

**LTC11D052**

**Title:** Report from TPPG  
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### **Issue**

A report from the Director of Taught Programmes on issues considered by TPPG

### **Recommendation**

LTC members are asked to consider the questions and recommendation contained in the report.

### **Resource Implications**

Many of the recommendations contained in the report will have resource implications for the University. These are explained in relation to the specific recommendations brought forward to LTC.

### **Risk Implications**

Many of the recommendations contained will have a 'risk' element for the University in the sense that decisions about policy issues will have an impact on processes and outcomes for students, and the student experience.

### **Equality and Diversity**

It is not envisaged that any of the recommendations contained in the report will impact on groups with protected characteristics.

### **Timing of decisions**

The report from the Director of Taught Programmes reflects discussions within the PGT NAM Working Group (meetings took place between Oct 2011 and Jan 2012) and TPPG meeting on 14 March 2012.

### **Further Information**

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### **Background**

TPPG is an advisory group which provides guidance and advice to the Academic Director of Taught Programmes on issues relating to UEA policy and teaching/pedagogy in general. TPPG is not a decision-making body and has no executive powers – it is a body with cross-University membership which puts forward recommendation to LTC for the latter to consider and/or approve.

### **Discussion**

The report from the Academic Director for Taught Programmes draws attention to a number of important policy recommendation that LTC is asked to consider/approve. Most relate to the implementation of the New Academic Model for postgraduate taught programmes.

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## Report from the Academic Director for Taught Programmes to the Learning & Teaching Committee (LTC)

### 1) New Academic Model for Postgraduate Programmes

Since September 2011 the Academic Director for Taught Programmes (ADTP) has been working with colleagues in all four faculties to determine how the New Academic Model for postgraduate programmes in the University should be configured.

The UG version of the New Academic Model (NAM) was driven by a recognition that to become a consistent UK top 20 University that UEA would need to embrace not only ambitious educational targets (like those now embodied in the Corporate Plan), but also a new educational ethos, with raised expectations in relation to the educational experience of our students and their ‘engagement’ as partners in the learning and educational process. The Vice-Chancellor has repeatedly (in his *Open Forums*) referred to the ‘play hard, study hard’ culture which he would like to see developed and the NAM supports this new culture of ‘robust engagement’ by setting in place requirements which include students ‘passing all modules’, and having to ‘earn the right’ to reassessment.

The University needs to decide how it wishes to see the ethos – as well as the fine detail – of the New Academic Model translated to postgraduate programmes. This will influence the next iteration of the Common Master’s Framework. The ADTP has set out in this section a series of proposals for consideration. In most cases the ADTP has set-out two Options (Options A or B) with arguments in favour/against each. The ADTP’s recommendation is **OPTION A** in each case. The ADTP’s proposals are contained with text boxes:



As we consider the PGT NAM, we should be cognisant of important differences between UG and PGT programmes which might influence the way we perceive the PGT version of the NAM. Apart from the obvious difference in the ‘level’ of the programmes concerned, we should note that Free Choice (which currently exists in UG programmes) does not apply at PGT level. Moreover, PGT courses vary much more in duration – some are one-year, fulltime, whilst others are two years, part-time, whilst the Integrated Masters (which combined UG and PG modules) are four years in duration with a final year of M level study of at least 120 credits. Master’s programmes also serve different functions or objectives. Some are best described as ‘standard’ programmes, enabling students to study in greater

depth or breadth subjects/disciplines they engage with at UG level. Others might be described as 'conversion' courses where students undertake study in a subject which is new to them. Others might be termed 'professional' courses (e.g. PGCE, MPHARM), preparing students for entry to a particular field of employment, practice or profession, or for progression or transfer within it. In these cases a PSRB normally accredits the programme. Master's programmes are, by their nature, subject to different pressures and issues relating to recruitment. In some Schools (e.g. ECO, NBS) Master's programmes are very much focused on international markets. International recruitment is central to their 'raison d'être'. The pedagogical challenges and educational issues faced by some programme teams with large number of International students are of a very different kind to those whose students come predominantly from the UK (or even the EU). Fees vary considerably on Master's programmes with professional courses like the MBA attracting 'premium' fees. . Student numbers vary dramatically – some Master's programmes attract small numbers (i.e. less than 12), whilst others are aimed as a mass market, with 150+ in a cohort. Qualificatory outcomes are varied and include PG Cert, PG Dip, MA, MSc, MRes, and MChem, MPHARM etc. Given this diversity with M level provision it is to be expected that colleagues have very different perspectives and views on the issues thrown-up by the concept of a 'new model' for postgraduate programmes.

It is unclear, at this stage, how the Home/EU and International markets for Master's courses will change over the next 2 years – the impact of recession in the EU and globally, demographic changes, Visa changes, structural changes in HE provision etc could all fundamentally influence the ability of the University to attract students of the quality, and on the scale it has in the recent past. It also remains unclear what impact high fees on UG programmes will have on demand for M level awards, or how strategic changes within the UK Funding Councils such as the AHRC will impact on the design, purpose, cost, delivery or recruitment onto postgraduate courses.

#### The consultation process

The UG NAM was approved in April 2011 and in the same month Joanne Ashman, the Assistant Registrar (LTQO) set out the challenges facing the creation of a similar 'model' for PGT programmes in a paper entitled '*The Implications of the New Academic Model for Integrated Master's and Master's Programmes*'. In July 2011, at the request of the incoming ADTP, the Chair of LTC sanctioned the creation of a new Working Group which would consider the implications of Joanne's paper and provide guidance, as necessary, to the ADTP. The ADTP convened four separate meetings of the Working Group (Oct, Nov, Dec and Jan), the membership of which widened progressively, to include 22 members of academic staff (including Assoc Deans) and additional colleagues from LTS (including Julia Jones the NAM Project Coordinator). Schools represented include MED, NSC, AHP, BIO, CHE, PHA, CMP, ENV, DEV, ECO, NBS, LAW, EDU, HIS, PSI, and LDC.

It has been clear from the outset that developing a single 'model' that pleases all parties is an impossibility: issues like 'passing all modules' are seen as desirable by some schools, and as potentially disastrous by others. Some have argued that we should have separate regulations for each of the three kinds of Master's courses mentioned above on the basis that they each have a different purpose, structure etc. However, the ADTP is convinced that the University should work towards a single regulatory framework for PGT programmes and that a proliferation of separate regulatory frameworks for different kinds of PGT programmes should be avoided at all costs. We have, as a University, worked hard over the past decade to streamline our PGT Regs and have succeeded in making considerable progress via the Common Master's Framework. Now is the time to build on this progress by achieving some additional 'simplifications' and efficiencies in the way our PGT programmes are run, in keeping with the stated aim in the Corporate Plan of eradicating unnecessary complexity.

The four meetings of the PGT NAM Working Group, along with many written contributions sent to Julia Jones or the ADTP by members of the group and Assoc Deans have, I believe, succeeded in 'flushing-out' the main issues and concerns relating to the PGT NAM. Having consulted with the Working Group, Assoc Deans, and TPPG, the ADTP is now in a position to present a series of proposals to LTC for scrutiny and comment.

#### A reminder of the UG New Academic Model

I have set out below the key precepts of the New Academic Model that are relevant for consideration in relation to PGT programmes. In the sections that follow I will consider each of these in turn. Discussion of the precepts of the UG model will be preceded by a discussion on the 'timing' of the PGT NAM.

