

Amendments to UPR AS14 (Structure and Assessment Regulations - Undergraduate and Taught Postgraduate Programmes) for 2017/18

This paper summarises the approved amendments to UPR AS14 for the 2017/18 academic year.

1. Approval of alternative chairs of examination boards

The Chair of each Board of Examiners must be approved by the Vice-Chancellor (or Deputy Vice-Chancellor, in the VC's absence), following the recommendation of the Dean of School. However, there may be occurrences where both the VC and DVC are unable to do so. In such exceptional circumstances, it has been agreed that the Director of Academic Quality Assurance will have the authority to approve alternative chairs of examination boards. The following amendment to UPR AS14, section C has been approved:

C BOARDS OF EXAMINERS

C1 General regulations for Boards of Examiners

C1.10 In exceptional circumstances, the Director of Academic Quality Assurance has delegated authority to approve an alternative chairman of a Board of Examiners. The proposed alternative chairman must have prior experience of chairing Board of Examiners' meetings.

C1.11 Each Board of Examiners will be constituted in

2. Chair's Action on behalf of a Board of Examiners

Whilst the majority of Boards of Examiners' activity is conducted at the Boards themselves, there are occasions where this is not possible. On these occasions, the Chair may be required to make a decision without calling a meeting of the Board, where this is in the best interests of the student and/or the University. The most common reason for doing so is where a situation arises that has to be dealt with promptly, and it is not appropriate to wait for a formal meeting of the Board. The Chair may consult informally with Board members, and would subsequently report the decision to the Board. However, the University's regulations do not formally recognise this delegated authority of the Chair. The following additions to UPR AS14, section C have therefore been approved:

C BOARDS OF EXAMINERS

C2 *Chair's Action on behalf of a Board of Examiners*

C2.1 Decisions or recommendations on student grades, continuation and awards will normally be considered at a Board of Examiners, and the University discourages the use of Chair's action as a routine alternative method. However it is recognised that in particular circumstances it is necessary to make decisions or recommendations subsequent to these meetings. In such cases, the Chairman shall have delegated authority to take action, with or without consultation with Board members.

C2.2 Chair's Action should normally only be used:

- to fulfil a minuted Board decision to delegate authority, following completion of an action on an individual student (for example, a decision on progression following confirmation of an outstanding module grade, the outcome of a Student Academic Misconduct Panel, or acceptance of Serious Adverse Circumstances);*

- *where matters referred are considered by the Chairman to be non-contentious, to review a decision or recommendation when required to do so under the terms of the University's procedures for requesting a formal review of the decision or recommendation of a Board of Examiners (as appropriate Appendix I, UPR AS12 or Appendix I, UPR AS13, refers);*
 - *to correct errors or omissions caused by administration processes.*
- C2.3** *Of the above, a Programme external examiner's approval and signature would usually only be required on recommendations affecting the final intended award of a student.*
- C2.4** *Chair's Action should only be taken following recorded consultation with Board members:*
- *to make changes to grades or progression or award decisions for a cohort of students;*
 - *to recommend a higher classification of award to an individual student;*
 - *where matters referred are considered by the Chairman to be contentious, to review a decision or recommendation when required to do so under the terms of the University's procedures for requesting a formal review of the decision or recommendation of a Board of Examiners (as appropriate Appendix I, UPR AS12L or Appendix I, UPR AS13M, refers).*
- C2.5** *Following appropriate consultation and external examiner's approval (see sections C2.3 and C2.4, above), the Chairman has full delegated authority to make a decision or recommendation, which is not subject to subsequent ratification by the Board of Examiners. The decision or recommendation should only be re-opened if it is shown to be contrary to University regulations.*
- C2.6** *Chair's Action should normally be taken by the Chairman of the Board of Examiners. However, in circumstances where the Chairman is unable to carry out Chair's action following the Board, the responsibility for those duties may exceptionally, and subject to the justified and recorded approval of the Dean of School, be delegated to an appropriate senior member of academic staff with experience of chairing Boards of Examiners.*
- C2.7** *All Chair's actions must be recorded in the minutes of the next scheduled Board of Examiners meeting.*

C4 Programme Boards of Examiners (Programme Boards)

