

# Assessment Regulations

## Terms of Reference for University Assessment Boards

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# Teesside University

## Terms of Reference for University Assessment Boards

### 1. Introduction and Principles

1.1 The following outlines the constitution and terms of reference for the Assessment Boards of the University as well as the responsibilities of those staff who are members of those Boards.

1.2 Assessment Boards are responsible for the operation of the decision-making process relating to marks, progression, and awards. Decisions of Assessment Boards in respect of assessment results and the conferment of awards constitute recommendations to the Vice-Chancellor, as Chair of the Academic Board.

1.3 Each Assessment Board will make judgments on student performance within its respective terms of reference. It will minute the basis on which decisions are made and record these in the Student Information System (SITS) using the approved codes.

### 2. Authority of Assessment Boards

2.1 The power to confer academic awards is vested in the Board of Governors of the University. The Board of Governors has delegated its authority to Academic Board in respect of awards made to individual students.

2.2 Academic Board has delegated to the University Assessment Boards, acting on its behalf and within their Terms of Reference, the conferment of awards, subject to the University's Regulations and course specific regulations.

### 3. Scope and Powers

3.1 Nobody other than an Assessment Board has authority to recommend to the Chair of Academic Board the outcome of assessment, the conferment of an award, or to amend the decision of a properly constituted Assessment Board acting within its terms of reference and in accordance with the regulations for the course of study.

3.2 The Academic Board has the right and duty to monitor the proceedings of an Assessment Board. It may intervene to be assured of, or to ensure, the proper conduct of a Board either on its own initiative or at request by way of one of its Committees or Sub-Committees.

3.3 Additionally, the University has agreed that it should operate a system of independent observation to assure itself that Assessment Boards operate properly and effectively within their terms of reference. As such, an independent observer, nominated by the Academic Registrar, is entitled to attend any Assessment Board. Such observers do not have the authority to participate in the Board's decision-making.

3.4 An Assessment Board may not alter any regulation.

#### **4. Confidentiality of Assessment Boards**

4.1 The deliberations of all Assessment Boards are strictly confidential. All proceedings which relate to individual students are confidential to members of the Assessment Board, the Secretary to the Board, the Vice Chancellor, Pro Vice-Chancellors, and the Director of the Department of Finance and Commercial Development.

4.2 Marks or grades awarded for summative assessment tasks may be communicated to students as part of assessment feedback process. However, it must be stipulated that such marks or grades are provisional and subject to ratification by the relevant Assessment Board.

4.3 Under no circumstances may module results, progression decisions, or award classifications be communicated to students until they have been formally agreed by the relevant Assessment Board and by means other than the formal process agreed by the University.

#### **5. Impartiality of Assessment Boards**

5.1 The deliberations of all Assessment Boards will take place with due regard to the principles of transparency, independence, equity, and impartiality. Assessment Boards will ensure there is no conflict of interest during proceedings that might compromise these principles.

5.2 Members of Assessment Boards are required to inform the Chair of any personal interest, involvement or relationship with a student being considered. This should normally take place in advance of the meeting of the Board.

5.3 Any person, who may or may not be a member of the Assessment Board, with responsibility for assessing student work, who has a potential conflict of interest must declare that interest to the Chair of the Board. In such circumstances, that person should not be the sole examiner for the student concerned on any individual module.

5.4 In addition to those declared in advance, the Chair should ask members present at a meeting of an Assessment Board for expressions of personal interest which may impair the impartiality of any judgements made by the Board.

5.5 If a member of the Assessment Board is aware of any potential conflict of interest, this must be declared and recorded in the minutes of the meeting. Unless prior dispensation has been given by the Chair, the member will leave the meeting of the Board when the individual case is being considered. In instances where the member concerned is permitted to remain in attendance during consideration of the student(s) concerned, the person involved shall not take part in any discussion or decisions pertaining to the issues or student(s) concerned. This process will be recorded in the minutes.

5.6 In instances where Assessment Boards are asked to consider outcomes from other regulatory processes (e.g. academic misconduct, fitness to practise), due regard will be given to the impartiality of the Chair and Members of the Board. If the Chair has had any previous formal involvement in a case to be considered by an Assessment Board, they will declare an interest and hand the Chair over to an appropriate senior colleague for the duration of the relevant discussion. Similarly, if any Member of the Board has had formal involvement in a case to be considered, they will declare an

interest and must not take part in the discussion and decision-making process. The minutes of the Assessment Board should record all such declarations and actions.

