

Amendments to UPR AS13 (Assessments and Examinations and Conferments (Partner Organisation-delivered provision)) for 2020/21

This paper summarises the approved amendments to UPR AS13 for the 2020/21 academic year.

1. Appeals procedure for students registered on Partner-delivered provision

UPR AS13, Appendix I identifies the appeals procedure for students registered on UH courses delivered by its collaborative partners. Previously, appeals from these students on assessment grades, module grades, progression, awards, etc. were dealt with under the procedures that operate within the partner organisation. Only once the procedures of the partner organisation had been exhausted could a student have, in limited circumstances, make representations to the UH Vice-Chancellor.

OfS' ongoing conditions for HE providers to be registered on the Register of English Higher Education Providers include a section on 'Protecting the interests of all students', with one condition that all students (whether UH-based or based at sub-contracted UK or overseas collaborative partners) should have access to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator's (OIA's) student complaints scheme. This clarification that UH-registered students based overseas can also access the OIA scheme has led to the University deciding that the formal stages of academic appeals (but not complaints) should be considered by UH rather than the collaborative partner. The following amendment to UPR AS13, Appendix I, section 5 has been approved:

5 *APPEALS PROCEDURE – UNDERGRADUATE AND TAUGHT POSTGRADUATE CANDIDATES (REQUESTS FOR THE REVIEW OF ASSESSMENT DECISIONS)*

5.2 *General principles*

- 5.2.3 At all stages of these procedures the powers of the *Principal Dean of School (or nominee)* and the Vice-Chancellor are limited to the referral of a case back to a Module or Programme Board of Examiners for reconsideration, where they are satisfied that this is a justifiable course of action.
- 5.2.5 With limited exceptions, all written materials considered by the *Principal Dean of School* (or nominee) or the Vice-Chancellor in their respective deliberations under this policy will be provided to the student.

5.4 *Informal procedures*

5.4.1 *Within the limits of the permitted grounds set out in section 5.3, a candidate may initially wish to raise queries concerning the following matters (sections 5.4.2 – 5.4.6, refer) using the informal procedures set out in the relevant section.*

5.4.2 *Mark or grade of an individual item of coursework*

- i The student or member of staff should raise the query with the lecturer(s) concerned immediately after receiving notification of the mark or grade. The lecturer will give an answer as quickly as possible, although it should be noted that some queries may take longer to address depending on their nature.*
- ii Where, having received a response from the lecturer(s), the student still believes there is an error which has not been rectified and wishes to pursue the matter further, he or*

she must raise the issue, in writing, with the Organisation's Principal within five (5) working days of the date of the response.

- iii The Principal (or nominee) will investigate the query and notify the student of the findings of that investigation. Where an error is found, any necessary corrections will be made following instruction from the Principal (or nominee) to the appropriate member of academic or administrative staff.*

5.4.3 Overall result of an individual module

The student should raise the query with the designated module leader within five (5) working days of publication of the result. If the student is unsure which member of staff to contact, he or she should seek advice from their Programme Leader (or equivalent). The student will receive an answer as quickly as possible. Some queries may take longer than others to address depending on their nature.

5.4.4 Stage progression, entitlement to an award or the class or grade of an award

The student should raise the matter at the earliest possible time with his or her Programme Leader or the Organisation's Principal.

5.4.5 A candidate's personal position

The student should raise the matter at the earliest possible time with his or her Programme Leader or the Organisation's Principal.

5.4.6 Suspected administrative error or procedural irregularity

The student should raise the matter at the earliest opportunity with his or her Programme Leader or the Organisation's Principal.

5.5 Formal procedure for the review of a decision by a Board of Examiners

5.5.1 All requests for a formal review of a decision of a Board of Examiners under the provisions of the regulations in this section (5.5) must be made in writing to the University of Hertfordshire.

5.5.2 Irrespective of whether they have raised a query informally using the procedures set out in section 5.4 and regardless of whether they have received a response, students wishing to request a formal review must do so using the procedures set out in this section (5.5). Such request must be submitted strictly in accordance with the following schedule:

- i request for the review of an assessment decision*
within ten (10) working days after the publication date for results by Short Course/Module Boards of Examiners;
- ii request for the review of a continuation or termination or award decision*
within ten (10) working days of the date of the notification of the recommendation of the Programme Board of Examiners.

5.5.3 Any student wishing to request a formal review should seek immediate guidance from his or her Programme Leader or the Organisation's Principal.

5.5.4 Requests for a formal review must be made in the form of a written submission which must be lodged with the Dean (or nominee) of the appropriate School at the University.

5.5.5 The correct name and address for lodging of the written notification and supporting statement will be provided in students' programme handbooks, or on request from the Organisation's Principal.

