression review will take place for all students within 9 to 12 months of their enrolment. The student must participate in a meeting and may be required to make a written submission and/or prepare an oral presentation. Progress in the subsequent years (at 9 to 12 months) is assessed until the thesis is submitted. The online progression report form must be completed.

Application of the regulation

- 13.1 Guidance on the procedure for the progression review is included in the Code of Practice for Supervisors and Research Students:
www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/copsupervisorsresearchstudents.pdf
- 13.2 It is expected that progression reviews are normally held early within the 9 to 12 month period, to allow time for a repeat review if this is required.
- 13.3 There are similar procedures for full-time and part-time students, and reviews of part-time students will also take place within 9 to 12 months of their enrolment. Part-time students will not be expected to have made as much progress as full-time students within this time. Exceptionally, the first progression review may be postponed, with permission from the College. The postponement must be no longer than six months [for full-time and part-time students](#).
- 13.4 Colleges/Schools may also have additional requirements, for example 10-week review.
- 13.5 Schools must ensure that students are aware of how the progression review will be conducted.

Regulation 14 Annual progression review recommendation

The Postgraduate Director or Head of the Graduate School, in consultation with the supervisors will make one of the following recommendations after the annual review:

- (a) confirmation of registration, for example for PhD, MPhil;
- (b) a repeat progression review must be undertaken within three months before confirmation of progression;



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- (c) for part-time students only for the first progression review: deferment of the confirmation decision to the second annual review;
- (d) registration for a different research degree such as MPhil or MSc by Research;
- (e) registration for a postgraduate taught degree (for example MSc) or diploma can be recommended if the student has undertaken the coursework for that qualification;
- (f) exclusion from study.

The [Convener of the](#) College Postgraduate Committee is responsible for making the progression decision, having considered the recommendation of the Postgraduate Director or Head of the Graduate School.

Application of the regulation

- 14.1 If the outcome of the annual review is 14(b) then the three month period starts from the date of issue of the progression decision to the student.
- 14.2 If there are doubts about a student's ability to complete a PhD successfully then option (d) must be considered. If there are serious doubts as to the student's research capability, then options (e) or (f) must be considered.
- 14.3 The Procedure for Withdrawal and Exclusion from Study can be found at: www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/withdrawal_exclusion_from_study.pdf

[...]

Regulation 22 PhD by Research and other Doctorates: examiner recommendation

After the oral examination, the examiners must make one of the following recommendations to the College Postgraduate Committee:

- (a) **Award PhD/Doctorate.** The thesis satisfies the requirements for the award of the doctoral degree as laid down in the University's Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study (see www.drps.ed.ac.uk/) as appropriate. No further changes can be made to the thesis after examination; or
- (b) **Minor Corrections Needed.** The thesis satisfies the requirements for the award of the degree except that editorial corrections are required or stated minor weaknesses, as identified by the examiners, must be remedied. In the opinion of the examiners, the student will be able to remedy these without undertaking any further original research. The corrections to the thesis must be completed within three months and are subject to certification by the Internal Examiner(s), and by the External Examiner (where the examiner so requests), before the degree is awarded; or



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- (c) **Additional Oral Examination Needed.** The thesis satisfies the requirements for the degree, or satisfies the requirements except for stated minor weaknesses, but the student's oral defence of the thesis has been inadequate in specified respects. The student is required to undergo further assessment, written, oral or practical, and make any corrections to the thesis within a specified period of not more than four months. The degree is awarded subject to the student achieving a satisfactory standard in the further oral examination and subject to certification of the corrections by the Internal Examiner(s), and by the External Examiner (where the examiner so requests); or
- (d) **Additional Work on Thesis Needed - No Oral Re-Examination Needed – Resubmission for PhD/Doctorate.** The thesis needs work above and beyond editorial corrections or minor weaknesses in order to meet one or more of the requirements for the degree, and this work may require further supervision. However, the student appears capable of revising the thesis to satisfy the requirements. The revised thesis must be completed within a further specified period of study, which is set by the examiners, and which must not exceed six months. Exceptionally, this period may be extended to a maximum of 12 months with permission from the College. In these cases College may also recategorise the recommendation to (e) – see below. The thesis is subject to certification by the Internal Examiner(s), and by the External Examiner(s) (where the examiner so requests), before the degree is awarded; or
- (e) **Substantial Work on Thesis and Oral Re-Examination Needed – Resubmission for PhD/Doctorate.** The thesis is substantially inadequate in one or more of the requirements for the degree, but the student appears capable of revising the thesis to satisfy the requirements. The student ought therefore to be invited to resubmit the thesis for oral examination in a substantially revised form as indicated by the examiners within a further specified period of study, which is set by the examiners, which must not exceed 12 months. Exceptionally, this period may be extended to a maximum of 24 months with permission from the College; or
- (f) **Award MPhil.** The thesis is substantially deficient in one or more of the requirements for the doctoral degree and cannot be revised to satisfy these requirements; but the thesis satisfies the requirements for the degree of MPhil; or
- (g) **Award MPhil following Minor Corrections.** The thesis is substantially deficient in one or more of the requirements for the doctoral degree and cannot be revised to satisfy these requirements. However, the thesis satisfies the requirements for the degree of MPhil except for stated minor corrections in the thesis. The student should be invited to carry out the specified minor corrections as indicated by the examiners. The corrections to the thesis must be completed within three months and are subject to certification by the Internal Examiner(s), and by the External Examiner (where the examiner so requests), before the degree is awarded; or



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- (h) **Substantial Work on Thesis Needed before Resubmission and oral examination for MPhil.** The thesis is substantially inadequate in one or more of the requirements for the doctoral degree and cannot be revised to satisfy these requirements. However, the thesis may satisfy the requirements for the degree of MPhil if stated deficiencies in the thesis are remedied. Accordingly, the student should be invited to resubmit the thesis in a substantially revised form as indicated by the examiners for the degree of MPhil. The revisions should be completed within a further period which must not exceed 12 months; or
- (i) **Award MSc by Research.** The thesis is substantially deficient in respect of all or any of the requirements for the degree and cannot be revised to satisfy these requirements or the requirements of the MPhil. However, the work is of sufficient quality to merit the award of MSc by Research; or
- (j) **Fail.** The thesis is substantially deficient in respect of all or any of the requirements for the degree and cannot be revised to satisfy these or any other research degree requirements.



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Application of the regulation

- 22.1 Students cannot resubmit the thesis more than once in line with 22 (d), (e) and (h).
- 22.2 ~~If the student does not meet the requirements set under 22(b) to (h) then they have not complied with all assessment requirements (see Regulation 9), which will result in a fail. Where a student receives a recommendation (b), (c), (d), (e), (g), or (h), but does not meet the requirements specified by the examiners by the given deadline (see Regulation 9), this will result in a fail".~~
- 22.3 A student presenting a thesis under Regulation 22 (h) may not subsequently be permitted to resubmit the thesis under Regulation 24 (e).
- 22.4 The College Office is responsible for ensuring that the student receives a written statement of any revisions to be made to the thesis. The supervisor must confirm with the student their understanding of any revisions to be made.
- 22.5 Where a student is offered the award of a different degree under (f), (g) or (i) above then the original word limits for the offered degree are set aside.
- 22.6 Where the examiners' recommendation is (j), the College will provide the student with a written explanation of the decision. In these circumstances the College Postgraduate Dean or nominee will be available to discuss the outcome with the student, should the student request this.
- 22.7 Students failing to meet requirements following resubmission under (d), (e) or (h) may be considered for an exit award.

[...]

Section C Thesis Regulations

[...]



Postgraduate Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees Academic Year 2024/253/24

Regulation 32 Previously published material

Where material is to be included in a thesis, research project or dissertation has been published before the thesis, research project or dissertation is submitted, the student must acknowledge the fact of such publication.

Application of the regulation

- 32.1 The signed declaration must contain a clear statement on the inclusion of any previously published material. See also regulation 34.
- 32.2 A student cannot include in a thesis material that has been accepted for publication prior to the start of their programme of study, unless registered for a PhD by Research Publications degree. Guidance on including publications in a thesis is available online: www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/publications_in_thesis.pdf
- 32.3 See also regulation 26.

[...]

Regulation 40 Award of degrees

Degrees are awarded by the relevant Senatus on the basis of recommendations of the College Postgraduate Committee, or Board of Examiners.

[...]

May 2024
~~25 May 2023~~

Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

23 May 2024

Committee Membership 2024/25

Description of paper:

1. Committee Membership for 2024/25.

Action requested / recommendation:

2. The Membership of each Standing Committee are presented to the Committee for **information**, following the presentation of the Membership to Senate for approval on 22 May 2024.

Background and context:

3. Under the Senate Standing Orders (22a), Senate may appoint Committees and delegate powers to these committees. Senate approves the membership of these committees annually.
4. Senate currently delegates powers to three Standing Committees: Senate Education Committee (SEC), Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC), and Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC).
5. Senate Standing Committees formally report to Senate annually in addition to providing updates on recent and forthcoming business at each ordinary meeting of Senate. These committees feed into and out of College level committees (Undergraduate Education, Postgraduate Education, Quality Assurance) and specialist Support Services (the Institute for Academic Development, Careers Service, Student Recruitment and Admissions, Registry Services) via committee membership. Therefore, a number of committee roles are ex officio, to ensure that committee members have the appropriate knowledge, expertise, responsibility and accountability to fulfil the committee remit.
6. In October 2022, Senate agreed to expand the membership of each Standing Committee to include three elected Senate members. An election is held annually to fill the three positions. All committees include student representation.
7. Senate members who are not included in the Senate Committees' membership may have opportunities to contribute to the work of these committees as co-opted members or as members of working groups.
8. Senate members receive notification via email when papers for Senate Standing Committees are available. Members are encouraged to feed into Standing Committees by sharing comments or feedback with either their College representative, or in their absence, the relevant Standing Committee Convener.
9. The terms of reference for each Committee are available on the [relevant Committee page](#)

Discussion

10. The draft Committee membership is provided below. Any known changes to the membership are highlighted in yellow, there may be further changes to the membership following the meeting on 23 May 2024. The election of the Convener and Vice-Convener, will be confirmed at the final meeting of APRC, in line with APRC's Terms of Reference.
11. All changes to membership will take effect from 1 August 2024.
12. The Standing Committee webpages will be updated with membership once all positions are confirmed.
13. In 2022/23 Senate was the subject of an externally facilitated review. The results of this review were formally received at the 11 October 2023 meeting of Senate. The review contained two recommendations which relate to Senate Standing Committees including a recommendation that a review of the Terms of Reference, coverage, and scope of the three Senate Committees be undertaken. It was recommended these recommendations be adopted, however delegated to the Senate External Review Task and Finish Group to provide oversight and drive the recommendations forward (see Senate Paper S23/24 11).
14. The formation of the Task and Finish Group was approved at the 7 February 2024 meeting of Senate and the first meeting of the group took place on 15 April 2024. The group discussed the prioritisation of recommendations with reference to the Standing Committee recommendations. The Group intend to consider, consult, and develop proposals for Senate with the intention of bringing proposals to future meetings of Senate (see Senate Paper S 23/24 30).
15. At its 11 October 2023 meeting, Senate agreed an action that Senate Standing Committees be formed in accordance with the Senate Standing Orders. Senate subsequently established an External Review Task and Finish Group at its 7 February 2024 meeting, and this group are responsible for providing oversight of the external review recommendations, including those relating to Senate Committees. The group are responsible for considering and formulating proposals to Standing Committees, which may include revisions to membership. The group have acknowledged the importance of having adequate time to consider and consult on proposals relating to Standing Committees.

Resource implications

16. No amendments with resource implications are proposed.

Risk management

17. Effective academic governance assists the University in managing risk associated with its academic activities.

Equality & diversity

18. The composition of the Senate Committees is largely determined according to defined role-holders (e.g. defined Assistant or Vice-Principal, Director of a

defined Support Service or delegate) or as representatives of particular stakeholders (e.g. a College or the Students' Association). The membership of the Committee is therefore largely a consequence of decisions taken elsewhere to appoint individuals to particular roles. Ensuring that appointment processes support a diverse staff body is part of the broader responsibility of the University.

Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed

19. The Senate Standing Committees' Membership and Terms of Reference are communicated via the Academic Services website:

<https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/committees>

20. Senate Standing Committees are subject to an annual internal review process, and this is reported annually to Senate.

Author

Registry Services
May 2024

Presenter

Professor Patrick Hadoke
Convener of APRC

Freedom of Information: Open

Senate Academic Policy and Regulation Committee

Role on APRC	Position	Name	Term of Office
3 x senior staff members from each College with responsibility for academic governance and regulation, and maintaining and enhancing the quality of the student experience at all levels	Dean of Quality Assurance and Curriculum Validation (CAHSS)	Dr Emily Taylor	
3 x senior staff members from each College with responsibility for academic governance and regulation, and maintaining and enhancing the quality of the student experience at all levels	Dean of Students (CAHSS)	Professor Jeremy Crang	
3 x senior staff members from each College with responsibility for academic governance and regulation, and maintaining and enhancing the quality of the student experience at all levels	Head of Taught Student Administration and Support (CAHSS)	Cat Morley	
3 x senior staff members from each College with responsibility for academic governance and regulation, and maintaining and enhancing the quality of the student experience at all levels	Dean of Learning and Teaching (CSE)	Professor Tim Stratford	
3 x senior staff members from each College with responsibility for academic governance and regulation, and maintaining and enhancing the quality of the student experience at all levels	Dean of Student Experience (CSE)	Professor Stephen Warrington	
3 x senior staff members from each College with responsibility for academic governance and regulation, and maintaining and enhancing the quality of the student experience at all levels	Head of Academic Affairs (CSE)	Alexandra Laidlaw	

3 x senior staff members from each College with responsibility for academic governance and regulation, and maintaining and enhancing the quality of the student experience at all levels	Dean of Taught Education (CMVM)	Professor Jamie Davies	
3 x senior staff members from each College with responsibility for academic governance and regulation, and maintaining and enhancing the quality of the student experience at all levels	Dean of Students (CMVM)	Dr Deborah Shaw	
3 x senior staff members from each College with responsibility for academic governance and regulation, and maintaining and enhancing the quality of the student experience at all levels	Academic Administration Manager (CMVM)	Isabel Lavers	
1 x senior staff member from each College with responsibility for postgraduate research	Head of PGR Student Office (CAHSS)	Kirsty Woomble	
1 x senior staff member from each College with responsibility for postgraduate research	Dean of Postgraduate Research (CSE)	Professor Antony Maciocia	
1 x senior staff member from each College with responsibility for postgraduate research	Director of Postgraduate Research and Early Career Research Experience (CMVM)	Professor Patrick Hadoke	
1 x Edinburgh University Students' Association sabbatical officer	Vice-President, Education	Dylan Walch	
1 x member of the Edinburgh University Students' Association permanent staff	Advice Place Manager & Deputy Manager, Students' Association	This role is shared between: Charlotte Macdonald and Clair Halliday	

1 x member of staff from Student Systems and Administration	Academic Registrar, Registry Services	Lisa Dawson	
1 x member of staff from the Institute for Academic development	Head of Taught Student Development, Institute for Academic Development (IAD)	Dr Donna Murray	
1 x member of staff from Academic Services	Head of Academic Policy and Regulation	Dr Adam Bunni	
1 x member of staff from Information Services' Learning, Teaching and Web Services Division	Head of Digital Learning Applications and Media	Karen Howie	
3 x elected Senate member, one positions is nominally assigned to each College	College of Science and Engineering	TBC – election outcome not yet known	1 August 2024 - 31 July 2025
3 x elected Senate member, one positions is nominally assigned to each College	College of Arts, Humanities and Social Science	TBC – election outcome not yet known	1 August 2024 - 31 July 2025
3 x elected Senate member, one positions is nominally assigned to each College	College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine	TBC – election outcome not yet known	1 August 2024 - 31 July 2025
Committee Secretary	Committee Secretary	Cristina Matthews	

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

23 May 2024

Senate Standing Committees Annual Internal Effectiveness Review

Description of paper

1. This paper outlines plans for the annual review of Senate Standing Committees' effectiveness.

Action requested / recommendation

2. Committee members are asked to comment on the plans for the annual review.

Background and context

3. The 2017 version of the Scottish Code of Good Higher Education Governance states that institutions are expected to review the effectiveness of their Senate and its committees annually and to hold an externally-facilitated review every five years: "49. The governing body is expected to review its own effectiveness each year and to undertake an externally facilitated evaluation of its own effectiveness and that of its committees, including size and composition of membership, at least every five years. As part of these processes or separately, the effectiveness of the academic board (also known as Senate, Senatus Academicus or academic council) is expected to be reviewed similarly. These reviews should be reported upon appropriately within the Institution and outside. Externally facilitated reviews should be held following any period of exceptional change or upheaval (allowing suitable time to see the effects of changes made), the usual timetable for externally facilitated review being brought forward if necessary in these circumstances."
4. In line with the requirements of the Code, Registry Services will be conducting an annual review of the effectiveness of the three Senate Standing Committees over Summer 2024. The outcomes of the annual review will be reported to Senate and Senate Standing Committees in September / October 2024.
5. Actions identified in the previous annual review and responses are outlined in Appendix 2.