Relevant precepts of the UG NAM (approved by LTC April 2011):

- Students must pass all modules
- Students will need to meet specified thresholds (to be defined) before being offered a reassessment opportunity
- Wherever possible reassessment should be at the item level rather than synoptic reassessment of the module
- The minimum module size will be 20 credits
- Free choice is to be replaced by 'Defined Choice' in course profiles with appropriate modules defined by Course Directors
- Joint degrees will have a Course Director from the School in which students are registered and Assistant Course Directors from other Schools contributing to the course
- Each Integrated Masters degree to comprise at least 480 credits, with no more than 20 credits at level 1 in stage 2, at least 90 credits at level 3 in stage 3 and 120 credits at level M in stage 4
- Modules will follow a clear progression from levels 1 to 2 to 3 to M (levels 4, 5, 6, & 7, respectively, in the Higher Education credit framework for England). The Higher Education credit framework for England level descriptors (FHEQ) to be adopted.
- Item and module assessment marks to be recorded as integers, and year and degree aggregates to be recorded to one decimal point
- Assessment and classification rules to be simplified and SITS output modified where required so that Boards of Examiners can use SITS output rather than Discoverer reports, with the remaining discretion focused on students with extenuating circumstances at borderlines
- Simplification of the rules for classification to include a reduction in the discretion available to Boards of Examiners
- Year weightings for all Integrated Masters degrees to be 20:30:50, stage 2:stage 3:stage 4
- All courses to have Programme-level outcomes and the ways these are to be assessed to be clear for all courses (ideally this should include a clear 'mapping' of outcomes to assessments so that it is clear to students where/how a particular programme outcome is assessed within the degree)
- SITS will be configured to accept marks on a pass/fail basis or 0-100 numerical scheme (note that LTC has previously ruled that negative marking is not permitted)

In addition, there are some issues which do not relate to the UG NAM, but which have been addressed as part of a new PGT version of the NAM. These include:

- M level award outcomes and thresholds: Pass, Merit, Distinction. Mark thresholds for each.
- Role of synoptic assessment
- APEL/APCL arrangements

## LARGELY NON-CONTROVERSIAL

Most of the proposals regarding the PGT NAM put to Faculty LTQCs and TPPG are not controversial – all Faculties will be able to sign up to them. This includes all features below:

- Reassessment at the item level rather than synoptic reassessment of the module
- No restrictions on programme choice (NB this varies from the UG model)
- No prescribed use of synoptic assessment (NB this varies from the UG model)
- Joint degrees will have a Course Director from the School in which students are registered and Assistant Course Directors from other Schools contributing to the course
- Each Integrated Masters degree to comprise at least 480 credits, with no more than 20 credits at level 1 in stage 2, at least 90 credits at level 3 in stage 3 and 120 credits at level M in stage 4
- Integrated Masters degrees to be weighted 20:30:50, stage 2:stage 3:stage 4
- The Higher Education credit framework for England level descriptors (FHEQ) to be adopted – M level will be **level 7** in future.
- Item and module assessment marks to be recorded as integers, and year and degree aggregates to be recorded to one decimal point
- Assessment and classification rules to be simplified and SITS output employed rather than Discoverer reports
- Simplification of the rules for classification to include a reduction in the discretion available to Boards of Examiners
- All courses to have Programme-level outcomes and the ways these are to be assessed to be clear for all courses
- Percentage (%) marking on 0-100 scale will be used for all assessments with exception of professional practice assessments in some schools where Pass/Fail will be used where necessary/preferable in SSF and FMH
- M level award outcomes and thresholds: Pass, Merit, Distinction. Mark thresholds for each will be 50%, 60% and 70%. *(One or two colleagues felt that the threshold for a merit should be 65%, but it is more common in the sector for the threshold to be at 60%)*

## PROBLEMATIC ISSUES

However, there are some issues which have raised serious concerns:

1. Timing of introduction of the PGT NAM
2. Pass all modules
3. Earning the right to reassessment – thresholds for attendance and engagement
4. 20 credit minimum module size
5. APEL/APCL arrangements

**In this section I will therefore focus on the 5 problematic aspects of the PGT NAM.**

### 1. The timing of the PGT NAM

It has been questioned whether this is the right time to be developing and agreeing a set of precepts that shape our PGT programmes. It is not clear, for example how the 'market' for master's level programmes will change. Competition is stiffer than ever, Research Councils are redefining their remit and role with regard to Master's programmes, and the impact of massively increased UG course fees on progression to Master's study is unknown. There are additional reasons for caution:

- Colleagues have noted, with some justification, that it may be wiser to see how our new UG NAM influences progression/failure rates etc, before we implement similar policies for PGT courses.
- Schools are already engaged in a major programme of work on the UG NAM – this is absorbing a considerable amount of staff time and requiring Schools to begin work on a PGT

NAM in parallel would place intolerable pressures on staff time – at a time when many are also working hard to address the needs of the REF 2013.

- Delaying any PGT NAM by a year – to 2014/15 – would help to ensure the smooth ‘bedding down’ of the UG programmes in 2013/14 and allow the University to learn from the impact of the NAM on the UG experience before making major changes to PGT courses.
- All four Associate Deans, following discussion with their LTQCs and HoS, have argued for a delay to 2014/15. Each has provided a compelling case for doing so.

This is a difficult decision and colleagues will all have a view. My own view as ADTP is that we should ‘listen’ to the very real concerns conveyed by each Faculty on this issue. To ignore the guidance and feedback provided by insisting on a 2013 roll-out of the PGT NAM would be a very high risk strategy and also potentially a counter-productive one.

**Whilst I recognise that some of our colleagues might wish to proceed with a roll-out of the PGT NAM as soon as possible, the ADTP urges LTC to proceed with extreme caution on this issue, and recommends a delay to 2014/15.**

**Proposals from ADTP:** (Option A is always the ADTP’s recommended option)

**OPTION A:** Postpone PGT NAM to 2014/15.

**OPTION B:** Implement PGT NAM in 2013/14, simultaneously with UG NAM.

## **2. Students must pass all modules**

As with the CCS, the Common Masters Framework currently allows for condonement of failure – that is, students who have failed modules (up to 40 credits worth) can have these credits ‘condoned’ by an Exam Board. The practice of condoning failure on Master’s awards is relatively common practice in our competitor HEIs and is employed in at least 16 Schools of Study at UEA and in all Faculties except FMH. Pass all modules would therefore constitute a very significant change in practice for the University. This is, arguably, the most controversial aspect of the UG NAM amongst PGT colleagues.

The issue was discussed at length and a majority felt that we should not require it for PGT programmes. The UG NAM does require students to pass all modules. This was driven by a key University priority to work our students hard, to set the bar high in terms of our expectations of their engagement and performance, and to develop a new culture in which students see themselves as partners in the educational process, rather than passive recipients of a product in the ‘student as consumer’ mould– something which the current marketisation of HE seems to be promoting. The ‘pass all modules’ requirement at UG level represents a significant step-change in the way in which the University articulates the standards it expects students to aspire to and also, of course, ensures that students do not have ‘failed’ modules on their HEAR reports which employers will have ready access to in future. From an educational point of view the concept of ‘pass all modules’ is enormously powerful, ensuring as it does that students complete all elements of their programme and therefore demonstrate achievement of all the programme outcomes. It is potentially critical too, in maintaining the credibility and perceived quality of UEA PGT programmes.

As ADTP I think it is important that we consider what kind of PGT programmes we would wish to see the University offering and the kind of expectations we would wish to set. I have argued forcefully

that in making a decision on this crucial principle we need to have a clear sense of **where we want to get to**, as well as where we are now and how this might constrain us. I feel fairly certain that if we were developing our PGT programmes from scratch, that none of us would want to see students carrying failed modules and this failure being condoned by the University. I don't believe this is really either in the students' interests or those of the University. It is expected that students on PGT awards will exit with some kind of HEAR in the future.

I know that some academic colleagues do share my concerns as the following feedback received by e mail illustrates:

*"Why would we not want students to pass all PGT modules? I thought the NAM was thankfully getting rid of that possibility! It feels very counterintuitive to award a degree with condoned fail"*

*"I have to say that I am completely opposed to condoned failure. It is completely inconsistent with the NAM and therefore introduces clear inequities between PGT and UG students. Surely a degree should be based on work that is passed and demonstrates achievement? A student should successfully complete all the requirements of the programme. Any exception to this should be exceptional and concessional"*

Having a different expectation at UG and PGT level is not, in my view, a desirable outcome. I recognise that PGT students (many of whom are mature learners, some are professionals in practice etc) are, by definition, a different kind of student but I do not think that the thresholds/standards we set should be different because of this. If requiring students to pass all elements of a programme at UG level is important to us this should also be the case at PGT level.

