

7

REGULATIONS FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF STUDENTS ON TAUGHT PROGRAMMES

7 Regulations for the Assessment of Students on Taught Programmes

7.1 General Requirements

7.1.1 Academic Standards

Assessment that contributes to the award of academic credit and/or to the award of the degrees, diplomas, certificates and other academic distinctions of the University will relate the achievement of each candidate to the stated academic standards of the University.

The academic standards of the University will be as stated in the intended learning outcomes of modules and programmes of study, as set out in the relevant module descriptors and programme specifications.

7.1.2 Equity of Assessment

All students registered for a given module will be subject to the application of the same academic standards, rules and procedures with respect to assessment and re-assessment, irrespective of the programme of study on which they are enrolled.

7.1.3 Anonymous Marking

Procedures for anonymous marking as approved by Senate will be used in all assessments that contribute to the award of academic credit and/or to the award of the degrees, diplomas, certificates and other academic distinctions of the University except where the nature of the assessment itself renders anonymity impossible to achieve, for example, possibly in placement observations or practical assessment.

7.1.4 Timing of Formal Examinations

Modules which are assessed by formal examinations will have the examinations scheduled at the end of the trimester in which the delivery of the module is concluded.

7.2 Module Descriptors and Programme Specifications

7.2.1 Module Descriptor

The Module Descriptor for each module will:

- a) Specify the intended learning outcomes of the module and indicate how these relate to each main category of assessment.

- b) Indicate the range and type of the categories of assessment and when these categories will be assessed.
- c) Specify – but only in the case of professional requirements regarding the need to demonstrate specific competences – any assignment or group of assignments that must be passed in order to achieve an aggregate pass in the module.
- d) Specify the provisions for re-assessment in relation to these elements in the event of initial failure.

7.2.2 *Programme Specification*

The Programme Specification for each programme will:

- a) Specify the aims of the programme and intended learning outcomes for each level of the programme and indicate how these relate to the constituent modules of the programme.
- b) Identify all of the elements (modules, supervised work experience, placements etc) that are to be assessed.
- c) Identify which elements are compulsory, optional or alternative.
- d) State the attendance requirements to be met by students, where the intended learning outcomes of a programme are such that attendance is compulsory for certain elements.
- e) State any specific assessment requirements that in addition to the requirements of the University Assessment Regulation must be met for progression towards or award of a professional qualification, provided that such requirements were approved through formal procedures for validation or for change to an existing programme.

7.3 **Definitions**

7.3.1 *Progression*

Progression is defined as meeting the requirements to proceed from a prerequisite module to a module for which it is a prerequisite or as meeting the requirements to proceed from one SCQF level of study to another.

7.3.2 *Pass – Module*

A module is regarded as having been passed for the purposes of progression and award of credit when a grade of C or above has been awarded and approved by the Subject Panel. The award of a grade of C requires that:

- a) An aggregate mark of at least 40% has been achieved.
- b) A mean mark of not less than 30% has been attained in each main category of assessment where the number of categories of assessment defined for each module will not normally exceed two or exceptionally three.
- c) Any specific requirements set out in the module descriptor under Regulation 7.2.1(c) are met.

7.3.3 *Pass – Award*

Students will be deemed to have achieved the University award for which they were registered when they have passed the core modules defined for that award in the programme specification and accumulated the amount of credit required for the award. Programme specifications may not stipulate additional requirements to achieve the award in terms of higher grades. Specific professional requirements for the award may be stipulated where required by the accrediting body, specifically agreed at validation and made clear in the programme specification.

7.3.4 *Progression with Credit Deficit*

The Progression & Awards Board (PAB) may permit a student to progress with credit deficit in two modules but in no more than one module per trimester in order to enable progression to the next level of study, provided that:

- a) The student is required to be re-assessed in (or chooses to re-take) the modules while studying at the next level
- b) Progression with credit deficit from SCQF level 9 to level 10 is not normally permitted.

7.3.5 *Progression from the Diploma to the Masters Stage of a Postgraduate Programme*

Progression from the Diploma to the Masters stage of a postgraduate programme may require measured attainment in excess of the minimum specified in Regulation 7.3.3 provided that such requirements are set out in the Programme Specification.

7.3.6 *Formal Examination*

Where a final summative examination is specified as an assessment for a module, this will take the form of a single paper of two hours duration. Exceptionally, at level 10 or 11, an examination of three hours will be permitted where this is specified in the approved module descriptor.

7.4 Marking and Grading

7.4.1 *Marking and Aggregation*

Module marks and grades are arrived at where required by aggregation of numerical marks from a number of assessments into a single percentage mark to which the corresponding grade is then applied.

Where specifically validated, some modules may not have module marks or grades. In such cases the student's attainment will be recorded as 'pass' or 'fail', in accordance with the assessment criteria within the approved module descriptor.