Discussion

6. The annual review process is intended to gather information on, and evaluate effectiveness in terms of, the:
 - Composition of the committee
 - Support and facilitation of committee meetings
 - Engagement of members and knowledge and understanding of their roles and committee remits
 - Impact and strategic relevance of Senate Committees' work
7. The review is a self-evaluative process and Senate Standing Committee members will be invited by the relevant Committee Secretary to respond to an online survey during Summer 2024. Draft questions are provided in Appendix 1.
8. Registry Services will collate and analyse the information, producing a report on the findings to be presented to Senate and Senate Standing Committees in September/ October 2024.

9. Previously the Convener and Secretary of each committee reviewed its coverage of postgraduate research student business, however, this is being looked at through the Senate External Review Task and Finish Group.

Resource implications

10. The review will be conducted by Registry Services as part of planned work. The resource implications of any actions identified in response to the outcomes of the review will be considered at that stage.

Risk management

11. The annual effectiveness review process assists the University in ensuring that its academic governance arrangements are effective and enables the University to manage a range of risks associated with its academic provision.

Equality & diversity

12. The online survey provides an opportunity for members to reflect on equality, diversity and representation through committee work.

Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed

13. The report will be presented to Senate and the Senate Standing Committees in September / October 2024. If the review identifies required actions or enhancement opportunities, these will be taken forward by Registry Services (if directly related to the functioning and support of the Senate Committees) or referred to the appropriate body for consideration.

Author

Registry Services
May 2024

Presenter

Professor Patrick Hadoke
Convener of APRC

Freedom of Information

Open

Appendix 1

Senate Standing Committees: Internal Effectiveness Review 2023/24

Draft questions for Summer 2024 survey

Members of the Senate Standing Committees will be invited to fill in an online survey during Summer 2024 and the draft questions are set out below for comment. The questions are based on the same set used for the previous four years but have been reviewed and refined for clarity, to align with the intentions of the review process outlined in paragraph 6, and to support gathering of actionable responses. HR EDI were consulted on the questions relating to equality, diversity and representation. Registry Services will also use responses to develop and track key performance indicators.

All responses to questions are Likert scale unless otherwise stated (strongly agree – agree – neutral – disagree – strongly disagree).

1. Composition of the Committee

- 1.1. The composition of the Committee enables it to fulfil its remit.
- 1.2. The size of the Committee is appropriate for it to operate effectively.
- 1.3. Please provide any comments on the composition of the committee [free text]

2. Support and Facilitation of Committee Meetings

- 2.1. The information provided supports effective decision-making by the Committee.
- 2.2. The Committee is supported effectively by Registry Services.
- 2.3. For new members in 2023/24: I received an effective induction when I joined the Committee.
- 2.4. Please provide any comments on the support and facilitation of committee meetings [free text]

3. Engagement of members and knowledge and understanding of their roles and committee remits

- 3.1. The Committee's remit is clear.
- 3.2. The scope of the Committee's remit is appropriate.
- 3.3. I am clear on my role and responsibilities as a member of the Committee.
- 3.4. I am able to engage effectively with and contribute to the work of the Committee.
- 3.5. Please provide any comments on the engagement of members and knowledge and understanding of their roles and committee remits [free text]

4. Impact and Strategic Relevance of Senate Committee's Work

- 4.1. The work of the Committee makes a positive impact.
- 4.2. The work of the Committee links to University strategic priorities.
- 4.3. Equality and diversity are appropriately considered and promoted in the work of the Committee.
- 4.4. Please provide any comments on how the work of the Committee can represent the views and needs of our diverse University community to inform decision-making [free text]
- 4.5. The work of the Committee is communicated effectively to the wider University.
- 4.6. Please provide any comments on the impact and strategic relevance of Senate Committees' work [free text]

Appendix 2: Action taken in response to 2022/23 Senate Standing Committees' Annual Effectiveness Review

Committee	Action	Response
All	Consider how to focus business within the Committee remit and clarify responsibilities where business overlaps and links with other committees.	<p>Registry Services have supported paper authors to focus on the detail relevant to the Committee's remit and the decision being asked of them. Discussions held on Committee's priorities have made specific reference to remits. Consideration is also being given to including reference to remits on Committee paper cover sheets.</p> <p>This is also being looked at through the Senate External Review Task and Finish Group.</p>
All	Continue to explore ways to diversify the membership of the Committee and effectively consider EDI matters.	Registry Services have signposted to relevant EDI guidance and training materials in order to empower members and enhance their understanding of EDI matters, and enable all members to appropriately scrutinise Committee business.
All	Consider how committees can communicate effectively with stakeholders, including the roles and responsibilities of Academic Services and members.	<p>Information to support members with their roles and responsibilities was updated in the Senate Standing Committees' Members' Guidance. The Senate Committees' Newsletter is back to being routinely published throughout the year.</p> <p>Registry Services have supported paper authors to include a plan of how information will be communicated to relevant stakeholders and to record instances where Committee members have responsibility for communicating information or outcomes to their College or Group. Clarity regarding responsibilities for actions has been further enhanced by the introduction of an action log for the Committee.</p>
SQAC	Clarify the roles of subgroups and task groups at the start of the year.	Registry Services are producing an organogram with the subgroups and task groups for all Senate Standing Committees.

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

23rd May 2024

Taught Postgraduate (PGT) Curriculum Framework and Programme Archetypes

Description of paper

1. This paper is provided for comment, no decisions are requested at this time. It provides an initial introduction to some of the key policy and regulation discussions that might be required should Senate approve the Taught Postgraduate (PGT) Curriculum Framework and Programme Archetypes, which are being discussed at the Senate meeting on 22nd May 2024.
2. Curriculum Transformation contributes to Strategy 2030 outcomes ii, v, vi, and ix, and is relevant to other outcomes including iv, x and xiii.

Action requested / recommendation

3. No specific approvals are requested at this time. The committee is asked to note the issues raised in this paper, and is invited to provide any observations to the author.

Background and context

4. At their meeting on Wednesday 22nd May, Senate will consider a paper detailing the PGT Framework developed as part of the Curriculum Transformation Project (S 23/24 3N). That paper also presents a proposed implementation timeline which would see the vast majority of PGT degrees adopt one of the proposed archetypes ahead of students commencing their studies in September 2026.
5. If approved, the implementation of the proposed PGT Framework will necessitate the updating of several of the University's policy and regulation documents. APRC is the responsible Senate Committee for most of the relevant policies, and it is anticipated that this work will be undertaken during academic year 2024/25.
6. The Curriculum Transformation Project Team has undertaken initial work to identify key policies and regulations which might need to be updated should the proposed PGT Framework be approved. This paper provides an initial insight as to some potentially key areas of discussion with regards to the University's General Degree Regulations and Taught Assessment Regulations. Further detailed proposals concerning specific policy changes will be presented to APRC for consideration in due course.
7. While the proposed Framework includes a range of degree structures for postgraduate study, it proposes no changes to the number, or level, of academic credits required for a given award. It is therefore expected that regulations around required credit levels will remain unchanged.

8. The issues highlighted below were discussed at a workshop with Senate Quality Assurance Committee (SQAC) members, and other University staff involved in QA and Governance on Tuesday 7th May 2024. Feedback from that meeting will be considered alongside any comments from APRC.

Discussion

9. *Programme and Course Approval Processes Associated with Existing Programmes Transitioning to the New Archetypes*
10. Consideration of how best to support programme and course approvals associated with the introduction of CTP has, so far, been based on three principles:-
 - a. *As under our current processes, approvals should occur at the lowest level appropriate (i.e. School BoS rather than College for example)*
 - b. *Where new approval mechanisms are proposed it should be because they can be expected to be more efficient than existing processes or meet a specific requirement not met through current processes*
 - c. *Any approval processes should collect all relevant information for downstream processes (eg. Setting up a new programme, supporting marketing activities etc) and eliminate/reduce the need for repetition of work wherever possible.*
11. The CTP Outline Business Case adopted an assumption that 20% of existing PGT degrees might require updating to achieve compliance with one of the proposed archetypes (i.e. 80 percent of existing programmes already follow one of the proposed archetypes). Initial conversations with College colleagues suggests this may be an over-estimation of the level of change required.
12. Given the principles in paragraph 9, and the belief that only a small proportion of programmes will be required to make changes to achieve compliance with one of the proposed archetypes, it is proposed that any changes to existing programmes will be handled through existing approval mechanisms (at School or College level as appropriate). Therefore, no requirement to consider revisions/exceptions to the existing Programme and Course Approval Policy is anticipated.
13. While it is expected that the proposed archetypes will support the vast majority of PGT programmes to continue in their current form, it may be expected that the introduction of greater flexibility in programme structures and revised focus on the Edinburgh Student Vision may lead to programmes revising their teaching, or new programmes being proposed. Again, it is expected that such changes will be handled through existing Board of Studies mechanisms. Current discussion between CTP, College and School colleagues is focussed on what process, if any, might help identify those programmes who wish to take early advantage of opportunities afforded by CTP, and how they can be supported to make changes ready for September 2026 or thereafter.

14. Following the recent workshop with SQAC colleagues, work is on-going to identify how the forthcoming annual QA reporting round can be used to support a (light-touch) process to identify programmes which either need updating to reflect the proposed degree models, or which may be involved in early discussions around exploiting the opportunities provided through the wider range of degree models proposed by CTP.

Issues with Academic Regulations Associated with the Introduction of the PGT Framework

15. A range of University regulations and policies will require updating in order to support the use of the proposed PGT archetypes. As with other large-scale change projects, such as the recent introduction of the Student Support Model, many of these amendments are likely to be minor (typically changes to language). The Project Team would welcome guidance from APRC on how they may wish to handle such minor amendments; for example following the approach established with regard to the Exceptional Circumstances Policy where simple changes to wording could be handled through convenors action.
16. An initial review of the General Degree Regulations and Taught Assessment Regulations has identified the following issues which will likely require more substantive discussion and updating.

Degree Specific Regulations Contained Within the Postgraduate General Degree Regulations

17. The Postgraduate General Degree Regulations include a large number of programme specific regulations. These typically represent programme specific exemptions from the general regulations around progression and award (approved by APRC and its predecessors at the time of programme approval).
18. The recording of such exemptions within the General Degree Regulations appears patchy (many of the more recent exemptions discussed as part of programme approval appear to have been handled at a local level as “programme specific requirements.”). Initial discussions with colleagues have highlighted several programme specific regulations within the current degree regulations which are no longer required, but have not been removed.
19. The flexibility provided by the proposed CTP PGT Framework is intended to allow programmes, schools and colleges, to handle many of the exceptions that previously required Senate, or APRC, approval. It is therefore expected that many of the existing programme specific regulations relating to PGT programmes could be handled at a local level should the proposed Framework be adopted.
20. CTP planning therefore includes resource to meet with PGT programmes who currently have programme specific degree regulations to discuss how the required

academic outcomes may be achieved at a local level within any new PGT framework; removing the need for programme specific degree regulations.

21. *Study Periods for PGT Programmes*

22. Postgraduate Degree Regulation 26, and the associated Study Period Table (<http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/studyperiodtable.pdf>), summarise maximum study periods for existing different types of PGT programme. The introduction of new PGT degree models (within the proposed PGT Framework) will need to be reflected within regulations around study periods, extension, authorised interruptions of studies and similar.

23. As a start point for this discussion, it is proposed that the CTP team will take existing regulations concerning study periods and apply them to any new archetypes agreed (for instance the expectation that the maximum period of an authorised interruption of studies should be equal to the full-time study period or half the study period for an intermittent degree), and present those results to schools, colleges, Senate Committees, and other colleagues for discussion.

24. It is expected that the diversity of degree archetypes included in the proposed framework (notably those for intermittent and stackable study) will mean that simply applying existing practice may lead to proposed study periods which are not considered academically appropriate. Therefore, in light of the above discussions, a revised version of the Study Period Table will be presented to APRC for detailed discussion early in academic year 24/25.

25. The proposed PGT Framework contains several degree models intended to support the University's focus on life-long, or extended, learning – notably the idea of a stackable degree (where a student may complete credits intermittently over an extended period with breaks along the way). This proposal invites consideration of, and an institutional position on, the maximum passage of time that might be acceptable for earning the credits required for specific levels of PGT award (similar to those regulations in the Undergraduate Degree Regulations which state that a student can take a maximum of 8 years to earn an Ordinary Degree, or 10 years for an Honours Degree).

26. As a starting point for this discussion, Postgraduate Degree Regulation 60 states “A candidate who already holds a postgraduate certificate or diploma from the University of Edinburgh may be permitted by the appropriate College to apply for candidature for the associated postgraduate diploma or Masters degree, provided that not more than five years have elapsed between their first graduation and acceptance as a candidate for the subsequent award.” This could be read to imply that student could complete a PG Cert, take a break of up to 5 years, return to complete the follow-on diploma, take another 5-year break, and then return to complete the masters qualification – giving a time period of 13 years plus any interruptions, extensions or periods of part-time study.

27. The appropriate maximum study period for a degree could be expected to be discipline specific (for instance with regards to how long knowledge or skills learnt can be expected to remain relevant). This is reflected in existing regulations, for instance Postgraduate Degree Regulation 28 allows Colleges to reduce the prescribed period of study for part-time, and intermittent, MSc degrees. Consideration will be given to whether this approach is appropriate to (non-fulltime) degree models proposed as part of CTP and, if so, how programmes would be able to gain approval for a shorter study period – likely at the time of programme proposal/approval.

28. It is intended that an initial position, to allow for detailed discussion should be presented to APRC during Semester 1 of Academic Year 24/25.

29. Regulations Around Progression and Award

30. Taught Assessment Regulations 56 through 60 detail the current requirements for progression and award at PGT level. These regulations are presented with reference to degrees which have clearly delineated taught course and capstone components.

31. In contrast, several of the degree archetypes in the proposed PGT Framework either have no separate capstone component, or the capstone element occurs simultaneously to the taught aspect.

32. Recent years has seen a growth in proposed PGT programmes which do not follow the traditional taught plus capstone models and these have previously required specific approval by APRC – where much of the debate has focussed on what are appropriate progression and awarding criteria (for example the MSc in Critical Care, paper APRC 22/23 6K, in March 23 and the MSc in Clinical Trials, paper APRC 22/23 9I, in May 23).

33. Given one of the key drivers for the diversity of degree archetypes within the PGT Framework is to simplify the requirements of colleagues who are proposing PGT awards that don't follow the traditional (120+60) degree model, it is appropriate to consider how the regulations around progression and award can be updated to support alternative degree models, without the need for programmes to seek explicit permission from APRC.

34. Such an aim invites several questions:-

- a. How can any regulations around progression or award help ensure students following different degree structures are subject to similar requirements in terms of academic rigour?