It should be emphasised that UEA is not alone in condoning failed modules on PGT awards. In a recent investigation, carried out by LTS colleagues, which considered 31 HEIs from across the Russell Group, 94 Group and Post-92 Group, it emerged that regulations allowing for the condoning of failure (or 'compensation') existed in 24 examples. In some cases HEIs allow for 40 credits of condoned failure (as at UEA) – UCL, Essex and Royal Holloway being notable examples. In others the limit is placed at 20 credits (Bradford University, University of Teeside, King's College London) and 30 credits (Kingston University, Loughborough). Universities which do require students to 'pass all modules' include: Queen's University Belfast, Imperial College, Durham University, University of Bedfordshire, University of Derby, University of Huddersfield, University of West London. It is fair to say, therefore, that practice on this issue varies considerably across the HE sector. If the way PGT programmes are currently structured and delivered at UEA means that we can't ensure that students pass every module, then I would argue that our position should be that those programmes should be redesigned in such a way that this DOES become possible. There are plenty of PGT programmes where students DO have to pass every module, so it is possible. This may require some radical re-conceptualisation of existing programmes.

#### Extent of condoned failure at UEA

In order to see what constraints face us on the issue of 'pass all modules' we must understand the extent to which condoned failure is currently used. LTS colleagues have been doing some research on the extent of condoned failure. Below is a breakdown of PGT students for 2009/10. It shows the number of students who achieved an award (excluding PGcred, GDip and GDipL)a) by passing all modules, and b) by having at least one Condoned Fail (CF) module.

School	Number of students who passed all modules	Number of students who were condoned fail	% CF of Total
AHP	52		0.00%
AMS	5	1	16.67%
ART	29	1	3.23%
BIO	46	4	8.00%
CCE	13		0.00%
CMP	28	9	22.50%
DEV	119	18	13.04%
ECO	71	35	32.71%
EDU	443		0.00%
ENV	57	17	22.97%
FTV	15	4	21.05%
HIS	26	1	3.57%
HUM	6		0.00%
LAW	46	13	18.84%
LCS	22	3	12.00%
LIT	63	2	3.03%
LLT		1	33.33%
MED	50		0.00%
MTH	4		0.00%
MUS	4		0.00%
NAM	9		0.00%
NBS	107	94	43.52%
PHA	1		0.00%
PHI	8		0.00%
PSI	45	10	18.18%
SWP	37	2	4.00%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1306</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>13.41%</b>

Thus we can see that condoning failure is a widespread phenomenon at UEA, with 16 Schools condoning one or more failed modules. It is established practice in HUM, SSF and SCI, but not FMH – In the latter students have to pass all modules due to PSRB requirements. The LTS statistics show that of 1,603 PGT students **13.4%** only passed their award through Condoned Failure. There are considerable variations between Schools, with highest incidences (proportional to student numbers) being in LLT, ECO and NBS. In seven Schools, the proportion is over **20%**. In many other Schools (10 in total) condoned failure is not used at all. What is very significant is that in some cases students are given a reassessment opportunity prior to the final Board, in others students are not, and failure is condoned without the student being offered reassessment at all. In one SSF School, just over **80%** of cases where failure was condoned occurred without offering the student a reassessment opportunity. Whilst there may be practical reasons why this happens, we should not lose sight of the ‘equality’ and ‘fairness’ issues this raises. Further information on condoned failure for 2010/11 is provided in **Appendix B**. This reveals 404 instances of condoned failure in modules with a total of 301 students benefitting from condoned failure across the University. Certain modules (e.g. in ECO,



NBS) have very high numbers of CFs which the Schools might wish to explore since this could be a manifestation of ‘problems’ inherent in the design of the modules in question.

#### Reasons to be cautious

However, having set out some of the principles which I believe should cause us to question whether condonement of failure should continue, it is important to consider the possible consequences of trying to implement a ‘Pass all modules’ policy too quickly. In some Schools, such as ECO and NBS, which have significant numbers of International Students, if condoned failure was not allowed, as things stand a considerable minority of students would simply fail at the Final Board. High levels of failure would be disastrous for the Schools concerned and their students. Indeed, introducing a ‘Pass all modules’ policy might unfairly disadvantage International students unless the policy is accompanied by radical changes in the way that these students are supported in their studies. This is especially the case on 1 year Master’s programmes where the demands placed on students (who are also trying to adapt to a new language, culture, setting, pedagogical approach, etc) are considerable. The ADTP would argue that, a ‘Pass all modules’ for PGT programmes should not be implemented until the University is able to allocate a greater resource to supporting students on such programmes, and until such time as Schools have been able to reconfigure their teaching and assessment strategies in such a way that students are better equipped to demonstrate the achievement of programme outcomes and to pass the modules on their awards. The essential point here is that ‘Pass all modules’ isn’t a zero-cost option – in order to implement it at PGT level, it will need to be paralleled by changes in the induction provided, by changes in the way PGT programmes are taught and assessed, and by changes in the support provided to students – especially International students and especially those on short, intense MA and MSc awards. International students are already over-represented (proportionally) in the number of Fails and we would not wish this situation to be exacerbated by a ‘Pass all modules’ policy which was ‘rushed’ into place without due regard for fairness. I am therefore persuaded that there is a real need for a cautious and measured strategy which allows Schools and the University’s central support services the time they need to adapt to support students working within a ‘Pass all modules’ environment. I am also persuaded that there should, therefore, be a ‘transition’ period of two years from the introduction of the PGT NAM in 2014/15, which provides the space needed for Schools to re-develop their PGT programmes so that condoning failure is no longer required.

#### **Proposal from ADTP:**

My recommendation, therefore, is that ‘Pass all modules’ should not be enshrined in the first iteration of the PGT NAM in 2014/15, but that it should remain our long-term objective for the 2<sup>nd</sup> iteration of the PGT NAM in 2016/17. No condonement of failure should be allowed from 2016/17 onwards, with the Regulations amended accordingly.

#### How should condoning failure operate between now and the end of the academic year 2015/16?

If condoning of failure is allowed to continue, its use should be more tightly constrained and limited than is currently the case, in accordance with the proposals set out below.

**Proposals from ADTP:PTION A:** Allow condoning failure to continue until end of 2015/16, but within specific constraints. Firstly, PGT students should be given the opportunity to be reassessed following failure of a module. Reassessment should occur prior to any student having a failed module condoned at the Final Exam Board. Schools should make whatever adjustments are necessary to facilitate reassessment, for example, by giving a standard extension to the dissertation submission deadline for students with reassessment.

A student with failed modules should be allowed to proceed to the Final Exam Board on the basis that:

- a) The student has passed all modules deemed to be 'core'
- b) Modules failed do not exceed 40 credits (for a Master's), or 30 credits (for a PG Dip). No failed modules should be allowed for a PG Cert.
- c) The student has a module mark in each failed module of at least 45%.
- d) The student has an aggregate mark across all modules (failed and passed) of at least 50%.
- e) Any failed module would preclude the award of a distinction

**All condoning of failure to cease in 2016/17, when 'Pass all Modules' is enforced.**

**OPTION B:** Allow condoning failure to continue as at present (no change) with different Schools using different criteria.

**OPTION C:** Students must pass all modules from 2014/15.

Note: If option A or B are endorsed, it should be noted that FMH Schools will form an exception to the use of condoned failure. FMH pre-Registration students cannot be allowed to fail a module as this would be inconsistent with PSRB requirements. FMH students will continue to be reassessed in-year (as at present).