5.7 If a member of staff (either at the University or approved partner) is a student on a module/course being considered by the Board, they will not be involved in the Board in any capacity.

## **6. System of Assessment Boards**

6.1 The University operates a two-tier system of Assessment Boards to determine the outcome of student assessment. This system is conducted sequentially through Module Boards and Progression and Award Boards.

Module Boards determine the marks for each individual module a student has studied and consider matters relating to failure and reassessment. Progression and Award Boards receive marks from the relevant Module Assessment Board(s) and determine progression and awards upon completion of the modules relating to a particular level of study. Progression and Award Boards will apply compensation where appropriate and determine whether a student may be offered the opportunity to trail or restudy modules.

## **7. Scheduling and Frequency of Assessment Boards**

7.1 Assessment Boards meet on a serial basis. Both Module Boards and Progression and Award Boards will meet as required, normally on two occasions during an academic year, though, where appropriate, more meetings of each Board is permitted.

The first occasion will consider first-sit student performance and is referred to as the first point of consideration. The second occasion will deal with matters relating to second-sit performance and, where necessary, deferred assessment. This is known as the second point of consideration.

7.2 The timing of Assessment Boards will be determined locally by Schools or Colleges but will usually be scheduled in such a way as to best facilitate student progression and achievement.

7.3 Where appropriate, Module and Progression and Award Boards may be combined into a single event but each Board must be held independently in accordance with its constitution and terms of reference.

7.4 It is the responsibility of individual Schools and Colleges to schedule and co-ordinate the Assessment Boards relating to their provision. However, the Academic Registrar must be notified of the date, time and venue of all meetings of an Assessment Board.

## **Module Board: Terms of Reference**

### **8. Establishment, Purpose, and Scope of a Module Board**

8.1 A Module Board will be established by the relevant School or College for each award assessed and conferred by the University. Every module will be included within the scope of one such Module Board.

8.2 The Module Board is responsible, on behalf of Academic Board, for considering student performance on individual modules comprising a course of study and ratifying the assessment results for those modules in accordance with the appropriate Assessment Regulations. The Module Board will forward these results to the relevant Progression and Award Board.

8.3 In determining results, the Module Board will pay due regard to the maintenance of academic standards and the fairness and consistency of the assessment process.

8.4 A Module Board has the authority to change the marks/grades of individual students or groups of students. Any such changes must be undertaken in reference to the cohort as a whole and with due regard for the equity of the assessment process. All changes must be agreed by the Module External Examiner.

8.5 A Module Board is not vested with the power to confer awards to students. Rather, it is charged with monitoring the academic standards and performance data of the modules within its remit. As such, a Module Board, in exceptional circumstances, has the authority to suspend consideration of a module and instigate an investigation into the validity of the results if it believes a course management issue has arisen and the application of the Regulations would be unjust to a student or students.

8.6 A Module Board may delegate the tasks defined within its terms of reference to the Chair, individual members, or sub-groups. All such delegations must have clear justification and be recorded in the minutes. Any actions taken on behalf of the Board shall be reported at its next meeting.

### **9. Constitution and Membership of a Module Board**

9.1 A Module Board will normally have the following membership:

- Chair: a senior academic/manager of the School or College who is independent of the course and/or subject area(s) under consideration. <sup>1</sup>
- The Course Leader responsible for the course(s) to which the modules being considered contribute.

<sup>1</sup> Chairs of University Assessment Boards must have undertaken the most recent mandatory training provided by the Student Learning & Academic Registry and be recorded on the official register of approved Chairs. Additionally, the appropriate level of seniority required to Chair a Module Board is defined by a combination of role and experience. As such, in instances where the Chair is not a member of the Senior Management Team of the School or College, they should hold a role not below that of Principal Lecturer and have significant experience of managing quality-related matters within the School/institution. Further guidance on the suitability of proposed Chairs of Assessment Boards can be sought from the Student Learning & Academic Registry.

- The relevant Head of Department, or equivalent.
- The Module Leader, or nominee, of each module whose results will be considered.
- The Module External Examiner(s) associated with the modules under consideration.
- For Module Boards held at a Partner Institution, a member of staff of the University.
- The Secretary to the Module Board.

The following have the right to attend a Module Board:

- Chair of Academic Board, or nominee
- Independent observer

9.2 If a Module External Examiner is not able to attend the meeting of the Board, (s)he must be consulted. All decisions taken by the Module Board remain provisional until confirmed by the appropriate External Examiner(s).

