

LTC15D107

Title: Minor Amendments to Regulations: Academic Appeals & Complaints and Self-Certification
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Issue

Recipients are invited to consider the proposals for two minor amendments to the regulations regarding Academic Appeals & Complaints and Self-Certification

Recommendation

The committee is asked to approve the amendments detailed below

Resource Implications

The proposals contain no resource implications for the University.

Risk Implications

The proposed amendments have no significant risk implications.

Equality and Diversity

N/A

Timing of decisions

Endorsement by LTC at its March meeting will allow the new regulations to be applied from the beginning of the 2016-17 academic year

Further Information

For further information regarding the issues in this paper please contact Dr Jon Sharp (Head LTS (Quality)) on 01603 9597374 jon.sharp@uea.ac.uk

Background

This paper proposes two minor amendments to regulations; one is largely a clarification of existing practice and the second proposed amendment is of an administrative nature, designed to release academic time in keeping with the University's current focus on optimising academic staff capacity for academic output.

Self-Certification

The current practice in relation to Self-certification is that any piece of work which falls due in the period covered by the Self-certified extension will have the deferred submission deadline applied. For example, a student has a self-certified extension on assignment A with an original due date of 15 March and a revised due date of 20 March. Consequently, assignment B with an original due date of 18 March would now also have a due date of 20 March.

This is the approach that has already been taken in a number of Schools, but since it is important that we treat all students equivalently, it would be useful to include a clause in the Self-certification regulations that explicitly sets out the approach outlined above as a requirement.

The proposed additional wording in the regulations should sit at the end of paragraph 5.1 within the Extenuating Circumstances (taught programmes) Regulations and should read:

Any piece of work which falls due in the period covered by the Self-certified extension will have the deferred submission deadline applied.

For example, a student has a self-certified extension on assignment A with an original due date of 15 March and a revised due date of 20 March. Consequently, assignment B with an original due date of 18 March would now also have a due date of 20 March.

Academic Appeals & Complaints

The number of Stage One Academic Appeals has increased significantly in the last year and this is creating difficulties in terms of the academic work-load associated therewith. The reasons for the increased volume are likely to remain: the fees regime has increased appeals across the sector and the requirement under the New Academic Model to pass all modules in order to progress. Consequently, the only lever available to reduce the impact on academic staff is to reduce the number of academic staff required to consider each case. The need for a member of academic staff from another faculty to sit on each panel was linked to the need to develop a University approach to the consideration of cases. A University approach is now well embedded and so this requirement can be removed without risk. It is also the case that the number of staff previously involved in each case erred on the side of caution to a degree that is no longer necessary. It is proposed that paragraph 6.2 of the regulations pertaining to Academic Appeals and Complaints which currently reads:

There shall be two panels in each Faculty, one being responsible for UG and PGT cases and the other being responsible for PGR cases. Each panel shall be chaired by a senior, well-trained member of academic staff in the Faculty concerned. The Panel shall comprise 3 members of academic staff from the Faculty in question, one member of staff from a Panel in another Faculty, plus the Chair and an experienced LTS/ PGR Service secretary/advisor. The Head of LTS/PGR Service will advise on procedural matters in relation to particularly complex cases.

Be replaced with the following:

There shall be two panels in each Faculty, one being responsible for UG and PGT cases and the other being responsible for PGR cases. Each panel shall be chaired by a senior, well-trained member of academic staff in the Faculty concerned. The Panel shall comprise 2 members of academic staff from the Faculty in question, plus the Chair and an experienced LTS/ PGR Service secretary/advisor. The Head of LTS/PGR Service will advise on procedural matters in relation to particularly complex cases.