

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.

## **A2: ADMISSION AND ENROLMENT**

*A2: Admission and Enrolment, Schedule 2.1: Appeals Procedure for Applicants* has been revised to incorporate and adjust timescales relating to elements of the appeal procedure and to include provision for the submission of a late appeal. These changes will both manage applicant expectations but also more closely align the procedure with other appeals procedures within the *Academic Regulations*. The revisions, as approved by Academic Council [AC/23/1/5.3.2], are as follows:

### **Schedule 2.1: Appeals Procedure for Applicants**

#### **4. APPEAL PROCEDURE**

##### **4.1 Stage One: Appeal**

- 4.1.1 Any applicant seeking to appeal the outcome of an application should submit an *Admissions Appeal Form*. The form, with any accompanying evidence, should be submitted to the *Head of Student Admissions Service*, normally no later than ten working days<sup>1</sup> following receipt of the feedback (paragraph 1.2 of this Schedule). Only exceptionally would an appeal be accepted beyond that period and only where the Head of Student Admissions Service is satisfied that there are verifiable, evidenced circumstances which were outwith the control of the applicant.

Where the Head of Student Admissions Service determines that there are no such circumstances then the Admissions Appeal Form – Continuation of Appeal will not be considered and the Head of Student Admissions Service shall advise the applicant accordingly.

- 4.1.2 Receipt of the *Admission Appeal Form* will be acknowledged, by email. If no email address is available then a letter acknowledging receipt will be sent to the applicant by first class mail.
- 4.1.3 The *Head of Student Admissions Service* and a representative from the School relevant to the application will consider the *Admission Appeal Form* and will provide the applicant with a response to the appeal normally no later than ~~five~~ ten working days following receipt of the *Admission Appeal Form*.

## 4.2 Stage Two: Continuation of Appeal

- 4.2.1 If an applicant is dissatisfied with the outcome of the Stage One Appeal then they may choose to continue with the Appeal by submitting the *Admissions Appeal Form – Continuation of Appeal* to the *Head of Student Admissions Service* normally no later than 10 working days following receipt of the outcome of the Stage One Appeal.
- 4.2.2 Receipt of the *Admission Appeal Form* will be acknowledged, by email. If no email address is available then a letter acknowledging receipt will be sent to the applicant by first class mail.

## A3 – SECTION 1: STUDENT APPEALS (AWARDS AND PROGRESSION) PROCEDURE

*Regulation A3 – Section 1: Student Appeals (Awards and Progression) Procedure – Grounds for Appeal [paragraph 6.5]* has been revised to simplify the language of the Grounds for Appeal. It was observed students frequently ticked both boxes ((i)(a) and (b)) declaring either physical or mental incapacity which would indicate a lack of understanding of the grounds and so the two grounds have been combined. In addition, the use of the word ‘computational’ was proving confusing and often a student related it to IT difficulties as opposed to an error on the part of the University. The revisions, as approved by Academic Council [AC/23/2/4.1.1], are as follows:

### Grounds for Appeal

6.5 Appeals shall be considered only on the following grounds for appeal:

- (i) that there is exceptional and compelling justification, which can be evidenced, that the student was experiencing such physical or mental incapacity as to prevent the student from: ~~(a)~~ notifying the School by submitting a *Coursework Extension Request* or a *Deferral Request*; and/or ~~(b)~~ undertaking the assessment;
- (ii) that there had been a material procedural, or administrative ~~or computational~~ error;
- (iii) that the assessment was not conducted in accordance with the current regulations governing the course.

## A3 – SECTION 2: STUDENT CONDUCT PROCEDURE

### Academic Misconduct

*Regulation A3 - Section 2, paragraph 6.1.1* has been designed to introduce a new academic misconduct category of 'False Authorship' which explicitly incorporates reference to artificial intelligence (AI). This new category also captures contract cheating and so negates the requirement for a separate category relating to contract cheating. A footnote defining essay mills has also been included. The revisions, as approved by Academic Council [AC/23/3/4.1], are as follows:

#### 6.1 Academic Misconduct (including Research Misconduct<sup>2</sup>)

- 6.1.1 *Academic misconduct* is defined by the University as any attempt by a student(s) to effect an unfair advantage in any assessment, and may include (though is not limited to) one or more of the following:
- (i) **False Authorship.** The University defines this as the practice of submitting work where the student is not the author of that work. The 'false authorship' may relate to the student engaging with a third party and/or software tool to complete an assessment, either in part or whole. This may include work produced by, but not attributed to: another student, an essay mill<sup>3</sup>, a family member or friend, a tutoring service or the unauthorised use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) software. It may also include payment, or other favours, though this will not always be the case. It may relate to any form of assessment or conducting research.
  - (ii) **Plagiarism.** The University defines this as the practice of presenting the thoughts, writings or other output of another or others as original, without acknowledgement of their source(s) at the point of their use in the student's work. All materials including text, data, diagrams or other illustrations used to support a piece of work, whether from a printed publication or from electronic media, should be appropriately identified and referenced and should not normally be copied directly unless as an acknowledged quotation. Text, opinions or ideas translated into the words of the individual student should in all cases acknowledge the original source.
  - ~~(ii) **Contract cheating.** The University defines this as the practice of submitting work which has been generated using one or more of a range of services provided by a third party. The 'contract' may include payment or other favours, though this will not always be the case. Services may include (though not limited to) essays or other types of assignments, conducting research, impersonation in exams and other forms of unfair assistance for completing assessed work.~~