7.4.2 *Marking and Grading Scheme*

All student work that contributes to a module mark and grade is assessed according to the following standard marking and grading scheme:

Grade	Numerical range (%)	Definition	Descriptor
A	70-100	Excellent Outstanding	Student work very much exceeds the threshold standard. It displays a consistently thorough, deep and/or extensive knowledge and understanding; originality and/or very high ability in analysis, evaluation, problem solving or other process skills; very high ability in professional practice skills (where relevant) including evidence of high degree of autonomy and independent judgement relative to threshold expectations.
B1	60-69	Very good Commendable	Student work is well above the threshold standard. It displays a consistently very good level of knowledge and understanding; high ability in analysis, evaluation, problem solving or other process skills; high ability in professional practice skills (where relevant) including exercise of significant independent judgement relative to threshold expectations.
B2	50-59	Good Highly competent	Student work is clearly above the threshold standard. It displays generally good knowledge and understanding; good ability in

			analysis, evaluation, problem solving or other process skills; evidences highly competent performance of professional practice skills (where relevant).
C	40-49	Satisfactory Competent	Student work is at the threshold standard. It displays generally satisfactory knowledge and understanding in most key respects; competence in analysis and most other process skills; evidences competent performance of professional practice skills (where relevant).
D	30-39	Unsatisfactory	Student work is marginally below the threshold standard. It displays some knowledge and understanding but this is incomplete or partial; limited ability in analysis and other process skills; evidences lack of or partial competence in professional practice skills (where relevant).
E	0-29	Very unsatisfactory	Student work is well below the threshold standard. It displays very limited knowledge and understanding; evidences very limited or no analytical or other process skills; very limited competence over the range of professional practice skills.

The following grades are used in exceptional circumstances where required by professional bodies:

Grade	Definition	Descriptor
Pass	Pass	Student has met the criteria for 'pass' as specifically defined in the module descriptor
Fail	Fail	Student has not met the criteria for 'pass' as specifically defined in the module descriptor

The one exception to the grading scheme above is that Grade D may be assigned to a module where the numerical value is greater than 40% but where Regulation 7.3.2 has not been met.

7.4.3 *Moderation of Marks for Assessed Work*

In addition to the appointment of Module Coordinators by Heads of School (Regulations 5.2.15 and 5.2.16), the latter will appoint module moderators. (See Regulation 7, Appendix 2).

7.5 **Classification of Honours Degrees, Distinctions, Intermediate, Posthumous and Aegrotat Awards**

7.5.1 *Classification of Honours Degrees*

The minimum criterion for the award of Honours degrees is a grade of C or above in each of the modules studied at SCQF level 10 or in the final year stage of the programme.

The following criteria will be applied by the PAB. Where modules whose intrinsic level is lower than SCQF level 10 are taken as a specifically validated part of the honours year stage, then grades for such modules will count towards the honours classification as if these modules were at SCQF level 10.

First class	Mean mark of 70% or above	OR Mean mark of at least 67% and a majority of the modules in the final year stage at grade A
Upper second class	Mean mark of 60% or above	OR Mean mark of at least 57% and a majority of the modules in the final year stage at grade B1 or better
Lower second class	Mean mark of 50% or above	OR Mean mark of at least 47% and a majority of the modules in the final year stage at grade B2 or better
Third class	Mean mark of 40% or above	

Where core modules in the Honours year of study are assessed using the Pass/Fail grades, then these modules will be excluded in the calculation of the Honours classification. Modules assessed using the Pass/Fail grades will not be permitted as optional modules within the Honours year of study.

Where a student has undertaken a resit in one or more modules at SCQF level 10 or in the final year stage of the programme, then the resit mark will stand on the student's academic record but a mark of 40% and grade C will be used in the classification of the Honours award.

7.5.2 *Award of Distinction*

- a) PABs will award distinction to candidates for undergraduate awards other than Honours degrees (including Certificates of Higher Education and Diploma of Higher Education) and for taught postgraduate awards of Graduate Diplomas and Postgraduate Diplomas where the following criteria are met by candidates at their first attempt

a mean mark of 65% or above

and

none of the 120 credit points (see 7.5.2(d) for Masters) taken in the final SCQF level of the award comprises prior credit imported from outside the University, unless the prior credit derives from a student exchange or study abroad programme in which a translation of the relevant grading system into the University system has been approved by the programme leader as part of the exchange agreement.

- b) In programmes where the Diploma of Higher Education is calculated on the basis of 300 credit points, the 120 credit points on which the calculation of Distinction will be based shall be defined in the programme specification and shall comprise 60 points at Level 8 and 60 points at Level 9.
- c) Distinction will not be awarded where any of the modules in the final year stage are assessed using the Pass/Fail grades. This must be made clear to students in the programme handbook.
- d) Distinction at Masters level will be awarded where students have met the above criteria but will be calculated on the basis of 180 credit points within the programme and not solely on the taught modules or the Masters level dissertation component of the award. [See 6.7.1(c)(iii) re imported credit and distinction.]

7.5.3 *Intermediate Awards*

A student who has achieved the necessary volume and level of credit and who has satisfied any further requirements set out in the programme specification has the right to claim any award intermediate to the final award for which she or he is or was registered provided that:

- a) The student claims the award within five years of the end of the academic session in which he or she was last registered for the programme to which the intermediate award relates

and

- b) No student who has obtained a final award is eligible to receive an intermediate award (Regulation 5.2.21).

7.5.4 *Aegrotat Awards*

- a) Where a PAB does not have sufficient evidence of the candidate's performance to be able to recommend the award for which a person is a candidate, but is satisfied that but for illness or other valid cause the person would have reached the standard required, the Board may, exceptionally, recommend the conferment of an Aegrotat award.
- b) An Aegrotat award may only be made where the candidate has demonstrated achievement in at least 50% of the credit from the final year stage of the award.
- c) An Aegrotat award may be made in relation to any award from a taught programme of the University save that an Aegrotat Honours degree will not be classified.
- d) No Aegrotat award may be made without confirmation in writing by the candidate of his or her agreement to accept the award.