C4.3 Powers and responsibilities of Programme Boards

C4.3.1 Programme Boards will operate within the University's assessment regulations and within any approved programme-specific assessment regulations and will have the following specific responsibilities:

- xi If, subsequent to a Programme Board of Examiners' meeting, an error is found in a mark or grade affecting the **continuation** of one or more candidates, the Chairman of the Programme Board of Examiners shall consult with the Chairman/Chairmen of relevant Module Boards of Examiners, the relevant School Administration Manager or, for collaborative Boards, the Assistant Registrar (Collaborative Partnerships), the appropriate administrator and, if appropriate, the internal Examiners/moderators for the module concerned to recommend a revised decision. ~~*This decision must have the agreement, in writing, of any Module External Examiner(s) involved in the original decision.*~~ The revised decision will be reported to the next meeting of the Programme and Module Board of Examiners.

3. Implementation of a GPA system

The June 2016 meeting of Academic Board approved the introduction of a GPA system at the University, for phased implementation from 2017/18:

- UH will adopt a GPA system, in parallel with the Honours Degree Classification system;
- There will be a phased introduction of the GPA system, from September 2017 onwards;
- GPA will initially only be offered to students registered on programmes offering Honours Classification (Bachelor's with Honours, Integrated Master's) and Foundation Degrees;
- GPA will also be used to inform students of staged performance (e.g. end of level 4 GPA, and end of level 5 GPA for Bachelor's students);
- UH has adopted a grade point scale based on the HEA-recommended scale, adapted to align with the UH Grade Descriptors;
- GPA will be calculated from the grade points awarded to all modules that contribute to the credit requirement for the award, with an equal weighting across all academic levels;
- If a student fails a module that is subsequently compensated by the final Programme Board, the actual grade point achieved is used to calculate GPA;
- If a student passes a module on referral or re-enrolment, a bare pass grade point is used to calculate GPA;
- Direct entrants to level 5 or 6 of a programme have their GPA calculated from the subsequent UH credit achieved;
- Study abroad students who replace any level 5 studies with studies at a partner institution have their GPA calculated only from UH modules;

In order to accommodate a GPA system, the following amendments to UPR AS14, sections C and D have been approved:

C **BOARDS OF EXAMINERS**

C3 **Programme Boards of Examiners (Programme Boards)**

C3.3 **Powers and responsibilities of Programme Boards**

C3.3.1 Programme Boards will operate within the University's assessment regulations and within any approved programme-specific assessment regulations and will have the following specific responsibilities:

- v *where appropriate, to confirm the award of a Grade Point Average (GPA) for students completing programmes and at the completion of each academic stage;*

(NOTE:

13 *The University is introducing a Grade Point Average (GPA) system, and will award a GPA for students completing their level 4 studies in 2017/18, their levels 0, 4 and 5 studies in 2018/19, their levels 0, 4, 5 and 6 studies in 2019/20 and their levels 0, 4, 5, 6 and 7 studies in 2020/21)*

