

## **Amendments to UPR AS14 (Structure and Assessment Regulations - Undergraduate and Taught Postgraduate Programmes) for 2021/22**

This paper summarises the approved amendments to UPR AS14 for the 2021/22 academic year.

### **1. Interim awards**

The exams and awards office have identified inconsistencies in interim award wording in the UPRs that could be considered contradictory. If a student returns to study having accepted an interim award they may or may not be required to return the interim award certificate. The previous wording in UPR SA03 stated that a student can only return to study if they return the interim certificate whereas UPR AS14 stipulated that the certificate and transcript was only to be returned if a student returns within a set period of one year. For consistency, the following amendments have therefore been approved to UPRs AS14 and SA03:

(a) UPR AS14:

#### **D3 Interim Awards and Progression**

D3.4 A student who receives an interim award may subsequently seek to undertake further study towards a higher award but admission to such a programme (and the amount of specific credit to be allowed) is at the discretion of the University. Information concerning the University's APL guidelines may be obtained from Academic Services.

~~In such a case, the University will not normally admit the student to further study in the programme for a period of at least one (1) academic year; if the student seeks admission before this, it may only be granted on return of the interim award certificate; such students will not be entitled to attend a further graduation ceremony. If the student seeks admission to further study on this programme within the current or following academic year, this will only be granted on return of the interim award certificate and transcript.~~ Programme and/or Admissions tutors will have discretion to take account of the circumstances of individual students, such as those studying part-time over extended and interrupted periods or those whose study pattern may be influenced by sponsorship, in applying these regulations.

Graduates with an award .....

(b) UPR SA03:

#### **10 General regulations governing the admission of students to undergraduate and taught postgraduate programmes**

10.5 ~~Candidates who choose to be presented for an interim award and who, subsequently, decide to undertake further study on the same programme towards a higher award, may do so only on the return of the interim award certificate to the Assistant Registrar (Exams and Awards). Candidates who choose to be presented for an interim award will receive an award certificate and transcript of results. If, within the current or following academic year, they subsequently decide to undertake further study on the same programme towards a higher award, the interim award certificate and transcript must be returned to the Assistant Registrar (Exams and Awards). If they return to study after one full academic year has passed, they will not be obliged to return this certificate or transcript (see UPR AS14<sup>17</sup>).~~

## **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. It has been approved that the following arrangements continue to apply for the 2021/22 academic session (but with amendments as shown), as they relate back to student performance in the 2019/20 and 2020/21 academic sessions:

### **D6 Final awards – Honours classification**

#### **D6.1 Calculation of overall classification grade for Honours classification (Bachelor's Degree)**

**(NOTE:**

**25** As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, overall classification grades may alternatively be calculated as follows:

**i Current level 6 Bachelor's students**

The final programme board has the discretion to disregard all level 5 grades ~~from the 2019/20 and 2020/21 academic year~~ when calculating degree classification. The best 90 credits at level 6 would be used, as if the student were a final year direct entrant.)

#### **D6.2 Calculation of overall classification grade for Honours classification (Integrated Master's Degrees)**

**(NOTE:**

**26** As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, overall classification grades may alternatively be calculated as follows:

**i Current level 7 Integrated Master's students**

The final programme board has the discretion to disregard all level 6 grades ~~from the 2019/20 and 2020/21 academic year~~ when calculating degree classification. The best 90 credits at L7 plus the best 120 credits from the remaining L5/7 modules would be used.

#### **D6.3 Recommendation for an Honours classification**

and

#### **D7.2 Criteria for conferring University awards 'with Distinction' or 'with Commendation'**

**(NOTE:**

**27/28** University regulations allow for up to 30 credits of failed modules (at any academic level) to be compensated by the programme board, with the classification grade being reduced by 2.5 for each 15 credits compensated. During the Covid-19 pandemic, ~~the limits of compensation are unaffected; however,~~ programme boards are instructed to compensate ~~without applying within existing limits and not apply~~ the penalty to the classification grade. ~~However, (except~~ where there is a proven case of ~~cheating academic misconduct at stage 2 or stage 3, as defined in UPR AS14 Appendix III', in the failed module, in which case~~ the compensation penalty should be applied).)

