UNIVERSITY OF HERTFORDSHIRE
CENTRE FOR ACADEMIC QUALITY ASSURANCE

Amendments to (i) UPR AS12 (Assessments and Examinations (U/G and Taught P/G) and Conferments (University-delivered provision)) and (ii) UPR AS13 (the equivalent of UPR AS12 for collaborative programmes) for 2016/17

This paper summarises the approved amendments to UPR AS12 and UPR AS13 for the 2016/17 academic year.

1. Revised arrangements for the marking and moderation of examinations and assessments

The University's Assessment and Feedback Working Group have identified elements of the University's policies on the marking and moderation of student work (UPR AS12, section 5) to be in need of clarification. As a consequence, the Centre for Academic Quality Assurance (CAQA) and the Learning, Teaching and Innovation Centre (LTIC) have reviewed existing policies, and following a process of consultation (with Schools and through ASAC) the following amendments to UPR AS12, section 5 have been approved:

5   **REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES RELATING TO THE SETTING, REVIEW, SUBMISSION, MARKING AND MODERATION OF EXAMINATIONS AND ASSESSMENTS**

The University's regulations and procedures relating to the setting, review, submission, marking and moderation of examinations and coursework reflect the good practice principles set down in the expectation and indicators contained in Chapter B6 of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education.

5.1   **Setting and review of assessments**

NO CHANGE

5.2   **Publication and use of Grading Criteria**

5.2.1   The following minimum requirements apply to the development, publication and use of grading criteria:

    i   every Programme must publish Grading Criteria in the Programme handbook(s);

    ii   Grading Criteria must relate to the University's Grade Descriptors and associated numeric grades, described in section D1.1, UPR AS14[5];

    iii   relevant Grading Criteria should be available for all assessments that students on the programme will encounter.

    ~~iv   feedback on marked student work must be consistent with the University's Grade Descriptors.~~

Further guidance is available on the Learning and Teaching Innovation Centre StudyNet pages, at:

http://www.studynet2.herts.ac.uk/intranet/lti.nsf/Teaching+Documents?Openview&count=9999&restricttocategory=Strategy+and+Policy/Grading+Criteria

5.3   **Submission of coursework**

NO CHANGE

5.4   **Marking ~~and moderation~~ of ~~marked~~ student work**

5.4.*1*   All examination scripts should be marked anonymously. *Wherever possible ~~all~~* summative student work~~, with the exception of those classes of submission identified below,~~ must be submitted and marked anonymously. There are some situations where it is not feasible to mark work anonymously, or where there is no significant scope for bias to affect the outcome of the marking process. The following forms of assessment are~~, therefore,~~ *examples of assessments that are* exempt from the need to be submitted and marked anonymously:

i   assessments where candidates can be identified during the assessment process (for example, oral presentations, performances*, observed practice assessments*);

ii   assessments where an assessor's familiarity with individual submissions makes anonymity impossible (for example, dissertations, work involving ongoing student/staff interaction, work subject to formal formative feedback);

iii   assessments where there are particular circumstances relating to the submission that may identify it as the work of a particular student or group of students (for example, individually negotiated titles, alternative formats relating to a study needs agreement);

iv   objective tests, such as multiple choice questions, and other assessments, such as highly structured mathematical or technical problems, where there is little or no opportunity for evaluative interpretation of the answer.

5.4.2   *Blind double marking is the process whereby two assessors work independently and neither marker is aware of the other's assessment decision in formulating their own mark.*

Blind double marking culminates in a single agreed mark.

For modules at levels **6** and **7**, a coursework assignment requires blind double marking if:

(i)   it counts for over **50**% of the module assessment; **and**
(ii)   is marked by more than one first marker; **and**
(iii)   the question or title has been developed and/or agreed on an individual basis.

An example of an assessment task that must be blind double marked is the individual project/dissertation module. Assignments where students, for instance, respond to a common question but draw on practice in order to answer that question do not need to be blind double marked. Blind double marking replaces internal moderation.

5.4.3   *Feedback on marked student work must be consistent with the University's Grade Descriptors.*

5.5   ***Internal moderation of marked student work***

The University needs to be assured that robust, effective and consistent moderation processes are being applied across all Schools.

Staff should refer to the detailed guidance on moderation produced by the Learning and Teaching Innovation Centre (LTIC).

5.5.1   *Internal moderation is a process separate from that of marking and provides assurance of the quality of marking and feedback. The process of internal moderation involves checking that the marks have been awarded fairly and consistently and in accordance with the grading criteria/marking scheme. The process also provides the opportunity to reflect on and refine assessment and feedback practices. Moderation must take account of the marks awarded to the full set of assessed work for the task, module or programme, in the context of the academic standards for the award. It is, therefore, not about making changes to an individual student's marks.*

5.5.2   *The module leader is responsible for ensuring that internal moderation has taken place.*

5.5.3   Staff undertaking moderation should have a minimum of ~~one~~ *two* (~~1~~ *2*) *years'* experience in UK Higher Education.

5.5.4   *All summative assessments must be internally moderated, with the exception of those assessments that have been blind double marked (see section 5.4.2) and assessments that have undergone objective marking including by a computer.* Student work from each assessment in a module should be sampled.

