

External Examiners' Briefing

Friday 6th January 2012

Outline of the session

- Role, Rights and Responsibilities
- Practical arrangements
- Annual Report
- Regulatory Frameworks
- Examination Boards
- Failure & reassessment
- Mitigating Circumstances, Cheating and Appeals

Role of the External Examiner

- <http://www.worc.ac.uk/aqu/668.htm>
- [QAA Quality Code](#) (.pdf)
- Key role in QA&E mechanisms
- Ensuring fairness of assessment
- Comparability of standards outside and within UW
- Attendance at Examination Board
- Moderation of marks
- Reporting to Academic Board
- Providing advice on proposed changes

Rights of the External Examiner

- Report to the Vice Chancellor
- See sample of all assessment tasks
- Inspect any assessment material
- To meet students and staff
- To discuss (and, exceptionally, amend) marks
- To attend the Examination Board
- To withhold signature

Sample of marked work

- [Assessment Policy](#) (.pdf):
 - 15% of each element of assessment across all grade bands
 - At least 6 pieces of work; not normally more than 25
 - Module outline, examination papers and/or assessment briefs and assessment and grade criteria
 - Provisional statistical profile of marks for the modules/sites of delivery
 - Level 4 work only in first year of operation (for degrees)

Support and information

- Website:
 - [EE Checklist](#) (.doc/draft), templates and further information
- AQU: (Margaret Chaffey) for practical arrangements
- Course Leader:
 - Exam Board dates
 - Annual Evaluation Report/response

External Examiner Report

- Template provided (.doc):
 - Standards appropriate for award?
 - Student performance comparable with sector?
 - Processes for assessment sound and fair?
 - Good (or interesting) practice?
 - Operation and arrangements for Exam Boards
 - Response to previous report

Regulatory Framework

- Undergraduate Regulatory Framework (URF)
- Postgraduate Regulatory Framework (PRF)

Assessment

- UG: Grades PG: Percentages
- Anonymous Marking: Not all work can be marked anonymously
- Student Feedback Forms & Feedback
- No anonymous consideration at Board of Examiner meetings

E-submission

- Currently being piloted by some module tutors
- Expanded workflow
 - Internal moderation of assessment and feedback
 - Access to work by External Examiner
- Availability of live statistical reports
- Submission of reports....??

Examination Boards

- Tiered System
- Boards at Departmental level agree marks/grades and make recommendation to ...
- The Scheme Board, which determines progress, and agrees final award and classification

Role of Board of Examiners

- Accountable to Academic Board
- The terms of reference of the Subject Assessment Board are as follows:
 - a) to act in accordance with the Regulations and Procedures of the University and to meet as necessary after each assessment point to fulfil this requirement
 - b) scrutiny and approval of assessment items and their marking
 - c) assuring the appropriate standards for modules

Role of Board of Examiners

- d) considering the performance of students on modules
- e) confirming the grades achieved by students on modules
- f) noting the decisions of the Mitigations Committee
- g) noting the decisions of the Cheating Committee
- h) making recommendations on a student's retrieval of failure to the appropriate Board of Examiners

Departmental Boards of Examiners

- Chaired by HoD or nominee
 - The Course Leader or Link Tutor is not permitted to chair the Board for the course for which he/she is responsible.
- External Examiner(s)
 - If unable to attend, expected to confirm satisfaction with the standard of grades, provide all reports expected to be presented at the meeting
- Consider results for courses within the department

Scheme Boards of Examiners

- Chaired by a senior member of academic staff
- All external examiners have right to attend but usually only Chief External does
- Role: decisions on progress/ differentiation of the award and overview of the Scheme

Standard Agenda

- Apologies for absence
- Approval of minutes
- Matters Arising
- Consideration of Grades
- Recommendations for failing students
- Re-assessment
- Comments from the external examiners
- Module Statistics and module moderation group

Failure and reassessment

Undergraduate:

- Three re-assessment opportunities after initial failure
 - (2) Reassessment, (3) Retake, (4) Reassessment
- Grade at re-assessment limited to D- in assessment item

Postgraduate:

- Two re-assessment opportunities after initial failure
 - (2) Reassessment or Retake, (3) Reassessment
- Grade at re-assessment limited to 50% in assessment item
- No opportunity to take assessment again, or repeat the module, to improve the mark
- No Condonment/Compensation

Academic Year – 2010/11

- Relocation of reassessment to July from September
 - Reassessment due end June
 - Boards of Examiners – mid July
 - Scheme Boards – end July
- Designed to improve student feedback, clearer/earlier decisions regarding progression

Procedures

Supporting students

- Late submission of assignments
- Mitigating Circumstances
- Cheating
- Academic Appeals
- Complaints

Late submission

Submission	Outcome
On time	No penalty
Missed 3pm deadline but submitted within five actual days of deadline	Work marked but grade capped at D- /50% (L1 grade)
After five days of the deadline	Work not marked – L2 grade

Mitigating Circumstances

- **Mitigating Circumstances:** where an unexpected event seriously affects the student's performance;
- **Suspension of Study:** where changes in the student's personal circumstances or illness make it difficult for them to continue with their studies at the present time;
- **Extension:** where the agreement of a later deadline for submission of an Independent Study or Dissertation will enable the student to complete the assessment.

New from 2010

- Encourage student engagement in assessments:
 - encourage claims based upon the late submission
 - non submission claims not expected to be upheld
- Expectation that the student will submit work:
 - require evidence to demonstrate mitigating circumstances for the period immediately leading up to the assessment and must in addition demonstrate why it was not possible to submit the coursework within 14 days of the deadline

Outcomes

Action by student:	Successful	Unsuccessful
Work submitted late but within 5 days	Work marked as if on time	Work marked but capped at D-
Work submitted late but within 14 days	Work marked as if on time	Fail - worked graded as 'L2'
Work not submitted or after 14 days	Reassessment at first attempt unless claim was for a piece of reassessment	Fail - student required to retake module
Claimed for performance affected and mark is D- or above	Opportunity for reassessment at same attempt	Original grade stands

Cheating

What is cheating:

- An attempt to gain an unfair advantage in an assessment
- Taking unauthorised materials into an examination
- falsification of data or information
- Commissioning or seeking to commission the completion of assessment on their behalf
- Assisting another student to do any of the above

Cheating

- Concerned with the actions of students and not their intentions
 - “I didn’t intending to” is not an acceptable excuse
- New role in Institutes: Academic Integrity Tutors (AIT)
 - Investigate incident
 - Decide if the offence is:
 - A minor offence (Learner incompetence)
 - A major offence which should be referred to the Cheating Committee

Cheating

- Be a member of the Cheating Committee when required
- Present a case against a student on behalf of the Department
- Ensuring decisions are recorded in the Student Record System
- Meet with other departmental AITs to ensure consistency of approach.
- Contribute to staff development
- Fixed outcomes if minor offence

Cheating

A very serious first offence or second offence

- a mark of zero
- No re-assessment permitted
- Registration terminated/withdrawal from the programme required

Academic Appeals

Grounds for appeal

- a material administrative error in the conduct of the assessment
- an error by the University in the application of the assessment regulations
- some other material irregularity relevant to the assessment(s) concerned which has substantially prejudiced the results of the assessment
- Not academic judgement: assessing the merits of an individual piece of work, or
- reaching any assessment decision based on the marks, grades or other information relating to a student's performance

www.worcester.ac.uk/registry



Any Questions?