- b. Is it necessary to have specific awarding criteria for each degree archetype? Or, could there be a minimum awarding criteria applied across all degrees which can then be amended with programme specific requirements to reflect specific programme learning outcomes?
 - c. Within the traditional 120+60 credit MSc model what flexibility, if any, should be allowed for programmes in terms of the current progression hurdle? For instance, to either remove the current progression hurdle or to introduce more precise requirements (for instance requiring a specific course to be passed at 50+ rather than an average across all taught courses)?
35. Discussion of issues of progression and award (such as those noted above) should also consider the criteria for the award of credit on aggregate; with a central question been the extent to which these should be consistent across different degree models.
36. The PGT degree models suggested by CTP are agnostic to the use of the “50% elevated hurdle” for award and progression within MSc degrees. However, the apparent contradiction between awarding Level 11 course credits with a pass mark of 40, but requiring 50+ to achieve an MSc award was raised in several discussions of the PGT Framework (including the recent discussion with SQAC and QA colleagues). APRC may wish to consider if this issue should be included in any discussions/consultations on PGT award and progression criteria.
37. In contrast to the discussion of the other issues highlighted in this paper, which are most likely to affect future degrees following new archetypes, any discussion of progression and award criteria could be expected to be relevant to all programmes, including those already running. Similarly, while APRC is ultimately responsible for the Taught Assessment Regulations, this discussion is likely to cut across the interests of Senate Education Committee and Senate AQ Committee. A full range of consultation and testing with relevant colleagues will therefore be essential.
38. It is therefore proposed that, should the PGT Framework be approved by Senate in May 24, the CTP team will move to organise a series of workshops on this area within each College through the summer of 24 and early in Semester 1 of academic year 24/25. Initial findings from these discussions would be presented to APRC (and other Senate Committees as required) in late 2024, with detailed proposals likely to come to APRC in March 2025.

Resource implications

39. The project resources to date have been managed through the project team staff time to support the development of the curriculum framework and the supporting the curriculum work.

40. An Outline Business Case is being prepared that sets out the resource requirements and implications of Curriculum Transformation. This includes consideration of the investment needed at an institutional level, in Schools and through the project team to support the design, development and implementation of the project. The Outline Business Case identifies specific resource requests (for both the project team and Academic Services) with regard to developing any required academic regulations. Work arising from CTP is reflected within APRC's priorities for Academic Year 24/25, and so it is expected that the committee's time can be managed on that basis.

Risk management

41. The project team maintain a risk register which is reviewed, presented and discussed at the Curriculum Transformation Project Board in addition to follow up actions with the risk owners and those responsible for taking any actions set out to mitigate the risks. The approach to risk management will be reviewed and refined in response to the recommendations of the external review of People & Money. The implementation timetable presented to Senate identified specific stage gates where progress required to implement the PGT Curriculum Framework (including associated regulations will work) will be formally assessed.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

42. Curriculum Transformation will support a positive contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by the University. Objectives around inclusive and equitable access to education (SDG4), wellbeing (SDG3) and gender equality (SDG5) align with the purpose of Curriculum Transformation and the prototype Curriculum Design Principles. SDG13 (action to combat climate change and its impact) features directly in the Edinburgh Student Vision and through consideration by a Climate and Sustainability working group.

Equality & diversity

43. An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) for the overall approach to Curriculum Transformation, the organisation and management of the Curriculum Transformation Project was completed in November 2022. Further EqIA will be undertaken as part of the development and implementation phases of Curriculum Transformation.

44. Work is underway, based on discussions with the Curriculum Transformation Board, the University Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee and other stakeholders, on the development of an Equality Impact Assessment for the proposed Curriculum Framework. The approach being taken is to identify opportunities to design in positive action and support for equity, diversity and inclusion, and to identify risks and amelioration around roll out and adoption. This will be discussed by the Board and with Senate Quality Assurance Committee.

45. Equality Impact Assessments for specific policy changes will be completed as required.

Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed

46. Depending on the nature of the PGT Framework approved by Senate, further detailed proposals for updating specific regulations will be presented to APRC through academic year 24/25. Prior to coming to APRC, these proposals will be subject to wide discussion with relevant University colleagues.

Author

*Dr Paul Norris (CTP Secondee)
9th May 2024*

Presenter

Dr Paul Norris

Freedom of Information *Open*

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee**23 May 2024****Updates to the Performance Sport Policy****Description of paper**

1. The paper proposes amendments to the Performance Sport Policy, following a periodic review conducted by staff in University Sport and Exercise, Moray House School of Education and Sport, and Registry Services. The proposed amendments are designed to clarify matters relating to the provision of adjustments to study for students participating in elite sport. The revised policy is designed to provide the support required to make the University a destination of choice for elite student athletes.

Action requested/recommendation

2. APRC is asked to approve the proposed amendments to the Performance Sport Policy. The proposed amendments are presented in the discussion section of the paper, with the Policy as amended provided in Appendix 1.

Background and context

3. Registry Services conduct periodic reviews of the University's academic policies to ensure that they remain current and fit for purpose, and to promote enhancement to our processes. The Performance Sport Policy is scheduled for review during the 2023/24 academic session.
4. The Performance Sport Policy was introduced in 2015 to provide a clear and consistent approach to supporting student athletes who are excelling in sport at a national or international level. Students in this position may require alternative arrangements for attendance, assessment and progression in their studies. The policy was introduced to provide clarity for students but also guidance for staff – predominantly Personal Tutors at the time – when students requested flexibility due to their sporting commitments.
5. The proposed amendments were devised by staff from University Sport and Exercise and Moray House School of Education and Sport, based on their experience of handling cases involving students taking part in elite sport.

Discussion

6. The existing policy was written in 2015 and has not been formally reviewed during the intervening time. Since 2015 there have been significant changes that are not reflected in the current Performance Sport Policy. There has been an increase in the demands placed on athletes competing at the top level of performance sport. The increasing professionalisation of performance sport has led to a rise in the number of performance level events across a range of

team and individual sports. These changes have created a situation where balancing academic and sporting commitments has become increasingly challenging for students. Athletes attending major championships (World, European, Olympic, Commonwealth) are regularly expected to attend training camps ahead of competition which can already be 2-3 weeks long. This, alongside the demands of regular training, which can be in excess of 20 hours per week, necessitates a review of the policy.

7. Over the last 9 years there has been significant and positive change in the accessibility of teaching and learning content. Students can now access lectures and assessments remotely for a large number of courses. The existing policy does not reflect the additional flexibility afforded by these changes.
8. The revised policy is also designed to offer better guidance to enable Student Advisers to work with academic staff and support students effectively.
9. The proposed amendments to the Policy are presented in tracked changes in Appendix 1. The key amendments are summarised below.

Eligible sporting activities (2)

10. We have clarified the eligibility requirements to indicate that students must have been “selected by a relevant body to perform at international level, or at national championship level in a sport recognised, or supported by University Sport and Exercise”. There are a number of open sporting events where people can either apply or pay to enter competitions which it can be argued are national/international level, and it is not intended that the policy should apply to these circumstances.
11. We have also added provision in the policy for staff to seek advice from University Sport and Exercise where a request for flexibility relates to a sport or a level of competition which is not obviously covered under the policy. We have also added clarification that training camps (including international training camps, or camps held in advance of major sporting events) are eligible for consideration under the policy. Attendance at training camps such as these is essential to participation in elite-level sport, so regarding them as routine training is not compatible with our commitment to supporting students to excel in their chosen sport.

Options for adjustments (5-9)

12. We have reorganised and restructured this section of the policy to make clearer what options are available to support students requesting adjustments due to participation in elite-level sport. The options within the policy are all provided for in the existing Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study, and the Taught Assessment Regulations. The amendments to this section include:

- putting clearer parameters around application for leave of absence for performance sport, to support prompt and efficient handling of requests (5);
- adding reference to seeking advice from the Student Immigration Service where a visa-holding student is seeking a leave of absence or other change to study (7);
- clarifying wording regarding the provision of coursework extensions offered to students for performance sport, in line with the new Exceptional Circumstances policy (8);
- clarifying the options available to College Deans and the Convener of the Board of Examiners where they have accepted that performance sport will prevent a student from attending a scheduled examination (9). (This provision is offered in line with Taught Assessment Regulation 25.2.)

13. We have removed a clause which previously stated that absences from a full-time programme should not exceed two weeks in any one semester. As noted above, the greater potential for remote learning and assessment, combined with the increased demands on elite athletes, mean that it is both necessary and proportionate to allow Schools to consider greater flexibility to allow longer absences. In line with the policy, however, it is essential that absences are only supported where they remain compatible with the student maintaining progress on their programme.

14. We have also clarified that the Head of School (or delegate), in consultation with the relevant Course Organiser(s) and the Convener of the Board of Examiners are empowered to consider offering other adjustments, for example alternative forms of assessment, where this is compatible with the provisions of the Taught Assessment Regulations. This is supportive of the general intention of the policy to provide adjustments for students taking part in elite-level sport, beyond those which would be routinely offered to all students, where this is proportionate and compatible with maintaining academic standards.

Resource implications

15. The existing provisions of the policy carry resource implications in terms of staff time required to consider and approve adjustments to study for students for performance sport reasons. However, the proposed clarifications to the policy should support staff to approach handling cases involving students taking part in elite sport more efficiently and with greater confidence.

Risk Management

16. The provision of adjustments to students taking part in elite-level sport presents a minimal risk to academic standards, provided that these are always offered in line with the Taught Assessment Regulations.
17. Absences from study for performance sport pose a degree of risk to students' progress in their studies, but the policy is designed to promote thorough consideration of this risk by staff deciding where leave of absence may be offered. It is also reasonable to expect that students requesting such absences assume a degree of risk associated with their absence from University to take part in sport.
18. Failure by the University to accommodate to a proportionate extent the needs of students taking part in elite-level sport poses risks to current students' progress in their studies and participation in sport. It also risks the University no longer being seen as a destination of choice for student athletes, who bring significant reputational benefits to the University.

Equality & Diversity

19. The proposed amendments do not present any equality and diversity implications.

Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed

20. If the proposed amendments to the policy are approved, Academic Services will include these as part of the annual New and Updated Policies email communication to Schools and Colleges in the summer, and associated web pages.

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Performance Sport Policy

Purpose of Policy

The Performance Sport Policy ~~provides outlines for staff and students the University's approach to offering~~ flexibility to students so that they may excel in both their chosen sport and their academic studies, ~~The policy and~~ provides a context for the University to make decisions on flexibility requested due to participation in significant national or international sporting events.

Overview

The policy sets out flexibilities on matters relating to attendance, assessment and progression for students who are ~~performing selected to perform~~ at national and international level in their chosen sport.

Scope: Mandatory Policy

The policy applies to all students, and to staff making decisions on requests stemming from performance sport matters. The policy is within the remit of the ~~Curriculum and Student Progression Committee~~ Academic Policy and Regulations Committee.

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Document control

Dates	Approved: 28.4.11	Starts: 1.8.11	Equality impact assessment 10.12.14	Amendments: 22.8.12, 4.6.15, 09.06.23	Next Review: 2027/283/24
Approving authority	Curriculum and Student Progression Committee <u>Academic Policy and Regulations Committee</u>				
Consultation undertaken	Curriculum and Student Progression Committee, following a request from Quality Assurance Committee <u>Sports and Exercise, Academic Policy and Regulations Committee</u>				
Section responsible for policy maintenance & review	Academic Registry <u>Services</u>				
Related policies, procedures, guidelines & regulations	n/a				
n/a	UK Quality Code				
Policies superseded by this policy	n/a				
Alternative format	If you require this document in an alternative format please email Academic.Services@ed.ac.uk or telephone 0131 650 2138.				
Keywords	Performance sport, sport event absences, elite athlete				



Performance Sport Policy

Principles

1. The University is committed to providing flexibility to programme requirements (e.g. regarding attendance and assessment) for students taking part in elite-level sport –so that they may excel in both their chosen sport and their academic studies, where this is compatible with the student maintaining progress on their programme.

Eligible sporting activities

- 1.2. In order to qualify for flexibility to be offered under this policy, 2—students must have been selected by a relevant body to performRepresentation must be at international level, or at national championship level in a sport recognised, or supported by University Sport and Exercise. Requests for absences or changes to assessment arrangements to allow representation at other levels will only be considered if accompanied by a recommendation from the Head of Performance Sport (or delegate), College Dean, or School Director of Learning and Teaching. Absences for training camps in advance of events or international team training camps will be considered. However, absences for training sessions are not usually considered eligible. -If further clarification is needed on national championship level, the relevant College Office will decide, drawing on advice from the University's Director of Sport and ExerciseHead of Performance Sport.
[http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/sport-exercise/performance"](http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/sport-exercise/performance)

- 3—Requests for absences or changes to assessment arrangements to allow representation at other levels will not usually be granted. Absences for training sessions are not usually considered “representative”.

Requesting flexibility to attendance or assessment arrangements

- 2.3. 4—It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that they promptly report to their Student Adviser, Postgraduate Director or Research Supervisor any sporting commitment that might affect their attendance or assessment.

- 4.5 Where a student is representing their nation in their chosen sport, any impact that this might have on attendance and assessment will be dealt with initially at School level, by the Head of School (or delegate). Any agreed adjustments to attendance or assessment should not compromise the ability of the student to reach a satisfactory level of attendance on their programme of study meet the learning outcomes for any element of a course or programme.

Absence from study

5. Students may request a leave of absence in order to pursue activity relating to performance sport. Requests for a Leave of Absence for Performance Sport should normally be submitted at least 14 days ahead of the period of absence. Requests received with fewer days' notice may not be considered, and each School will aim to provide a response within 10 days. The Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study provide information about recording of leave of absence.

<http://www.drps.ed.ac.uk/>



Performance Sport Policy

6. When considering a Leave of Absence for Performance Sport, Schools will consider reasonable and proportionate adjustments to support students. Where the period of absence requested is not compatible with the student maintaining academic progress (including cumulative, shorter absences), Schools should consider alternative options. These include:
- a) Taking an authorised interruption of studies. Information about authorised interruption of study is provided in the Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study, and in the Authorised Interruption of Study Policy.
 - b) Switching between full-time and part-time modes of study. Information about changing mode of study is provided in the Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study.
7. Where a student requesting absence from study is in the UK on a visa, students and Schools should contact the Student Immigration Service for advice.

Changes to assessment

~~The usual expectation is that the single amount or cumulative total of absence from a full-time programme should not exceed two weeks in any one semester. For periods greater than this, change to part time study or Authorised Interruption of Study may be applied for under the Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study. <http://www.drps.ed.ac.uk/>~~

8.6 Students may request extensions to coursework deadlines due to participation in performance sport using the Exceptional Circumstances service. Where an extension to deadlines does not afford the flexibility required to enable sporting representation, the Head of School (or delegate) in consultation with the relevant Course Organiser(s) and the Convener of the Board of Examiners may consider other options, including offering an alternative form of assessment. Any agreed adjustments affecting assessment ~~should be dealt with by the use of extension to deadlines and~~ will be undertaken with reference to the relevant Assessment Regulations.

3.9. Students who believe that ~~extenuating circumstances exist which~~ participation in performance sport will prevent them from sitting an examination in the scheduled time or venue should contact their Student Adviser, Postgraduate Director or Research Supervisor. Their case is considered by the relevant College Dean (or delegated authorising officer) and Student Administration in consultation with the Convener of the Board of Examiners. in line with Taught Assessment Regulation 25.2. The College Dean and Convener of the Board of Examiners are empowered to offer the student an opportunity to sit the examination at a different time or location, or to complete an alternative form of assessment.

- ~~7. In addition to the flexibility described above, the following options may be available, depending on the nature of the programme and the status of the student:~~
- ~~a) Switching between full-time and part-time modes of study, e.g. to allow a student to achieve a balance between preparation for, and participation in, a major sporting event and progress on their programme of study; and~~
 - ~~b) Taking leave of absence for a specified period, e.g. where a student is preparing for a major sporting event and this preparation cannot be undertaken whilst attending the University.~~



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Performance Sport Policy

~~8 — Where it is proposed that a student might switch between modes of study or take leave of absence, this must be agreed with the relevant College Undergraduate or Postgraduate Dean.~~

~~4 June 2015~~ 23 May 2024



Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

23 May 2024

Proposed Changes to the Academic Misconduct Investigation Procedures

Description of paper

1. This paper proposes amendments to the Academic Misconduct Investigation Procedures, to provide clarification in response to feedback.