5.5.6 Students wishing to lodge a formal request for a review of a decision made by a Short Course/Module Board of Examiners or a Programme Board of Examiners should note that at no stage do the procedures set out in this section (5) provide for external representation, for example, by a Trade Union representative or a lawyer.

(Note for guidance:

The policies and procedures for the operation of the Examinations Appeal Panel which give effect to the principles determined by the University as they relate to representation and advice for students and the role of Students' Advisers at that, later, stage of the review process, are set out in section 5.6.8.)

5.5.7 The student's written submission should:

- i summarise the case and grounds for requesting the review;
- ii indicate the date on which the decision/recommendation was taken by the Short Course/Module or Programme Board of Examiners;
- iii include any relevant documentary evidence.

5.5.8 Upon receipt of a written request for a review, the Dean of School (or nominee) will consult colleagues to determine whether there are sufficient grounds to justify a review. Having completed his or her consultations and having reviewed all the evidence, the Dean of School (or nominee) will within **15** working days of the receipt of the request or as soon as possible thereafter:

- i dismiss the request; or
- ii refer the matter to the Short Course/Module or Programme Board of Examiners; and
- iii inform the candidate of his or her decision by means of a **Letter of Decision** in the following format:

Letter of Decision

The Dean of School (or nominee) will communicate his or her decision to the student in writing. Such letters (**Letters of Decision**) will:

- a inform the student of the decision;
- b give the reasons why the decision was taken;
- c where the matter has been referred to the Short Course/Module or Programme Board of Examiners, advise the student that the proceedings of the Short Course/Module or Programme Board of Examiners are confidential, that its decisions are a matter of academic judgement, cannot be influenced and are final;
- d explain any further rights of appeal that the student might have.

Included with the letter will be a copy of the report or record of any Hearing which has taken place.

Where appropriate, the **Letter of Decision** will be accompanied by a **Completion of Procedures Letter** which may be used in relation to any future dealings with the Office of the Independent Adjudicator.

Letters of Decision will be sent by recorded mail and to the email address the student has provided to the University for all correspondence.

5.5.9 The Dean of School will provide a copy of the **Letter of Decision** to the Assistant Registrar (Student Administration – Collaborative Partnerships) and to the Chair of the Short Course/Module or Programme Board of Examiners.

5.5.10 Where the Dean of School has referred the matter to the Short Course/Module or Programme Board of Examiners, the Chair of the Board of Examiners concerned will notify the student, in writing, of the decision of the Board.

5.5.11 Where the Short Course/Module or Programme Board of Examiners finds evidence of administrative error or procedural irregularity, the Short Course/Module or Programme Board of Examiners will take the appropriate action.

5.6 Representations to the Vice-Chancellor

5.6.1 ~~Once the procedures of the Partner Organisation have been exhausted and~~ In the event that either:

- i the decision of a *Short Course*/Module or Programme Board of Examiners remains unchanged after the request has been referred to it by the *Principal Dean of School (or nominee)* or
- ii a candidate has had his or her request dismissed by the *Principal Dean of School (or nominee)*,

then a candidate may, in limited circumstances, make representations to the Vice-Chancellor of the University, in his or her capacity as Chair of the Academic Board. These representations can be made **only** on the grounds that exceptional circumstances apply but it must be emphasised that any submission to the Vice-Chancellor should not be regarded as merely another opportunity to present the same arguments as those submitted to the *Principal Dean of School (or nominee)* and should be made only if the candidate believes that the correct procedure has not been followed and/or that all the relevant circumstances have not been considered and/or there is new evidence not previously considered by the *Principal Dean of School (or nominee)*.

5.6.2 Guidance

Before making such a submission to the Vice-Chancellor the candidate is strongly advised to seek guidance from a member of staff nominated for this purpose by the *Organisation's* Principal, who may further consult appropriate colleagues within the Organisation.

5.6.3 If, having obtained appropriate guidance, the candidate wishes to pursue the matter, he or she must notify the Vice-Chancellor, in writing, within ten (**10**) working days of the date of written notification from the *Principal Dean of School (or nominee)* that his or her request has been dismissed, that he or she wishes the decision of the Module or Programme Board of Examiners to be reviewed.

The written request must be supported by a statement detailing the grounds upon which a review is being sought, together with any relevant documentary evidence.

(Note for guidance:

It should be noted that the date referred to in section 5.4.3 relates to the date of the written notification from the *Principal Dean of School (or nominee)* and not to the date of its receipt.)

5.6.4 The correct address for lodging of the written notification and supporting statement required under the terms of section 5.6.3 is:

Student Procedures Co-ordinator, University of Hertfordshire, Dean of Students, College Lane, Hatfield. Hertfordshire. AL10 9AB. United Kingdom

Or through email, to: studentprocedures@herts.ac.uk

The written notification may, in the first instance, be sent by email, in which case the candidate **may also be required to** send the original of the notification and the supporting statement to the Vice-Chancellor, by post, to the above address.