The following (temporary) amendments have been withdrawn for the 2021/22 academic session:

### D5.2.2 Referral in undergraduate programmes

~~(NOTE:~~

~~19 — During the Covid-19 pandemic, deferral to next academic year should be offered, as an alternative to a referred attempt. The grade would be uncapped and the status code would reflect a first attempt (from PREN to P, if the module was passed the following year.)~~

~~(NOTE:~~

~~20 — During the Covid-19 pandemic, failed modules will retain their fail grade. However, if the module is passed at referral, grades for referred assignments will not be capped to the pass grade.~~

### D5.2.3 Referral in postgraduate programmes

~~(NOTE:~~

~~22 — During the Covid-19 pandemic, deferral to next academic year should be offered, as an alternative to a referred attempt. The grade would be uncapped and the status code would reflect a first attempt (from PREN to P, if the module was passed the following year.)~~

~~(NOTE:~~

~~23 — During the Covid-19 pandemic, failed modules will retain their fail grade. However, if the module is passed at referral, grades for referred assignments will not be capped to the pass grade.)~~

## D6 Final awards – Honours classification

### D6.1 Calculation of overall classification grade for Honours classification (Bachelor's Degree)

D6.1.1 For students being considered for a final award with Honours classification, the Programme Board of Examiners will determine for each candidate:

- i the average numeric grade of the best **90** credits at Level **6** or higher; and
- ii the average numeric grade of the best remaining **90** credits at Level **5** or higher; and
- iii a combined average numeric grade, weighted ~~75%~~ **50%** (i) and ~~25%~~ **50%** (ii), above; and
- iv the candidate's Honours classification will be considered on ....

### D6.2 Calculation of overall classification grade for Honours classification (Integrated Master's Degrees)

D6.2.1 For students being considered for a final award with Honours classification, the Programme Board of Examiners will determine for each candidate:

- i the average numeric grade of the best **90** credits at Level **7**; and
- ii the average numeric grade of the best remaining **120** credits at Level **6** or higher; and
- iii the average numeric grade of the best remaining **90** credits at Level **5**; and
- iv a combined average numeric grade, weighted ~~50%~~ **40%** (i), ~~30%~~ **40%** (ii) and **20%** (iii), above; and
- v the candidate's Honours classification will be considered .....

### 3. Serious Adverse Circumstances and Fit-to-Sit Claims

A number of inconsistencies have developed in the UPRs over time related to SACs and the Fit-to-Sit process, and the move to a centralised system had not been fully taken into account. The following amendments to UPR AS14 (as well as UPR AS12 and UPR AS13) have therefore been approved:

- (a) In order to make it clear to Module and Short Course 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:

#### C3 Module Boards of Examiners (Module Boards) and Short Course Boards of Examiners (Short Course Boards)

##### C3.4 Responsibilities of Module Boards and Short Course Boards

The responsibilities of Module Boards and Short Course Boards are:

- iii to consider written communications from staff and/or students relevant to its work ~~and, in particular, submissions from students with any relevant information on personal circumstances, including Serious Adverse Circumstances, which they wish the Examiners to take into account which they wish the Examiners to take into account together with all recommendations from the Serious Adverse Circumstances Assessment Panel on circumstances submitted by students via [sac@herts.ac.uk](mailto:sac@herts.ac.uk)~~ (see further sections C3.7.4 and C3.8 'Serious Adverse Circumstances');

##### C3.7 Serious Adverse Circumstances Assessment Panels

C3.7.4 The Module Board or Short Course Board ~~retains the responsibility for the final decision but it is normally required expected to follow the~~ recommendations of the Serious Adverse Circumstances Assessment Panel ~~will normally be accepted and not to accept Serious Adverse Circumstances directly from a student or member of staff unless the Serious Adverse Circumstances have previously been submitted by the student to [sac@herts.ac.uk](mailto:sac@herts.ac.uk).~~

