

5.12 Review of Assessment Decisions

The regulations concerning the review of assessment decisions (University General Regulations: Study Regulations 6.58 – 6.94) are outlined below. An application form for a clerical check of an assessment decision (regulation 6.59) is attached as Appendix 15. A form requesting the review of an assessment decision is attached as Appendix 16.

Review of assessment decisions

The following procedure covers requests for review of any aspect of academic assessment from students on undergraduate or postgraduate taught programmes. A separate procedure covers appeals or disputes in connection with research (MPhil and PhD programmes) – see Calendar Book III.

6.58 General principles

- i. There is no appeal against the academic judgement of examiners.*
- ii. Marks will not normally be awarded to compensate for extenuating circumstances. Extenuating circumstances will normally only influence the consequences of assessment decisions, e.g. whether a student is permitted to re-take a module. However, special consideration may be given to cases where students are prevented by illness or emergency from taking or completing an assessed element (see Study Regulations 6.32–6.41).*
- iii. Students submitting requests for review must accept any consequent delays, e.g. final year students may not graduate with their year cohort.*
- iv. The Student Complaints Procedure (see Study Regulations Section 9) cannot be used to investigate matters of academic judgement. Where more than one procedure applies (e.g. student progress, complaint, review of assessment decision), the Director of Academic and Student Affairs will decide the nature and sequencing of any procedures to be followed. The aim is that no more than one investigation into a particular issue or episode should be under way at any one time.*

Clerical check

6.59 *Students seeking a clerical check of their marks should submit a written request to the Head of School of the relevant School (i.e. the School delivering the module in question), c/o the School Office, within ten working days of publication of the assessment outcome. A charge of £10 will be levied for this service, but should an error be uncovered, this fee will be returned. The fee for the clerical check must accompany the request for the check.*

Grounds for review

6.60 *Candidates may apply for a review only on the following grounds:*

- i. that there was a procedural irregularity in the assessment process which may have adversely affected the student's results (**Note:** an appeal may not be based on a claim that the examiners should have made greater allowance for e.g. a student's extenuating circumstances);*
- or, in the case e.g. of the thesis/dissertation element of taught programmes,*
- ii. that there was inadequate supervision of the student's work. If a review is requested on the grounds of inadequate supervision, good reason must be provided as to why action was not taken before completion of the assessment.*

Review procedure

6.61 *Students must submit requests for review to the Head of School of the relevant School within ten working days of publication of the assessment outcome.*

6.62 *Requests for a review must be submitted on the appropriate form, available from the Quality Assurance and Partnerships office, Students' Union or School Offices. Applicants must set out the grounds for review and include their student registration number and contact details (address, email, telephone number). Any supporting documents should be attached.*

Quality Assurance and Partnerships Assessment

6.63 *Students who knowingly submit false evidence at any stage of the review process will forfeit the right to have their case considered and may be liable to disciplinary proceedings (see Conduct Regulations (Rules of Discipline)).*

6.64 *On receipt of a request for review, the Head of School (or his/her nominee), in consultation with two senior members of the School, shall determine whether sufficient grounds for review*

have been established. Students are responsible for making themselves available to attend for interview, should this be necessary.

6.65 If, following consultation with two senior colleagues, the Head of School (or his/her nominee) decides that no grounds for review have been established, the student shall be sent written confirmation of the decision, with reasons, normally within ten working days of the Head of School's receipt of the request for review. The School shall send a standard email to the student's University email address advising him/her that a letter stating has been sent stating that no grounds for review have been established, and instructing him/her to contact the School Office urgently if it has not been received within 2 working days of the email.

6.66 If the case for review has been established in the opinion of the Head of School (or his/her nominee) or following appeal to CSAC, the Head of School or CSAC shall request the Board of Examiners, in consultation with the external examiner(s), to review its original decision, with such recommendations as are deemed appropriate.

6.67 The Chairperson of the Board of Examiners shall inform both the student and the Head of School of the Board's decision in writing, with reasons, normally within 15 working days of receiving the request for review from the Head of School (or his/her nominee). The student shall be advised that he/she has the right of appeal to the Central Student Appeals Committee (see Study Regulations 6.75–6.79) and will be given a deadline by which any such appeal must be submitted. This deadline shall be five working days from the date of the letter from the Chairperson of the Board of Examiners. The School shall send a standard email to the student's University email address advising him/her that a letter stating the decision of the Board has been sent, and instructing him/her to contact the School Office urgently if it has not been received within 2 working days of the email.

6.68 A copy of the original request for review and confirmation of the eventual outcome shall be sent to the Director of Academic and Student Affairs in each case.

Request for concessions based on extenuating circumstances

6.69 Evidence of extenuating circumstances must be submitted to the School Office within three working days of returning to study or, in the case of emergencies which arose during examinations, within three working days of the date of the student's last examination. If a student knows he or she is going to miss an assignment deadline or an examination because of extenuating circumstances, he or she should inform the relevant School Office in advance by telephone or letter of their enforced absence, either personally or, if this is not possible, via someone on their behalf (see also Section 8 Regulations covering Absence and Failure to Submit Assignments due to Illness, below). Boards of Examiners are not obliged to consider any medical certificate or evidence of extenuating circumstances presented more than three working days after the last examination (see Study Regulations 6.32–6.41 above). When a student who is not in good academic standing seeks a concession on the basis of extenuating circumstances, the case shall be dealt with by the appropriate School Student Progress Committee (see Study Regulations 5.10–5.18) and not by the procedure set out in 6.70–6.74 below.

6.70 When the performance of a student has been significantly affected by extenuating factors which the student could not have made available before the Board of Examiners reached its decision, the student may submit a request in writing to the relevant Head of School for a concession in connection with that assessment decision. Any such request shall relate only to the consequences of the original assessment decision, and not the original assessment mark. Students must submit such requests to the relevant Head of School within ten working days of learning the assessment outcome, along with an explanation of why this information was not communicated to the Board of Examiners within the deadline for such submissions, with appropriate supporting evidence.

