

**Amendments to (i) UPR AS12 (Assessments and Examinations (U/G and Taught P/G) and Conferments (University-delivered provision)) and (ii) UPR AS13 (the equivalent of UPR AS12 for collaborative programmes) for 2024/25**

This paper summarises the proposed amendments to UPR AS12 and UPR AS13 for the 2024/25 academic year.

**1. Agreement of exceptions to the 4-week turnaround time**

UPR AS12 states that staff have 4 calendar weeks to mark, moderate and return student work, and if they have any reason to extend that return past that deadline they must seek the agreement of one of their Associate Deans in advance, and notify students that feedback will be late. This agreement must now be by the Dean of School rather than an Associate Dean. The following amendment has therefore been approved to UPR AS12, section 5.8:

**5.8 Return of marked student work**

- ii Students' coursework will be returned to them together with feedback no later than four (4) calendar weeks after the submission deadline. Any exceptions to this must be agreed by the ~~Associate~~ Dean of School (~~Academic Quality Assurance~~) or the ~~Associate Dean of School (Learning and Teaching)~~ and notified to students in advance of the expiry of the four (4) week period. For work of an on-going nature, such as a major project or dissertation, supervising staff will ensure that students are provided with feedback at interim stages.

**2. Students who are debtors to the University**

The University has clarified its response to students who are debtors. This includes the withdrawal of access to StudyNet and Canvas, which prevents students from accessing study materials and submitting assignments. The following amendment has therefore been approved to UPR AS12, section 10.1.7:

**10.1.7 Withholding of results**

- i The University reserves the right to withhold the formal notification of the examination or assessment results from any student who owes money to the University in the form of Academic Student Debt, as defined in Appendix I, UPR SA13<sup>5</sup>/Appendix I, UPR SA15<sup>6</sup>, *until such time as the moneys owed have been paid.*
- ~~ii *Students in these circumstances will, nevertheless, be notified of any examination or coursework referrals/deferrals and will be permitted to submit for such examinations or assessments. However, the University reserves the right to withhold the formal notification of the results of any referred examinations or assessments until such time as the moneys owed have been paid.*~~

Further, the following amendment has also been approved to UPR AS12, Appendix I, section 1.3 (regulations for students):

**1.3 Students who are debtors of the University**

Students who are debtors of the University *may be blocked from accessing IT systems. During this block students will not be entitled to undertake or submit their assessments. Students may be offered a deferral opportunity in these assessments once debts have been resolved.*

### **3. Eligibility to attend graduation ceremonies**

The Exams and Awards Office have updated the student requirements for deferring their award ceremony. The following amendment has therefore been approved to UPR AS12, section 12.1.5:

#### **12.1.5 Eligibility to attend graduation ceremonies**

- iv If a graduate or diplomate is unable to attend the ceremony to which they had been invited, they may defer this invitation once, to the ~~next~~ ceremony period *advised by the Exams and Awards Office*. In order to defer their invite, the graduate or diplomate *must inform the Exams and Awards Team before the advised deadline, available on the Graduate Ceremonies website and notified in the invitation e-mail. If the graduate or diplomate has not, for any reason, requested a deferral before the advised deadline, and received confirmation of the deferral, they will not be eligible to attend any future ceremony.* Deferral requests are considered at the discretion of the Associate Director (Academic Services), subject to availability and in meeting the eligibility criteria listed in 12.1.7.

~~complete the online deferral form available on the Graduation Ceremonies website by the deadline specified. Successful submission of this form will generate a confirmation email sent to the email address provided by the student on the deferral form. The graduate or diplomate will not be eligible to attend any ceremony if they have not, for any reason, completed the deferral form and received the confirmation as above.~~

- v It should be noted that attendance at ceremonies for the presentation of degrees and diplomas is solely by invitation of the University. An individual who is in debt to the University and where such sum has not been paid ~~one (1) week or five (5)~~ *eight (8)* working days prior to the registration deadline (see Appendix I, UPR SA13<sup>5</sup>/Appendix I, UPR SA15<sup>6</sup>), is not eligible ~~to be invited to attend~~ any such ceremony.

### **4. Revised arrangements for student appeals (early resolution, appeal to the Dean)**

There has been an increase in the number of appeals and correspondingly the number of appeals that are upheld at Dean of School level. This inevitably resulted in delays to decision making causing stress to the student and a poor student experience. The bulk of appeals occur after the referred/deferred period and the delay in reaching a decision often has knock on effects for students in terms of graduation, progression and visas. The new Early Resolution process seeks to improve this, by:

- i helping the student articulate and set out clearly the facts upon which they believe an examination board decision should be reviewed; and
- ii provide holistic advice and support and to direct the student's query to the appropriate decision maker for timely consideration.