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5.5.5   Where there is more than one (**1**) marker *the moderator should identify and consider any differences in the distribution of marks between markers.*

5.5.6   ~~All summative assessments must be internally moderated, with the exception of those assessments that have been blind double marked (see section 5.4.8~~ *Moderators must select a minimum sample size that* is equal to the square root of the total number of items, but not *fewer* than five (**5**), selecting work from across the range of grades awarded. If there are *fewer* than five (**5**) items of assessment, then all items will be reviewed. *Where there is more than one marker, the sample must include at least three (3) items from each marker.*

5.5.7   The outcome of ~~this~~ *the moderation* process will be one *or more* of:

i   *the* marking *is* fair~~ly~~ and consistent~~ly~~, requiring no change to *either* the marks *or the feedback provided to students*;

ii   *the* marking *is* consistent but too harsh or too generous, requiring all *relevant* marks to be *adjusted* up or down following consultation with the *relevant* marker*(s)*;

iii   *there are* significant inconsistencies in marking, requiring a re-mark of all work following consultation with *relevant* marker*(s)*;

iv   *the quality of the feedback provided by one or more markers requires improvement;*

v   *the feedback provided by one or more markers requires greater consistency.*

The marks of individual students should not be changed as a result of internal moderation.

If agreement cannot be reached between the internal moderator and the marker*(s) about any aspect of the marking process*, the Dean of School *or their nominee* will appoint a second moderator. ~~*The marks of individual students should not be changed as a result of internal moderation.*~~

5.5.8   *Clear documentation must be provided to evidence the process of moderation and this must be made available to the external examiner.*

5.5.9   For assessment that involves judgements of transient *events (e.g. oral presentations, interviews)* and other less traditional forms of assessment that do not lend themselves to the above procedure, *the School* must take appropriate steps to ~~obtain safe~~ *ensure the assessment process is safe.*

5.6   *Errors in examination and coursework marking*

5.6.1   All examination scripts *and any other assessment that are not returned to students* should be checked to ensure that no part has been overlooked by the examiner(s) and that the total mark is arithmetically correct. *This includes coursework which comprises objective assessments where the total mark requires manual calculation.*

5.6.2   *Where,* at any point in the marking and moderation process, *an error in the mark calculations is identified the whole set of assessments should be checked to ensure that the same error does not occur elsewhere.*

5.7   *External Examiners*

5.7.1   Appropriate samples of marked student work should be reviewed by External Examiners, selected from across the range of grades awarded (however, see section 5.4.11). *Where moderation is required,* the sample provided for the External Examiner is the same as that used for the internal moderation process. However, the External Examiner has the right to review all relevant examination scripts and in-course assessments.

5.7.2   With the agreement of the External Examiner, samples of marked student work from the referred/deferred examination period do not need to be reviewed by External Examiners, providing that:

i   the External Examiner is satisfied with the standard of marking of student work during the first-sit examination period;

ii   the External Examiner has reviewed the referred/deferred assessments prior to their use;

iii   all marginally-failed referred/deferred student work is internally moderated *or blind double marked, as appropriate* (see section D1.1, UPR AS14[5], for the definition of a marginal fail grade);

iv   all other marking and internal moderating requirements, as defined in sections 5.4.1 to 5.4.10 above, are adhered to.

See section 9.3 if the External Examiner is also absent from the Module Board of Examiners for the referred/deferred examination period.

5.8   Return of marked student work

i.   Where blind double marking has taken place, the provisional mark agreed by the markers is the only mark provided to the student. Feedback to the student should be consistent with the grading criteria / marking scheme. Any inconsistencies in individual marker comments should be resolved before the feedback is given to the student.

ii.   It should be apparent to the student whether or not their work has been part of the sample chosen in the process of internal moderation.

iii.   Students' coursework will be returned to them together with feedback no later than four (**4**) calendar weeks after the submission deadline. Any exceptions to this must be agreed by the Associate Dean of School (Academic Quality Assurance) or the Associate Dean of School (Learning and Teaching) and notified to students in advance of the expiration of the four (**4**) week period. For work of an on-going nature, such as a major project or dissertation, supervising staff will ensure that students are provided with feedback at interim stages.

5.9   Provision of feedback on examinations

5.9.1   Schools must ensure that, if sought, feedback on performance in written examinations is available to students. *Schools* are responsible for determining the nature and extent of feedback *but subject to the following:*

(i)   Students who are resitting an examination are entitled to guidance, ~~*if sought,*~~ on the strengths and weaknesses of their examination performance; ~~. *Students that who are not re-sitting should normally receive individual feedback when requested, but in some circumstances more generic feedback, which does not address the individual case, may be appropriate.*~~

(ii)   *Students should normally receive individual feedback although* in some circumstances more generic feedback, which does not address the individual case, may be appropriate;

(ii)   *If requested, feedback must include a breakdown of marks and any markers' comments.*

5.9.2   *Markers must ensure that any comments on assessments, including examination answers, are not inappropriate and only relate to the answer and grading criteria/marking scheme.*

2. Arrangements for the approval of Award Pass Lists

The current wording of UPR AS12, section 10.1.3 suggests that the minutes of programme Boards should be prepared within 20 working days. However, UPR AS14, Appendix II, section 3.2 states that this deadline should effectively be 40 working days. The following amendment to UPR AS12, section 10.1.3 has therefore been approved to clarify the deadline:

10   PUBLICATION OF RESULTS

10.1.3 Award Pass Lists

School Administration Managers will ensure that not more than **20** working days following the relevant Board meeting:

i   an appropriate Award Pass List is produced and signed by the Chairman of the Programme Board of Examiners and by the School Administration Manager *and that the original Award Pass List is placed in the Minute Book*;

(Note for guidance:

The original Award Pass List is subsequently placed in the Minute Book (see UPR AS14, Appendix II, section 3.2). Section 9.5.3 formally designates the annotated Programme Board of Examiners Report as an appendix to the minutes of the meeting to which it relates. The original Award Pass List is also an important record of the business of the Board. Although it does not form part of the minutes of the meeting, it too should be placed in the Minute Book to ensure that it is readily available for scrutiny.)