7.5.5 *Posthumous Awards for Taught Programmes*

- a) Any award associated with the taught programmes of the University may be awarded posthumously where the normal requirements for the award have been met. (See also Regulation 8.5.4 for Research Awards.)
- b) A posthumous Aegrotat award may be made where the normal requirements for an Aegrotat award have been met. (See Regulation 7.5.4 (a-c) Aegrotat Awards.)

7.5.6 Joint Award (collaboration)

- a) The University of the West of Scotland will participate fully in the decision making process with regard to assessment arrangements.
- b) Subject and PAB Panels will take place at the University of the West of Scotland under normal University conditions.
- c) Students enrolled on the programme will be subject to the progression and award criteria that apply to the programme, and will be considered at PAB at the appropriate point in each academic session.

- d) The arrangement for distribution or classification of Honours or equivalent will be agreed at validation and in the drafting of the collaborative agreement. Any deviations from the University regulations must be endorsed subsequently at the University Regulations Committee.

7.5.7 Dual Award (collaboration)

The two awards will be based on the same assessed student work and can only be granted when the outcomes of the programme have been achieved at the same point in time.

7.6 Compensation for Failure in Modules

Compensation for failure may not be applied by the PAB with respect to any student.

7.7 Valid Reasons for Non-Attendance at, Non-Submission of or Poor Performance in Assessment

- a) In all circumstances where it is established through procedures laid down by Senate for this purpose that student non-attendance at, non-submission of or performance in an assessment was attributable to illness or other cause found to be valid, the student will have the right to be re-assessed at the next available opportunity as if for the first time (or, if the assessment is a first or second re-assessment, as if for the second or third time, respectively).
- b) Senate will establish one or more Mitigation Panels to examine on the basis of written evidence major claims of mitigating circumstances submitted by individual students.
- c) Where the Mitigation Panel rules that mitigating circumstances may have led to non-attendance at, non-submission of or impaired performance in an assessment, the details of the assessment or assessments concerned will be communicated to the relevant Subject Panel (SP). Where the module concerned has been graded at D or E, the SP will award the right to be re-assessed as specified in Regulation 7.7(a) above. Where the module concerned has been graded at C or better, the SP will permit the student to choose whether to be re-assessed under Regulation 7.7(a).
- d) In the case where the student has passed the module and chooses not to be re-assessed, then the original mark will be permitted to stand. However, if in this case the student chooses to present for re-assessment, then the Subject Panel will consider both the original mark and the mark

obtained for the module following re-assessment, and will confirm whichever is the higher mark.

- e) Where – prior to the exercise of the right to be re-assessed – a PAB is able to recommend the candidate for a final award, the candidate will be informed of the proposed grade for any module deemed to have been affected by mitigating circumstances and of the classification of the final award (if relevant), and will have the right either to confirm acceptance of the award or to be re-assessed under Regulation 7.7(c) above.
- f) Where a candidate wishes to accept an award under Regulation 7.7(e), this must be conveyed in writing by the candidate to the relevant PAB Chair.
- g) An appeal against a decision of the PAB Subject Panel or in relation to a decision regarding student mitigating circumstances may only be made in conformity to the provisions of University Regulation 13 on student appeals.

7.8 Re-Assessment

7.8.1 General requirements

- a) Re-assessment is defined as the right to submit failed assignments or attend for examination or other forms of assessment in those categories of assessment that have not achieved a mark of 40% or more, or have not been attended or attempted on a preceding occasion, and where in consequence a grade of D or E has been achieved in a module.
- b) The forms of re-assessment should normally be the same as for the first attempt.
- c) Where a student is offered the opportunity to re-take a module, the student will have entitlement to the same number of attempts as if taking the module for the first time.
- d) Module marks at re-assessment will be calculated by carrying forward marks for assessments which the student has not been asked to resit and by aggregating these with marks for assignments in which the student was asked to resit.
- e) The relative weightings of different assessments will remain the same in cases of re-assessment as in the assessment for the first time.

- f) Re-assessment shall not be permitted in modules or categories of assessments which are identified in the module descriptor as excluded from the possibility of re-assessment where this is a requirement of a PRSB.

7.8.2 *Undergraduate Programmes*

- a) A student who obtains a grade of D or E at the first attempt will be entitled to two opportunities for re-assessment.
- b) Re-assessment under Regulation 7.8.2(a) will be at the next available opportunity – that is, normally:
 - i) for a first re-assessment, the resit diet in the academic session in which the module was failed.
 - ii) for a second re-assessment, the trimester in which the module is next offered in the following academic session.
- c) Unless undertaking re-assessment at the next available opportunity is found to have been prevented by mitigating circumstances as determined under Regulation 7.7, failure to attend or submit work at the next available opportunity will result in automatic loss of entitlement to that attempt.