### 3. Earning the Right to Reassessment

There was little agreement on this issue. Some colleagues have been keen to emphasise that PGT students are mature learners and should be treated as such – they should not have to negotiate 'hurdles' to earn the right to be reassessed. It was also pointed out that non-attendance can often signify problems – e.g. international (INT) students who are shy about speaking in seminars. Some of our colleagues have argued passionately that these students should be helped, not 'punished' by being denied a reassessment opportunity. Whilst the majority view in the December meeting of the Working Group was that there should be no threshold (either a min attendance or minimum % mark in 1<sup>st</sup> sit) for PGT students to earn the right to reassessment, the ADTP's discussion paper circulated after Xmas and the discussion at the January meeting seemed to result in a shift in the majority view, with most colleagues in favour of a consistent policy at UG and PGT level. However, the Associate Dean for SSF has expressed concerns about the current variance in the monitoring of attendance, and the Student Union has recently taken a stance in opposition to attendance monitoring, as evidenced by a recent article in *Concrete*. Whilst one must accept that the new attendance monitoring process for 2011/12 has not been adhered to as consistently as we would like, it is important to stress that the variance we see is the natural consequence of a rapid change in practice – given that the ADTP has recommended a delay in the PGT NAM to 2014/15, this allows us a further 2 academic years to 'iron-out' glitches in the system, to ensure that staff record attendance conscientiously, and to endeavour to put in place computerised swipe card systems in a wide range of teaching venues. There is a great deal of published research on the relationship between attendance and performance in higher education context. I have attached a list of some of these sources in **Appendix A** of this paper. The message from the published research is quite stark: students who attend more taught sessions perform better than those who attend less. Admittedly, the vast majority of this research relates to UG courses and students. As far as I am aware there is no

research which suggests that there is no similar correlation at PGT level and I think most of us probably know from our own experience that students on PGT programmes who fail to attend the majority of sessions normally perform less strongly (though there will always be exceptions).

Let's consider again the two requirements that have been agreed at UG level:

1. **No more than 20% unauthorised absence (i.e. min 80% attendance)**

It has been pointed out that there are sometimes as few as 9 taught sessions which can be easily monitored on PGT modules, so missing just two of them would lead to students falling below the 80% attendance requirement. Whilst some PGT students (e.g. INT students) often struggle with adapting to PG study in the UK, I would argue that if there are so few formal taught sessions on a PGT course that it is even MORE important that students attend them assiduously because they provide a crucial framework around which they can build their learning. An International student might struggle with the academic demands of a module, which results in them getting a very low mark, but we should be able to reasonably expect that students attend scheduled sessions. If they do, they are more likely to pass.

The 80% attendance requirement is already in place on FMH PGT courses, including part-time ones. The requirement is not seen as 'insulting' either by staff or students. I'm therefore not yet convinced that we should treat PGT students differently in this respect – as far as I am concerned the factors which led us to approve 80% attendance on UG programmes apply equally at PGT level.

2. **Minimum 20% aggregate module mark**

We know that on intensive 1 year programmes some International students struggle to adapt to the challenges of studying in the UK, and to develop their written English skills quickly enough to be able to achieve pass marks, especially in the first semester. For this reason some colleagues are concerned that requiring students to achieve the 20% module mark may unfairly penalise these students who are engaged/enthusiastic and working hard but simply struggling to develop the sophistication of written English required to gain a 50% pass mark. Once again, the ADTP needs to sound a note of caution: if we DO insist on the 20% threshold mark, the University will need to commit itself to enhancing the level of support provided to International students and others who are struggling with the academic demands of PG study despite working hard and attending taught sessions.

One could argue that 20% is a very low mark, and that if a student cannot achieve this, even in 1<sup>st</sup> semester, they are unlikely to pass the award anyway (regardless of the amount of support provided) – in which case it might be in their best interests to be withdrawn rather than struggle on for another 9 months and fail regardless. Some colleagues expressed concern regarding the difficulty of marking at the 20% boundary. This is acknowledged. Revised PGT Marking Scales – assignment-specific examples, and revised University wide marking scales – will help to address this.

LTS colleagues have kindly extracted some useful data for 2010/11 about the number of modules where students have gained a mark of less than 20% in 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> sits, and who have been awarded a degree (including an exit award). The data doesn't include students with a mark of below 20% who subsequently withdraw or fail.

See tables below:

Table One

Number of modules categorised by first sit mark and final award

Count of SPR Code	Final Award						Grand Total
	1st sit mark band	LLM	MA	MSC	PCER	PDIP	
0	1				5		6
10-19.99		1	3	1	3		8
20-29.99		5	13		9		27
30-39.99	3	9	71		20		103
40-49.99	18	20	126	3	41	3	211
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>355</b>

This shows that out of 355 modules students gained marks of less than 20% in only **14** cases (3.9%). The number of PGT modules and students likely to be affected by the 20% threshold is likely, therefore, to be relatively small. The vast majority of students (96%) who do Fail, and go on to get an award, generally gain marks over 20%. The 20% threshold would affect relatively small numbers of PGT students, but would ensure that they are withdrawn earlier, rather than later, saving time and expense for the students concerned.

Table Two

Number of Modules categorised by first sit mark band and final module grade after second attempt

Number of modules	Final Module Grade			
1st sit mark band	CF	F	P	Grand Total
0	1	5		6
10-19.99	1	3	4	8
20-29.99	3	7	17	27
30-39.99	20	15	68	103
40-49.99	31	23	157	211
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>355</b>

This table shows that students who get less than 20% on their first sit are more likely to **Fail rather than Pass** the module following their 2<sup>nd</sup> assessment attempt. Two students passed modules through condoned failure. In comparison 75% of students who get a 1<sup>st</sup> sit mark of 40-49.9% pass their module following reassessment. Condoned failure is normally used in modules where students have achieved a final module mark of 40-49%, but it is also occasionally used in cases where students have achieved less than 20%. Of those failing at 1<sup>st</sup> sit, 15% fail at reassessment. Of those failing with a mark over 20%, 13% fail at reassessment.

Table Three

Number of modules categorised by first sit mark band and second sit mark band

No of modules	2nd sit mark band						
1st sit mark band	0	10-19.99	20-29.99	30-39.99	40-49.99	>=50	Grand Total
0	5				1		6
10-19.99		1	1		2	4	8
20-29.99			2	3	5	17	27
30-39.99				12	23	68	103
40-49.99					54	157	211
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>355</b>

This table shows again that the likelihood of a student gaining a pass on reassessment is directly linked to their mark on the 1<sup>st</sup> sit – the higher the 1<sup>st</sup> sit mark, the higher the percentage passing on reassessment. Of the group of 14 modules in which students gained less than 20% at 1<sup>st</sup> sit, more failed than passed on reassessment. **This suggests that students gaining very low marks of less than 20% are unlikely to pass even if offered reassessment – and withdrawal from the course (as in a ‘pass all modules’ regime) might be preferable to allowing the student to continue struggling, and then failing the course.** LTS has also organised data by student – see tables 4-7 below. They show that 152 PGT students gained Fail marks of less than 50%. Only 10 students got less than 20% in their 1<sup>st</sup> sit. Only four of them passed ‘by right’ following reassessment. Condoning of failure was used extensively, but primarily for students gaining fail marks in the 30-49% range. Out of 152 students who gained fail marks across the PGT programme, 18 (11.8%) failed following reassessment. A further 68.4% passed outright, and 19.7% only gained a pass by having failure **condoned**. The figures suggest, therefore, that Schools should plan for an expected failure rate at reassessment of approx 12% and put in place support to reduce this figure downwards.