- vi to consider situations where a student's achievement has been

D ASSESSMENT AND AWARD REGULATIONS

D1.1 Interpretation of grades

Levels 0, 4, 5, 6				Level 7			
<i>Grade awarded</i>		Interpretation of Grade		<i>Grade awarded</i>		Interpretation of Grade	
Numeric Grade ¹	<i>Grade Point²</i>	Grade Descriptor	<i>Indicative Classification Descriptor</i>	Numeric Grade ¹	<i>Grade Point²</i>	Grade Descriptor	<i>Indicative Classification Descriptor</i>
80-100 ³	<i>4.50</i>	Outstanding	1 st Class	80-100 ³	<i>4.50</i>	Outstanding	1 st Class
75-79	<i>4.25</i>	Excellent	Honours/ Distinction	75-79	<i>4.25</i>	Excellent	Honours/ Distinction
70-74	<i>4.00</i>			70-74	<i>4.00</i>		
67-69	<i>3.75</i>	Very good	Upper 2 nd Class Honours/ Commendation	67-69	<i>3.75</i>	Very good	Upper 2 nd Class Honours/ Commendation
64-66	<i>3.50</i>			64-66	<i>3.50</i>		
60-63	<i>3.25</i>			60-63	<i>3.25</i>		
57-59	<i>3.00</i>	Good	Lower 2 nd Class Honours/ Pass	57-59	<i>3.00</i>	Good/ satisfactory	Lower 2 nd Class Honours/ Pass
54-56	<i>2.75</i>			54-56	<i>2.75</i>		
50-53	<i>2.50</i>			50-53	<i>2.50</i>		
				50 ⁴	<i>2.50</i>		
47-49	<i>2.25</i>	Satisfactory	3 rd Class Honours/ Pass	47-49	<i>2.25</i>	Marginal fail	Not applicable
44-46	<i>2.00</i>			44-46	<i>2.00</i>		
40-43	<i>1.75</i>			40-43	<i>1.75</i>		
40 ⁵	<i>1.75</i>			Referred <i>or</i> <i>re-enrolled</i> Pass			
37-39	<i>1.00</i>	Marginal fail	Not applicable	37-39	<i>1.00</i>	Clear fail	Not applicable
34-36	<i>0.75</i>			34-36	<i>0.75</i>		
30-33	<i>0.50</i>			30-33	<i>0.50</i>		
20-29	<i>0.25</i>			20-29	<i>0.25</i>		
0-19	<i>0.00</i>	Little or nothing of merit		0-19	<i>0.00</i>	Little or nothing of merit	

- 1 Where a coarser-grained reporting and recording mechanism is required for marking individual assessments, a reference scale is available on the Learning and Teaching *Innovation Centre's* StudyNet pages. Student performance on assessments more suited to coarse-grained judgements may be recorded using these reference grades.
- 2 *Module Boards award grade points alongside numeric grades for all modules from 2017/18.*
- 3 For classification purposes, a cap of **90** will be applied to all module or short course numeric grades contributing toward the average numeric grade used to determine Honours classification and for conferring University awards 'with Distinction' or 'with Commendation'.
- 4 A referred *or re-enrolled* pass for Level 7 modules will be awarded **50** (*with a grade point capped at 2.50*).
- 5 A referred *or re-enrolled* pass for Levels 0, 4, 5 and 6 modules will be awarded **40** (*with a grade point capped at 1.75*).

D4 Final Compensatory credit

D4.4 Final Compensatory credit for undergraduate programmes

D4.4.2 Where final compensatory credit is awarded, the appropriate fail status code(s) will be changed to COMP status code(s) *and grade(s) awarded will be unchanged.*

D4.5 Final compensatory credit for postgraduate (taught) awards (including Integrated Master's Degrees)

D4.5.2 Where final compensatory credit is awarded, the appropriate fail status code(s) will be changed to COMP status code(s) *and grade(s) awarded will be unchanged.*

D5 Deferral, Referral, Re-enrolment

D5.3 Re-enrolment

- D5.3.3 Following re-enrolment on any module or short course, whether or not the student has attended, the *numeric* grades awarded will be those actually achieved in the assessment. However, for the purpose of Honours classification, for conferring awards 'with Commendation' or 'with Distinction' *and GPA calculation*, these numeric grades will be capped to **50** (*with grade points capped to 2.50*) for Level 7 modules or short courses and **40** (*with grade points capped to 1.75*) for any Level 4, 5 or 6 modules or short courses.
- D5.3.4 Students may alternatively elect to study different option modules which are available on the validated programme of study (if available and normally with the next cohort). Attendance will be required and the *numeric* grades awarded will be those actually achieved in the assessment. However, for the purpose of Honours classification and for conferring awards 'with Commendation' or 'with Distinction', the numeric grades for the chosen alternative modules or short courses will be capped to **50** (*with grade points capped at 2.50*) for Level 7 modules or short courses and **40** (*with grade points capped at 1.75*) for any Level 4, 5 or 6 modules or short courses.

D8 Final awards – Determination of a Grade Point Average (GPA)

(NOTE:

xx A Grade Point Average (GPA) will be calculated for those students eligible for the awards identified in section D8, having accumulated credit contributing to the award from 2017/18 onwards.)