Quality Assurance and Partnerships Assessment

6.71 The student shall have the right to meet the Head of School or his/her nominee, accompanied by a registered student of the University or by a member of staff of the University or University Chaplaincy. No legal representation shall be permitted. Students should indicate in their letter whether they wish to avail of this right.

6.72 On receipt of such a request, the Head of School or his/her nominee shall meet the student, if necessary, and consult with the Chairperson of the relevant Board of Examiners in determining

whether a concession should be granted. Extra marks shall not normally be awarded to compensate for extenuating circumstances, but extenuating circumstances may be taken into account in a number of ways, e.g. by permitting the student a further attempt to reach pass standard; or discounting the module or element in question for the purposes of calculating the degree classification.

6.73 The Head of School or his/her nominee, following consultation with two senior members of the School, shall inform the student of his/her decision in writing, with reasons, normally within 15 working days of receiving the request for a concession. The student shall be advised that he/she has the right of appeal to the Central Student Appeals Committee (see Study Regulations 6.75–6.79 below) and shall be given a deadline by which any such appeal must be submitted. This deadline shall be five working days from the date of the Head of School's letter. The School shall send a standard email to the student's University email address advising him/her that a letter stating the decision of the Head of School (or nominee) has been sent, and instructing him/her to contact the School Office urgently if it has not been received within 2 working days of the email.

6.74 A copy of the original request, and confirmation of the eventual outcome, shall be sent to the Chairperson of the Examination Board and Director of Academic and Student Affairs in each case.

Appeals to the Central Student Appeals Committee (CSAC)

6.75 Students may appeal on any of the following grounds to the Quality Assurance and Partnerships office:

- i. new evidence has become available which could not have been made available to the Head of School or Board of Examiners (evidence withheld from the Head of School or Board of Examiners will not normally constitute new evidence);
- ii. there has been a procedural irregularity; or
- iii. the decision of the Head of School or Board of Examiners was too severe or inappropriate.

6.76 The notice of appeal must be made in writing within five working days of the date of the letter stating the decision of the Head of School or Board of Examiners.

6.77 The Chairperson and two other members of the CSAC not previously involved in the case shall decide if there are grounds for appeal.

6.78 If it is decided that there are no grounds for appeal the student shall be informed of the decision in writing, with reasons, within five working days of its having been made. The Quality Assurance and Partnerships office shall send a standard email to the student's University email address advising him/her that a letter has been sent stating that there are no grounds for appeal, and instructing him/her to contact the Quality Assurance and Partnerships office urgently if it has not been received within 2 working days of the date the email was sent.

6.79 Where grounds for appeal exist the case will be considered by CSAC.

6.80 The Central Student Appeals Committee shall be constituted as in Study Regulation 23.

6.81 The Central Student Appeals Committee may rescind or vary:

- the decision of the Head of School or his/her nominee in Study Regulation 6.65 above; or
- the decision of the Board of Examiners in Study Regulation 6.66 above; or
- the decision of the Head of School or his/her nominee in Study Regulation 6.73 above;
- or it may dismiss the appeal.

6.82 The Committee shall, in the event of its rescinding or varying a decision of the Head of School or his/her nominee, or a decision of the Board of Examiners, have the power to require students to retake any module(s) or element(s) of a module, or to refer cases to the appropriate Quality Assurance and Partnerships Assessment

Board of Examiners. The Central Student Appeals Committee shall have no authority to alter assessment decisions.

6.83 There is no appeal against a decision of the Central Student Appeals Committee.

Procedures of the Central Student Appeals Committee

6.84 Students will be given five working days' notice in writing of the date and venue of the meeting at which their appeal will be heard, and will have the right to appear before the Committee. The Quality Assurance and Partnerships office shall send a standard email to the student's University email address advising that a letter notifying him/her of a CSAC meeting has been sent, and instructing him/her to contact the Quality Assurance and Partnerships office

urgently if it has not been received within 2 working days of the date the email was sent.

6.85 *Students may be accompanied by a registered student of the University or by a member of staff of the University or University Chaplaincy. No legal representation shall be permitted.*

6.86 *If students do not appear in person before the Committee, the appeal may be determined in their absence.*

6.87 *The Committee shall seek copies of all correspondence relating to the case, and may seek written evidence from the Head of School or his/her nominee, or from the relevant Board of Examiners, or from such other witnesses as may have relevant information.*

6.88 *The Committee shall not be entitled to inspect examination scripts, dissertations or other elements of assessed coursework.*

6.89 *Any Committee member who has an involvement with the case in question (e.g. as a member of the Board of Examiners) shall withdraw while the Committee hears that case, and the quorum will be reduced accordingly.*

6.90 *Only members of the Committee and its secretariat shall be present while the Committee makes its decisions.*

6.91 *Minutes shall be taken as a formal record of the meeting and retained.*

6.92 *Students shall receive written confirmation of the Committee's decision, with reasons, within five working days of the appeal hearing. Quality Assurance and Partnerships office will send a standard email to the Student's University email address advising him/her that a letter stating the decision of the SSPC has been sent, and instructing them to contact the Quality Assurance and Partnerships office urgently if it has not been received within 2 working days of the date the email was sent.*

Monitoring

6.93 *The Director of Academic and Student Affairs shall make an annual report to the Learning and Teaching Committee and to Academic Council on assessment appeals/reviews. The reports shall be in summary form, preserving anonymity.*

Advice

6.94 *Advice on the operation of this procedure may be obtained from the Quality Assurance and Partnerships office, Students' Union or School offices.*