7.8.3 *Taught Masters Degrees, Postgraduate Certificates and Diplomas, and the Professional Graduate Diploma in Education*

A candidate for the award of a taught Masters Degree, Postgraduate Diploma or Certificate, or the Professional Graduate Diploma in Education or a candidate studying a module whose intrinsic level is SCQF level 11, will be entitled to one further attempt in failed elements of assessment except that there will be no re-assessment of any Diploma or Masters project or dissertation unless a first attempt is awarded under Regulation 7.7.

- 7.8.4 Notwithstanding the above regulations (Regulation 7.8.1 to 7.8.3), the PAB will have the power to limit the number of opportunities for re-assessment and/or to withdraw a student from a programme in the case of failure in a module entailing placement or work-based learning or professional practice, provided that such decisions are taken in accordance with explicit criteria that are contained in the relevant programme specification.

7.9 **Eligibility to Act as an Examiner or Moderator**

- a) Any person who acts as examiner or moderator who has any relationship other than that of a teacher or supervisor with any candidate being assessed will notify the Academic

Registrar who will draw the circumstances to the attention of the relevant SP and PAB.

- b) No student will be a member of a SP or PAB other than where a person who is otherwise qualified to be an examiner is at the same time registered on a module or programme unrelated to the Subject Panel or PAB in question.
- c) A member of staff of an institution affiliated to or associated with the University which provides a programme leading to an award of the University may act as an examiner or moderator for the programme or module(s) concerned, as if a member of University staff.

7.10 Subject Panels and Progression & Awards Boards

7.10.1 *Memberships and Remits of Subject Panels and Progression & Awards Boards*

SP and PABs will have the memberships, remits and powers set out in Regulation 14 section 5, as supplemented by the regulations below.

7.10.2 *Subject Panels*

Subject Panels consider the performance of students registered for modules assigned to the Panel by the Head of School, and decide upon the confirmed marks and grades for each student on each module.

7.10.3 *Subject Panels and Standardisation of Marks*

- a) Standardisation is the process of making adjustments to the marks and grades attained by students in a given module in the event of exceptional circumstances. Standardisation is defined as taking account of circumstances which have affected students' performance, either incidents during the delivery of the module or during the assessment points within the module.
- b) Standardisation must not be applied in order to achieve a preconceived mean mark and may take the form of such adjustments to marks as are deemed appropriate in the specific circumstances.
- c) Standardisation may only be applied by the relevant Subject Panel and with the agreement of the relevant Subject External Examiner.
- d) The application of standardisation together with details of the adjustments made to marks and grades must be

recorded by its Chair in the Minutes of the Subject Panel meeting.

7.10.4 *Progression & Awards Boards*

- a) PABs decide the eligibility of each candidate for progression between levels of study, and for awards of the University.
- b) Each student on a named programme of study will be assigned to a specified PAB. A student registered for a joint award will be assigned to the PAB for the award title that falls first in the alphabet.
- c) A decision of the PAB that a candidate is eligible for an award of the University will require the written consent of relevant PAB External Examiners.
- d) The decisions from each assessment diet conducted in accordance with the University's regulations will be recorded by the PAB concerned and signed by the person appointed to chair that Board and where relevant by the PAB External Examiners.
- e) Unless otherwise provided for in the University's regulations, the decisions of each PAB will be final.

7.10.5 *Review of a Decision of a Progression & Awards Board/Subject Panels*

- a) In accordance with the requirements of Regulation 13 an Appeals Sub-group may require an SP or PAB to reconsider its decision(s), if:
 - i) a candidate, in accordance with the University Appeals Procedure, appeals against a decision of an SP or PAB and establishes to the satisfaction of Senate, or of any sub-group established to determine whether a *prima facie* case exists, that his or her performance in the examination or assessment was adversely affected by illness or other factors which he or she was unable, or for valid reasons unwilling, to divulge before the SP or PAB reached its decision, provided that the appeal is supported by medical certificates or other documentary evidence in accordance with Regulation 13. Where the student could have reported the exceptional circumstances to the Mitigation Panel prior to its meeting, those circumstances cannot then be cited as grounds for appeal unless there is a compelling reason why these were not disclosed in the first instance;

- ii) Senate, or any sub-group established in accordance with the University Appeals Procedure to determine whether a *prima facie* case exists, is satisfied on the evidence produced by a candidate or any other person that there has been a computational or administrative error or that the examination or assessment was not conducted in accordance with the University regulations, or that some other procedural irregularity relevant to the assessment has occurred.
- b) The members of any sub-group established to determine whether a *prima facie* case exists will be persons who have had no direct involvement with the candidate(s), the programme of study, or the SP or PAB concerned (see Regulation 13).
- c) Any disagreement with the academic judgement of an SP or PAB in assessing the merits of an individual piece of work or in reaching any assessment decision based on the marks, grades and other information relating to a candidate's performance will not of itself constitute grounds for an appeal by a candidate against a decision of an SP or PAB.
- d) If, after reconsideration, in the circumstances described in Regulation 7.10.5 (a)(ii) above, the SP or PAB does not modify its decision, Senate will annul that decision if in its opinion due and proper account has not been taken of the relevant factors.
- e) In any case of procedural or other irregularity, or when it is impossible to re-convene an SP or PAB, Senate may annul a decision of the SP or PAB without making a prior request for it to be reconsidered. If an error or irregularity is found to have affected more than one candidate, Senate may, at its discretion, annul the whole examination or assessment or any part of it and require appropriate action to be taken including, if necessary, the appointment of new External Examiners.
- f) Where an SP or PAB agrees to amend its decision, but is uncertain as to the most appropriate alternative recommendation it should make, the Board should seek additional evidence of the student's performance, either through re-assessment at the next normal opportunity, or through a *viva voce* examination, or through some other form of assessment appropriate to the student's circumstances and the particular programme of studies.