9.3 No student may be a member of a Module Board or otherwise attend a meeting of the Board. Members of staff (either at the University or approved partner) who are students on the module(s) under consideration by the Board are considered as students in this context.

9.4 There will be no formal numerical quorum established for meetings of a Module Board. Quoracy shall be determined by the Chair. Quorum will not be established without the presence of the Chair. For Module Boards held at a Partner Institution, quorum is not established without the presence <sup>2</sup> of a member of the Board who is also a member of staff of the University.

## **10. Meetings of a Module Board**

10.1 All meetings of the Module Board will be chaired by a senior academic or manager who has undertaken the appropriate training for Assessment Board operation.

10.2 The Module Board will meet as required, normally on two occasions during an academic year, though, where appropriate, more meetings of the Board is permitted

10.3 Meetings of the Module Board will be scheduled to best facilitate student progression and achievement and to ensure that all marks/grades and decisions regarding reassessment are available for the associated Progression and Award Board.

## **11. Functions of a Module Board**

11.1 To receive the minutes of the previous meeting of the Board and note any business undertaken by Chair's action.

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<sup>2</sup> In this context, "presence" does not necessarily mean physical attendance at the meeting of the Board. While attendance is encouraged whenever possible and practicable, a member of staff of the University can be "present" at a meeting in range of other ways. For example, virtual attendance is permissible (via telephone, MS Teams, Skype or other video conferencing technologies). Alternatively, in certain circumstances "presence" may be defined as written input following receipt of the module results (at least 48 hours) in advance of the meeting of the Board. Where a member of University Staff is not able to attend the meeting of the Board, advice should be sought from the Student Learning & Academic Registry.

11.2 To ensure all decisions made about individual students are taken with due regard for the principles of equity, impartiality, and consistency.

11.3 To ensure all decisions made by the Board are taken in accordance with the appropriate Assessment Regulations.

11.4 To determine and ratify the marks for the assessment and reassessment of individual students registered on modules considered by the Board, taking into account any Extenuating Circumstances which have been approved or are otherwise pending approval.

11.5 To determine the reassessment arrangements in respect of students who have not satisfied the criteria to pass a module considered by the Board and notify the relevant Progression and Award Board(s) of such arrangements and/or the outcomes of those arrangements.

11.6 To monitor student performance in relation to module marks and statistics and confirm that the standards achieved in the modules under consideration are being maintained and are consistent with comparable standards in the sector.

11.7 To identify any anomalies in student performance or other cause for concern which may indicate a course management issue has arisen that could lead to an injustice being transacted in the Board's decision-making and/or the application of the Assessment Regulations. In such cases, the ratification of results for the module(s) concerned should be deferred and the Irregular Results Procedure instigated.

11.8 To implement the appropriate penalty in the event of it being established that a student has breached the Regulations Relating to Academic Misconduct Regulations (relating to Taught Provision and Advanced Independent Work on Professional Doctorate Programmes).

11.9 To act in accordance with the outcome of any appeals, made through the University's Academic Appeal Regulations, which have been upheld.

11.10 To agree what actions shall be delegated to the Chair, nominee, or sub-group, of the Board and to confirm that all such actions will be reported to the Board at its next meeting.

11.11 To meet any additional expectations required by Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) or other such external bodies.

## **12. Operational and Procedural Matters**

12.1 Decisions about student performance on each module will be taken on the basis of the evidence before it from the outcomes of assessments only, without reference any other evidence submitted by the student or members of the Board.

12.2 When making decisions about individual student performance, the Module Board will normally only discuss those students who have failed to satisfy the requirements of the assessments.

12.3 An individual student who has approved Extenuating Circumstances in a particular module, or who is awaiting the outcome of an application that is pending, will be flagged on the relevant

module report(s) considered by the Board. However, the details of the circumstances will not be made available to the Board.

12.4 The Module Board will thus confirm in respect of each student on each module within its remit:

- i. The ratified mark that will be entered into the Student Information System and which will appear on the student's transcript.
- ii. The student has passed, failed, or is eligible to be reassessed in the module under consideration; or consideration of outcomes for the module(s) in question is deferred.