- (iii) **Falsification or fabrication of data.** The University defines this as the misrepresentation of the results of experimental work or the presentation of fictitious results.
  - (iv) **Collusion.** The University defines this as two or more students working together, without the prior authorisation of the Course Leader, tutor or supervisor, to produce the same piece of work, and then attempting to present this work as their own.
  - (v) **Bribery.** The University defines this as the paying, offering or attempted exchange of an inducement for information or material intended to advantage the recipient in an assessment.
  - (vi) **Personation.** The University defines this as a substitute taking the place of a student in an examination, preparing coursework for assessment on behalf of another student, or submitting coursework for assessment that has been prepared by someone other than the student to whom the resulting grade would be attributed.
  - (vii) **Cheating.** The University defines this (in relation to examinations) as the taking of any unauthorised material (hardcopy or electronic) into an examination; the unauthorised use of technology in examinations; communicating or attempting to communicate in any way with another student during an examination; copying or attempting to copy from another student during an examination.
- <sup>3</sup> Essay mills are organisations or individuals, usually with a web presence, that contract to complete an assignment or assignments for a student for a fee.  
(<https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/guidance/essay-mills-and-the-case-for-legislation.pdf>)

## Non-Academic Misconduct

*Regulation A3 – Section 2, paragraph 6.2.1* has been revised, as approved by Academic Council [AC/23/3/4.1], to include the following footnote to address the need for explicit reference to Report and Support within the Regulations:

### 6. Non-Academic Misconduct

*Non-academic misconduct* may involve conduct relating to (though not limited to) the following<sup>4</sup>:

<sup>4</sup> These may include cases reported via the University's [Report and Support platform](#).

## Sanctions

*Regulation A3 – Section 2, paragraph 10.2* has been amended to remove any suggestion or implication that some sanctions are only applicable for a first instance of established misconduct – this is with particular reference to the sanction of ‘Reprimand’.

### 10.2 Sanctions

- 10.2.1 One or more of the following sanctions may be applied for established ~~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 degrees).

**Reprimand:** Written warning, retained by the Dean in the School’s student file. This sanction would normally be appropriate ~~only~~ if University staff were satisfied the misconduct was minor. ~~and the first known case of misconduct.~~

## A8: HONORARY AWARDS

*Regulation A8: Honorary Awards* has been revised, and approved by Academic Council [AC/23/1/8], to provide further clarity around nominations, awards and currency of terminology.

## FIT TO SIT POLICY AND EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES

The University’s *Fit to Sit Policy and Extenuating Circumstances* has been amended to strengthen the language and provide clarity regarding submission dates and appropriate supporting evidence. The revisions, as approved by Academic Council [[AC/23/3/4.1], are as follows:

### Extracts

#### 4. WHAT IS ACCEPTABLE EVIDENCE?

##### **Academic Appeals, Misconduct Appeals and Fitness to Practise Appeals**

- 4.6 Likewise, supporting evidence can be obtained from your General Practitioner (GP) (medical doctor) or a qualified health practitioner. To be eligible for this you must have attended the practice at the time of your illness. Medical certificates ~~should~~ must be specific about the nature of the illness and ~~should~~ must include a clear diagnosis. Retrospective evidence will generally not be accepted.
- 4.7 Students studying on-campus in Aberdeen are encouraged to register with a local medical practice. If an overseas medical certificate is submitted then it must be on official letter-headed paper with the relevant stamp of authority. If the medical certificate is not in English

then it must be accompanied by a translation by an official translation service. Any costs incurred for the translation will be the responsibility of the student.

- 4.8 If, during an invigilated examination, you notify an invigilator that you have become unwell and are unable to continue, then this will be recorded by the Invigilator and you ~~should~~ must refer to this in Section 4 of the *Deferral Request Form*.

① **Unacceptable evidence:** Photographs of physical injuries, skin conditions, bodies and/or funeral services **are not appropriate evidence and will not be considered if submitted with an appeal.**

## 6. HOW TO REQUEST EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES

There are two routes through which extenuating circumstances can be claimed:

### 6.1 Coursework Extension Request

If you are seeking an extension to a submission deadline then the *Coursework Extension Request Form* must be completed and submitted through your **RGU email account** to your School **at least 24 hours prior to the submission date and time.** Your School's email address can be found at [www.rgu.ac.uk/academicregulations](http://www.rgu.ac.uk/academicregulations). Claims submitted within, or after, 24 hours of the submission date will **not** be considered.

You will receive an automated receipt of your email which you ~~should~~ must retain for your records.

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