- g) Where an SP or PAB agrees to confirm its original decision in a case based on a candidate's personal circumstances, that decision shall be final except in the circumstances described in Regulation 13.
- h) Where, however, a Mitigation Panel is satisfied by the evidence produced by a candidate that his or her performance had been affected by illness or other valid cause (see Regulation 7.7), that candidate must be enabled to exercise the right to re-sit as if for the first time. If an assessment affected by illness was itself a second attempt, the candidate must be permitted to re-sit as if for the second time.

7.11 Cheating and Plagiarism

7.11.1

Definitions

- a) Cheating and plagiarism are defined by the University as the attempt to gain an unfair advantage in an assessment by gaining credit for work of another person or by accessing unauthorised material relating to assessment.
- b) Plagiarism is defined further as the use of the work of other students, past or present, or substantial and unacknowledged use of published material presented as the student's own work. It includes the following:
- the extensive use of another person's material without reference or acknowledgement;
 - the summarising of another person's material by changing a few words or altering the order of presentation without reference or acknowledgement;
 - the substantial and unauthorised use of the ideas of another person without acknowledgement;
 - copying the work of another student with or without the student's knowledge or agreement;
 - deliberate use of commissioned material which is presented as one's own;
 - the unacknowledged quotation of phrases from another's work;
- c) Cheating is defined further as inclusive of the following:
- communication with or copying from another student during an examination or assessment (except in so far as assessment regulations specifically permit communication, for instance for group assessments);
 - knowingly introducing any unauthorised materials (written, printed or blank) on or near an examination desk unless expressly permitted by the assessment regulations;

- knowingly introducing any electronically stored information into an examination hall unless expressly permitted by the assessment regulations;
- obtaining a copy of an 'unseen' written examination paper prior to the date and time of its authorised release;
- gaining access to unauthorised material relating to an assessment during or before the assessment;
- colluding with another person by submitting work done with another person as entirely one's own work;
- **OR** collaborating with another student in the completion of work which is intended to be submitted as that other student's own work
- **OR** knowingly allowing another student to copy one's own work to be submitted as that student's own work;
- falsifying data by presenting data of laboratory reports, projects or other assessments as one's own when these data are based on experimental work conducted by another party or obtained by unfair means;
- assuming the identity of another person with intent to deceive or to gain unfair advantage;
- **OR** allowing another person to assume one's own identity with the intention of deceiving or gaining unfair advantage to oneself;
- the use of any other form of dishonest practice not identified above;

7.11.2 *Procedures*

- a) Cheating and plagiarism may be regarded as substantial academic irregularities under the University Code of Discipline for Students (Regulation 12) and all instances are liable to be investigated and to be given due consideration under the terms of that Code.
- b) Notwithstanding the above, any suspected case of plagiarism will be referred in the first instance by the member of academic staff concerned to the Chair of a Plagiarism Panel constituted in the relevant academic Faculty.
- c) The Chair of the Faculty Plagiarism Panel will be appointed by the Faculty Executive.
- d) The membership of the Faculty Plagiarism Panel will be:
 - the Chair
 - the Chair of the Subject Panel to which the module in question is assigned
 - and a further academic member of the School, appointed by the Plagiarism Panel Chair

- e) The member of academic staff who refers a case of suspected plagiarism to the Panel must not serve as a member of that Panel for the purpose of giving consideration to this case, but will attend the Panel for the purpose of presenting evidence.
- f) The Plagiarism Panel Chair will inform the student in writing of the alleged offence and of the requirement to attend for interview.
- g) The Plagiarism Panel will determine whether an offence has been committed and, if so, whether the offence is minor or major.
- h) Where the Panel has determined that a MINOR offence has been committed, the Plagiarism Panel Chair will determine and inform the student of a sanction that will be a requirement that the affected student work is resubmitted without loss of entitlement to an attempt, and with or without the determination that the maximum mark assignable for the resubmitted work should be 40%.
- i) A student will have the right to appeal the decisions of the Plagiarism Panel and its Chair taken under (h) above and such appeals will be referred to the Senate Disciplinary Committee (see Regulation 12).
- j) Where the Plagiarism Panel has determined that a MAJOR offence has been committed, the Plagiarism Panel Chair will refer the matter to the Senate Disciplinary Committee for consideration under Regulation 12 and will inform the student in writing of this action.

7.12 External Examiners

7.12.1 Principles

- a) There are two types of External Examiner appointment. Subject External Examiners are appointed to assess groups of related modules and are members of Subject Panels. PAB External Examiners are members of the PAB that take decisions on student progression and academic awards.
- b) New external examiners should normally be nominated as a subject external examiner. PAB External Examiners should, where possible, be appointed from the pool of existing subject examiners. Furthermore, external examiner responsibilities at a subject panel level are likely to be reduced or removed on appointment to PAB External Examiners. There will normally be a single PAB External Examiner associated with a group of programmes. The

University therefore seeks to establish programme groupings where one external examiner would normally be appointed per grouping. Schools must therefore take responsibility for designating these programme groupings and in doing so must ensure that all groupings have the necessary external input to support their function.