Action requested / recommendation

2. APRC is asked to approve the proposed amendments to the Academic Misconduct Investigation Procedures (Appendix 1).

Background and context

3. The Academic Misconduct Investigation Procedures ([academicmisconductprocedures.pdf](#)) set out the process when handling cases of suspected academic misconduct within the University. The proposed amendments are the result of feedback from various teams such as the Appeals Team, the Students' Association Advice Place and the College Academic Misconduct Officers (CAMOs).
4. The proposed changes to the Academic Misconduct Investigation Procedures were presented at the CAMO group for consultation on 24 April 2024. The CAMO group is comprised of the CAMOs and relevant administrative staff from each of the Colleges, a representative from the Students' Association Advice Place, and is led by Professor Tina Harrison (Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance).

Discussion

5. A summary of the proposed amendments to the regulations are provided in Table 1. A version of the procedures showing the proposed changes is in Appendix 1.

Table 1: Proposals for amendments to the Academic Misconduct Investigation Procedures

Section of Regulations	Amendment and rationale
Purpose of Procedure, 1.1	It was proposed that the following sentence would be added to reference the use of GenAI which will support students understanding of the use of AI and support other student facing guidance. <i>'The inappropriate use of Generative Artificial Intelligence could contribute to academic misconduct.'</i>
All sections	References to a "breach of the academic misconduct investigation procedures" have been amended to "academic misconduct offence", as the reference to breaching a procedure makes little sense. Due to reformatting, the numbering of sections throughout have been updated.

	Overall formatting changes to improve clarity, readability and accessibility of the procedures.
2.2	Affirmation meetings are utilised by academics as a precursor to the academic misconduct investigation procedures. Addition of a reference to these meetings to add clarity to the process if these have been conducted prior to submitting the academic misconduct report form.
Section 3 4.1, 4.2, 5.2, 5.3	<p>Feedback has been received from the Appeals team and EUSA Advice Place that not all SAMOs are giving students the opportunity to respond to academic misconduct allegations due to contradictory wording in previous sections 3.2 and 3.4.</p> <p>It was recorded in the minutes for the May 2023 ARPC that all students should be given the opportunity to respond therefore creating a 'Screening' section to for the purpose of clarity.</p> <p>Wording added to clarify that if a student is offered a meeting before the SAMO decides how to proceed, then the Student should be made aware that a meeting as part of the screening process is not yet part of the investigation.</p> <p>Further clarity added to confirm that if a student was invited to a preliminary meeting during screen, Students must be given an opportunity to respond to the allegations as part of the investigation.</p>
4.5, 6.4 (c)	<p>The options available to SAMOs has been separated into a list. This is to address the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Confusion from on how mark penalties are represented as a percentage leading to incorrect application. - The Academic Misconduct Report Form states that SAMOs 'request that the issue is dealt with via marking'. This was not clearly defined previously. - Addition of the option to FAIL a PASS/FAIL assessment. <p>Clarity added to the example used to demonstrate how mark penalties are applied is replicated in section 6.4 (c) under the penalty options for CAMOs.</p>
4.5, 6.4	<p>CSE and CAHSS had raised that the application of the Academic Misconduct Investigation Procedures does not currently reference to PASS/FAIL Assessments.</p> <p>The addition of the option for SAMOs and CAMOs to 'issue a FAIL for PASS/FAIL Assessments;' ensures the procedures are relevant to these assessments.</p>
4.6, 7.1, 10.3 (d), 11.1, 14.2, 15.1, 16.1	All mark penalties issued by a CAMO or a SAMO must be ratified by the Board of Examiners or relevant PGR college committee. Included which mark penalties under the relevant section require ratification by the Board of Examiners or relevant PGR college committee.

	No wording was included to clarify that SAMO mark penalties must be ratified by the Board of Examiners therefore adding this into 4.5 for the purpose of clarity.
4.8, 6.5, 10.5	The Colleges do not currently report the SAMO cases to the Student Conduct Team for the annual review to ensure consistency in the application of the procedures. Adding in relevant sections to include the recording of SAMO investigations and their penalties into the process. Clarity added to what penalties under which section require reporting.
9.3(d)	Amend reference from Board of Examiners to or College committee which is responsible for overseeing postgraduate research studies within the relevant College.
12	As per a recent change to branding the UK Research Councils has changed to UK Research and Innovation (UKRI). Changed all references within the procedures to reflect this. A new UKRI Governance of Good Research Practice Policy supersedes the previous policy linked in the procedures. From the new policy, clarification around the timings of reporting to the UKRI has been added in 12.1 <i>The new UKRI policy states 'Organisations must inform UKRI of any allegation of research misconduct where it relates to an individual(s) associated with: any funded UKRI research activity'. The academic misconduct investigation procedures can only govern academic misconduct in assessment submissions.</i> Clarity has been added that any investigation under Section A, B or C should be reported. This ensures investigations from thesis submissions for first year reviews and taught courses are reported. As per the T&Cs of UKRI Grants, the responsibility for reporting an Academic Misconduct investigation to UKRI sits with the School or College managing the grant. Changed from 'the school' in 12.1 Reference for the School or College to refer the UKRI Terms and Conditions of Grants when reporting is added to 11.1 to ensure compliance. The policy weblink has been replaced in 12.2
16	Approved amendments to the Student Appeal Regulations include that CAMO and SAMO mark penalties ratified by the Board of Examiners will be open for appeal. The amendments to this section reflect the wording of the updated Student Appeal Regulations.

Resource implications

6. The requirement for SAMO penalties (warnings and mark penalties) to be fed into the College penalties, prior to being reported to Registry Services at the end of

each academic year will lead to a small increase in staff time. This is essential for Registry Services to be able to ensure that the procedures are being applied consistently by SAMOs and CAMOs, and that Colleges are sufficiently aware of where there may be inconsistencies in the process.

Risk management

7. In order to ensure that cases of suspected academic misconduct are handled fairly and sensitively, it is vital that the process is conducted in an efficient but thorough manner. The proposed changes will support this and reduce the risk of mishandled cases due to lack of clarity in the procedures.
8. A risk was identified from the Appeals Team and the Students' Association Advice Place that SAMOs were not consistently providing students with the opportunity to respond to the allegation due to contradictory wording in the procedures. The amendments clarify and address this risk.
9. All penalties issued must be ratified by the Board of Examiners however, no wording was included in the procedures to state that SAMO penalties must be ratified. The amendments clarify and remove the risk of this happening due to lack of clarity in the procedures.
10. Within the annual reporting of penalties applied in proven cases, only CAMO data is recorded and reported meaning the data is not an accurate representation. The amendments ensure that Academic Services can be confident that the SAMOs and CAMOs are consistently applying the procedures.
11. The UKRI policy from the UK Research Institute referred to in the procedures was superseded in 2022. The amendments align to the new policy and remove the risk associated with referring to an outdated procedure.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

12. The proposals within this paper have no impact on the Climate Emergency and Sustainable Development Goals

Equality & diversity

13. The proposed amendments do not raise any specific equality and diversity concerns. The proposed amendments have been suggested to ensure that the investigation process is conducted in a fair, efficient and timely manner in order to minimise delays and any potential distress to students involved.

Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed

14. Should APRC approve the amendments, these changes would be effective from 1 August 2024.
15. Registry Services will communicate the changes in an e-mail to relevant staff in Schools, Colleges and professional services.

Author

Meg Batty
Academic Policy Officer

Presenter

Meg Batty
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Freedom of Information

Open



Academic Misconduct Investigation Procedures

Purpose of Procedure

This document sets out the University's procedures for dealing with suspected cases of academic misconduct by students or graduates of the University. These procedures apply to all types of academic misconduct including plagiarism, self-plagiarism, collusion, falsification, cheating, deceit and personation. The inappropriate use of Generative Artificial Intelligence could contribute to academic misconduct.

The University takes very seriously any suspected incidences of academic misconduct and aims to ensure that all suspected cases are investigated efficiently and dealt with appropriately.

Scope: Mandatory Procedure

All staff and students

Contact Officer

[Registry Academic Services](#)

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Document control

Dates	Approved: 25.05.23 XXXXXX	Starts: 18.09.2023	Equality impact assessment: 10.12.14	Amendments: 11.12.15 02.06.16 16.06.17 05.07.18 30.05.19 24.09.20 16.01.23 <u>DATE</u>	Next Review: 2027/28

Approving authority

Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC)

Consultation undertaken

College Academic Misconduct Officers, College administrative staff dealing with academic misconduct, EUSA.

Section responsible for procedure maintenance & review

[Registry Academic Services](#)

Related policies, procedures, guidelines & regulations

Academic Misconduct Report Form
Code of Student Conduct

UK Quality Code

UK Quality Code – Assessment

Procedures superseded by this procedure

Previous versions of the Procedures for Dealing with Suspected Academic Misconduct

Alternative format

If you require this document in an alternative format please email Academic.Services@ed.ac.uk.

Keywords

Academic misconduct, plagiarism, self-plagiarism, collusion, falsification, cheating, deceit, personation



Academic Misconduct Investigation Procedures

1. Definition of academic misconduct

- 1.1 Academic misconduct is defined by the University as the use of unfair means in any University assessment. This includes assisting a student to make use of unfair means, and doing anything prejudicial to the good conduct of the assessment. Examples of misconduct include (but are not limited to) plagiarism, self-plagiarism (that is, submitting one's own previously assessed or published work for assessment without appropriate acknowledgement), collusion, falsification, cheating (including assisting others to cheat by sharing work and contract cheating, where a student pays for work to be written or edited by somebody else), deceit, and personation (that is, impersonating another student or allowing another person to impersonate a student in an assessment). [The inappropriate use of Generative Artificial Intelligence could contribute to academic misconduct.](#)
- 1.1.1 These procedures explain how the University investigates allegations of academic misconduct in relation to any work submitted for assessment. This includes instances where the alleged misconduct is found after the relevant mark has been ratified by a Board of Examiners as per Section 64 of the Taught assessment Regulations:
www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/policies-regulations/regulations/assessment-regulations/taught
- The University may also investigate allegations of misconduct relating to work which has not been submitted for assessment at the University (e.g. a conference paper or publication) under the Code of Student Conduct, where this may represent a breach of the Code:
www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/discipline/code-discipline
- 1.2 Staff investigating allegations of academic misconduct will make a decision based on the balance of probabilities. This means that they will be satisfied that academic misconduct has occurred if they consider that, on the evidence available, it is more likely than not to have occurred.
- 1.3 A School Academic Misconduct Officer (SAMO) and a College Academic Misconduct Officer (CAMO) may nominate a deputy to hold meetings with students in cases where there is a conflict of interest or where subject specific expertise is required e.g. where there is reasonable doubt that a student's work may not be their own and further enquiry into the student's work is required in order to establish whether there is a potential case of academic misconduct.
- 1.4 When investigating instances of alleged collusion or the use of another student's work without their consent, the SAMO/CAMO can conduct a single academic misconduct investigation in relation to the incident. The SAMO/CAMO may interview each student involved in the alleged collusion case individually. In order to conduct a thorough and fair investigation, the SAMO and CAMO will provide each student with details of the identity of the other student(s) involved in order to allow each student to respond fully to the allegations. If deemed necessary by the CAMO/SAMO each student involved will be provided with a copy of the other student(s) work and will be provided with an opportunity to respond to this. Whilst the investigation may involve multiple students, each student's outcome will be determined individually in light of the evidence relating directly to them and therefore, students should respond to allegations separately. Students should be informed that the information shared with them should be treated as confidential.



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- 1.5 The SAMO or CAMO may not draw any inference if a student chooses not to attend a meeting with them.

A. Suspected academic misconduct in assessed work submitted for taught courses

2. Reporting of suspected academic misconduct in taught courses

2.1 Any member of staff who has evidence ~~of that a student suspected may have breached the~~ Academic Misconduct offence Investigation Procedures in an assessed piece of work submitted for a taught course must complete an Academic Misconduct Report Form. They will submit the form and any other relevant documentation to the ~~School Academic Misconduct Officer (SAMO)~~, informing the relevant Course Organiser. The work under investigation will be assessed and awarded a face value mark prior to referral to the SAMO. The face value mark is the mark that the work is believed to merit based solely on the content as presented, assuming no academic misconduct has taken place.

2.12.2 An affirmation meeting is a precursor to the SAMO screening process and may be conducted to establish whether a student holds the knowledge that they have presented in work submitted for assessment (whether as continuous assessment or in an examination). If academic misconduct is suspected, it should be reported via an Academic Misconduct Report Form. Information obtained at an affirmation meeting may be considered through the academic misconduct investigation.

2.2 The Academic Misconduct Report Form is available at:
www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/discipline/academic-misconduct

3. Screening of suspected academic misconduct in taught courses by the School Academic Misconduct Officer (SAMO)

3.1 The SAMO is responsible for deciding whether there is a case to answer. The SAMO will discuss the case with the relevant Course Organiser and/or marker and can consult with the CAMO if necessary.

3.2 Before deciding how to proceed the SAMO (or nominee) may, at their discretion, invite a student to a preliminary meeting (either online or in person) or request a written statement from the students. If a student is invited to a meeting, they should be made aware that this stage is not yet an of the stage of the investigation and may be accompanied at that meeting by a member of the University community, e.g. their Student Adviser or a caseworker from the Edinburgh University Students' Association Advice Place.

3.3 If the SAMO decides that there are sufficient grounds for investigation, they will determine whether ~~they are able to~~ deal with the case themselves or whether it needs to be referred to a CAMO, according to the criteria in 3.4.