- (b) In order to (i) to be more flexible about the source of evidence, (ii) to put in place the procedure agreed with Associate Deans (AQA) that Fit to Sit exceptions should come via the appeals route, and (iii) to make it clear to students that they can only submit SACs via [sac@herts.ac.uk](mailto:sac@herts.ac.uk):

##### C3.8 Serious Adverse Circumstances

C3.8.4 However, the following two circumstances are considered to be exceptions to C3.8.3, above:

- i where, at the time of sitting or submitting the assessment concerned, the student was not capable of understanding that their performance was likely to be affected seriously by ill health and/or its treatment and this view has the written support of a doctor, ~~or~~ psychiatric *nurse or mental health* practitioner; or
- ii where a student suddenly becomes unwell during an examination or in-class test and elects to leave without completing the assessment. In these circumstances, before leaving the examination room, the student must notify the Invigilator of the Serious Adverse Circumstances which have necessitated their leaving the examination or test.

*Any claims based on exception i or ii must be made via an appeal to the Dean of School.*

C3.8.5 Serious adverse circumstances adversely affecting student performance will therefore only be considered by a Module Board or Short Course Board ~~if either (i) they have led to a student not being able to sit or submit an assessment, or (ii) in support of the circumstances described in C3.8.4, above. It is the student's responsibility to draw these evidenced serious adverse circumstances to the attention of the Module Board or Short Course Board when it meets to consider confirmation of grades. if submitted by the student via [sac@herts.ac.uk](mailto:sac@herts.ac.uk). This must be done. The claim(s) must be submitted by the student~~ at the earliest possible time, before the Board of Examiners' meeting. Information and guidance ~~will be~~ *is* available to students via the 'Ask Herts' service to explain how to submit a request for Serious Adverse Circumstances to be brought to the attention of the relevant Board of Examiners together with the date when their Board of Examiners is due to convene. This ~~will be~~ *guidance is* in addition to guidance on what constitutes acceptable Serious Adverse Circumstances and their implications (see section 5.4.2, Appendix I, UPR AS12J).

(c) The deleted sections below are already covered elsewhere in UPR AS14:

### **~~D9—Valid reasons for poor performance Posthumous and Aegrotat Awards~~**

~~D9.1 If it is established to the satisfaction of the Module Board or Short Course Board that a student's absence, failure to submit work or poor performance in all or part of the assessment was due to illness or other cause found valid on production of acceptable evidence, the Board may allow the student to be reassessed as if for the first time in any or all of the elements of assessment. If an assessment affected by illness was itself a second attempt the student will be permitted to resit as if for the second time (see also D5.1 Deferred assessments).~~

~~D9.2 The Module Board or Short Course Board should normally is expected to follow the recommendation from the Serious Adverse Circumstances Assessment Panel, to decide whether or not the student has presented a valid case. Where the Board is not satisfied, the student does not have a right to be reassessed as if for the first time. If the Board is not convinced by the evidence offered but does not wish to disregard it completely, it may choose to further assess the student in particular elements of the assessment.~~

~~D9.3 The Board, taking into account the recommendation from the Serious Adverse Circumstances Assessment Panel, may exercise discretion in deciding on the particular form any further assessment or reassessment should take. options include viva-voce examination; additional assessment tasks; review of previous work or normal assessment at the next available opportunity. The student should not be put in a position of unfair advantage over other candidates: the aim should be to enable the student to be assessed or reassessed on equal terms.~~

**D9.1** If it is established to the satisfaction of the Programme Board that a student's absence, failure to submit work or poor performance in all or part of an award was due to illness or other cause found valid on production of acceptable evidence, the Board may:

- i where it is satisfied that there is sufficient evidence of the student's achievement or this evidence is subsequently obtained, recommend the student for the award for they are a candidate (with or without Honours classification, Distinction or Commendation, as appropriate). In order to reach a decision, a Programme Board of Examiners may assess the candidate by whatever means it considers appropriate: it may also recommend a posthumous award, up to the candidate's final intended award where at least one third of the candidate's programme of studies had been completed;

- ii where the Programme Board does not have enough evidence of the student's performance to recommend the award for which the student was a candidate or an interim award permitted under these regulations but is satisfied that, but for illness or other valid cause, the student would have reached the standard required, recommend the offer of an Aegrotat award (in recognition of an incomplete programme of study, and without classification). The student may, however, decline the award and seek reassessment without penalty.