- c) There will be one and only one Subject External Examiner associated with each and every module. The same individual may be associated with a number of modules. Faculty Executives are responsible for ensuring that Schools have allocated modules to an appropriate SP and have assigned an external examiner to each module.
- d) No recommendation for the conferment of an award of the University will be made without the approval of the PAB External Examiner(s) for the programme.
- e) Each External Examiner will provide an annual report.
- f) External examining procedures for programmes offered by a Partner Organisation are required to be the same as, or demonstrably equivalent to, those used within the University. The procedure should be clearly specified and rigorously and consistently applied. External Examiners for collaborative arrangements will be appointed by the University according to its normal procedures.

7.12.2 *Attendance at Assessment Panels*

- a) Subject External Examiner(s) are expected to attend each meeting of the SP at the end of each Trimester approving the results for each module to which they have been appointed.
- b) Results are approved at this stage and will be released to students as final approved results.
- c) Since no result of the University may be conferred without the approval of the appointed Subject External Examiner(s), this approval exceptionally may be obtained by written consent if no examiner is able to attend the SP.
- d) The PAB External Examiner(s) will be expected to attend the PAB for all awards at all levels at the end of Trimesters 2 and 3 (for some areas of provision there will be a requirement to attend a PAB after Trimester 1). This likelihood will be communicated at time of appointment.

- e) Since no award of the University (including intermediate exit awards) may be conferred without the approval of the appointed PAB External Examiner(s), this approval exceptionally may be obtained by written consent if the external examiner is unable to attend the PAB.

7.12.3 *Appointment and Eligibility*

- a) Each Subject External Examiner will normally be appointed for a period of up to four years, which exceptionally may be extended by up to one further year in accordance with the criteria and procedures established by the Learning, Teaching & Assessment Board (LTAB). The total period of appointment of the PAB External Examiners (including appointment as Subject External Examiner) should normally be four years and would not normally exceed five years of consecutive service as Subject and PAB External Examiner.
- b) An External Examiner (Subject or PAB) may be re-appointed provided that four years have elapsed since the end of the previous term of office and that the second appointment will not exceed four consecutive years.
- c) An External Examiner (Subject or PAB) will not normally hold more than the equivalent of two concurrent substantive appointments as an External Examiner, whether in the University or at another institution of higher education.
- d) The nominations for the appointment of an External Examiner should be made at least six months before the first assessment or award with which the examiner is to be associated.
- e) The nomination must be endorsed by the Faculty Executive concerned prior to consideration for approval by LTAB. Following approval by LTAB, the Secretary to LTAB will confirm to the External Examiner concerned and notify the appropriate contacts in the Faculty.
- f) Newly appointed External Examiners should take up their appointments on or before the retirement of their predecessors. They should remain available until after the last assessments with which they are to be involved to deal with any subsequent reviews of decisions that arise.
- g) Normally, appointments should run from the October before the first assessments to the October after the last assessments.

7.12.4 *Criteria for the Appointment of External Examiners*

- a) The criteria for the appointment of External Examiners are intended to ensure that only persons with appropriate experience and expertise are appointed to act in that capacity.
- b) Persons appointed to act as External Examiners for the University must therefore:
 - i) hold academic/professional qualifications that are appropriate to the modules, programmes or programmes of studies to be assessed and examined, with both the level and the subject(s) of those qualifications generally matching what is to be examined;
 - ii) have the standing, expertise and experience to be able to compare the performance of the candidates being assessed with that of their peers on comparable programmes or modules offered by other universities and institutions of higher education in the United Kingdom in order to maintain the University's academic standards in the context of higher education as a whole;
 - iii) have sufficient recent examining experience, preferably including that of having already acted as External Examiner, or comparable related experience to indicate competence in assessing candidates in the subject area(s) concerned;
 - iv) PAB External Examiners must have prior experience as an external examiner, preferably including at least one year's experience as a subject external examiner at the University of the West of Scotland;
 - v) be drawn from different institutional or professional contexts and traditions to ensure that programmes have the benefit of wide-ranging external scrutiny;
- c) In any event, other than in exceptional cases there must **not** normally be:
 - i) more than one Subject Examiner from the same institution or organisation in the team of External Examiners for related cognate areas;
 - ii) reciprocal external examining between cognate areas in the University and those in other institutions or organisations;

- iii) replacement of any External Examiner by another person from the same institution or organisation;
 - i. any person appointed as an External Examiner who is from the same institution or organisation which has provided an External Examiner for the same programme or subject grouping during the past four years;
 - ii. a proposal to appoint an external examiner who has been retired from her/his profession/academic post for more than six months;
- d) Bearing in mind that each External Examiner is required to be impartial in making judgements and must not have had previous close involvement with the University which might compromise objectivity, any person proposed to LTAB as an External Examiner must not have been, during the past five years:
 - i) a member of staff of the University, a member of the Court of the University, a near relative of any member of staff concerned with the programme, or a student of the University;
- e) For similar reasons, any person proposed as an External Examiner shall not normally be:
 - i) personally associated with the sponsorship of students on the programme of studies concerned;
 - ii) required to assess colleagues who are recruited as students to the programme or programme element (module, programme component or unit) or programme of studies concerned;
 - iii) in a position to influence significantly the future employment of students on the programme;
 - iv) likely to be involved with student placements or training in the External Examiner's organisation;

7.12.5 Powers of External Examiners

On any matter which an External Examiner has declared to be a matter of principle, the decision of the External Examiner concerned must either be accepted as final by the SP or PAB in question or be referred to the Senate.