Table 4

	number of students failing at least one module who obtain an award						
	Final Award						
	LLM	MA	MSC	PCER	PDIP	PDIPNAM	Grand Total
no of students	16	27	79	2	25	3	152

Table 5 Students' first sit mark band vs Final Award

no of students	Final Award						
1st sit band	LLM	MA	MSC	PCER	PDIP	PDIPNAM	Total
0	1			2			3
10-19.99		1	3		3		7
20-29.99		4	12		6		22
30-39.99	3	8	49		5		65
40-49.99	12	14	15		11	3	55
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>152</b>

**Table 6** Students' first sit mark band vs. Final module grade

no of students	Final Module Grade			
1st sit band	F	CF	P	Total
0	2	1		3
10-19.99	2	1	4	7
20-29.99	5	3	14	22
30-39.99	5	16	44	65
40-49.99	4	9	42	55
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>152</b>

**Table 7** Students' first sit mark band vs. Students' second sit mark bands

no of students	2nd sit band					
1st sit band	0	20-29.99	30-39.99	40-49.99	>=50	Total
0	2			1		3
10-19.99		1		2	4	7
20-29.99		2	2	4	14	22
30-39.99			5	16	44	65
40-49.99				13	42	55
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>152</b>

The LTS statistics suggest that if a 20% threshold for 1<sup>st</sup> sit was introduced as a criterion for 'earning the right to reassessment', it would affect only a small number of PGT students, but it would help to remove very weak students from the system who are ill-prepared or equipped for M level study, and who would be unlikely to pass regardless of the amount of support offered to them. Withdrawing them earlier rather than later would arguably be in the best interests of the students and the University.

#### Double jeopardy?

The point has been made that using Gen Reg 13 to penalise non-attendance, and then again to use attendance as a threshold for reassessment constitutes a case of double jeopardy since students are penalised twice for the same offence. I do not agree. It should be possible to apply the same attendance monitoring processes on PGT programmes as on UG ones. Gen Reg 13 will, if used rigorously, help to identify 'problems' or extenuating circumstances that PGT students might be experiencing, and non-attendance can then be 'authorised' where circumstances justify it. Let us remember that Gen Reg 13 isn't just a mechanism for penalising students – it is intended to ensure that the reasons for non-attendance (especially unauthorised absence) are identified as early as possible. If a student has extenuating circumstances that legitimately prevent them from attending, there is no reason why they should be penalised twice. An Exam Board can use its discretion here to award a reassessment opportunity to students who, for legitimate reason, have failed to achieve the 80% attendance requirement for reassessment or the 20% module mark threshold. Where a module mark has been penalised due to plagiarism (or late submission) resulting in the overall mark being below 20%, we would not wish to exclude that student from reassessment, providing that they met the attendance criteria.

### Proposals from ADTP:

**OPTION A:** Students will be offered a reassessment opportunity where they have met the following requirements:

1. must have no more than 20% unauthorised absence for the failed module AND
2. must have achieved an overall module mark for the failed module of at least 20%.
  - a. It is acknowledged that there will be a few modules where attendance is not monitored, in which case only the mark threshold will be taken into consideration.
  - b. For modules where there is no mark awarded (pass/fail modules) only the attendance threshold will be taken into consideration. This will be made clear to students at the point of registration for the module.
  - c. Where there are extenuating circumstances, students may be permitted to take a reassessment opportunity where one or both thresholds have not been met.

### Failure in more than one Module

- Where students have failed more than one module, they will need to satisfy the reassessment criteria in **each** failed module to be permitted to be reassessed in **any** of the failed modules, because students are required to pass every module.
- Students would not be permitted to go to reassessment in order to obtain an exit award. For example, if they had passed 40 credits, they could not go to reassessment in a further 20 credits to obtain a Postgraduate Certificate, if they had only met the reassessment threshold in that one 20 credit module. Students need to have met the reassessment threshold in each failed module to be permitted to be reassessed in any module.

### Extenuating Circumstances

- Students may be permitted to undertake reassessment if all or some of these criteria are not met, but only if there are relevant and significant extenuating circumstances which have been brought to the attention of the University by the published deadline.

### Penalties

Where marks have been penalised due to late submission or plagiarism the minimum module mark threshold of 20% may not need to be met.

**OPTION B:** No change. Students get automatic right to reassessment regardless of their 1<sup>st</sup> sit module mark or their attendance at teaching events.

## 4. 20 credit minimum module size

The Working Group's discussions have included consideration of the feasibility of a **20 credit minimum** module size (as per the UG Model). The drivers here are similar to those which influenced the UG model – namely the importance of ensuring that programmes are simplified, that there are sufficient opportunities for formative assessment within modules and that costs are reduced by addressing 'fragmentation' of admin/academic staff time.

Each module brings with it a cost in terms of all the processes required to service it, so reducing the overall number of modules within the Masters programmes is as important as it is at UG level. We must not lose sight of this.

The 20 credit minimum module size has not been as controversial as some other aspects of the NAM. Even so, I recognise that building a 20 credit minimum module size into the PGT Model will present some challenges for some Schools. LTS colleagues and the ADTP had meetings with

members of the MBA team in December 2011 to explore this issue. On the MBA, 10 credit modules are commonplace (there are 38 separate 10 credit PGT modules in NBS). After careful consideration the ADTP is convinced that **there is a legitimate and defensible position** for regarding the MBA as a unique case. The sector norm for MBAs is small modules with extensive coverage of content themes. Denying the MBA team the option of employing 10 credit modules could fatally undermine the course's market position and recruitment, and possibly also the PSRB accreditation by AMBA. The MBA will need, therefore, to be an exception to the requirement for 20 credit modules.

Small 5 and 10 credit modules exist in a number of other Schools in SCI, SSF and HUM (see figures below). The Faculty Associate Deans are aware of the current picture with regard to small modules and are working with colleagues to address this.

#### **HUM**

LCS – 2 x 5 credits  
ART- 1 x 10 credit  
AMS- 1 x 10 credit  
HIS - 3 x 10 credits  
LDC- 4 x 10 credits  
PHI - 1 x 10 credit

#### **SCI**

BIO – 12 x 10credits  
CHE – 1 x 10 credit  
CMP – 9 x 10 credits  
ENV – 6 x 10 credits  
PHA – 3 x 10 credits

#### **FMH**

AHP – 4 x 10 credits

#### **SSF**

DEV – 2 x 10 credits  
EDU – 1 x 10 credits  
NBS – 38 x 10 credits  
SWP – 5 x 10 credits

I am firmly of the belief that we should and must 'grasp the nettle' on this and commit ourselves to the 20 credit min module size for the reasons I have set out above. We must be as radical at PGT level in our thinking as we have been within the UG Model. Associate Deans are working with colleagues in each Faculty to explore how these small modules can be either deleted, reconfigured or 'merged' accordingly.

#### **Proposals from ADTP:**

**OPTION A:** 20 credit minimum module size. MBA to be sole exception within the Regs.

**OPTION B:** Place no minimum limits on module size

## **5. APEL/APCL arrangements**

As part of the Working Group's discussions, the issue of APCL/APEL was considered. One proposal was that we should accept a maximum of one third of credits for any M level award on the basis of APCL from any other HEI (i.e. the other two thirds would have to be earned at UEA). This was rejected. Some colleagues have argued that in certain Professional Schools (e.g. NSC, EDU) that there should be sufficient flexibility to allow for new CPD programmes to be developed which meet the needs of employers and partners. The University needs to be responsive to such demand and to be able to accommodate, where appropriate, credits which have been imported from other PGT programmes in other Universities/Colleges.

The general consensus was that UEA should accept a maximum of 50% of credits of Prior Certificated Learning from another HEI, and also to accept a maximum of 50% of credits for Prior Experiential Learning (or any combination of the two up to 50% in total). This is a maximum, and Schools are free



to look at student applications for APCL/APEL on a case by case basis, and are not obliged to accept any APCL and APEL request if they do not feel it to be appropriate. In such cases, the reason for rejection should be explained to the student or applicant.

However, the ADTP is mindful that we should not 'box ourselves into a corner' on this issue and that regulations should reflect the needs of Professional Schools in which a future need for greater flexibility has already been articulated.

It is recommended, therefore, that the 50% maximum is written into the PGT NAM Regs, but that LTC delegates authority to the Faculty Associate Deans in SSF and FMH to authorise, where the evidence merits it, the granting of APEL/APCL beyond the 50% limit, up to a maximum of 120 credits out of 180s (or 80 credits out of 120 for a PG Dip, or 40 out of 60 for a PG Cert).