### **13. Delegated Authority (Chair's Action)**

A Module Board may delegate its responsibilities to the respective Chair in relation to recommendations concerning an individual student, or groups of students, subject to the approval of the relevant external examiner(s). Delegated responsibility should only be exercised in exceptional cases, for example:

- i. To correct errors and/or omissions in the assessment marks and/or module results presented to an Assessment Board.
- ii. To approve changes to a student's assessment marks and/or module results following academic appeals.
- iii. To instigate the Irregular Results Procedure or otherwise ensure students are considered justly and consistently.
- iv. To recommend conferment of an award in light of the above.
- v. To consider module results and/or the conferment of an award for a very small number of students where it is not practical to reconvene a Module Board.

### **14. Responsibilities of Members of a Module Board**

14.1 The Chair of the Module Board is responsible for:

- i. Proposing and determining the quoracy of the Board.
- ii. Ensuring the proper conduct of the Board and that it operates within its approved terms of reference.
- iii. Ensuring all discussions undertaken by the Board are confidential.
- iv. Ensuring all decisions taken by the Board are impartial and there is no conflict of interest during the assessment process that might compromise the impartiality of the Board.
- v. Ensuring students receive fair and equitable treatment from the Board and that decisions are taken on the basis of the evidence before it.
- vi. Ensuring the data considered by the Board is complete and accurate.
- vii. Ensuring the Board is conducted in accordance with the appropriate Assessment Regulations.
- viii. Ensuring an agreed decision is reached for each student on each module within the Board's remit and that this decision and any attendant requirements are communicated to the student.
- ix. Ensuring that the comments of the External Examiner(s) are reported to the Board. Where External Examiners are unable to attend the meeting of the Board and written comments



are unavailable, the Chair will make it clear that all decisions of the Board remain provisional pending receipt of such comments and will confirm the arrangements for securing them.

- x. Where necessary, instigating the Irregular Results Procedure.
- xi. Confirming that the minutes are a full and accurate record of the Board's decision-making, and that any conflicts of interest and all delegated actions are properly detailed.
- xii. Ensuring all delegated actions are completed within the appropriate timeframe.

#### 14.2 The Secretary to the Module Board is responsible for:

- i. Prior to the Meeting of the Board:
  - a. Scheduling the meeting of the Board and notifying members of the date, time, and venue.
  - b. Notifying the Academic Registrar of the date, time and venue of the meeting of the Board, including those relating to courses delivered wholly or in part by a partner institution.
  - c. Liaising with the relevant Course Leader(s) to ensure that all necessary information and documentation required by the Board is available and accurate.
  - d. Producing and circulating an agenda detailing the proceedings of the Board.
- ii. During the Meeting of the Board:
  - a. Ensuring all papers, documents, and information required to inform the Board's decision-making are available to members.
  - b. Minuting the meeting in such a way that all decisions are unambiguously and fully recorded, particularly in instances where the Board had exercised discretion in its decision-making or in cases where a conflict of interest has been declared.
- iii. Following the Meeting of the Board:
  - a. Ensuring the minutes are checked and approved by the Chair.
  - b. Assisting the Chair in the tracking and execution of any delegated actions.
  - c. Ensuring the decisions of the Board are entered in the Student Information System (SITS).
  - d. Ensuring the approved minutes of the meeting are stored securely.

#### 14.3 Members of a Module Board are responsible for:

- i. Attending all meetings of the Module Board of which they are members. If, exceptionally, a member is unable to attend he/she will propose an appropriate substitute to the Chair.
- ii. Undertaking sufficient preparation in advance of scheduled meetings of the Board so as to be able to properly contribute to the deliberations and decision-making of the Board.
- iii. Being fully conversant with the relevant Assessment Regulations in operation at the Board.
- iv. Submitting full and accurate marks to the Secretary of the Board by the agreed deadline.
- v. Checking and confirming the information relating to the modules they will represent at the Board by the agreed deadline.
- vi. Ensuring that appropriate arrangements are in place for students permitted to be reassessed on modules considered by the Board.
- vii. Respecting the confidentiality of the Board's proceedings.

viii. Undertaking any actions delegated to them by the Board by the agreed deadline.

14.4 The Module External Examiner(s) is responsible for:

- i. Confirming that the assessment process is conducted in accordance with the appropriate University Assessment Regulations and, where necessary, course specific regulations.
- ii. Confirming that all students have been assessed fairly in relation to the relevant module specification and that the students who have passed modules have fulfilled the relevant learning outcomes and reached the required standard.
- iii. Confirming that the range of marks awarded to students by internal assessors fairly reflects the standards of those students' performance, with due regard to standards on comparable modules delivered elsewhere in UK higher education.
- iv. Where necessary, offering guidance in respect to the instigation of the Irregular Results Procedure and, thereafter, contributing to the execution of those procedures.
- v. Presenting a verbal report at the end of the meeting of the Board endorsing the decisions taken. This will form part of the official minutes.

