

Amendments to University Policies and Regulations for 2021/22

This paper summarises the amendments to the University's academic UPRs (University Policies and Regulations for the 2021/22 academic year, available at: <https://www.herts.ac.uk/about-us/governance/university-policies-and-regulations-uprs/uprs/academic-assessment-and-awards>) that students need to be aware of. *Amendments are identified in red italics.*

This paper should be read in conjunction with UPR SA07 (*Regulations and Advice for Students' Particular Attention – Index*, (at: https://www.herts.ac.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0005/233096/SA07-RegsandAdviceforStudents_ParticularAttention-Index.pdf) and the StudyNet guidance on the Academic Regulations (at: <https://www.study.net2.herts.ac.uk/ptl/common/studentcentre.nsf/page/98370E73AE82CA21802577E60057CE00x>) (please **copy this URL and paste it into your browser**).

1. Permanent relaxation of Sandwich Award requirements

Previously, a sandwich award required the successful completion of at least 36 weeks full-time placement activity from a maximum of two separate approved placements. However, due to employment issues initiated by the Covid-19 pandemic, it has been agreed that the University should be more flexible with respect to students who cannot complete their 36 weeks. The following amendments have been agreed on a permanent basis:

- Reduction of the 36-week minimum requirement to 30 weeks minimum (in line with the requirements of most other Universities);
- In exceptional circumstances, the Director of Academic Quality Assurance is able to approve a Sandwich award where a student has accumulated down to the 24 weeks placement activity, which is the HESA minimum expectation of a Sandwich Year.

The amendment will reassure students finishing their placement early, and those wanting to but worried of the consequences of doing so. However, UH Careers and Employment service reported increasing difficulties for students to secure Sandwich placements in the current environment. This situation is unlikely to improve in the foreseeable future. The following permanent amendment has therefore been approved to UPR AS11, section 2.4:

Details can be found in UPR AS11, section 2.4.1:
(https://www.herts.ac.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0016/232504/AS11-Schedule-of-Awards.pdf).

2. Temporary regulations in response to the Covid-19 pandemic

The University introduced a Safety Net policy in response to the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, some of which continue to apply for the lifespan of the pandemic. The following arrangements continue to apply for the 2021/22 academic session, as they relate back to student performance in the 2019/20 and 2020/21 academic sessions:

- Level 6 Bachelor's students: The examination board can disregard all level 5 grades when calculating degree classification, if it benefits the student. The best 90 credits at level 6 would be used, as if the student were a final year direct entrant;
- Level 7 Integrated Master's students: The examination board can disregard all level 6 grades when calculating degree classification. The best 90 credits at L7 plus the best 120 credits from the remaining L5/7 modules would be used;
- All Master's, Integrated Master's, Bachelor's and Foundation Degree students: University regulations allow for up to 30 credits of failed modules to be compensated by the examination board, with the classification grade being reduced by 2.5 for each 15 credits compensated. During the Covid-19 pandemic, examination boards will not apply the penalty to the

classification grade. However, where there is a proven case of academic misconduct in the failed module, the compensation penalty will be applied.

Details can be found in UPR AS14, sections D6.1, D6.2, D5.2.2, D5.2.3, D6.3, and D7.2:
(https://www.herts.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/232509/AS14-Struct-Ass-Regs-Ugrad-Taught-Pgrad-Progs.pdf).

3. Serious Adverse Circumstances (SACs) and Fit-to-Sit Claims

The move to a centralised system to consider SACs and the Fit-to-Sit claims has led to the need to update University policies. The following amendments have been made:

- to make it clear to students that they can only submit SACs via sac@herts.ac.uk;
- Clarification to examination Boards that students **must** obtain a SAC via the centralised system and that Boards are expected to follow the recommendations given by the centralised SAC Panel;
- to be more flexible about the source of evidence required of students;
- Clarification that Fit to Sit exceptions should come via the appeals route;
- the time limit of 10 working days to submit SACs has been removed;
- For students registered at collaborative partners of the University, arrangements for drawing SACs to the attention of examination boards have been amended to reflect current practice.

Details can be found in UPR AS14, section C3.4, C3.7.4:

(https://www.herts.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/232509/AS14-Struct-Ass-Regs-Ugrad-Taught-Pgrad-Progs.pdf),

and UPR AS12, Appendix I, section 5.4.2

(https://www.herts.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/233528/AS12-apx1-Ass-Exams-Regs-for-Candidates-including-Appeals-Proc-UH.pdf).

and UPR AS13, Appendix I, section 5.3.2

(https://www.herts.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0019/233533/AS13-apx1-Appeals-Procedure-Partner-Organisations.pdf).

4. Academic Integrity and Academic Misconduct

A number of amendments to University policies on Academic Integrity and Academic Misconduct have been made for clarification purposes:

- On unauthorised use of materials in examinations;
- To the recommended penalties to be imposed for proven cases.

Details can be found in UPR AS14, Appendix III, sections 2.10.4, 8.12 and 9.5:

(https://www.herts.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/237625/AS14-Apx3-Academic-Misconduct.pdf).

5. Late submission of coursework

Penalties for the late submission of coursework have been amended, to clarify that online timed assessments (e.g. in-class tests) are not subject to this regulation.

Details can be found in UPR AS12, Appendix I, section 4,i:

(https://www.herts.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/233528/AS12-apx1-Ass-Exams-Regs-for-Candidates-including-Appeals-Proc-UH.pdf).

6. Replacement of examination anonymity number with Student Record Number on examination scripts

An anonymous marking policy has been in place for several years. For examinations, anonymous marking involved the allocation of an Exam ID each year to every student. We wish to preserve anonymous marking where possible in principle, but the University has now replaced the use of Exam ID with 'Student Record Number' (SRN) on exam scripts. While the use of the SRN reduces the technical assurance of anonymity on exam scripts, 'pseudonymisation' of students remains in place.

Details can be found in UPR AS12, sections 5.4 and 7.8:

https://www.herts.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/231933/AS12-Ass-Exams-Ugrad-Taught-Pgrad-Conferments-UH.pdf

7. Examination arrangements

The University's Exams and Awards Office have updated and clarified a number of arrangements for examinations, for:

- Examinations involving the use of computers for candidates with a Study Needs Agreement in place;
- Scheduling of off-campus examinations.

Details can be found in UPR AS12, sections 6.4 and 7.1:

https://www.herts.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/231933/AS12-Ass-Exams-Ugrad-Taught-Pgrad-Conferments-UH.pdf