**ADTP's proposals:**

**OPTION A:** To accept a maximum of 50% of credits of Prior Certificated Learning from another HEI, and also to accept a maximum of 50% of credits for Prior Experiential Learning (or any combination of the two up to 50% in total). LTC delegates authority to the Faculty Associate Deans in SSF and FMH to authorise, where the evidence merits it, the granting of APEL/APCL beyond the 50% limit, up to a maximum of 120 credits out of 180 (or 80 credits out of 120 for a PG Dip, or 40 out of 60 for a PG Cert).

**OPTION B:** No change to current Regs ie Postgraduate taught students may be granted APCL for 50% or less towards the total number of credit points for an award. APCL shall not be granted in respect of the dissertation component of a course.

APEL exemptions may not be granted for more than 25% of the total number of credit points required for an award.

Postgraduate taught applicants: the maximum APL (i.e. a combination of APCL + APEL) that may be granted is 50% of the total number of credit points required for an award.

Further details on current policy: <http://www.uea.ac.uk/calendar/APL%252fAPEL+Policy>

## 2) Working Group on Plagiarism & Collusion

The ADTP has set in place a Working Group which has been tasked with exploring how the Regs for Plagiarism and Collusion might be adapted and revised for 2012/13, and with investigating the kind of training and support the University should provide to Plagiarism Officers in future to assist them in their role. The aims and terms of reference for the group are set out below. The Group will complete its work by 4 May 2012.

**Membership: Chair + 4 plagiarism officers + LTS Secretary**

**Chair:** Gill Price (MED)

**Frequency of meetings:** At discretion of the Chair.

### **Objective:**

To chair a small working group of plagiarism officers, supported by a member of LTS staff. The working group to consist of 4 POs, one from each Faculty. The Working Group is tasked with addressing four key objectives:

- 1) Identify areas of the current Plagiarism and Collusion policy which are not clear, ambiguous or requiring clarification and suggest revisions which help to make them more informative/transparent and user-friendly for POs and students alike.
- 2) Identify aspects of the current policy which need to be 'added to' - e.g. more guidance around how plagiarism meetings should operate, guidance on how level 1 cases should be dealt with etc, how criteria should be used to judge the 'seriousness or severity' of a case and how this links to appropriate penalties.
- 3) Identify the areas where training for POs would be most profitably and usefully focused in future, and the kind of training which would be most accessible/attractive to POs. What aspects of the role are most difficult to get to grips with or understand? Understanding the difficulties and challenges associated with the role will help to focus minds on what might be effective in the way of professional development/training.
- 4) Develop an Induction Document for new POs (ideally maximum of 8 pages of A4) which sets out clear guidance on: nature/demands/challenges of the role, responsibilities of the role, sources of guidance/support, some examples of best practice, how to conduct Plagiarism/Collusion meetings, how to investigate a case, how to use Turnitin as a part of the investigation, how to arrive at judgements and make decisions regarding penalties, how to give feedback and support (educational role), when and how to communicate outcomes, how and when to make allowances for SpLDs and other extenuating circumstances, record-keeping as a part of the role. Essential focus in developing the Induction Document: what would you and your fellow POs have found useful as a new PO when starting the job?

### **Issues to explore**

#### Roles and functions

- The role of the PO: how long should it be held? What qualifications or equivalences are necessary for the role?
- Scope of role: a role descriptor is needed (see below). Is the role that of an investigator, interviewer, judge, educator?
- If 'educator' is part of the role, what is expected? How can the PO best promote awareness of good academic practice in his/her school?
- What kind of training should be available to POs? Should each PO have a personal development budget (£300) which they can spend on conference attendance/training relating to plagiarism etc?

- How can practice of POs best be shared within the University?
- What kind of written guidance and helpful interactive materials (videos, presentations etc) might be helpful in supporting new and experienced POs in their role?

### Investigations

- What really constitutes a Level-1 offence? What tends to distinguish these low-level offences from the level2/3 cases?
- What is the best way/time to provide feedback to students on their case? How can the 'educational' value of this feedback be maximised?
- What should a PO write – how much info to give? – in the summons sent to the student regarding the plagiarism meeting?
- When and how should the PO involve the student's academic advisor?
- Should a PO have found every suspicious thing before a meeting is held? What should a PO do if he/she finds more evidence of plagiarism after the meeting?
- How many meetings can be called with the student when suspicions are raised about previous work?
- What if the plagiarism is found in a re-sit assignment, and student fails – hold meeting though they are asked to leave the course? Then they appeal and return....?
- How to prepare for the meeting – what information to collect, and what to think about:-
  - Experience/stage of student
  - Rules and info about plagiarism and collusion available to student at the time
  - Instructions and guidance relating to the specific assignment
  - How the student might respond: e.g. if they claim it is purely 'ignorance' or 'disorganisation' or 'lack of support'?
- When should the PO refer the student to DoS for additional guidance/training?

### The Plagiarism Meeting

- What is the key purpose of the meeting? Possible options:-
  - to get student's point of view and any circs
  - to detect and determine intention
  - to educate /impart information / make a point
- How should PO approach the setup of the room – where does everyone sit? How can the environment be made less intimidating for the student?
- What 'facts' should the PO be trying to discover or uncover?
- Advocacy skills – 'non-inquisitorial' – what does that mean? In what 'tone' should the meeting be conducted.
- How to gather information to support decisions about 'intent to deceive'.
- In-meeting strategy: which information to ask about or present first, and which to keep for later?
- Whether to say so if you disagree with, or do not believe, the student (feedback?)
- What the student can expect, and what they are expected to do with any SpLDs? How might it affect their assessments and plagiarism issues? What allowances if any can/should be made for this when used as an excuse for plagiarism?
- What constitutes a 'falsified reference' (as mentioned in the Policy grid?)

### Post-meeting

- What to do with 'mitigating circumstances'. Should they be allowed for in setting level? How should 'mitigating circumstances' mentioned in section 5.1 be taken into account? Who is the Head of School's designate? At what point are they appointed? Whose job is it to collect any information on possible mitigating circumstances? Are they taken into account after the PO has decided the level of offence?

- What part if any does a reflective or apologetic attitude (or a defensive and deceitful one) on the part of the student in the meeting play in setting a level of offence?
- How to deal with repentant vs defensive attitudes of student – Policy does not mention student attitude.
- Any correspondence allowed with student after the meeting?
- Should the student be involved in agreeing the minutes of the meeting? What if they are, and there is a dispute?
- Whether forward-feeding is allowed?
- How should we know whether the lessons have been learned?

### Records

- What records are supposed to be kept in cases and of investigations that may not lead to meetings.
- Who keeps them? How should they be stored (Data Protection issues?); How should they be used?
- What is the role of the LTS staff member who attends Plagiarism meetings? What is wider role of LTS in supporting the work of POs?

### Penalties

- What is the role of the PO in 'recording' the revised mark?
- Is the guidance on penalties and measures of 'severity' sufficiently detailed and/or helpful for POs and students? Can the policy be enhanced so as to make it more easy to understand and apply?
- The length of time taken between recommending that HOS considers a referral to SDC, and the case actually being heard at SDC – how can this be reduced? What should be a reasonable expectation?
- What is role of PO in deciding the penalty?

