

BRIEFING NOTE ON AMENDMENTS TO THE ACADEMIC REGULATIONS for implementation in Session 2022-23



Where appropriate, amended/inserted text is underlined, and deleted text is ~~struck through~~. The appropriate minute reference number, recording approval of the amendment, is indicated in brackets [AC = Academic Council].

1. INTRODUCTION

- Page numbers in the *Table of Contents* and paragraph references have been updated as appropriate.

A3 - SECTION 2: STUDENT CONDUCT PROCEDURE

Student Conduct Procedure – Sanctions

Regulation A3 - Section 2, paragraph 10, has been amended [AC/22/3/4.1.1] to more effectively accommodate mitigation and to clarify the sanction of 'Absolute Discharge' in relation to any subsequent misconducts:

10. Sanctions

10.1 Criteria

10.1.1 When determining a proportionate sanction, the following criteria will be used, taking due cognisance of whether the sanction relates to academic or non-academic misconduct as described in [paragraph 6](#) of this Regulation:

- (vii) any mitigating circumstances (also refer paragraph 10.1.2 of this Regulation);
- (viii) the course stage, and availability of further assessment opportunities;
- (ix) the extent to which the assessment would have contributed to a final award;
- (x) where relevant, any requirements of associated professional, statutory and/or regulatory bodies;
- (xi) any other factors, including use of information technology and Library Services, security, observance of University regulations or any issues raised by the student not covered by the above.

10.1.2 In accordance with Regulation 10.1.1, a number of criteria are considered when determining a proportionate sanction. Where a student has extenuating circumstances and the Dean is satisfied that the severity of the circumstances may have impacted the student's decision making and behaviour at the time of the misconduct then the Dean may determine that the assessment opportunity be deferred.

10.2 Sanctions

10.2.1 One or more of the following sanctions may be applied for a first incidence of misconduct. (Refer also to [paragraph 10.1.2](#) of this Regulation and [Regulation A6: Research Degrees, Schedule 6.3](#) for outcomes relating to research).

The following list is not exhaustive.

Absolute Discharge: Exceptionally, although it is established that an incidence of misconduct has occurred, no blame is attached to the student's actions and no sanction imposed (although a record of the *Misconduct Hearing* and decision is retained in the student's file). This outcome **will not** be taken into account when considering any subsequent incidences of misconduct.

Initial Evidence-Gathering

Regulation A3 – Section 2, paragraph 7, has been amended [AC/22/3/4.1.2] to permit the introduction of a discretionary preliminary evidence-gathering process to inform a Dean's decision on whether to proceed to a *Misconduct Hearing* or not:

7. Student Conduct Procedure: Misconduct Hearing

7.1 Initial Intimation

7.1.1 ~~Where there are reasonable grounds to believe that misconduct has occurred then the Head of School shall be informed in the first instance,~~ Where an allegation of misconduct is made, then the Dean shall be informed in the first instance, including where it relates to the University's student accommodation. The Dean shall determine whether there are reasonable grounds to believe that misconduct has occurred. The Dean may, at their discretion, appoint an Officer of the University to undertake preliminary evidence gathering to inform their decision as to whether there are such reasonable grounds. In such circumstances, the Dean should be mindful of the normal timescales as specified in Regulation 7.2(i).

A4: ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF ASSESSMENT BOARDS

Proceed Carrying

Regulation A4, paragraph 5.2(i), relating to **proceed carrying**, has been amended [AC/22/2/4.1.2] to remove reference to 'exceptional' within the Regulation, with a view to encouraging greater use of 'proceed carrying' at Assessment Boards to support and facilitate the progression of students, and to replace the term 'discretion' with more transparent wording:

5.2 A student shall normally pass all modules central to the objectives of the course at each progression and award point as specified by Academic Council and defined in the Course Specification at each stage of their course before being permitted to receive the appropriate award or to proceed to the subsequent stage of the course, except that:

- (i) the Assessment Board ~~shall have discretion to exceptionally~~ may allow a student to proceed to the subsequent stage of their course carrying modules, normally amounting to no more than 15 credits and not designated as prerequisites for the subsequent stage of study;

Condonement of Failure

Regulation A4, Schedule 4.1: University Grading Scheme, has been amended [AC/22/2/4.1.3] to address some ambiguity regarding which grades are open to condonement, i.e. both Grade E and F:

Grade E

Definition of Grade: Borderline Fail – ~~Failure Open to Condonement~~

Recording of Condonement

An amendment [AC/22/2/4.1.4] been made to the terminology used to record condoned passes within relevant documentation, including student transcripts. Condoned passes will be recorded as "Credits Awarded", with the aim of providing a more supportive and transparent approach for all parties:

- 11.2 Where a fail is condoned this shall be recorded as "~~condoned~~ Credit Awarded" on the student's transcript, and the module's SCQF credit points awarded.