14.5 Members of the Module Board will expect:

- i. To be provided with complete and accurate information to support the Board's decision-making.
- ii. To be able to engage in open and honest discussions based on mutual respect and reciprocal appreciation of different professional roles, experience, and expertise.

## **Progression and Award Board: Terms of Reference**

### **15. Establishment, Purpose, and Scope of a Progression and Award Board**

15.1 A Progression and Award Board will be established by the relevant School or College for each award assessed and conferred by the University. Every award will be included within the scope of one such Progression and Award Board.

15.2 A Progression and Award Board is responsible, on behalf of Academic Board, for considering the overall profile of each student registered on a course of study and for making decisions in accordance with the appropriate Assessment Regulations, including decisions on, compensation, progression, restudy, and the conferment and classification of awards.

15.3 In determining results, the Progression and Award Board will pay due regard to the maintenance of academic standards and the fairness and consistency of the assessment process.

15.4 A Progression and Award Board receives the decisions made by the associated Module Board(s) and will automatically endorse all such decisions concerning marks/grades, eligibility for reassessment, and deferred assessment.

15.5 Under no circumstances may a Progression and Award Board change the marks/grades of individual students or groups of students that have been ratified by a properly constituted Module Board.

15.6 A Progression and Award Board may delegate the tasks defined within its terms of reference to the Chair, individual members, or sub-groups. All such delegations must have clear justification and be recorded in the minutes. Any actions taken on behalf of the Board shall be reported at its next meeting.

### **16. Constitution and Membership of a Progression and Award Board**

16.1 A Progression and Award Board will normally have the following membership:

- Chair: Dean of School/senior academic/manager of the College, or a nominee, who is independent of the course and/or subject area(s) under consideration.<sup>3</sup>
- The Course Leader responsible for the course(s) under consideration.
- The relevant Head of Department(s), or equivalent.
- The Award External Examiner(s) associated with the course(s) under consideration.
- For Progression and Award Boards held at a Partner Institution, a member of staff of the University.
- The Secretary to the Progression and Award Board.

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<sup>3</sup> Chairs of University Assessment Boards must have undertaken the most recent mandatory training provided by the Student Learning & Academic Registry and be recorded on the official register of approved Chairs. Additionally, where the Chair is a nominee of the Dean of School/College Manager, the nominated person should hold an appropriate level of seniority within the institution, normally a member of the Senior Management Team with significant experience of quality management. Further guidance on the suitability of proposed Chairs of Assessment Boards can be sought from the Student Learning & Academic Registry.

The following have the right to attend a Progression and Award Board:

- Chair of Academic Board, or nominee
- Independent observer

16.2 Where necessary, the Chair may co-opt additional members to the Board to assist the Board in the discharge of its powers and to support the maintenance of academic standards and the fairness and consistency of the assessment process.

16.3 If the Award External Examiner is not able to attend the meeting of the Board, (s)he must be consulted. All decisions taken by the Progression and Award Board remain provisional until confirmed by the appropriate External Examiner(s).

16.4 No student may be a member of a Progression and Award Board or otherwise attend a meeting of the Board. Members of staff (either at the University or approved partner) who are students registered on a course under consideration by the Board are considered as students in this context.

16.5 There will be no formal numerical quorum established for meetings of a Progression and Award Board. Quoracy shall be determined by the Chair. Quorum will not be established without the presence of the Chair. For Progression and Award Boards held at a Partner Institution, quorum is not established without the presence of a member of the Board who is also a member of staff of the University.<sup>4</sup>

## **17. Meetings of a Progression and Award Board**

17.1 All meetings of the Progression and Award Board will be chaired a senior academic or manager who has undertaken the appropriate training for Assessment Board operation.

17.2 The Progression and Award Board will meet as required, normally on two occasions during an academic year, though, where appropriate, more meetings of the Board is permitted.

17.3 Meetings of the Progression and Award Board will be scheduled to best facilitate student progression, completion, and achievement.