### **Parameters**

1. Whilst I am not averse to the notion of the Working Group exploring the use of Turnitin, I remain unconvinced that the pros involved in its use outweigh the cons. The decision as to whether we use Turnitin will be reviewed on an annual basis in early Sept. If the Working Group wishes to bring forward proposals regarding the wider use of Turnitin, I will consider them, but I should stress that the final decision on its use will remain with me as ADTP.
2. The role of the Working Group will be to bring forward a set of concrete proposals for discussion at the March meeting of POs. I would expect that feedback at this meeting will result in some refinements/amendments. The Working Group can make whatever amendments it feels are required. Once you, as Chair, are happy with the proposals for change you can forward them to me for formal consideration at TPPG meeting in April. Amendments to policies/practices can then be forwarded to LTC in time for its June meeting. Changes would be signed-off in time for implementation in Sept 2012. I would envisage that the Working Group would be supported by a Grade 8 member of LTS (TBC) who can keep minutes/records of the group's discussions and aid the Chair in bringing proposals forward.
3. The role of the Group is to bring forward proposals to the March meeting of POs. It has no decision-making powers per se. The ADTP is under no obligation to bring proposals forward to TPPG which he feels are either not in keeping with the ethos of the NAM, or which are not in tune with best practice in the sector.
4. One thing that the Group may wish to revisit is the title of the role and its duties. The term 'Plagiarism Officer' doesn't seem to really capture the full breadth of the role – esp since it ignores collusion which is, in some schools, quite a common problem. In some other HEIs the term Academic Integrity Officer is used instead, which seems to me to be rather more

appropriate. In terms of the role description, I recently found a good one at University of Leeds and adapted it. See details below:

Regarding the role descriptor, I found an example on the University of Leeds website and adapted it slightly to reflect our practice/procedures at UEA. Note the different title and key responsibilities. Other HEIs refer to the PO as an *Academic Practice Officer* – I like this since it captures the breadth of the role.

### **The Academic Integrity Officer/Academic Practice Officer**

The Academic Integrity Officer is a nominated member of academic staff who is responsible for ensuring consistency within a School of Study in relation to the implementation of plagiarism/collusion procedures and practices and the investigation of suspected cases of plagiarism and collusion, in order to ensure equity of treatment of students. The role also involves plagiarism education, including raising staff and student awareness of what 'academic integrity' means, why it is important, and how the University addresses it as an aspect of the development of its students. The Academic Integrity Officer also promotes discussion of plagiarism and collusion-related issues and good academic practice more generally within their School and produces an annual report to their Faculty LTQC on plagiarism cases, penalties imposed and 'lessons learned' which might positively inform future practice.

The principal duties of the Academic Integrity Officer are:

- Overseeing the investigation of suspected cases of plagiarism & collusion;
- Ensuring consistent procedures and practice across the School;
- Working with tutors and academic colleagues to raise awareness of plagiarism issues;
- Leading on the use of *Turnitin* in investigations and developing standard practices in its use;
- Promoting good practice in academic writing and sharing best practice with other Schools;
- Assisting in the development of an online plagiarism tutorial that all students can undertake in their School within the first 2-3 weeks of the autumn semester.
- Providing discipline-specific content for the generic online tutorial if required.
- Attending an annual meeting of Academic Integrity Officers within the University in order to share practice and identify enhancements in policy/practice.
- Producing an annual report on cases of plagiarism/collusion for Faculty LTQC – to include brief details, penalties, instances of good practice, lessons learned for the future etc.
- Liaising with senior adviser, HoS, Faculty Associate Dean and other academic colleagues as required in the execution of their abovementioned duties.

### **OUTPUTS OF WORKING GROUP:**

- 1) Amended/revised policy. Ideally this would include additional guidance notes for the use of POs inserted into the policy in italics or indented sections of text. This might extend to revised procedures, steps in the process, and revised tool for judging severity of case and the penalties employed. Suggested deadline: Monday 26 March 2012
- 2) An 8 page Induction/Briefing Document for new (and existing) POS. This is likely to emerge after the March meeting of POs. Suggested Deadline: 4 May 2012
- 3) Proposals regarding the future training and professional development support provided to POs to aid them in their difficult role. This might include: Proposals for effective sharing of practice. Proposals for recording and use of 'case studies' to inform future practice. Suggested deadline: Monday 26 March 2012

Dr Adam Longcroft, Academic Director of Taught Programmes, 7 February 2012

### 3) Working Group on Double Marking & Internal Moderation

The ADTP has set in place a Working Group which has been tasked with exploring how our policies and practices relating to double-marking and internal moderation might be adapted and revised for 2012/13. The aims and terms of reference for the Group are set out below. The Group will complete its work by 13 June 2012.

#### **The Brief:**

Simplify and find a means of articulating clearly the University requirement around double marking (what is it, when is it needed, to what extent) and moderation (what is it, how is it performed, by whom) with minimal room for variant practices (only where required by external PSRB) [Jon Sharp]

#### **Background:**

The University, via the Academic Director of Taught Programmes, is working towards a new Code of Practice on Assessment. In order to develop this new code, there are areas where current practices need to be reviewed and simplified, both to reduce complexity and cost, and to ensure more consistent practices within the University. One area of practice that needs to be examined is that relating to double-marking and internal moderation (internal verification). The University's published policy on double-marking is arguably unnecessarily vague, permissive and confusing, allowing, as it does, considerable variance but with no real justification or purpose. The same can be said of the policy on internal moderation – as a result the latter operates quite differently in different Faculties, which again leave the University vulnerable to complaints, challenges and appeals. The ADTP and LTS are keen to see internal moderation functioning in future as the formal process by which marks are confirmed, thus making Module Boards redundant. However, for this to happen, a consistent and robust (and simple) Internal Moderation process needs to be agreed.

#### **Terms of reference:**

The working group is tasked with exploring how the University's requirements around double marking (what is it, when is it needed, to what extent?) and internal moderation (what is it, how is it performed, by whom?) can be simplified and clearly articulated, with minimal room for variant practices (only where required by external PSRBs).

#### **Some questions:**

- 1) How much variance currently exists in terms of double-marking? Are each of the 5 different versions allowed for by the University all being employed?
- 2) Is there value in agreeing a definition of double-marking which is that of blind double marking (i.e. two markers independently mark script and then agree final mark).
- 3) Would there be value in limiting use of blind double marking to just dissertations, exam scripts and projects? These would not then need to be subjected to Internal Moderation. Why should dissertations/projects be double-marked anyway? If we achieve a robust system of Internal Moderation, can they be single marked?
- 4) Must we keep double-marking for exam scripts? If so, how should double-marking operate? Ideally it should be used consistently across the University so students can have faith in their exam marks regardless of which School they are studying with...?
- 5) What might be implications of having all other coursework submissions single-marked, but with consistent/robust internal moderation process as means of checking marking levels/consistency etc and confirming marks?
- 6) How much variance exists in terms of the way that internal moderation/verification operates? Why does this variance exist? Does it have a sound basis – if so what are the implications for achieving a consistent/simple approach across the University?

- 7) Can we abandon use of term Internal Verification altogether and its role as a form of double-marking, and use just Internal Moderation instead as the standard method by which marks are confirmed?
- 8) What purpose should Internal Moderation serve? Should it primarily be a matter of quality assurance (i.e. just to confirm marks and veracity of mark range, marking levels etc) or should it be a quality enhancement process and feed into wider QE processes, by giving internal moderators an opportunity to provide feedback on module design module assessment strategy, quality/quantity/value of the written feedback provided to students, etc?
- 9) Should we place any restrictions on staff able to undertake Internal Moderation? (e.g. should probationary staff, or staff with less than 2 years experience, be able to act as internal moderators?) Must moderation be carried out by a member of academic staff, or could it (in some cases) be delegated to an appropriate trained (paid) external assessor? (e.g. if there is only one expert on Japanese language in a school, who would moderate the module on 'An Introduction to Japanese'?).
- 10) Do PSRBs place requirements on Schools regarding marking or internal moderation procedures? How restrictive/prescriptive are these requirements? How can these requirements be taken into consideration in any future policy on double-marking or internal moderation?
- 11) How should 'samples' of scripts for internal moderation purposes be established? Can a simple, consistent, requirement (e.g. % proportion of scripts) be agreed and employed across all 4 faculties? In large cohorts, should a 'cap' on number of scripts included in a sample, be established? Who should 'choose' the sample? Academic module leaders, or LTS staff in HUBS? Or should the 'sample' be totally random (arguably fairer)?
- 12) Are there instances of practice in other HEI's which might usefully inform our future policy/practices in relation to both double-marking and internal moderation? [Adam Longcroft]

## 4) Reflecting on the use of 'Levels' and 'Free Choice' in the Common Course Structure: Lessons for the New Academic Model

### Introduction

In August 2008 the QAA published two key documents: *The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland*, and *Higher Education Credit Framework for England: Guidance on Academic Credit Arrangements in Higher Education in England*. These two documents have revolutionised the way in which levels are perceived and used within the higher education sector. It has, for example, resulted in a significant shift in the language used to describe levels.