3.4 The case will not require referral to the CAMO provided that it is a first academic misconduct offence (the relevant College can advise where it is a potential repeat academic



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~~misconduct offence) or If the SAMO believes that the case is minor in nature and can be appropriately dealt with by any of the options available to the SAMO under 4.543-5 a-f.~~

- ~~3.5 In cases where the SAMO is unsure about whether or not the criteria above apply have been met, the SAMO should consult the CAMO, who will determine whether the SAMO can deal with the case.~~
- ~~3.6 The SAMO will refer all cases which fail to meet the criteria set out in 3.4 above to the CAMO. Allegations of serious misconduct, including examination misconduct and contract cheating, will always be referred to the CAMO.~~
- ~~3.7 The SAMO must refer cases to the CAMO within 15 working days of receiving an allegation of misconduct. Any allegations which arise outside of this period must also be referred to the CAMO within 15 working days of being detected.~~
- ~~3.8 When referring a case to the CAMO, the SAMO must complete the relevant section of the Academic Misconduct Report Form and submit this with any relevant documentation to the College Academic Misconduct Administrator.~~
- ~~3.9 When a case has been referred to the SAMO or the CAMO, marks for the student must not be ratified by Boards of Examiners or published until the investigation has been concluded.~~

43. Investigation by the School Academic Misconduct Officer (SAMO) – suspected academic misconduct in taught courses

- ~~3.1 The SAMO is responsible for deciding whether there is a case to answer. The SAMO will discuss the case with the relevant Course Organiser and/or marker and can consult with the College Academic Misconduct Officer (CAMO) if necessary. If the SAMO decides that there are grounds for investigation, they will determine whether they are able to deal with the case or whether it needs to be referred to a CAMO.~~
- ~~3.2 A SAMO (or nominee) may, at their discretion, invite a student to a preliminary meeting (either online or in person) or request a written statement from students before deciding how to proceed with the case. If a meeting is requested, the student may be accompanied at that meeting by a member of the University community, e.g. their Student Adviser or a caseworker from the Edinburgh University Students' Association Advice Place.~~
- ~~3.3 The case will not require referral to the CAMO provided that it meets all of the following criteria:
It is a first breach (the relevant College can advise where it is a potential repeat breach); **and**
The SAMO believes that the case is minor in nature and can be appropriately dealt with by issuing a warning or applying a mark penalty of no more than 10 marks in accordance with the relevant Common Marking Scheme, except in cases where the component is worth 5% or less of the course mark. In these cases, if appropriate, the SAMO can apply a penalty that reduces the component to mark to zero.~~

~~In cases where the SAMO is unsure about whether the criteria above apply, the SAMO should consult the CAMO, who will determine whether the SAMO can deal with the case.~~



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- ~~3.4.14~~ In cases which satisfy the criteria in 3.4 and ~~3~~the SAMO is responsible for investigating a case, the SAMO should provide the students with the opportunity to respond to the allegation ~~either and where appropriate then issue a warning or penalty to the student, and direct them towards an appropriate source of support within the University. by inviting the student for a meeting (either online or in person) or by requesting a written statement from the students.~~ If a meeting is requested, the student should be made aware of the stage of the investigation and may be accompanied at that meeting by a member of the University community, e.g. their Student Adviser or a caseworker from the Edinburgh University Students' Association Advice Place.
- ~~4.2~~ Where the student was invited to a preliminary meeting as in 3.2, the student must still be given an opportunity to respond to the allegation at this stage in the investigation in 4.1. ~~Unless a further meeting is required, this This can be done by of requesting a written statement from the students.~~
- ~~4.3~~ Where the student does not respond to the allegation, and the SAMO is satisfied that they have been given sufficient opportunity to do so, the SAMO may deal with the alleged academic misconduct offence in the absence of any further information. The student and the SAMO will be informed of the outcome and any penalty decision.
- ~~4.4~~ Where the student reports that the affected assessment was impacted by special exceptional circumstances, the SAMO will advise the student to request consideration of these by the appropriate Special Exceptional Circumstances Committee. The SAMO will not take account of special exceptional circumstances in reaching a penalty decision for the investigation. ~~For postgraduate research students, p~~
- ~~4.5~~ The following options are available to the SAMO:
- ~~(a)~~ To decide that, on the balance of probabilities, the allegation is not proven and no penalty or warning is therefore to be applied;
 - ~~(b)~~ In the case of a first academic misconduct offence which is a result of poor scholarly practice, the SAMO may decide that a mark penalty will not be appropriate;
 - ~~(c)~~ A penalty deducting no more than 10 marks under the relevant Common Marking Scheme from the face value mark will be applied to the face value mark. The penalty applied should be proportionate to the academic misconduct offence. The face value mark must be expressed as a mark out of 100 (e.g., 15/20 must be presented as 75/100 so that, for example, a 5 mark penalty would reduce the mark to 70/100);
 - ~~(d)~~ A penalty whereby ~~the~~ the mark is to be reduced to zero, where the assessment component is worth 5% or less of the course mark;
 - ~~(e)~~ Issue a FAIL for PASS/FAIL assessments, where the component is worth 5% or less of the course mark;

In addition to any actions taken under sections 4.5 b-e above, the SAMO may also do the following:

- ~~(f)~~ Issue a formal warning and/or ask the student to attend a mandatory meeting with the SAMO to discuss good academic practice.;



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4.6 Where a mark penalty ~~from~~ (options 4.5 c-e) has been issued, the SAMO will advise the Convener of the relevant Board of Examiners of the decision and the penalty ~~shall to be enacted~~ (see Section 7). A record of ~~all the~~ academic misconduct offences ~~breach~~ (including first offences under option 4.54 b) must be maintained by the SAMO and the student should be warned about the consequences of any further academic misconduct offence ~~misconduct breaches~~. Action should be taken within 15 working days of receiving an allegation of misconduct. ~~Alternatively, Where there is no case to answer,~~ the SAMO may direct another relevant member of academic staff to address the issue with the student in assessment feedback and/or via existing mark rubrics.

~~4.3.75~~ A face value mark that is appropriate for the work submitted as is should have been determined ~~by this point in the Academic Misconduct Report Form~~. A fair estimate mark that suitably reflects the student's own contribution to the work and takes the minor misconduct or poor scholarship into account should then be established, as advised in the Academic Misconduct Report Form.

~~3.6~~ The SAMO will refer all cases which fail to meet the criteria set out ~~in at 3.4.3 above to the CAMO~~. Allegations of serious misconduct, including examination misconduct and contract cheating, will always be referred to the CAMO.

~~3.7~~ The SAMO must refer cases to the CAMO within 15 working days of receiving an allegation of misconduct. Any allegations which arise outside of this period must also be referred to the CAMO within 15 working days of being detected.

~~3.8~~ When referring a case to the CAMO, the SAMO must complete the relevant section of the Academic Misconduct Report Form and submit this with any relevant documentation to the College Academic Misconduct Administrator.

~~3.9~~ When a case has been referred to the SAMO or the CAMO, marks for the student must not be ratified by Boards of Examiners or published until the investigation has been concluded.

4.8 The relevant College will keep a record of all cases where any outcomes ~~thing~~ under 4.6 b-f has been issued by the SAMO.

54. Investigation by the College Academic Misconduct Officer (CAMO) - suspected academic misconduct in taught courses

54.1 The CAMO is responsible for investigating all cases of suspected academic misconduct referred to them by a SAMO and for deciding on the penalty (if any) to be applied. As part of this investigation, the CAMO should ascertain whether or not this is the student's first academic misconduct offence (the relevant College can advise where it is a potential repeat academic misconduct offence). ~~breach of the Academic Misconduct Procedures~~.

54.2 If the CAMO considers there is a case to answer, they will write to the student suspected of an academic misconduct offence describing the alleged academic misconduct offence, notifying the student of the stage of the investigation ~~breach~~ and inviting the student to respond to the evidence reported by the School. ~~The CAMO will copy the initial correspondence to the student's Student Adviser and encourage the student to speak with their Student Adviser.~~



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- 5.3 Where the student was invited to a preliminary meeting as per 3.2, the student must still be given an opportunity to respond to the allegation at this stage in the investigation. Unless a further meeting is required, this can be done by requesting a written statement from the student.
- 54.43 Where the student responds to the allegation and there is sufficient information for the CAMO to make a decision, the CAMO may decide to take action without meeting the student. In such cases the CAMO will write to the student and the SAMO, to inform them of the outcome and any penalty decision. The SAMO will advise the Convener of the relevant Board of Examiners of the decision and any penalty to be enacted (see Section 6). If the CAMO's recommendations relate to specific staff members, the SAMO will forward each recommendation to the relevant staff member. Where appropriate, the SAMO, or another member of academic staff, will also offer to meet with the student concerned in order to provide advice on academic best practice.
- 54.54 Where the student does not respond to the allegation, and the CAMO is satisfied that they have been given sufficient opportunity to do so, the CAMO may deal with the alleged academic misconduct offence ~~breach~~ in the absence of any further information. The student and the SAMO will be informed of the outcome and any penalty decision. ~~as set out in paragraph 4.3.~~
- 54.65 The CAMO may decide it is necessary to invite the student to attend a formal academic misconduct interview. The interview will be conducted by a panel chaired by the CAMO (or nominee), and including at least one representative SAMO from that College (not from the same School as the student). The CAMO will be assisted by a note-taker who will take a record of the meeting.
- 54.76 Where the CAMO conducts an interview with the student, this should be held in person wherever possible. The student may be accompanied by a member of the University community, e.g. a caseworker ~~p~~ from the Edinburgh University Students' Association Advice Place, or their Student Adviser. If the student is unable to attend in person, the CAMO will consult with the student and select one of the following options:
- To conduct the interview electronically (e.g. by video, web-camera, etc.); **or**
 - To offer the student the opportunity to make a written submission.
- 54.87 In exceptional cases, the panel may invite an academic staff member with relevant specialist knowledge to attend the interview as an expert witness. In such cases, the expert will provide specialist knowledge to assist the panel in making a decision. However, the expert will not form part of the panel, and will not be involved in any decision making.
- 54.98 The purpose of the interview will be to enable the panel to obtain further relevant information about the alleged academic misconduct breach-offence and to allow the student the opportunity to put forward their response to the allegation. The panel will take this information into account when deciding on any penalty to be applied.
- 54.109 Following the interview, the CAMO will send a confidential report of the meeting to the student. The student will be given the opportunity to comment on the accuracy of the report. The CAMO will then approve a final version of the report.



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- 54.110** The CAMO, in consultation with the rest of the panel, will decide on the penalty, if any, to be applied (see **65.1** below). The CAMO will inform the student of the decision as soon as possible following the outcome of the meeting.
- 54.124** The CAMO will send a report of the meeting, the outcome, and any recommendations arising from the case, to the reporting SAMO and the School Fitness to Practise contact, if relevant.
- 45.132** The SAMO will forward the outcome of the case, including any penalty to be enacted, to the Convener of the relevant Board of Examiners (see section **67**). If the CAMO's recommendations relate to specific staff members, the SAMO will forward each recommendation to the relevant staff member. Where appropriate, the SAMO, or another member of academic staff, will also offer to meet with the student concerned in order to provide advice on academic best practice.
- 45.134** If an allegation of academic misconduct is upheld in relation to a student registered on a programme with Fitness to Practise requirements, further action may be taken under the relevant College Fitness to Practise Procedure. This will not involve reinvestigating the allegation of academic misconduct.
- 56. Penalty decisions available to the College Academic Misconduct Officer (CAMO) - academic misconduct in taught courses**
- 65.1** In deciding whether or not it is appropriate to apply a penalty, and which penalty to apply, the CAMO will take into account the severity, perceived intent and benefit to the student of the academic misconduct, as well as any previous ~~breaches of the Academic Misconduct offences~~Investigation Procedures.
- 65.2** Any penalty will apply **only** to the specific work assessment under investigation, which in itself may represent only a part of the overall course assessment. The College will retain a record of any penalties applied by the CAMO, but this will not appear on a student's transcript. In cases where one or more students have colluded on a piece of work, penalty decisions for each student will be made on an individual basis.
- 65.3** Where the student reports that the affected assessment was impacted by special exceptional circumstances, the CAMO will advise the student to request consideration of these by the appropriate Special Exceptional Circumstances Committee. The CAMO will not take account of special exceptional circumstances in reaching a penalty decision. For postgraduate research students, please also refer to 67.1 below.
- 65.4** The following options are available to the CAMO:
- To decide that on the balance of probabilities, the allegation is not proven and no penalty is therefore to be applied;
 - In the case of a first ~~academic misconduct offence~~breach which is a result of poor scholarly practice ~~rather than any deliberate attempt to deceive~~, the CAMO may decide that a mark penalty will not be appropriate;
 - A penalty deducting 10, 20, 30 or 50 marks under the relevant Common Marking Scheme from the face value mark will be applied. The penalty applied should be



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proportionate to the academic misconduct offence breach. The face value mark must be expressed as a mark out of 100 percentage using the relevant Common Marking Scheme (e.g., 15/20 must be presented as 75/100% so that, for example, a 30 mark penalty would reduce the mark to 45/100%);

- (d) The mark is to be reduced to zero or issue a FAIL for PASS/FAIL assessments;
- (e) In cases where students have colluded in producing a piece of work, the face value mark may be split (not necessarily equally) between the students involved. For instance, a face value mark of 70 may be split equally between two students, so that each student receives a mark of 35;
- (f) In serious cases, the CAMO may decide to refer the case for disciplinary action under the Code of Student Conduct. This may occur if the student has a record of previous academic misconduct breaches/offences, or in cases of serious misconduct (e.g. including but not limited to serious instances of contract cheating and exam misconduct, breach of duty of care e.g. in a professional/clinical setting, and failure to meet ethical, legal or professional obligations). In such cases, the CAMO investigation is equivalent to that of the Conduct Investigator for other student conduct cases, and no further investigation is required under the Code of Student Conduct. The CAMO may refer the case to a Student Discipline Officer, or to the Student Discipline Committee, as appropriate. If referring to the Student Discipline Committee, the CAMO should contact the Secretary to the Student Discipline Committee to discuss the matter. Details of the University disciplinary procedures and of the penalties available to Student Discipline Officers and the Student Discipline Committee under the Code of Student Conduct are available at: www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/discipline/code-discipline

In addition to any actions taken under sections 6.4 a-b-f above, the CAMO may also do the following:

- (g) Issue a formal warning and/or ask the student to attend a mandatory meeting with the SAMO to discuss good academic practice.

6.5 The relevant College will keep a record of all cases where anything under 6.5 b-g has been issued by the CAMO.

7.6. Application of penalties by the Board of Examiners - taught courses

7.6.1 The Board of Examiners is required to apply the mark penalty determined by the School Academic Misconduct Officer (SAMO) under section 4.5 c-e or College Academic Misconduct Officer (CAMO) under section 6.4 c-e. It cannot apply any additional penalty for the breach academic misconduct offence except in cases that involve an additional Fitness to Practise element and are referred for further consideration under the relevant College Fitness to Practise procedure. If the student has accepted Special-Exceptional Circumstances relating to the affected assessment the Board will take into account the recommendation of the Special-Exceptional Circumstances Committee when reaching its decision, in accordance with the Special-Exceptional Circumstances Policy and Regulation 43 of the Taught Assessment Regulations: www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/policies-regulations/regulations/assessment-regulations/taught



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B. Suspected academic misconduct in work submitted for postgraduate research programmes (other than taught components, which are investigated in line with A)

87. Reporting of suspected academic misconduct in postgraduate research programmes

87.1 Any member of staff who has evidence ~~where that~~ a student undertaking a postgraduate research programme ~~is suspected of may have breached the an A~~ academic ~~M~~misconduct ~~offence~~~~Investigation Procedures~~ (in the thesis or other work submitted for assessment and/or progression) must complete an Academic Misconduct Report Form in conjunction with the relevant SAMO. They must submit the form and any other relevant documentation to the CAMO.

87.2 The Academic Misconduct Report Form is available at:
www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/discipline/academic-misconduct

8.3 If the academic misconduct relates to a taught course, the procedure for academic misconduct in taught courses (outlined in section A) will apply;

98. Investigation by the College Academic Misconduct Officer (CAMO) – suspected academic misconduct in postgraduate research programmes

98.1 The CAMO is responsible for investigating all cases of suspected academic misconduct ~~referred to them by a SAMO~~ and for deciding on the penalty (if any) to be applied.

98.2 If the CAMO considers that there is a case to answer, the CAMO will arrange for an academic misconduct panel comprising the CAMO and one other relevant academic member of staff (for example a relevant College Dean or a Graduate School Director or School Academic Misconduct Officer from a different School in the same College) to interview the student, following the same procedure as outlined in ~~54.65-45.910~~.

98.3 The CAMO, in consultation with the rest of the panel, will decide on the penalty, if any, to be applied (see ~~109.1~~ below). The CAMO will inform the student of the decision as soon as possible following the outcome of the meeting. The CAMO will provide the student's principal supervisor with an outline of the decision.

98.4 Except in cases referred for further consideration under the Code of Student Conduct, once the CAMO has approved the report of the meeting and decided on the penalty (if any) to be applied, the CAMO will submit a written report to the SAMO for forwarding to the Convener of the relevant Board of Examiners or College committee which is responsible for overseeing postgraduate research studies within the relevant College. This will include details of any penalty which the Board must apply in light of the decision (see section ~~109~~ below).