7.12.6 *Rights and Responsibilities of External Examiners*

- a) The overall responsibility of each PAB External Examiner is to ensure that each candidate for a particular award is considered impartially and fairly in accordance with University regulations and guidance and that the standards of the University's awards are maintained.
- b) The overall responsibility of each Subject External Examiner is to ensure that each module is assessed impartially and fairly and that the standards of the University's awards (or parts of awards) are maintained.
- c) Each Subject External Examiner will:
 - i) have the opportunity to review and approve the form, content and standard of the assessment instruments and, where appropriate, the distribution and balance of coursework and other assessments. These should be in accordance with published module descriptor;
 - ii) be expected to attend meetings of the Subject Panel as appropriate [see 7.12.2(a)] and have the right of access to all candidates' work;
 - iii) moderate the marks awarded by the internal examiner(s) as deemed necessary as agreed with the Module Co-ordinator;
 - iv) have the right to inspect the work of all students and to call for such papers as he or she thinks necessary when sampling the work of students;
 - v) be entitled to modify the marks proposed by internal examiners provided that such modifications should be applied to all students undertaking the module unless all scripts have been reviewed by the Subject External Examiner;
- d) Each PAB External Examiner will:
 - i) attend meetings of the PAB as appropriate and, in light of information received from Subject Panels, to make award and progression decisions [see Regulations 7.12.2(b) and (c)];
 - ii) be consulted about, and have the right to approve or prevent, any proposed changes in the assessment regulations which will directly affect students currently on a particular programme of study;

- iii) contribute to such *viva voce* examination of any candidate as is deemed necessary in relation to Regulation 7.10.5(f) on review of a decision of a PAB;
- iv) otherwise participate, as necessary, in reviews of progression and award decisions with respect to individual candidates.
- v) Comment as required on aspects of cohort performance, honours classification distribution and any other matters pertaining to the operation of the University's assessment panel processes.

7.12.7 *Reports*

- a) Each External Examiner shall report annually to the University on the conduct of the assessments concluded during the year and on issues relating to those assessments, in a form determined by the Senate.
- b) Where there is concern about standards and performance, particularly if there is anxiety that assessments are being conducted in a way which jeopardises either the fair treatment of individual candidates or the standards of the University's awards, an External Examiner has the authority to submit a report directly to the Principal.

7.12.8 *Termination of External Examiner Contract*

- a) In exceptional circumstances the University of the West of Scotland or the external examiner may wish to terminate the contract prior to its normal completion.
- b) The External Examiner may withdraw from the contract by advising the Academic Registrar in writing no later than the end of December of the year in progress.
- c) If the External Examiner resignation is over a matter of principle, academic standards or concerns over maladministration, then the Academic Registrar will report the matter to the relevant Faculty Executive, LTAB and Senate.
- d) The University may only terminate the contract of an external examiner through a decision of Senate *either* on the basis of demonstrable persistent failure to meet the requirements of the role, for example through repeated non-attendance at assessment panels, repeated lack of response to draft assessment instruments, or the provision of false information in annual reports *or* due to a significant

change of circumstances of the External Examiner or of the module provision in the relevant subject area.

- e) It will be the responsibility of the Dean of Faculty in the first instance to advise the Academic Registrar of any concerns under (d) above.
- f) Notwithstanding regulations (c) to (e) above, if an annual report that is due for submission on 1 September has not been received without due explanation by 20 November, or if the report has not been received after a comparable interval in the case of another due date, he or she may be deemed by the Chair of LTAB to have resigned their appointment, and will be advised accordingly.
- g) With respect to (d) and (f) above, where illness or other personal reasons have been notified by the external examiner to the Academic Registrar as preventing the External Examiner from meeting requirements of the role, the relevant Faculty will in the first instance seek to agree appropriate revised arrangements such as a revised timescale for submission of an outstanding report.

APPENDIX 1**POLICY STATEMENT ON RELEASE OF MODULE MARKS & GRADES TO STUDENTS**

- 1 Students will have a right to information regarding module grades, the overall mark attained for a module, and the marks attained for each assessment instrument (that is, each distinct examination or submitted assignment or equivalent).
- 2 Details of a student's attainment in modules will be made available to the individual student via the Student Self Service within the Banner Student Information System.
- 3 Details of how to access Student Self Service will be provided to all students.

APPENDIX 2

NOTES ON MODULE MODERATION

Moderation may be defined as the process required to ensure reliability and validity of assessment procedures, of the instruments of assessment and of the resulting student grades.

Subject Panel Chairs are required to satisfy themselves that appropriate moderation arrangements are in place for the modules for which they are responsible.

For end of trimester assessments, Module Moderators should expect to receive the examination paper or other instruments of assessment including a full marking schedule by Week 8. In the case of continuous assessment items, the Module Moderator should expect to receive them before the end of Week 1. The schedule should include model answers or (if this is not appropriate) extended criteria and guidance on marking each element of assessment.