A6: RESEARCH DEGREES

PhD by Public Output

Regulation A6, paragraph 10, has been amended [AC/22/3/4.1.5], specifically to PhD by Public Output, to ensure its ongoing suitability in comparison to sector developments for the award of doctorate by a public output route. The primary amendments include:

- Section 10.1.3: the inclusion of the section that defines what constitutes an affiliated institution;
 - Section 10.2.2(iii): the insertion of the phrase “of any University” to ensure that a current or past research student who had co-produced/authored an item of public output could not be included in a submission;
 - Section 10.2.2(iv): editing to improve clarity around the requirement for the majority of outputs presented for in a portfolio to be less than 5 years old;
 - Section 10.5(i)(e): the necessity for the candidate to specify the proportion of work they personally undertook for co-produced public outputs and for this contribution to be verified by each co-author/collaborator/contributor whilst at the same time explicitly confirming co-author approval for the candidate to include the given output in a portfolio for a degree award;
 - Section 10.5(ii)(b): every item of public output in a portfolio should be peer-reviewed. Where traditional peer-review would not be possible, the Research Degrees Committee (in consultation with the supervisory team) would arrange for an alternative mechanism utilising external independent expert(s);
 - Section 10.5(ii)(c): the minor edit to replace “... the contribution to knowledge of the research presented within the portfolio.” with “...the original contribution of the research presented within the portfolio.”;
 - Section 10.5(ii): the reinstatement of the previous reference to assessment being at SCQF Level 12 was not required as this was covered in 10.6.4 and 10.7.1 through the use of the University’s Assessment Criteria (which were derived from SCQF Level 12 descriptors);
- Section 10.7.4: inclusion of reference to ‘normally’ as this would permit a failed candidate an opportunity to reapply before a 5 year period had lapsed.

FIT TO SIT POLICY

Extensions and Deferrals

The University's *Fit to Sit Policy* has been amended [AC/22/2/4.1.5] to make clear that a student might apply for *either* an extension *or* a deferral for a particular assessment. The revised wording is designed to both support staff in their decision-making and manage student expectations:

8. WHAT WILL BE THE OUTCOME OF MY REQUEST?

8.4 It is your responsibility to determine whether your circumstances warrant applying for **either** a *Coursework Extension Request* or a *Deferral Request*. You may find it helpful to consult with your Course Leader or Personal Tutor for further guidance. Where a student has received an extension to their submission date then no further extension shall be permitted for that particular submission and the student would either be expected to submit on the agreed deadline or use the [Academic Appeals \(Awards and Progression\) Procedure](#) after the Assessment Board. Only in very exceptional circumstances would a *Deferral Request* be accepted on an extended submission date.

Furthermore, the *Coursework Extension Form: Self-Certification* has been revised [AC/22/3/4.1.3] revised to allow students to indicate whether they are supported by the Inclusion Centre. This will remove the need for the *Reasonable Adjustment Extension Request* form and streamline the current process.

Extract from Coursework Extension Form: Self-Certification

SECTION 3: Supported by the Inclusion Centre	
<u>If you are currently supported by the Inclusion Centre then please tick the box. By doing so you are granting permission for the School to contact the Inclusion Centre should they need to.</u>	
<u>I am a disabled student and am currently being supported by the University's Inclusion Centre</u>	
SECTION 34: Declaration	
By submitting this form through your RGU email address you are declaring:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the above information to be accurate to the best of your knowledge; and ▪ that you understand the information provided in support of your claim will be treated in confidence unless disclosure is necessary to progress the claim. 	
Please be aware the University's <i>Student Conduct Procedure</i> , as contained in <i>Academic Regulation A3: Section 2</i> , may be applied should there be any doubts about the authenticity of the claim or documents submitted to support the claim.	
Student Name	Date

July 2022