109. Penalty decisions available to the College Academic Misconduct Officer (CAMO) – academic misconduct in postgraduate research programmes



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- 109.1** In deciding whether or not it is appropriate to apply a penalty, and which penalty to apply, the CAMO will take into account the severity, perceived intent and benefit to the student of the academic misconduct, as well as any previous academic misconduct ~~breaches~~offences.
- 109.2** Where the student reports that the affected assessment was impacted by ~~special~~exceptional circumstances, the CAMO will advise the student to request consideration of these by the appropriate Exceptional ~~Special~~ Circumstances Committee. The CAMO will not take account of exceptional ~~special~~ circumstances in reaching a ~~penalty~~ decision.
- 109.3** The following options are available to the CAMO:
- Decide that on the balance of probabilities the allegation of academic misconduct should not be upheld and no penalty is therefore to be applied;
 - Allow the student to edit and resubmit the work having corrected the affected section(s)*;
 - Instruct the examiners to reassess the work with the affected sections removed (without offering the student the chance to edit)*;
 - Deem the thesis (or dissertation, or other assessment or components of assessment) to have failed and instruct the Board of Examiners, or -will be deemed to be the College committee which is responsible for overseeing postgraduate research studies within the relevant College~~Board of Examiners accordingly~~;
 - In serious cases or where the student has a record of having a number of previous academic misconduct ~~offences~~breaches, the CAMO may decide to refer the case for disciplinary action under the Code of Student Conduct. In such cases, the CAMO investigation is equivalent to that of the Conduct Investigator for other student conduct cases, and no further investigation is required under the Code of Student Conduct. The CAMO may refer the case to a Student Discipline Officer, or to the Student Discipline Committee, as appropriate. If referring to the Student Discipline Committee, the CAMO should contact the Secretary to the Student Discipline Committee to discuss the matter. Details of the University disciplinary procedures and of the penalties available to Student Discipline Officers and the Student Discipline Committee under the Code of Student Conduct are available at: www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/discipline/code-discipline
- *Options (b) and (c) may involve the thesis no longer being fit for a specific award.
- 109.4** Where the work affected has been submitted for annual review the CAMO will submit a report, including a recommendation, to the student's annual review panel.
- 109.5** The relevant College will keep a record of any penalties applied by the CAMO under section 10.3 b-e; but this will not appear on a student's transcript.
- 110. Application of penalties by the Board of Examiners or equivalent College committee – postgraduate research programmes**
- 110.1** The Board of Examiners or equivalent College committee is required to apply the penalty determined by the College Academic Misconduct Officer (CAMO) under section 10.3 d. It cannot apply any additional penalty for the ~~academic misconduct offence~~breach. If the student has submitted Special-Exceptional Circumstances relating to the affected



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assessment the Board or Committee will take into account the decision of the Exceptional Special Circumstances Committee when reaching its decision, in accordance with the Exceptional Special Circumstances Policy:

<https://www.ed.ac.uk/student-administration/extensions-special-circumstances>

124. Students funded by UK Research and Innovation Councils

124.1 Where there is evidence that a student who is receiving funding from one of the UK Research Innovation (UKRI, formerly known as UK Research Councils) funding is suspected of an academic misconduct offence may have breached the Academic Misconduct Investigation Procedures in of their assessments funded UKRI funded research activity investigated their research, the University is required to report this to the UKRI relevant Research Council within one month of deciding to undertake a formal investigation under Section A, B or C. Staff reporting suspected academic misconduct to the relevant SAMO or CAMO should indicate on the Academic Misconduct Report form where a student is funded by a UKRI UK Research Council. Should the SAMO or CAMO decide that there is a case to answer, they will notify the relevant staff member managing the grant within the School or College, who will inform the UKRI relevant Research Council that a student in receipt of UKRI funding is under an academic misconduct investigation of the allegations against the student, and provide updates on the outcome of the case. Schools and Colleges should consult the UKRI Terms and Conditions of Grants when reporting any investigations of academic misconduct.

124.2 Policies and guidance relating to research integrity for students funded through UK research councils are published by UK Research and Innovation (formerly known as Research Councils UK), and can be found online at:
<https://www.ukri.org/publications/ukri-policy-on-the-governance-of-good-research-practice/>
www.ukri.org/about-us/policies-and-standards/research-integrity/

C. Suspected academic misconduct by graduates of the University

132. Reporting of suspected academic misconduct – graduates

132.1 Any member of staff who has evidence where that a graduate of the University is suspected of may have breached the an A academic M misconduct offence Investigation Procedures that could impact upon the award, or classification of award, including the award of postgraduate Merit or Distinction, must complete an Academic Misconduct Report Form in conjunction with the relevant SAMO. They should submit the form and any other relevant documentation to the CAMO.

143. Investigation by College Academic Misconduct Officer (CAMO) - graduates

143.1 If the CAMO considers there is a case to answer, the CAMO will write to the graduate notifying them of the allegations and inviting them to attend an interview. The interview procedures for graduates are identical to the investigation and interview procedures for enrolled students (sections 54.2 to 45.101 for taught courses, and 89.2 to 89.4 for research programmes).



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143.2 Following investigation the following options are open to the CAMO:

- (a) If there is no case to answer, or if it is concluded that academic misconduct is proven but was taken into account at the time of the original award, the CAMO will report the case and the outcome of the investigation to the Convener of the relevant Board of Examiners [or equivalent College committee](#). No further action will be taken;
- (b) If the allegation is found to be proven, but is unlikely to have impacted on the award or classification of award (including the award of postgraduate Merit or Distinction) made to the graduate, the CAMO will report the case and the outcome of the investigation to the Convener of the relevant Board of Examiners [or equivalent College committee](#). No further action will be taken;
- (c) If the allegation is found to be proven, and is likely to have impacted on the award or class of award made to the graduate, the CAMO will refer the case for disciplinary action under the Code of Student Conduct. In such cases, the CAMO investigation is equivalent to that of the Conduct Investigator for other student conduct cases, and no further investigation is required under the Code of Student Conduct. The CAMO may refer the case to a Student Discipline Officer, or to the Student Discipline Committee, as appropriate. If referring to the Student Discipline Committee, the CAMO should contact the Secretary to the Student Discipline Committee to discuss the matter. Details of the University disciplinary procedures and of the penalties available to Student Discipline Officers and the Student Discipline Committee under the Code of Student Conduct are available at:
www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/discipline/code-discipline

D. Review of a College Academic Misconduct Officer (CAMO) decision

154. Request for a review by the Board of Examiners

- 154.1 If the Board of Examiners, [or equivalent College committee for postgraduate research students](#), believes that there is a justifiable reason to challenge the CAMO's decision about the penalty to be applied, the Convener may request that the decision be referred for review by the CAMOs of the University's other two Colleges jointly. The relevant Convener will submit a request in writing to the relevant contact in [Registry Academic Services](#), outlining the reasons for challenging the decision. The Convener will write to the student to inform them that their case has been referred for review, explaining that the final course result has therefore not yet been agreed.
- 154.2 [Academic Registry Services](#) will arrange for the case to be reviewed by the CAMOs of the other two Colleges. The original investigating CAMO will be required to submit a copy of all of the case documentation which was considered by the CAMO along with copies of the report and decision letter. Each CAMO will be sent the documentation and will be asked to come to a decision separately before meeting to discuss the case; this meeting may be held by correspondence. The CAMOs may decide to invite the student to a further academic misconduct interview, following the same procedure as outlined in section [54.56 – 45.910](#). The CAMOs may be assisted by a note-taker who will take a record of the meeting.
- 154.3 Once the meeting and any further academic misconduct interview has been held, the two reviewing CAMOs will make a joint decision about whether or not to uphold the original



Academic Misconduct Investigation Procedures

investigating CAMO's decision, to rescind a penalty or to apply an alternative penalty. In determining an alternative penalty, the reviewing CAMOs may only choose from those penalties listed in ~~65~~.4 (for work submitted as part of a taught course), ~~910~~.3 (for students undertaking postgraduate research programmes) and ~~134~~.2 (for graduates).

- ~~154~~.4 [Academic-Registry](#) Services will notify the Convener of the Board of Examiners and the student in writing of the joint CAMO decision. The original investigating CAMO will be informed of the outcome of the review. The Board will be required to adhere to that decision and cannot request a further review. The Convener of the Board of Examiners will write to the student to inform them of the final course result agreed by the Board.

~~165~~. Student right of appeal

- ~~165~~.1 ~~CAMO decisions resulting in mark penalties are ratified by Boards of Examiners.~~ Students have a right to appeal decisions made by [the](#) Boards of Examiners, [or equivalent College committee for postgraduate research students](#), including decisions affected by the outcome of an academic misconduct investigation.

~~16.2~~ ~~Students have a right to appeal mark penalties made by a SAMO or CAMO and are only open to appeal once the relevant course mark has been ratified by the Board of Examiners or relevant College committee which is responsible for overseeing postgraduate research studies within the relevant College.~~

- ~~16.3~~ ~~The grounds for appeal are specified in the University's Student Appeal Regulations.~~ Students wishing to submit an academic appeal should refer to the University's Student Appeal Regulations and related guidance at: www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/students/appeals

~~September 2023~~ [May 2024](#)

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

23 May 2024

Programme and Course Handbooks Policy Update

Description of paper

1. Presents minor updates to the Programme and Course Handbooks Policy.

Action requested / recommendation

2. This paper is for approval.

Background and context

3. Academic Services conduct cyclical reviews of policies and procedures to ensure they remain fit for purpose. This Policy is reviewed annually to ensure that information and relevant web links remain accurate and up-to-date.

Discussion

4. Only essential updates were sought from content owners, for example, to correct factual inaccuracies, broken links, and/or to align with changes to other policies or external requirements. Minor changes have been made to the Policy, marked in tracked changes.
5. The Committee is asked to approve the minor changes to the Policy.

Resource implications

6. There are no potential resource implications indicated by the proposed minor amendments to the Policy.

Risk management

7. The proposed amendments do not introduce any new risks.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

8. Not applicable.

Equality & diversity

9. The proposed amendments do not present any equality and diversity implications.

Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed

10. If the proposed amendments are approved, Registry Services will include these as part of the annual New and Updated Policies email communication to Schools, Deaneries, and Colleges in the summer.

H/02/27/02

APRC 23/24 7J

Author

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Academic Policy Officer

Registry Services

Presenter

Patrick Jack

Academic Policy Officer

Registry Services

Freedom of Information: Open



Programme and Course Handbooks Policy

Purpose of Policy

To confirm the status, purpose and core content of programme and course handbooks.

Overview

The main aim of this policy is to ensure that students know where to find particular information on their programmes and courses through the provision of core content in handbooks. Programme and course handbooks are part of the academic governance framework of the University. Additionally, there are external requirements in relation to the provision of information for students that the University must follow.

Scope: Mandatory Policy

This policy applies to all staff who are producing programme and course handbooks and applies to both taught and research programmes.

Contact

[Academic-Registry](#) Services

[Aacademicpolicy-
Services@ed.ac.uk](#)

Document control

Dates	Approved: 14.04.16 XXXXXX	Starts: 01.08.16	Equality impact assessment: 25.05.15	Amendments: 23 5.05. 24 3	Next Review: 2023 /2028/ 294
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Approving authority

Senatus Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

Section responsible for policy maintenance & review

[Academic-Registry](#) Services

Related policies, procedures, guidelines & regulations

[Creating Accessible Handbooks Guidance](#)

Alternative format

If you require this document in an alternative format please email Academic.Services@ed.ac.uk or telephone 0131 651 4490.

Keywords

Programme, course, handbook



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Programme and Course Handbooks Policy

Status of Programme and Course Handbooks

Programme and course handbooks are part of the academic governance framework of the University and are referenced in the Degree Programme Regulations. Therefore, as well as providing information for students on their programme and courses, they can be used to stipulate requirements. Once approved and published, the details set out in programme and course handbooks must be adhered to by students and staff for the academic session to which it applies.

A **programme** of study is the sum of all the elements leading to a defined graduating curriculum. A **course** is a unit of teaching and learning formally offered within the University, which carries credit expressed in credit points and which may contribute to a University award.¹

Requirements

It is the responsibility of Schools to determine how best to provide students with programme and course information. The “home” School must ensure that students are provided with all the necessary information to cover their programme and courses (of particular importance for joint awards). Additionally, consideration should be given to ensuring that students who are taking outside courses are provided with all necessary information. It is not a requirement that handbooks are created for all programmes and courses, but students must be provided with the core content detailed below using an appropriate combination of programme and course handbooks. It is of particular importance that formal agreed assessment and feedback activities (as detailed in the course descriptor) and any related requirements are explicitly communicated in written form at the outset of each programme or course. This does not preclude additional formative assessment and feedback opportunities.

Other types of handbooks are not part of the academic governance framework of the University and are not required to adhere to this policy. Additionally, other types of handbooks (e.g. School or year level handbooks) should not contain any regulatory or academic compliance requirements.

Programme or course handbooks do not need to be physical documents. It may be that information is held on a website, wiki or virtual learning environment and forms the equivalent of a programme or course handbook. Students should be made aware of which form(s) of media their course and/or programme handbooks are held. This policy applies to all forms of media.

The [Creating Accessible Handbooks guidance](#) should be followed for programme and course handbooks. There are no other design requirements in relation to programme and course handbooks.

The core content listed below must be included in programme and course handbooks and can be presented in any order. Core content can be supplemented with any other information the School wishes to provide.

Where information is owned and maintained by another area, links should be provided rather than cutting and pasting it into handbooks. This approach aims to reduce the risk of misinforming students and also to reduce the time taken by staff to produce handbooks. Particular examples include course and programme information on the Degree Regulations and Programmes of Study (DRPS) and academic regulations, policies and guidance.

¹ [University Glossary of Terms](#)



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Programme and Course Handbooks Policy

Programme and course handbook content must align with the information on the DRPS (including the Degree Programme Specification, the Degree Programme Table and the course descriptor) which forms the definitive record of programme and course information.

Final versions of programme and course handbooks must be made available to students at the start of a programme or course. The Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy requires reading lists (at minimum indicative core texts) be made available at least four weeks before the start of the course (with additional reading that indicates priority/relevance provided nearer to the start date of the course). Therefore, if reading lists are only contained within handbooks, these need to be made available to students within this timeframe. Arrangements should be made to provide handbooks in an alternative format upon request.

Approval Process

Boards of Studies have responsibility for the formal oversight of programme and course handbooks. In practice the approval of handbooks can be delegated to members of staff within a School as part of an approvals process that ensures accuracy of information and all handbooks are approved prior to the commencement of a course or programme. Boards of Studies need to have formal oversight of the approvals process and would be expected to record that handbooks had been approved at the relevant Board of Studies meeting.

Changes

Exceptionally, changes may need to be made to a programme or course handbook after publication. In this case, all students who are affected by the change must be informed as soon as possible. Changes which differ from the approved programme and course information in the DRPS (including the statement of assessment) are not permitted.

Purpose

Programme Handbooks

- A source of information and guidance for students on a specific programme or group of programmes.
- Work in conjunction with degree programme tables, degree programme specifications, degree programme regulations, and assessment regulations to provide students with all the information they require for their studies.
- A collection of information and “signposts” to information that exists elsewhere.
- Contain core content.
- An information resource for staff, external examiners, and professional, statutory and regulatory bodies.

Course Handbooks

- A source of information and guidance for students on a specific course or group of courses.
- Work in conjunction with the course descriptor to provide students with all the information they require for a specific course.
- A collection of information and “signposts” to information that exists elsewhere.
- Contain core content
- An information resource for staff, external examiners, and professional, statutory and regulatory bodies.



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Programme and Course Handbooks Policy

Core Content

Core Content	Description/further information		Reference/Source
Session that the Handbook applies to	State the session that the handbook applies to and make it clear that the University may make changes to the course / programme for future sessions.		
Organisation (for accessibility)	Contents page Glossary ² Standard text (in Arial 14 bold): "If you require this document or any of the internal University Of Edinburgh online resources mentioned in this document in an alternative format please contact [name and contact details]" It is good practice to provide two methods of contact e.g. phone number and email or email and postal address		
Details	Programme Name, date of publication	Course Name, code, level and credits, date of publication	Path Course descriptor in the DRPS
Overview*	Programme Structure and core courses, aims, learning outcomes and graduate attributes	Course Timeline of activities: lectures; tutorials; laboratories; placements; syllabus; learning outcomes	Degree Programme Tables and Degree Programme Specifications in the DRPS Course descriptor in the DRPS
Assessment and feedback information[^]	To include: submission and feedback deadlines, extensions procedures, late penalties, word count, submission procedures, dissertation (or equivalent) arrangements (including supervision), information on good academic practice, and exam diet dates		Statement of Assessment in Taught Assessment Regulations

² Can assist with the Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy requirement: Key technical words and/or formulae shall be provided to students at least 24 hours in advance of the class.