**D9.2** *In the case of an aegrotat award, before a recommendation under (i) or (ii) above is implemented the student must, within reason, have signified, in writing, that they are willing to accept the award and ~~accepts~~ that ~~this accepting~~ implies waiving the right to be reassessed under ~~D9.4 D.5 above as a deferred, referred or re-enrolled candidate.~~*

#### 4. Academic Integrity and Academic Misconduct

A number of amendments to UPR AS14, Appendix III 'Academic Integrity and Academic Misconduct' (primarily to section 8.12 'Indicative penalties following Stage 2 proceedings' and section 9.5, 'Indicative penalties following a Stage 3 proceedings') have been approved, for clarification purposes:

##### 2.10 Examination Misconduct

###### 2.10.4 Unauthorised use of examination materials

Unauthorised use of examination materials occurs if you obtain or see, *or attempt to obtain or see*, a copy of an examination question paper or other form of assessment before the date and time of its authorised release (this covers both 'seen' and 'unseen' papers).

Unauthorised use of examination materials also occurs if you remove an examination script or examination stationery or other materials from the examination room (or any other room in which a formal assessment is taking place) unless specifically authorised by an invigilator or examiner.

##### 8.12 Indicative penalties following Stage 2 proceedings

Academic Misconduct	Range of penalties
Making your work available for another to copy ( <i>where no collusion applies because you are not currently studying on the module</i> )	A disciplinary warning placed on the student's record; <del>AND</del> <del>a discretion to reduce the mark for your own assessment.</del>
Examinations <i>misconduct</i> including in-class tests, written, oral and practical examinations, whether conducted face-to-face or online.	A grade of 0 for the assessment; AND a disciplinary warning placed on the student's record; AND a requirement to access support and guidance as directed by the Associate Dean of School (Academic Quality Assurance) or SAIO in consultation with your personal tutor or equivalent.

<i>Contract cheating</i>	<i>A grade of 0 for the module; AND a disciplinary warning placed <del>on the student's</del> your record; AND a requirement to access support and guidance as directed by the Associate Dean of School (Academic Quality Assurance) or SAIO in consultation with your personal tutor or equivalent.</i>
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### 9.5 Indicative penalties following a Stage 3 proceedings

<b>Academic Misconduct</b>	<b>Range of penalties</b>
Examinations <i>misconduct</i> including in-class tests, written, oral and practical examinations, whether conducted face-to-face or online.	A grade of 0 awarded for the assessment; AND a final University disciplinary warning placed on the student's record OR suspension from studies OR permanent exclusion from the University. Where the penalty is suspension the student will be asked to undertake a prescribed task or series of sessions to support you in your future studies. A second or subsequent Stage 3 offence will automatically result in a suspension or permanent exclusion from the University.
Making your work available for another to copy ( <i>where no collusion applies because you are not currently studying on the module</i> )	A final University warning placed on the student's record or suspension from studies or permanent exclusion from the University. Where the penalty is suspension the student will be asked to undertake a prescribed task or series of sessions to support you in your future studies. A second or subsequent Stage 3 offence will automatically result in a suspension or permanent exclusion from the University.
Impersonation	Permanent exclusion from the University AND a grade of 0 in the relevant module for the student whose identity has been impersonated.
<i>Misappropriation of material submitted for assessment</i>	<i>A grade of 0 for the module; AND a final University disciplinary warning placed on <del>on the student's</del> your record or suspension from studies or permanent exclusion from the University. Where the penalty is suspension the student will be asked to undertake a prescribed task or series of sessions to support you in your future studies. A second or subsequent Stage 3 offence will automatically result in a suspension or permanent exclusion from the University.</i>