Moderators should ensure that:

- a) The instruments of assessment are appropriate to the module intended learning outcomes and are of the correct standard or level of difficulty.
- b) There is the correct balance of knowledge, skill and understanding.
- c) The questions or assignments contain no technical errors, are original and are unambiguous in meaning.

For an end of trimester assessment, the marking schedule should be forwarded to the external examiner at least one month before the beginning of the relevant diet to allow for a response and any follow up action to be taken.

The resit paper should be created at the same time as the end of trimester paper and the same procedures for its moderation should be followed. (If no resit is required, the paper can be used as the basis of exam paper for the next session.)

- 1 All assessments should be internally moderated and double/second marking or sample marking should take place as appropriate with priority being given to modules at levels 9 and 10; new modules and where the marker(s) are recently appointed members of staff.

definition:

- *double/second marking - second marker marks all scripts without knowledge of mark assigned by initial marker; enables marking standards to be ascertained (if fewer than 20 scripts, double marking rather than sample marking should be used);*

- *sample marking - second marker identifies an appropriate sample of scripts having access to marks awarded by initial marker; enables the level of marking to be compared with the agreed marking criteria. The sample should include a range (overall 15%) of scripts, (5%) from each of the top, middle and bottom of marks range;*
- 2 The final marks should be signed off by the Module Co-ordinator and moderator and be presented to the Subject Panel Chair for signature, with a copy of the signed approved results being held by the Module Co-ordinator. By putting their signatures to the final marks, the Module Co-ordinator and the moderator confirm that the following procedures have been followed:
- that the approved marking scheme has been adhered to by all markers, and that comparable standards are achieved among markers;
 - that all marks have been received and collated for all modes of delivery (day/evening/summer school) and from all campuses and sites of delivery;
 - that the correct weighting between examination and coursework components has been used in calculation of final mark (this should be achieved by the moderator having a copy of the definitive module descriptor);
 - that the marks have been transcribed correctly from examination scripts and coursework submissions prior to calculation of final marks;
 - that, in cases of anonymously marked work, anonymity has been preserved;
 - that consideration has been given to the need for standardisation;
 - that a selection of examination scripts and coursework is made available for forwarding to the appropriate external examiner (on whatever basis may be required by the external examiner). A full marks list identifying where each of the sample papers lies should also be included.

APPENDIX 3

POLICY ON THE RETENTION OF ASSESSMENT MATERIAL

The following revised policy has been agreed by the Learning & Teaching Board (LTB) following consultation with Schools and the Quality Assurance Review Group (QARG).

- 1 All exam scripts, following each programme panel, to be retained for two months following the final examination panel. Thereafter a sample of assessment material will be retained as outlined in (2). The Head of School will be responsible for arranging the collection, storage, retrieval and subsequent disposal of assessment material.
- 2 For quality review purposes, where external or internal assessors may wish to review assessment material from a range of modules or student performance over time, a representative sample of module assessment material should be retained.

A sample of module assessment material¹ (following the Subject Panel) for each module in the University at all levels should be retained on a rolling basis for five years. Mark sheets should be retained along with scripts and other assessed work. Students should not be required to submit two copies of coursework etc. The sample scripts should be photocopied by the School following marking to capture examiners' comments. The Module Co-ordinator is responsible for identifying the sample and the Head of School should make administrative arrangements for scanning/photocopying, storage and retrieval.

- 3 Where professional and statutory bodies require retention of examination scripts and projects/dissertations and/or other assessed work, for a longer period than specified in the University policy, then this requirement should be met. The programme leader will be responsible for ensuring that this policy is met.
- 4 It is recommended that all Schools adopt a system for organising the comprehensive storage of module material for quality review purposes. An ideal "module pack" would contain:
 - Module descriptor;
 - Examination paper/coursework outline;
 - Assessment strategy;
 - Marking schedule;
 - Evidence of moderation;

¹ *Definition of Module Sample*

For the purposes of this policy, a sample constitutes five pieces of assessment or 5% - whichever is greater (for each assessment method as identified in the module descriptor) for each module. The sample should reflect the range of marks awarded and should be accompanied by the marks disc printout.

- Samples of assessed work and marks/grades (for the previous session);
- 5 This policy will be reviewed from time to time in light of the changing requirements of the University and QAA methodologies.

Updated May 2009

APPENDIX 4**UNIVERSITY POLICY ON LATE SUBMISSION OF COURSEWORK**

- 1 Coursework submitted after the due date without good cause as determined by the Module Co-ordinator will be penalised by the reduction of ten percentage points from the mark awarded provided that the work is submitted within one calendar week of the due date. The due date for submission should normally lie within the University trimester dates.
- 2 Extensions to coursework deadlines on the basis of good cause may be determined by the Module Co-ordinator. The agreed revised date for submission will thereafter be deemed to be the due date for submission. The above penalties will then apply to any work submitted after the due date.
- 3 Coursework may not normally be submitted more than one calendar week after the due date.
- 4 Where the decision of the SP involves a requirement to resubmit coursework, penalties for late submission will not be carried forward to the resit diet.
- 5 There will be a single due date for coursework submitted for the September resit diet, namely the first day of the resit examination diet as published in the University Calendar of Dates.
- 6 There will be no indication on the student transcript that a penalty for late submission has been applied. (Agreed at Senate 4 June 2008.)