## **18. Functions of a Progression and Award Board**

18.1 To receive the minutes of the previous meeting of the Board and note any business undertaken by Chair's action.

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<sup>4</sup> In this context, "presence" does not necessarily mean physical attendance at the meeting of the Board. While attendance is encouraged whenever possible and practicable, a member of staff of the University can be "present" at a meeting in range of other ways. For example, virtual attendance is permissible (via telephone, MS Teams, Skype or other video conferencing technologies). Alternatively, in certain circumstances "presence" may be defined as written input following receipt of the progression/award outcomes (at least 48 hours) in advance of the meeting of the Board. Where a member of University Staff is not able to attend the meeting of the Board, advice should be sought from the Student Learning & Academic Registry.

18.2 To ensure all decisions made about individual students are taken with due regard for the principles equity, impartiality, and consistency.

18.3 To ensure all decisions made by the Board are taken in accordance with the appropriate Assessment Regulations.

18.4 To consider all information which is pertinent to reaching a decision on the overall performance of each student. This includes, but may not be limited to:

- The decisions of the associated Module Board (including those in respect of the ratification of marks/grades; the arrangements for and/or outcomes of reassessment; the recommendation(s) and/or outcomes of any Irregular Results Procedure).
- Any credit awarded to the student through the Recognition of Prior Learning procedures.
- Details of approved extensions on assessed work.
- Any approved or pending Extenuating Circumstances.

18.5 To confirm the award and progression results for individual students with regard to credit and award requirements.

18.6 To confer awards, on behalf of Academic Board, to individual students who are deemed have completed their course of studies. This shall include awards made under Aegrotat procedures or awards conferred posthumously.

18.7 To confer intermediate awards to eligible students who have withdrawn from the University or who are otherwise unable to continue on their course of studies.

18.8 To confirm if a student is eligible to progress to the next Level of the course, including whether they are permitted progress while trailing up to the equivalent of 20 credits.

18.9 To confirm if a student's overall performance in a single Level of a course will be permitted to compensate for failure in up to the equivalent of 20 credits/30 credits in accordance with the appropriate Assessment Regulations.

18.10 To decide if student will be permitted to restudy failed modules in accordance with the appropriate Assessment Regulations.

18.11 To decide if, in exceptional circumstances, a student will be offered the opportunity to restudy a Level of a course as though for the first time.

18.12 To consider the profile of part-time students and either:

- a) Make a formal progression decision if the minimum profile for progression has been achieved; or
- b) Confirm their eligibility to continue their studies into the next academic year.

18.13 To implement the appropriate penalty agreed by the Associated Module Board in the event of it being established that a student has breached the Academic Misconduct Regulations (relating to Taught Provision and Advanced Independent Work on Professional Doctorate Programmes).

18.14 To consider the deficiencies in student profiles that prevent progression or completion and agree appropriate actions relating to the provision of academic advice and related support and guidance.

18.15 To make final decisions regarding a student's eligibility to continue on their course of study and, where necessary, confirm the termination of registration.

18.16 To monitor data on student performance and confirm that the standards achieved in the awards under consideration are being maintained.

18.17 To act in accordance with the outcome of any appeals, made through the University's Academic Appeal Regulations, which have been upheld.

18.18 To agree what actions shall be delegated to the Chair, nominee, or sub-group, and to confirm that all such actions will be reported to the Board at its next meeting.

18.19 To meet any additional expectations required by Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) or other such external bodies.

## **19. Operational and Procedural Matters**

19.1 Decisions about student progression and achievement will be taken on the basis of the evidence before the Board only.

19.2 When making decisions about individual student performance, the Progression and Award Board will normally only discuss in detail those students who are potential failures or who may not be able to proceed or be conferred their intended award.

19.3 An individual student who has approved Extenuating Circumstances in one or more modules, or who is awaiting the outcome of an application that is pending, will be flagged on the relevant report considered by the Board. However, the details of the circumstances will not be made available to the Board.

19.4 The Progression and Award Board will thus ascribe a formal progression decision to each student as defined in the relevant Assessment Regulations.

## **20. Delegated Authority (Chair's Action)**

A Progression and Award Board may delegate its responsibilities to the respective Chair in relation to recommendations concerning an individual student, or groups of students, subject to the approval of the relevant external examiner(s). Delegated responsibility should only be exercised in exceptional cases, for example:

- i. To correct errors and/or omissions in the assessment marks and/or module results presented to an Assessment Board.
- ii. To approve changes to a student's assessment marks and/or module results following academic appeal.
- iii. To recommend conferment of an award in light of the above.

- iv. To consider the conferment of an award for a very small number of students where it is not practical to reconvene a Progression and Award Board.