- D8.1 *For students being considered for the following awards, the Programme Board of Examiners will determine for each candidate the weighted arithmetic mean of the grade points awarded for the identified credits from the validated programme of study:*
- i Integrated Master's Degree:
- the best 480 credits (including at least 360 credits at levels 5/6/7, of which at least 240 must be at levels 6/7 and at least 120 must be at level 7)*
 - ii Bachelor's Degree with Honours:
- the best 360 credits (including at least 240 credits at levels 5/6, of which at least 120 must be at level 6)*
 - iii Foundation Degree:
- the best 240 credits (including at least 120 credits at level 5).*
- D8.2 *The candidate's GPA will be calculated on the basis of this combined average, alongside Honours classification or any classification 'with Distinction' or 'with Commendation'*
- D8.3 *For the purpose of GPA calculation, grade points awarded following re-enrolment on any failed module or short course (or alternative to that module or short course, if available on the validated programme of study) will be capped, as described in section D5.3 (Re-enrolment).*
- D8.4 *All grade points (including those for referred passes, re-enrolled passes and compensated modules) are eligible for inclusion in the determination of the GPA, with the exception of grade points awarded for non-University of Hertfordshire modules studied during a period of study abroad and additional modules which are not part of a validated programme of study.*
- D8.5 *For direct entrants to Levels 5 or 6 and any other students awarded credit on the basis of prior certified or experiential learning (APCL or APEL), GPA will be determined for each candidate from the weighted arithmetic mean of the grade points awarded for the subsequent University of Hertfordshire modules from the validated programme of study. Any graded University of Hertfordshire standalone credit (that is, credit not associated with a programme of study) achieved prior to admission to the programme is eligible for inclusion in the determination of the GPA, providing that the modules or short courses concerned have been shown to contribute towards the achievement of the programme learning outcomes through an APCL process.*

4. Replacement Modules for modules that students have achieved FNFA status

In situations where a student has permanently failed an optional module (indicated by the award of a FNFA status code), several Schools give students the opportunity to enrol on alternative optional modules. However, in some Schools students are registered on replacement modules as a first attempt (REG on the Board paperwork), while in other Schools they are treated as repeat modules (REP on the Board paperwork). This means that a student who fails the replacement module in one School receives a FREN, while a student who fails the module in the other School receives a FNFA. For Joint Honours students this means that they can have two different outcomes for the same situation. The following clarifications to UPR AS14, sections D1.2 and D5.3 have therefore been approved:

D ASSESSMENT AND AWARD REGULATIONS

D1.2 Interpretation of module status codes

The following status codes will be reported by Module Boards to describe a student's status on a module:

Status Code	Description
P(40)	Passed, capped at 40. Level 0, 4, 5 or 6 module or short course passed at referral or re-enrolment, <i>or where an alternative module to a failed module has been passed. The numeric grade for the module is capped to the minimum pass grade for classification purposes</i>
P(50)	Passed, capped at 50. Level 7 module or short course passed at referral or re-enrolment, <i>or where an alternative module to a failed module has been passed. The numeric grade for the module is capped to the minimum pass grade for classification purposes</i>
FNFA	Fail, no further attempts. The student has failed to meet the minimum pass criteria <i>for the module or short course</i> and may not seek further re-enrolment or reassessment <i>on the module or short course. The student may enrol on an alternative module, only if available on the validated programme of study and at the discretion of the Programme Board.</i> Module Boards and Short Course Boards should exercise caution in applying this status code. It should normally be awarded only where a student has previously been referred and reassessed on the same module (see also sections D5 'Deferral, Referral, Re-enrolment' and C2.9 'Cheating, Plagiarism and Collusion').

D5 Deferral, Referral, Re-enrolment

D5.3 Re-enrolment

D5.3.4 *Whether students are eligible for re-enrolment on the module concerned (indicated by the award of a FREN/FRENC/FRENE status code) or not (indicated by the award of a FNFA status code), they may elect to study an alternative module, only if available on the validated programme of study and at the discretion of the Programme Board.* Attendance will be required and the numeric grades awarded will be those actually achieved in the assessment. However, for the purpose of Honours classification and for conferring awards 'with Commendation' or 'with Distinction', the numeric grades for the chosen alternative modules or short courses will be capped to **50** for Level **7** modules or short courses and **40** for any Level **4, 5** or **6** modules or short courses. *Further re-enrolment on the replacement module is not allowed.*