The following amendments have been approved to UPR AS12, Appendix I, sections 5.5 and 5.6 (regulations for students):

#### **5 Requests for the review of assessment decisions – undergraduate and taught postgraduate students (appeals procedure)**

##### **5.5 ~~Informal procedures~~ Stage 1 – Early Resolution**

*5.5.1 Early Resolution is a stage designed to give help and support to a student with concerns about their academic results to:*

- i articulate their issue(s) more clearly;*

- ii *understand their results in the context of the UPRs and any programme specific regulations and the next steps;*
- iii *receive clarification or resolution of their issue(s) by assisting the student in liaising with the relevant programme team / Chair of exam board;*
- iv *understand whether an exception to the 'fit to sit' principle may apply and, if so, to advise on the process to be followed;*
- v *complete the Stage 2 appeals form, where appropriate, to their best advantage.*

5.5.2 *A student who wishes to pursue a request to review an Examination Board decision (an appeal) within the limits of the permitted grounds set out in section 5.4 must follow the Early Resolution procedure set out in 5.5.3 below. a student may initially wish to raise queries concerning the following matters (see sections 5.5.2—5.5.6) using the informal procedures set out in the relevant section.*

5.5.3 *The student must complete an Early Resolution Request Form in the case of:*

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

5.5.4 *The student must be given a response to their request within five (5) working days of receipt of the Early Resolution Form. Within 15 working days from the date on which the student submitted the Early Resolution Request Form, notification of completion of Stage 1 – Early Resolution must be provided to the student whether or not a resolution has been found.*

~~5.5.2—Mark or grade of an individual item of coursework~~

- ~~i—The student or member of staff should raise the query with the tutor(s) concerned immediately after receiving notification of the mark or grade. The tutor 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 tutor(s), the student still believes there is an error which has not been rectified and wishes to pursue the matter further, they must raise the issue, in writing, with the Programme Leader within five (5) working days of the date of the response.~~
- ~~iii—The Programme Leader 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 Programme Leader to the appropriate member of academic or administrative staff.~~

~~5.5.3—Overall result of an individual module~~

~~The student or member of staff 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, they should seek advice from the Student Administration Service. The student will receive an answer as quickly as possible, although some queries may take longer than others to address depending on their nature.~~

~~5.5.4—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 their Year or Programme Leader.~~

#### ~~5.5.5 — A student's personal position~~

~~The student should raise the matter at the earliest possible time with their Personal Tutor, Academic Support Tutor, Year or Programme Leader.~~

#### ~~5.5.6 — Suspected administrative error or procedural irregularity~~

~~The student or member of staff should raise the matter at the earliest opportunity with the Chair of the Short Course/Module or Programme Board of Examiners (see sections 5.6.1 and 5.6.2).~~

### ~~5.6 Formal procedure for the review of a decision by a Board of Examiners Stage 2 – an appeal to the Dean of School~~

~~5.6.1 All requests for a formal review of a decision of a Board of Examiners under the provisions of the regulations in this section (5.6) must be made, in writing, solely by means of the current version of the pro forma found in the following link:~~

~~<https://ask.herts.ac.uk/academic-appeals-requests-for-the-review-of-assessment-decisions>~~

~~Requests for formal reviews (appeals) can only be made after completion of Stage 1 - Early Resolution and when a resolution cannot be found.~~

~~5.6.2 Irrespective of whether they have raised a query informally using the procedures set out in section 5.5 and regardless of whether they have received a response, Students wishing to request a formal review *by the Dean of School* must do so using the procedures set out in this section (5.6). 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 of the completion of Stage 1- Early Resolution or, where applicable, within ten (10) working days of the receipt of a Fit to Sit decision from the Exceptional Circumstances Team following a late submission after the student has received their results ( see AS14 C.3.8.5) or where additional evidence has been provided following an earlier decision of the Exceptional Circumstances Team (AS12 5.4.1f) 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.*~~

~~Requests for a formal review (*an appeal*) under the provisions of this section (5.6) not submitted using the required pro forma *within ten (10) working days of completion of Stage 1- Early Resolution or, where applicable, within ten (10) working days of the receipt of a Fit to Sit decision from the Exceptional Circumstances Team following a late submission after the student has received their results ( see AS14 C.3.8.5) or where additional evidence has been provided following an earlier decision of the Exceptional Circumstances Team (AS12 5.4.1f)*, will not be considered.~~