## **21. Responsibilities of Members of a Progression and Award Board**

21.1 The Chair of the Progression and Award Board is responsible for:

- i. Proposing and determining the quoracy of the Board.
- ii. Ensuring the proper conduct of the Board and that it operates within its approved terms of reference.
- iii. Ensuring all discussions undertaken by the Board are confidential.
- iv. Ensuring all decisions taken by the Board are impartial and there is no conflict of interest during the assessment process that might compromise the impartiality of the Board.
- v. Ensuring students receive fair and equitable treatment from the Board and that decisions are taken on the basis of the evidence before it.
- vi. Ensuring the data considered by the Board is complete and accurate.
- vii. Ensuring the Board is conducted in accordance with the appropriate Assessment Regulations.
- viii. Ensuring an agreed progression decision is reached for each student considered within the Board's remit and that this decision and any attendant requirements are communicated to the student.
- ix. Confirming that the minutes are a full and accurate record of the Board's decision-making, and that any discretionary decisions, conflicts of interest, and all delegated actions are properly detailed.
- x. Ensuring all delegated actions are completed within the appropriate timeframe.

21.2 The Secretary to the Progression and Award Board is responsible for:

- i. Prior to the Meeting of the Board:
  - a. Scheduling the meeting of the Board and notifying members of the date, time, and venue.
  - b. Notifying the Academic Registrar of the date, time and venue of the meeting of the Board, including those relating to courses delivered wholly or in part by a partner institution.
  - c. Liaising with the relevant Course Leader(s) to ensure that all necessary information and documentation required by the Board is available and accurate.
  - d. Producing and circulating an agenda detailing the proceedings of the Board.
- ii. During the Meeting of the Board:
  - a. Ensuring that all papers, documents, and information required to inform the Board's decision-making are available to members.
  - b. Minuting the meeting in such a way that all decisions are unambiguously and fully recorded, particularly in instances where the Board had exercised discretion in its decision-making or in cases where a conflict of interest has been declared.

- iii. Following the Meeting of the Board:
  - a. Ensuring the minutes are checked and approved by the Chair.
  - b. Assisting the Chair in the tracking and execution of any delegated actions.
  - c. Ensuring the decisions of the Board are entered in the Student Information System (SITS).
  - d. Ensuring the approved minutes of the meeting are stored securely.

21.3 Members of a Progression and Award Board are responsible for:

- i. Attending all meetings of the Progression and Award Board of which they are members. If, exceptionally, a member is unable to attend he/she will propose an appropriate substitute to the Chair.
- ii. Undertaking sufficient preparation in advance of scheduled meetings of the Board so as to be able to properly contribute to the deliberations and decision-making of the Board.
- iii. Being fully conversant with the relevant Assessment Regulations in operation at the Board.
- iv. Checking and confirming the information relating to the student profiles under consideration.
- v. Respecting the confidentiality of the Board's proceedings.
- vi. Undertaking any actions delegated to them by the Board by the agreed deadline.

21.4 The Award External Examiner is responsible for:

- i. Being fully conversant with the relevant Assessment Regulations in operation at the Board.
- ii. Confirming that the assessment process is conducted in accordance with the appropriate University Assessment Regulations and, where necessary, programme-specific regulations.
- iii. Verifying the implementation of those Regulations in progressing and conferring awards to students.
- iv. Confirming that students are considered equitably and that the Assessment Regulations have been applied fairly and consistently in the Board's decision-making.
- v. Presenting a verbal report at the end of the meeting of the Board that will form part of the minutes. This should include a statement that they accept the classification/award decisions.

21.5 Members of the Progression and Award Board will expect:

- i. To be provided with complete and accurate information to support the Board's decision-making.
- ii. To be able to engage in open and honest discussions based on mutual respect and reciprocal appreciation of different professional roles, experience, and expertise.



# Addendum: Irregular Results Procedure

## 1. Introduction

This addendum to the Terms of Reference for University Assessment Boards sets out the definition and operation of the University's Irregular Results Procedure. It describes the course of action to be taken by a Module Board in circumstances where the results for a specific module or module(s) are deemed by the Board to be wholly anomalous. This procedure should only be invoked in exceptional circumstances where irregularities in student performance or another cause for concern may indicate a course management issue has arisen that could lead to an injustice being transacted in the Board's decision-making and/or the application of the Assessment Regulations.

## 2. Definitions

2.1 The term 'Irregular Results' refers to the assessment outcomes for modules that a Module Board deem to be wholly anomalous, atypical, and/or inconsistent with cognate modules being considered by the Board.