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Programme and Course Handbooks Policy

Core Content	Description/further information	Reference/Source
<p>PGT handbooks only Dissertation or research project supervision</p>	<p>Standard text: “The dissertation/research project is an independent piece of work. You will be allocated a supervisor, who will provide you with advice and guidance in relation to the dissertation/research project, but you should remember that the sole responsibility for the academic quality of your dissertation/research project lies with you. You should research and develop your own ideas, and discuss your proposed approaches with your supervisor. Feedback you receive from your supervisor is intended as guidance, and must not be interpreted as an indication that your work will receive a particular final mark/outcome.</p> <p>You may be allocated a supervisor whose area of expertise is not a precise match for your chosen area of research, but who has the required expertise to supervise a dissertation/research project. All supervisors are experienced and knowledgeable regarding academic writing.”</p> <p>Provide information regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expected timelines relating to supervision, e.g. when supervision starts and ends; • The number of meetings students can expect with their supervisor; • Expectations regarding email contact with the supervisor; • How many draft chapters the supervisor will review and comment upon; • Whom students should contact if they experience problems with their supervision. 	
Referencing guidance	Add referencing guidance	
Marking scheme[^]		Extended Common Marking Scheme
Prioritised reading list^{3^}	<p>Or learning resources</p> <p>It is a requirement of the Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy that reading lists shall indicate priority and/or relevance.</p>	Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy
Contacts	<p>Key programme staff contact details</p> <p>It is good practice to provide two methods of contact e.g. phone number and email or email and postal address</p>	
Dates⁺	Important dates not detailed elsewhere (including timescales for online distance learning students)	
Timetable[^]	Link to student-facing timetabling service	My Timetable Course Timetable Browser

³ Please note the Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy requirement: Course outlines and reading lists shall be made available at least 4 weeks before the start of the course. Reading lists at this stage may focus on the core texts only (where they are used). Additional reading may be provided nearer to the start date of the course.



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Programme and Course Handbooks Policy

Core Content	Description/further information	Reference/Source
Lecture recording	If the course involves lectures, inform students which of their lectures will be recorded or not. An appropriate explanation should be provided to students where a lecture will not be recorded.	Lecture Recording Policy Virtual Classroom Policy
Key locations	Teaching Office, laboratories, online environments (VLE, etc.), etc.	
Progression requirements and award criteria		Degree Programme Regulations in the DRPS
“Local” requirements+	College, School, programme, or course-specific requirements	
Attendance requirements	Please note there are particular requirements for UKVI sponsored students: Schools should ensure that students are made aware of their attendance, engagement and on-campus obligations. Handbooks should include this information, together with guidance on how all students should submit requests for absences (special-exceptional circumstances, interruptions of study, leave of absence, etc.) Immigration information for staff	Student Immigration Service
Reference to relevant University regulations	Add links to University regulations, policies and procedures	Academic Regulations Complaints Handling Procedure Academic Appeals Academic Misconduct (including plagiarism) Special Circumstances Dignity and Respect For general information on rules, regulations and policies: Student Contract webpage
Student Support	Including what happens when things go wrong	For students who have a Student Adviser: information on the new Student Support model: Academic Life and Student Support Statements



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Core Content	Description/further information	Reference/Source
Student Wellbeing	Standard text: “As with all transitions in life studying at university can be both exciting and challenging. Whether it is your first time at university or you are returning to higher education, and whether you have a pre-existing mental health condition or not, it is important to look after yourself. University life can be busy and stressful at times, this can in turn cause our state of wellbeing to fluctuate. We all have strategies for coping with life and it is important to continue using and revising these skills to maintain your wellbeing. This is crucial to allow you to experience a positive and happy university journey. The University provides a range of support, evidence-based resources, and workshops which are available to you. These are provided by a number of different services, including the Centre for Sport and Exercise, Chaplaincy, Student Counselling, Disability and Learning Support Services, the Student Wellbeing Service, the Institute for Academic Development, the Equally Safe team, Report + Support platform and the Edinburgh University Students' Association.”	Health and wellbeing student webpages
Student Feedback	Detail the opportunities available for students to provide feedback on their experiences and how they will be informed of action taken in response to feedback provided	Student Voice Policy
Student representative structure	Standard text: “ Student representatives – both Programme and Elected Representatives – work closely with staff to ensure your voice is heard on the issues that matter to you, from teaching and learning, to student support, key services, and your sense of belonging to the University community. Throughout the year, representatives will gather feedback from you, share that feedback with relevant staff and other student representatives including the five full-time Sabbatical Officers, and work to enhance your student experience. Your School will facilitate communication between you and your representatives, in-line with this guidance . Student representatives are trained and supported by staff within the Students' Association.” Include the name only of the School Representative(s) as appropriate.	Students' Association Your Voice



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Core Content	Description/further information	Reference/Source
Peer Support+	<p>Standard text (edit as appropriate to course/programme): “Peer Learning and Support in the context of the University means a student with more experience sharing their knowledge, skills, abilities and expertise with a new or less experienced student. Peer Learning and Support Schemes may focus around advancing your academic work, providing 1-2-1 mentoring, or opportunities to socialise with other students within your School or offering additional support to ensure your wellbeing while at University. The Students’ Association, in partnership with Schools and University Services, provide some of these opportunities, facilitated by trained student volunteers, at both the undergraduate and postgraduate level of study at Edinburgh. Other peer support opportunities are also provided by the University. Peer Assisted Learning Schemes (more commonly known as PALS), involve trained volunteers in second year and above who plan and facilitate structured study sessions for other students. These academic sessions cover a variety of topics, including settling into university life, study skills, course content, module choices, assessment and the skills students need to excel in their degrees. Peer Support Schemes (e.g. academic families, buddies, clans or similar) aim to building a sense of community for students, enhance student well-being and enrich the university experience. Peer Support Schemes are based on a model where higher year’s students plan and run regular sessions to foster a sense of community and belonging through the integration of the year groups. Sessions can vary depending on the Scheme, but sessions usually have a specific well-being or academic focus, while others provide more social opportunities to facilitate meeting new people. Peer Mentoring Schemes are a form of peer support that take place in a 1-2-1 environment, whether this is in person or online. Peer Mentoring Schemes usually have a pastoral/welfare or academic focus, however we do also have some identity based Schemes available for example our LGBTQ+ Peer Mentoring Scheme.”</p> <p>Detail available Peer Support opportunities</p>	<p>Peer Learning and Support</p> <p>Peer Learning and Support schemes</p>
Reference to University and Students’ Association Support Services	Provide information via the thematic student website	<p>Students Students’ Association – Advice Place</p> <p>Link to Support and professional services</p>



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Core Content	Description/further information	Reference/Source
Accreditation to external bodies, discipline-specific career/industry information+	Detail here as appropriate	
Name, position and institution of External Examiner(s)^	Where an External Examiner is appointed to fulfil a role on behalf of a professional body, this will also be stated. Students must be informed in the handbook that they must not make direct contact with External Examiners, and that other routes exist for queries about the assessment process.	External Examiners for Taught Programmes Policy
Health and safety	<p>Standard text: “The University has a duty, so far as reasonably practicable, to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all employees and students while at work, and the safety of all authorised visitors and members of the public entering the precincts of the University. The University Health and Safety Policy is issued upon the authority of the University Court and contains the Health and Safety Policy statement and summary of the organisation and arrangements of health and safety within the University. The successful implementation of the University Policy requires the support and co-operation of all employees and students - no person shall intentionally interfere with, or misuse anything provided by the University in the interest of health, safety or welfare.</p> <p>The University Health and Safety Policy The University Health and Safety Policy is supported by a Framework document published in two parts on the Organisation and Arrangements of health and safety within the University. Individuals are required to comply with any procedures or arrangements formulated under the authority of this Policy. Any questions or problems about matters of health and safety can be taken up initially with the School Safety Adviser. Further guidance on health and safety matters can be found on the Health and Safety Department website at http://www.ed.ac.uk/health-safety including contact details for all professional staff within the corporate Health and Safety Department.”</p> <p>Provide information on local health and safety arrangements (including for online distance learning students).</p>	Health and Safety Policy



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Programme and Course Handbooks Policy

Core Content	Description/further information	Reference/Source
Data Protection	<p>Standard text: “Under Data Protection Law, personal data includes all information about a living, identifiable individual. Students using personal data as part of their studies must comply with the University's data protection policy and the related responsibilities as outlined in the linked guidance. Before using personal data as part of their studies students must become familiar with the linked guidance, discuss implications with their supervisor and seek appropriate ethics approval. They must also obtain consent from the data subjects to take part in the studies. Failure to comply with the responsibilities under the policy is an offence against University discipline. A breach of the University policy can cause distress to the people the information is about, and can harm relationships with research partners, stakeholders, and funding organisations. In severe circumstances the University could be sued, fined up to £17,500,000^{£20,000,000}, and experience reputational damage.”</p> <p>Provide information on local data protection arrangements (including for online distance learning students).</p>	Student responsibilities when using personal data
PGR handbooks only		
Supervision	Information on supervisory arrangements and expectations, including annual progression review.	
Thesis (or equivalent) requirements	To include local context on expected thesis length	
Training and development	To cover: research culture; professional development; research skills training; and teaching.	Policy for the recruitment, support and development of tutors and demonstrators
Code of Practice	Provide a link to the Code of Practice for Supervisors and Research Students	Code of Practice for Supervisors and Research Students

+ If applicable

* As applicable for research programmes

^ Taught programmes only

Senate APRC Committee**23rd May 2024****Exceptional Circumstances Communication Plan****Description of paper**

1. This paper contributes to the University Strategy 2030 values and outcomes, including:

We will be a destination of choice, based on our clear “Edinburgh Offer”. All of our staff and students will develop here, whether they are from Leith, Lisbon, Lahore or Lilongwe.

We will be leading Scotland’s commitment to widening participation.

The undergraduate curriculum will support breadth and choice, preparing students, graduates and alumni to make a difference in whatever they do, wherever they do it.

The Exceptional Circumstances policy approved by APRC in 2023/24, aims to provide support for students on our undergraduate and postgraduate taught courses should their studies be impacted through circumstances outside their control. It is part of a wider network of support also provided by Student Advisers and Wellbeing Support. This paper focuses on the implementation of the policy and the need for consistent, coordinated, and clear communication to support a strong student and staff experience.

Action requested / recommendation

2. The committee is asked **to note** the planned actions and provide any feedback in regards to the plan and timelines to communicate the implementation of the Exceptional Circumstances policy and the relevant system changes.

Background and context

3. The Exceptional Circumstances policy was approved by APRC in the 23/24 academic cycle for implementation at the start of 24/25. A full implementation plan has been developed to reflect the planned system changes. This document confirms how and when we will communicate the changes to varying stakeholder.
4. We will reflect on lessons learned from the implementation of the ESC Service in 2020/21 and a recent web project focused on student communication.
5. Through the system development testing which includes students and staff we are focusing on key cohorts, such as those with disability profiles, and taking in feedback to inform our communication plan.

Discussion

6. The Exceptional Circumstances policy will enable students to apply for up to three coursework extensions which will be automatically approved. Students can then apply for Exceptional Circumstances which is evidence-based with updated grounds for approval.

7. The system developments are underway to support the policy with planned implementation date of September 2024.
8. We need to begin to communicate the policy change to cohorts of students and staff after the current round of progression and award boards in June 2024.
9. The plan considers our stakeholders, including our largest audience, which is continuing students who have experienced the Extensions and Special Circumstances Policy and System.
10. Developing an institutional statement in relation to the motivation and reasoning for the policy changes is key and this is being developed with Communication and Marketing colleagues.

Resource implications

11. There are no additional resource implications in relation to the communications plan and its implementation. The plan is focused on ensuring communication is timely and effective to reduce the potential for higher levels of support for students and staff as we transition to the new policy.

Risk management

12. There is a risk we do not meet the objectives outlined in the plan and the impact this may have on the staff and student experience. We plan to mitigate the risk through education and awareness through proactive and timely communications.

Equality & diversity

13. An Equality Impact Assessment has been approved for Exceptional Circumstances policy which includes the implementation.
14. We are working closely with DLSS in relation to those with disability profiles to simplify access to the service and system.

Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed

15. The paper outlines how and when we will communicate the implementation and operation of the new Exceptional Circumstances policy and related system change with students and staff across the university, this includes:
 - Email communication to students and staff (schools and University Services);
 - Training and awareness session in relation to the policy and system for key stakeholders;
 - Templates to support school communication, Learn Ultra pages, and course/programme handbooks;
 - Student and staff facing service webpages.

The timetable is focused on the varying cohorts of staff and student to ensure relevant timing and the incremental development of the system.

Author

Sarah McAllister
Head of Student Support Operations
Registry Services

Presenter

Lisa Dawson
Academic Registrar

Freedom of Information

Open

Exceptional Circumstances Communication Plan

Background and Aims

The communication campaign detailed in this document aims to support students and staff to understand and engage with the new Exceptional Circumstances (EC) policy which will replace the existing Special Circumstances and Coursework Extension policy from 1 August 2024. The key changes are students will be able to apply for three coursework extensions per academic year with automatic approval. After this point, students can apply for exceptional circumstances supported with evidence. The grounds for which a student can apply for exceptional circumstances have been updated to reflect the exceptional nature to the new policy. To effectively implement the new policy Registry Services will support system and process changes alongside training and communication for students and staff.

In the 22/23 academic year, a review of Extensions and Special Circumstances (ESC) was undertaken focusing on the system, service, and policy from the point of implementation to identify enhancements and lessons learned. The review sought feedback from all Schools through in person visits. As part of the recommendations related to the service element of the review, student and staff webpages were a key focus. As a result, a project was commissioned to review the webpages undertaken by a User Experience Consultant and Web Content Designer. The project included staff and student workshops and group and individual feedback sessions on the existing and newly designed pages. This included students who engaged with the service via the Disability and Learning Support Service.

To implement the new EC policy for the 24/25 academic year, the feedback and design principles from the recent web project will be utilised given their continued relevance to ensure ease of access to information, particularly, for students who are in distress.

The aim of this document is to set out the target audiences, the communication objectives, key messaging, methods and plans for evaluation of this communication plan. The overall aim is to ensure ease of access to the service and to provide the right guidance at the right time for students.

In order to empower the communications and support consistency of messaging, an institutional statement on why these changes have been made will be created. This is particularly relevant for continuing students who have a specific understanding of the support provided and process to seek support through ESC. Communication and Marketing will support the development of an institutional statement.

It is important to note for staff facing communication and training, the system changes are in development, with the first phase of changes due to deliver ahead of the new academic year commencing.

Target audiences

The Exceptional Circumstances policy and system can be used by undergraduate and postgraduate taught students, as well as postgraduate research students undertaking taught courses. Students are the largest audience, and there are a number of distinct cohorts to consider, including:

- continuing students who have used the current system since the 2020/21 academic year;
- new students who have no experience of the policy or system;
- students with a Schedule of Adjustments for disability who use the Extra Time Tool;
- staff supporting students, such as, Student Advisers and Teaching Office staff;
- academic staff, such as, Cohort Leads, Course Organisers, and Programme Directors;
- staff in University Professional Services, such as, Disability and Learning Support Service (DLSS), Wellbeing Service, Student Counselling Service, and the EUSA Advice Place.

Students with a disability profile have been specifically identified given the allocation of support provided in the new policy. For example, once a student supplies the evidence to support the creation of their disability profile, the service are reviewing the need to provide additional evidence when there is a repeat of a known condition. This is a change in approach, driven by students through feedback in recent testing of the system design from students with disability profiles who have engaged with the current ESC system and the ETA Tool.