~~5.6.3 Any student wishing to request a formal review (*an appeal*) ~~should~~ *is advised to seek immediate guidance from the Dean of School (or nominee if the Dean of School is the Chair or member of the Module or Programme Board of Examiners) (see sections 5.6.1 and 5.6.2) or the Students' Union.*~~

## 5. Inclusivity of assessments

The following amendment has been made to update and align UPR AS12 with the new UPR on Inclusive Assessments. The following amendment has been approved to UPR AS12, section 5.1.3:

### 5 Regulations and Procedures relating to the setting, review, submission, marking and moderation of examinations and assessments

5.1.3 All summative assessment (coursework as well as examinations) should be reviewed by an academic colleague prior to being handed out to students. This activity may be achieved within a module team or may be assigned to an appropriate individual, for example, an internal moderator. The review process should ensure that:

- (i) the learning outcomes are addressed;
- (ii) *the assessment, and the information related to it, is inclusive;*
- (iii) the assessment is designed in a way that minimises the opportunities for academic misconduct;
- (iv) the assessment task and grading criteria are consistent with the level of study;
- (v) that different grading criteria are in place for students studying at different levels undertaking the same assessment;
- (vi) the total assessment load is appropriate.

## 6. Anticipating the needs of students with disabilities

The UH Student Wellbeing team have reviewed UPR AS12, Appendix II (Students with Disabilities and Other Needs) to update and align it with the new UPR on Inclusive Assessments. The following amendments have therefore been approved to UPR AS12, Appendix II, sections 3, 4 and 5 (students with disabilities and other needs):

### 3 Identifying and making reasonable adjustments to examination arrangements

3.1 Students must contact their *Student Wellbeing* or their *Disability* Adviser *within Student Wellbeing ('Adviser')* at the earliest opportunity and must do so no later than four (4) weeks prior to the period for Semester A and Semester B examinations identified in the University Calendar and three (3) weeks prior to the period so identified for referred/deferred examinations to agree reasonable adjustments *beyond those which are already incorporated into the design of the examination. Where it is reasonable and possible to agree adjustments outside of that period the University will do all that is reasonable and where adjustments are not possible will support students to submit exceptional circumstances or signpost to other services.*

3.2 Where an examination has been scheduled 'out of time' (that is, other than during the times referred to in section 3.1) students must contact their *Disability* Adviser at the earliest opportunity and must do so no later than four (4) weeks prior to the 'out of time' examination.

### 3.3 Requests from disabled students *students where their needs are not met in the design of an assessment*

*Even where an assessment has been designed in compliance with UPR TL05, a disabled student may feel that their needs are not met by the assessment design.*

*Consequently, they may request for a reasonable adjustment to be made. The Student Wellbeing Disability Adviser will determine the adjustments to be made for disabled students. The Disability Adviser will discuss requests with the student concerned and, by using the Study Needs Agreement on StudyNet, will agree with the student the arrangements which are to be put in place. The agreed Study Needs Agreement operates for the entire period during which the student is enrolled on the programme but, where appropriate, the Disability Adviser may agree to revise the Study Needs Agreement.*

- 3.4 Where the Disability Adviser needs to request medical or other appropriate evidence, this will be used for the purpose of agreeing adjustments and will ~~not~~ be shared *only for reasons which are necessary*. Evidence will normally take the form of a doctor's or consultant's note or, for students who disclose a Specific Learning Difficulty, a report following an assessment with an Educational Psychologist or other suitably qualified person with a recognised practicing certificate. ~~The assessment of a specific learning difficulty must have taken place on or after 1 January 1988 and the student will have been over sixteen (16) years of age at the time.~~
- 3.5 Where a student requests adjustments on grounds of a Specific Learning Difficulty but does not have a suitable assessment report they will be supported ~~in obtaining this through an assessment with an Educational Psychologist, where appropriate, to obtain an assessment with an Educational Psychologist or specialist teacher through the University's diagnostic assessment service.~~

### 3.6 Requests from students who are not disabled

*Where the assessments are not accessible, additional requests for special arrangements for reasons other than disability, such as pregnancy, will be made to the appropriate Disability Adviser. Where special arrangements are agreed by the Disability Adviser, the adjustments agreed will apply only to the examination session for which the adjustments were requested. Further, separate, requests must be made in respect of any future examination session.*

## 4 Administration of assessment/examination arrangements for students with disabilities or other additional needs

### 4.2 Disability Advisers *within Student Wellbeing*:

are responsible for:

- i ~~(using the Study Needs Agreement on StudyNet)~~ agreeing with disabled students the reasonable adjustments which are to be made available to them;
- ii in the case of Semester A and Semester B examinations referred to in the University Calendar, notifying the Associate Director not less than three (3) weeks prior to the first examination in the series of the special arrangements agreed for disabled students in their respective Schools;
- iii in the case of 'out of time' examinations (see section 3.2), notifying the Associate Director not less than three (3) weeks prior to the examination of the special arrangements agreed for disabled students in their Schools;
- iv for referred/deferred examinations, notifying the Associate Director not less than one (1) weeks prior to the first examination in the series of the special arrangements agreed for disabled students in their respective Schools;
- v determining *any the* non-disability related additional needs of students ~~in their respective Schools~~;

- vi ensuring that the additional facilities and/or other special arrangements which have been agreed, but which are not arranged by the Associate Director, are provided/made and that the student is informed;
- vii ensuring that information about agreed adjustments for disabled students is available to staff who need to know in order to carry out assessments and/or examinations outside of the examination periods specified in the University Calendar.

#### 4.3 Costs

*Costs that arise from complying with any duty to make reasonable adjustments must not be passed on to the student for whom the adjustment is being made.* Any additional costs *that have already been* incurred either by the student or by a centre other than the student's School should be met from the budget of the student's School or other appropriate funding sources, for example, a student's Disabled Students' Allowance.

### 5 Time constrained in-course/module assessments

~~5.1 — Schools will make reasonable adjustments for individual disabled students in relation to time constrained in-course/module assessments including, but not restricted to, in-class written assessments, presentations, Electronic Voting Systems, practical assessments, Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs) and viva voce examinations.~~

5.1 *Additional* reasonable adjustments will be agreed for disabled students by their **Disability** Advisers and written into their Study Needs Agreements. Schools will be informed of these adjustments via the *automated system class lists published on StudyNet*.

### 7. Exceptional Circumstances at Partner Institutions

UPR AS14 contains details in C3.7 and C3.8 of the UH-based procedures for handling exceptional circumstances e.g. the requirement of submission of Exceptional Circumstances through the Student Portal which may not apply to students in partner institutions. However, UPR AS14 applies to both UH-based and Partner-based provision. Apart from the Herts HE Consortium, partner institutions have their own local procedures for handling exceptional circumstances. UPR AS13 is also silent on the matter of exceptional circumstances. The following amendments have therefore been approved to UPR AS13, Appendix I, section 3:

#### 3 Exceptional Circumstances

3.1 *Exceptional Circumstances are significant unforeseen circumstances beyond a student's control that would have affected their ability to perform to their full potential if they were to sit or submit an assessment at the appointed time.*

3.2 *Request(s) for Exceptional Circumstances must be submitted by the student at the earliest possible time after the applicable assessment deadline and within fifteen (15) working days of the assessment deadline, and at least five (5) working days before the applicable Board of Examiners' meeting. Students should refer to their institution's local information and guidance about how to submit a request.*

3.3 *Students who sit or submit an assessment deem themselves to be sufficiently able to take the assessment and cannot later claim to have suffered Exceptional Circumstances.*

3.4 However, the following two circumstances are considered to be exceptions to 3.3, above:

- i where a student suddenly becomes unwell during an examination or in-class test and elects to leave without completing the assessment. Where the assessment is invigilated, before leaving the examination room, the student must notify the Invigilator or Proctor of the Exceptional Circumstances which have necessitated their leaving the examination or test.

*For un-invigilated on-line assessments based on exception i, the student must submit a request by midnight on the calendar day after the on-line assessment. By submitting a request based on exception ii, a student renders their original attempt null and void.*

or

- ii 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 from a psychiatrist or mental health practitioner who has been treating the student over a period of time. A GP may also give support if they are aware of (a) treatment or referrals to such specialists (b) an incident close to the assessment date that may have temporarily affected the student's capacity to take decisions.

*Requests based on exception ii must be made by a student within fifteen (15) working days of the assessment date.*

3.5 A student's Exceptional Circumstances request must include full details and written evidence from independent third parties. Students can be assured that all statements of Exceptional Circumstances will be treated as confidential. If the student is concerned about the personal nature of the information or they find it difficult to obtain evidence, they should consult their institution's local information and guidance about who to contact for support.

3.6 Partner organisations are responsible for informing the University of the outcome of Exceptional Circumstances considerations at least three (3) days before the relevant Module Board.

3.7 The acceptance of Exceptional Circumstances will not necessarily cause the Module Board to come to a different decision.

## **4 Examinations**

### **4.1 Attendance**

- i Students....