2.2 The term 'Irregular Results Procedure' refers to the process a Module Board will enact in circumstances where it agrees that the results for a module or modules considered within its remit evidence actual or perceived irregularities.

## 3. Context for Use

3.1 The Irregular Results Procedure will be invoked only in exceptional circumstances.

3.2 It is expected that, typically, other University policies, procedures, or customary practices will identify any such irregularities in the assessment outcomes for a module in advance of presenting those results for ratification by an Assessment Board. These policies, procedures, and practices include:

- Internal and external moderation processes
- Result checking
- Confirmation of marks through the formal sign-off procedure
- Pre-meetings of Assessment Boards

3.3 In instances where irregularities are identified through one or more of these processes, Schools are expected to take all reasonable measures to resolve the matter through the appropriate procedures in advance of the Module Board. This will normally involve consultation with, and the endorsement of, the appropriate External Examiner(s).

## 4. Operation

4.1 The decision to instigate the Irregular Results Procedure must be the consensus of the Board and endorsed by the relevant External Examiner(s).\*

4.2 Subject to 4.1, a Module Board can deem the results for a module irregular if:

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\* If the External Examiner is not present at the meeting of the Board, then their written endorsement must be secured in order to proceed with the Irregular Results Procedure. If such endorsement is not secured, the original results should normally be endorsed. This can be carried out by Chair's Action. Members of the Board should be notified of the outcome.

- i. The assessment outcomes are considered to be wholly anomalous in comparison to student performance on cognate modules comprising the same course;
- ii. The assessment outcomes indicate a potential course management issue has occurred that, if unaddressed, may lead to an injustice being transacted in the Board's decision-making and/or the application of the Assessment Regulations.

4.3 In instances where a Module Board agrees to initiate the Irregular Results Procedure then the following procedures should be followed:

- i. Defer ratification of results for the module(s) concerned;
- ii. Delegate responsibility to the Chair to initiate an investigation into the accuracy and/or reliability, and/or validity of the results in question;
- iii. Agree a mechanism and timeframe for subsequently considering and ratifying the deferred results;
- iv. Seek advice from the relevant External Examiner(s) on the investigative process to be undertaken;
- v. Notify the Chair(s) of any attendant Progression and Award Boards that the Irregular Results Procedure has been invoked and that there may be a delay in receiving ratified marks for the affected modules;
- vi. Provide regular updates to the External Examiner(s) on the findings of the investigation and seek their endorsement for all proposed actions.

4.4 If, following the investigation, it is determined that the results as originally presented are accurate, reliable, and valid, those results should, with the agreement of the External Examiner(s) be ratified by Chair's Action. Members of the Board should be notified of the outcome of the investigation and the ratified results should be communicated to the Chair(s) of any attendant Progression and Award Boards.

4.5 If, following the investigation, it is determined that the results are inaccurate and/or unreliable, and/or invalid, the Chair should consult with the relevant External Examiners regarding a proposed course of action. Board members should be notified. Such actions may include, but are not limited to:

- i. Originating additional internal moderation procedures;
- ii. Instigating the re-marking of the affected assignment(s) for the full module cohort. This should encompass appropriate internal and external moderation processes;
- iii. Adjusting the results, on a cohort basis, for the affected module(s). This should normally only be an upward adjustment. The marks of individual students should not be amended;
- iv. Recommending to the relevant Progression and Award Board(s) that the results for the modules in question be discounted from the calculation of Level Averages and/or the classification/grading of awards.
- v. Offering students a further opportunity to be assessed on the affected module(s). This does not have to be the original assessment task, but it must assess the appropriate learning outcomes. The outcomes of this will be considered to be first-attempts.

4.5.1 The Chair, in consultation with the External Examiner(s), should propose a mechanism and timeframe for ratifying the module results. This may be by Chair's Action, but depending on the

action taken, the Board may need to be reconvened.<sup>†</sup> Following ratification, the results should be communicated to the Chair(s) of any attendant Progression and Award Boards

4.6 At the next scheduled meeting of the Module Board, the Chair should provide a report to members about the instigation of the Irregular Results Procedure, its outcome, and any subsequent actions taken to address course management issues and/or associated matters that led to the anomalous results. This is in addition to the requirement to report any Chair's Actions taken in-between meetings of the Board.

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<sup>†</sup> The University's Student Learning & Academic Registry will provide guidance regarding the requirement to reconvene an Assessment Board following the instigation and outcome of the Irregular Results Procedure.