Over 50% of current coursework applications are focused on short term mental health. Transitioning to a policy that focuses on exceptional circumstances, will need to be clear in defining acute, particularly, in relation to applications focused on short term mental health. Students often write about stress, anxiety, and loss of sleep particularly in relation to examinations. The service is working closely with the University GP Practice and DLSS to define acute and to be able to refer students, particularly, continuing students, to resources for wellbeing support. Key here will be support from Schools in advance of peak periods. The service has undertaken a journey mapping exercise to review common physical and mental health cases through the new policy to ensure no disadvantage to students. From June 2024, Outcomes will be shared with the ESC User Group and via the staff facing service webpages at [Information for Staff | The University of Edinburgh](#).

For the initial ESC implementation, the service provided Schools with staff and student facing [templates](#) which had a variety of engagement. The service noted Schools who took a proactive and repetitive approach to communication of the new policy and service changes, reported less disruption and were able to engage in the ESC reports to identify and support students. The service also received a reduced volume of emails from students and academic staff seeking guidance and support. The service updates the templates annually to support Schools and are developing updated templates to support the policy and system changes which will be tested and shared through the ESC User Group.

There is an opportunity to enhance support via EC through a trauma informed approach to support students who have concerns about reporting their circumstances for a variety of reasons. These can include students who are reporting gender-based violence or are unable to make an application, e.g. due to being hospitalised. Staff within the service will receive trauma informed training to support the assessing of applications for validity and to support the creation of the updated application form and within our communication, including our webpages.

Timetable

A campaign for staff facing communication focused on education and awareness of the new policy, service and system changes will commence in June 2024 with feedback and support from APRC on our planned approach.

Given the volume of referrals made to the service by DLSS staff to the ESC Service, we have taken initial steps and are organising a session with DLSS that will include Academic Services and the EC Service introducing the new policy, and proposed system changes given the direct role Disability Advisors have with students and the follow of referrals received for special circumstances. Similar sessions will be held for schools and other relevant services.

The second phase, during the summer period, will be student facing communication, again broken down into continuing and existing.

A variety of methods of communication will be used for the target audiences.

Month	Audience	Focus	Contributors	Communication Methods
Mid June	Staff facing – Student Advisers, Cohort Leads, Teaching Organisation Managers, and Teaching Organisation staff, staff within University Support Services (DLSS, Counselling, Wellbeing), EUSA Advice Place	Policy, System, Service	Registry Services (EC and Student Systems Partnership), Communication and Marketing, EC Team	Recorded information sessions focused on cohorts of staff relevant to role and EC engagement. Updated webpages staff facing webpages Planned incremental communications, such as, email – University level and more focused to College, Schools, and roles
August through to September	Existing students, including those with a disability profile Include in returning student communications	Policy, System, Service	Communication and Marketing, EC Team School	Service webpages Video content School templates Direct communications Joint communications with DLSS
September through to end of October	New students, including those with a disability profile	Policy, System, Service	Communication and Marketing, EC Team	Service webpages Video content

			Induction team School	School templates Direct communications Joint communications with DLSS
September	Launch of new service name	Service	Service Communication and Marketing	Re-direction of URLs Emails Staff facing announcements Student facing announcements via schools.
November 2024	Evaluation point for volume of inquiries and rejected applications to adjust comms – focused on semester 1 deadlines	Policy, System	Communication and Marketing, EC Team Schools Students	Measurement of service statistics Surveys ESC User Group
January 2024	Evaluation point for volume of inquiries and rejected applications to adjust comms – focused on semester 1 completion	Policy, System	EC Team Schools Students	Measurement of service statistics Surveys ESC User Group
June 2024	Evaluation point – focused on full academic year planning for 25/26	Policy, System, Service	EC Team and Schools Schools Students University Services	Summary of: Measurement of service statistics Surveys ESC User Group

Communications Objectives

The objectives of the campaign are:

- students and staff to understand the support available in regards to coursework extensions and exceptional circumstances;
- reduce confusion between the existing and new policy and process changes as far as possible and to ensure schools are communicating with academic staff;

- University Support Services are clear on the change in policy and system through training and guidance made available;
- staff, including academic staff, to understand and accept the policy changes through education and awareness in order to be able to give consistent and correct guidance to students;
- for students to easily access the service and provide information at the right time;
- for communication to be clear, timely, and in plain English aligning with the recommendations from the ESC recent web project.

Key Principles

Consistency will be key in regards to why the policy change has taken place through an institutional statement. We must ensure we address potential student concerns or perception of a reduction in support as this is not the case. The introduction of three automated coursework extension applications will give students the autonomy to use the support when needed without supplying detailed statements. After this point, students will be able to apply for exceptional circumstances with guidance from their Student Adviser, if needed. The grounds for exceptional circumstances have been updated to reflect circumstances

A focus on simplification through use of plain English and easy to understand system guidance for both students and staff.

The need for patience, there will be varying levels of understanding and buy in. We will see an increase in inquiries from students and staff and we will evaluate continuously how we can respond to repeated concerns or issues raised through enhancing or adjusting our approach. We will have a new approach to evidence for the team to evaluate validity. We have sought support for the University GP Practice and DLSS. We are predicting more dialogue between school, students and the service as some grounds will no longer be acceptable. We will seek to clarify as far as possible on evidence as we gain experience with the new policy.

Evaluation

It is anticipated there will be higher levels of enquiries to the service from students and Schools as the new policy and system embeds; feedback will enable rapid response and adjustment to communications/web pages. The ESC User Group will continue as a forum for staff system users and building of a community of practice. We will plan to review the implementation of the new policy in first semester, including how students and staff are engaging with the service, in order to make any required adjustments in our approach. An update will be provided to APRC on any metrics available given reporting is yet to be confirmed in the new system. A subsequent review at the end of the academic cycle to inform any system enhancements requests and to enable the service to prepare for communication updates for the 25/26 academic year.

Sarah McAllister
Head of Student Support Operations
May 2024

Senate Academic Policy and Regulations Committee

23 May 2024

**Approval of Pass/Fail arrangement for:
Year abroad work for degrees in languages and history: Courses undertaken
at the American University in Cairo by Arabic + History students during the
first semester (Semester 1)**

Description of paper

1. Request for approval of the pass/fail arrangement of the course listed above. The course will contribute to the following 2030 strategies:
 - a. The undergraduate curriculum will support breadth and choice, preparing students, graduates and alumni to make a difference in whatever they do, wherever they do it.
 - b. We will have more user-friendly processes and efficient systems to support our work.

Action requested / recommendation

2. Formal approval of the course listed above (Code to be confirmed once created in Euclid). The 40 credit course has been approved by the School of History, Classics and Archaeology (HCA) Board of Studies following consultation with the School of Literature, Languages and Cultures (LLC) and will be available to students on the Arabic and History degree from academic year 24/25.

Background and context

3. In August 2023, the Academic Policy and Regulations Committee approved the pass/fail arrangements of two courses HIST10509 and HIST10510 which allowed LLC students on the Language and History degree to study a history course at the host university in one or both semesters. (See APRC paper attached.)
4. At that time, the Arabic and History programme was not included due to the particular arrangements at the American University of Cairo which required all pre-approved courses to be taken in Semester 1. The original 40 credit course, CHAC10004 was therefore retained in this degree.
5. Following review, the History Subject Area wish to make a number of changes to the 40 credit course, including a change of name which would require a new course code to be created in the system. This would provide more clarity for students on this degree, outlining a distinction between the 40 credit Semester 1 course for students studying at the American University of Cairo, or a choice of 20 credit courses consistent with other joint language and History degrees for students studying at other universities.
6. Students on the above course will receive credits on a pass/fail basis. This is in line with the process already in place for HIST10509 and HIST10510 and for all non-mandatory year abroad History students. Moreover, and as with LLC's 'ELCC10004: Language acquisition through residence/study B', credits for these courses will be awarded following assessment in the Final Year. The pass/fail requirement not only ensures consistency and efficiency in processing credits for those students, but also provides an incentive for students to develop their

linguistic and historical skills without the marks awarded by their host universities distorting their overall degree classification.

Discussion

7. Following consultation with colleagues in LLC, the course proposal was submitted to the HCA Board of Studies on the 10th April 2024 (see appendix 1: Course Proposal Form). The board approved this proposal (see appendix 2: extract from the Board of Studies minutes).

The approval will be passed to LLC for update in the Degree Programme Table for Year 3, Arabic and History (MA Hons) 24/25 (see appendix 3: Programme Amendment Form)

We would like to request approval from the Academic Policy and Regulations Committee for the pass/fail arrangement of the course. Designating this course as pass/fail ensures efficient processing of credits for these courses, and avoids potential inconsistency between different marking schemes in the host universities.

Resource implications

8. The increased clarity within the DPT and DRPS will improve efficiency in the course enrolment process.

Risk management

9. N/A

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

10. N/A

Equality & diversity

11. Maintaining flexibility within this degree will ensure students can continue to study a wider variety of subjects and perspectives.

Communication, implementation and evaluation of the impact of any action agreed

12. Once approved, I will communicate the decision to LLC who will make the required changes within the degree programme.

Author

*School of History, Classics and
Archaeology*

Freedom of Information (Is the paper 'open' or 'closed')

Open

Appendix 1: Proposal form submitted to the Board of Studies**Change to Course: CHCA10004 Year Abroad Work for Degrees in Languages and History****Proposer: Wannas Dupont**

1. Case for Support:

Ahead of AY 23/24, changes were made to the Year Abroad Courses for students on Language and History degrees to allow students to take either courses in their host institution or complete Year Abroad work set by the subject area. Students could choose either option per semester, completing a 20 credit course per semester.

Students on Arabic and History who study at the American University in Cairo have a different arrangement whereby they must take pre-approved courses at the host institution (worth 40 UoE credits), all courses must be undertaken in the first semester due to the structure of the AUC programme. Therefore, the changes put in place for other degrees this year were not appropriate for these students. We originally retained course CHCA10004 in the Arabic and History degree to allow for this.

Following review, we would like to make the following changes to allow a 40 credit Sem 1 course for students in AUC, but also to provide the same level of choice that now exists in other degrees, to non-AUC students on Arabic and History.

This proposal focuses on the changes to this 40 credit course, this will require a new course to be created due to the name change. There is a separate proposal to confirm the wider change to the degree programme.

2. Changes:

Section	Current	Change to:
Course Name	Year Abroad Work for Degrees in Languages and History	Year abroad work for degrees in languages and history: Courses undertaken at the American University in Cairo by Arabic + History students during the first semester.
Summary	<p>During their third year abroad while studying for these combined degrees, students will...</p> <p>EITHER:</p> <p>1) write two essays under the supervision of a member of the School of History, Classics and Archaeology. One essay will examine a historiographic topic, while the other will be based on primary sources. Materials for both essays will be available online.</p> <p>OR:</p>	Students on the Arabic and History programme who are studying at AUC must take pre-approved history courses at AUC where appropriate exchange is allowed/available.

	2) Students on the Arabic and History programme who are studying at AUC are permitted to take pre-approved history courses where appropriate exchange is allowed/available	
Course Description	For students who choose the two year abroad essays (worth 40 credit points), these are the only pieces of work that students are expected to do in their third year for History. They will help students develop the analytical skills that they have acquired in the previous two years of study.	<p>This course should only be selected by Arabic + History exchange students at the AUC who will be fulfilling their full History requirement (the equivalent of 40 UoE credits) during the first semester by taking pre-approved courses at their exchange destination.</p> <p>All other Languages + History students, including Arabic + History students not studying at the American University in Cairo, should enrol in the appropriate combination of courses HIST10509, HIST10510, HIST10501 and HIST10502.</p>
Assessment	<p>EITHER: Two 4000-word essays, each worth 50%.</p> <p>OR: Assessment undertaken as part of the pre-approved history courses for students on the Arabic and History programme studying at AUC.</p>	<p>Assessment undertaken as part of the pre-approved history courses for students on the Arabic and History programme studying at AUC.</p> <p>Assessment arrangements are set by the host university. The course will be graded as pass/fail.</p>
Learning Outcomes	<p>On completion of this course, the student will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrate, by way of coursework, an ability to read, analyse and reflect critically upon relevant scholarship; demonstrate, by way of coursework, an ability to understand, evaluate and utilise a variety of primary source material; demonstrate, by way of coursework, the ability to develop and sustain scholarly arguments in oral and written form, by formulating appropriate questions and utilising relevant evidence; demonstrate independence of mind and initiative; intellectual integrity and maturity; an ability to evaluate the work of others. 	<p>On completion of this course, the student will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> read, analyse and reflect critically upon relevant scholarship; develop and sustain scholarly arguments in oral and written form, by formulating appropriate questions and utilising relevant evidence; demonstrate independence of mind and initiative; intellectual integrity and maturity; an ability to evaluate the work of others.

Appendix 3: Programme Amendment form: Year 3 Arabic and History**Change to DPT: Arabic and History (MA Hons) (UTARAHI)****Proposer: Dr Wannes Dupont**Case for Support:

Last year the History Subject Area made changes to the Year Abroad Courses for joint Language and History degrees. These are now in place within these degrees. However, students on the degree Arabic and History who are on exchange at the American University of Cairo fulfil their full History requirement (the equivalent of 40 UoE Credits) during the first semester by taking pre-approved courses at their exchange destination. Therefore, the new year abroad courses put in place in 23/24 are not appropriate for these students as they are structured at 20 credits per semester. Those students currently take [CHCA10004 Year Abroad Work for Degrees in Languages and History](#).

However, as this is currently the only Year 3 option on the Arabic and History degree, this means that students not studying at the American University of Cairo don't have the same flexibility as we have now given to students on other joint language degrees. Therefore the proposal is to rename this course 'Year abroad work for degrees in languages and history: Courses undertaken at the American University in Cairo by Arabic + History students during the first semester' and amend the DPT to allow for a choice between this course and the other year abroad courses for students not attending AUC.

Changes:

- Remove CHCA1004 from the Arabic and History degree (Year 3)
- Add a Group of collections similar to the [French and History Year 3 DPT](#) but with the additional 40 credit new course for students studying in Cairo.

Revised DPT:**Compulsory Courses**

- IMES10054: Arabic Coursework Essay (20 credits)
- IMES10045: Arabic: Language Acquisition (40 credits)

Select 20 credits from:

- IMES10027: IMES Dissertation (Part 1) (20 credits)
- IMES10059: IMES Long Essay (20 credits)

Select 40 credits from:

- NEW Course - Year abroad work for degrees in languages and history: Courses undertaken at the American University in Cairo by Arabic + History students during the first semester (40 credits)
- HIST10501: Year abroad work for degrees in languages and history: Historiography (20 credits)
- HIST10509: Year abroad work for degrees in languages and history: Courses undertaken in host university (Semester 1) (20 credits)
- HIST10502: Year abroad work for degrees in languages and history: Research (20 credits)
- HIST10510: Year abroad work for degrees in languages and history: Courses undertaken in host university (Semester 2) (20 credits)

A note should be added to the above collection to say:

'Students studying at the American University of Cairo **MUST** choose course (NEW course code). All other students must choose one 20 credit course per semester.'

The degree notes for Year 3 and Year 4 should be amended to say:

Final Assessment:

One unit of assessment is allocated to every 20 credits and constitutes one 20-credit paper. The following are the twelve 20-credit papers on which the classification of the degree is based.

Final Assessment

One unit of assessment is allocated to every 20 credits and constitutes one 20-credit paper. The following are the twelve 20-credit papers on which the classification of the degree is based. (Papers that for the purposes of degree classification acquire a weighting of 40 credits are, therefore, listed twice.)

1. Arabic 4
2. Arabic 4
3. Arabic Oral
4. Arabic Coursework Essay
5. Year abroad work for History (where students choose the option of studying in the host university, this will not count towards the degree classification)
6. Year abroad work for History (where students choose the option of studying in the host university, this will not count towards the degree classification)
7. IMES Dissertation Part 1 (mark same as for IMES Dissertation Part 2) OR IMES Long Essay
8. IMES Dissertation Part 2 OR History Dissertation
9. History Dissertation OR IMES Honours Option
10. IMES Honours Option
- 11 and 12. History Special Subject (40 credits)