This reflective report to LTC examines the use of 'Levels' within the University. It looks back to how the University has utilised levels in the past, how its use of levels has been viewed by the QAA, how they are being used at present, and how the use of levels will change as we move to implement the New Academic Model. Some information on the use of Free Choice in autumn 2011 is presented to academic and administrative colleagues prior to the implementation of the New Academic Model which it is hoped will provide useful guidance for Schools regarding the most effective use of 'defined choice' modules within the NAM.

### Language & nomenclature

Current UEA nomenclature has levels 0, 1, 2 etc and M-level modules. This is very different from the module nomenclature used not only in the FHEQ, but also by HEFCE, QAA, UEA Partner colleges and PSRBs. UEA has decided, in line with the precepts of the New Academic Model, to adopt the FHEQ **levels 4, 5 and 6** (for UG) Level 7 (for MA, MSc, MRes, PG Certs/Dips, PGCE etc, Integrated Masters) and Level 8 (for EdD, PhD, DCLinPsy). Colleagues should start to familiarise themselves with this new language for levels as quickly as possible.

### Use of levels

On 21 Oct 2009 TPPG considered the outcomes of the June 2009 QAA Audit Report Action Plan. This included consideration of critical feedback on the University's use of 'levels' within the CCS:

*"The report of the previous audit advised the University to review its approach to the use of levels in its assessment arrangements for undergraduates in the context of demonstration of progression. The present audit team found an evident tension with respect to progression in reconciling alignment with the FHEQ with the University's approach to wide availability of free choice of modules, and the fact that modules in years two and three are not defined by level of study. There remains a need for the University to be more explicit on the matter of levels of study to strengthen its approach in this area and to secure demonstrable progression between levels throughout its provision. Accordingly, the team advises the University that, further to the advice provided in the QAA Institutional audit report of*



*2004, it should give priority to the systematic calibration of its provision, against the guidance provided by the FHEQ on the matter of levels” (QAA 2009).*

CCS (Common Course Structure) Regulation 4.2(d) [CCS 2010/11 Degree Regulations pages 7/8] specifies “no more than 40 credits of Free choice modules (level 0 modules are not allowed to be chosen as Free Choice modules) within the final 240 credits specified in the programme specification for Honours Degrees (or the final 360 credits in the case of courses comprising 480 credits)”. The University has historically supported Free Choice modules within CCS to enable students to undertake a module(s) outside the area of their own programme. Such modules can be undertaken at Levels 1, 2 or 3 and are subject to approval by the student’s School. This means that students might undertake Free Choice modules at Level 1 during Stages 2 and/or 3 of their programme and that these would count towards their yearly aggregate and degree classification. In fact many students choose Free Choice modules which are at the same Level as the Stage of their programme. Indeed, some Schools choose to enforce this and a small number of course profiles specify this requirement.

The University reviewed the way in which ‘levels’ were articulated and employed within the Common Course Structure.

In Dec 2010 LTQO produced a report titled *The use of Levels within the Common Course Structure*. This report was based on a detailed analysis of modules offered in each School and an examination of the way ‘free choice’ was being used by students and Schools. This report and the accompanying spreadsheet highlight 3 general areas of possible concern:

- 1) Free Choice modules,
- 2) Option Ranges containing the *option* of lower Level module(s)
- 3) Lower Level modules which are *required* to be undertaken within in an Option Range.

On the issue of Free Choice, the vast majority of Schools and programmes were compliant with the Regs as specified above. In Health, for example, levels were closely aligned with Stage of study. However, three programmes were ‘flagged’ as being non-compliant with CCS Regs on Free Choice. These were all in HUM:

English Drama (**50** credits Free Choice in Years 2/3)  
English Literature with Creative Writing (**50** credits Free Choice in Years 2/3)  
Music & Technology (**60** credits total: 40 credits of Free Choice in Year 2, 20 credits in Year 3)

These anomalies have since been addressed, and the programmes concerned now comply with CCS Regs relating to Free Choice.

The Dec 2010 report by LTQO succeeded in revealing the degree to which Stage and Level of study were aligned within Schools and across the University. It demonstrated that whilst there was a high degree of compliance in terms of the use of Free Choice, the University’s regulations around Free Choice and the use of option ranges in some programmes meant

that there was often a rather 'loose' alignment between level and stage, with some students taking 40 credits of level 1 modules, or level 2 modules in Year 3.

The report by LTQO and the QAA's FHEQ documents informed the development of a new framework for degree programmes at UEA which involved detailed consultations with one of the world's leading authorities in higher education – professor Graham Gibbs. These consultations both within and without the University led directly to the development of what was to become the 'New Academic Model'.

In January 2011 meeting of TPPG, the ADTP noted that:

*“The QAA Audits in both 2004 and 2009 had identified the University’s use of the Level of modules as an area for action. A mini-review had been undertaken to identify those programmes which contained modules of a lower Level than the Stage of the programme, either as a requirement or as an option. The Director of Taught Programmes had considered the resulting breakdown and report and felt that the issue of Levels was best dealt with within the overall framework and discussions for the New Academic Model, rather than asking colleagues to consider changes to their programmes at the same time as also considering changes required by the New Academic Model.”.*

In April 2011 the University's Learning & Teaching Committee approved its New Academic Model (NAM) for implementation in Sept 2013. One of the central features of the NAM is that it ensures all degree programmes in the University will comply with FHEQ requirements. In particular, this means that 1<sup>st</sup> year UG students (studying at level 4) will only be able to engage with level 4 modules. 2<sup>nd</sup> year students (studying at level 5) will be allowed to integrate a maximum of 20 credits from level 4; the remainder (100 credits) will be at level 5. 3<sup>rd</sup> year UG students (studying at level 6) will be allowed to integrate a maximum of 30 level 5 credits into their degree, and will not be able to study level 4 modules at all. This will ensure a clear progression between levels and enhanced coherence across programmes within the University.

#### The current picture regarding levels

In January 2012 the ADTP commissioned the new LTS service to investigate the way in which levels were used in autumn 2011. There were several reasons for this request:

- 1) To what extent do students exercise their right to Free Choice?
- 2) What kinds of Free Choice modules do they choose to engage with?
- 3) How does Free Choice 'add value' by providing 'enrichment' opportunities within the UG curriculum?
- 4) To what extent do students take modules out of Stage (and therefore to what extent is the University aligned with FHEQ requirements)
- 5) How is Free Choice helping to build employability skills?
- 6) How might information about Free Choice modules help Schools to identify potentially valuable EEC modules in the New Academic Model?

The results of the LTS investigation are presented in **Tables 1-6** which follow this report.

The LTS statistics indicate clearly that the vast majority of students at UEA study modules which are aligned with their stage of study (see Table 1). For example, in the case of Year 2 students, **94%** of module enrolments are at Level 2. In the case of Year 3 students **83%** of module enrolments are at Level 3.

However, there remain significant numbers of Year 2 students enrolling on Level 1 modules (353 module enrolments) and Year 3 students engaging with Level 1 modules (272 module enrolments) (see Appendices 2 & 3). More than **95%** of these enrolments are on modules outside the home school of the students concerned – which means the vast majority are via Free Choice.

In the case of Year 3 students taking Level 2 modules, the majority of such enrolments are in the students' home schools (75%) and thus are driven by degree programme option ranges.

The number of Year 2 students enrolling on level 1 modules is largest in MTH and CMP. The number of Year 3 students enrolling on Level 1 modules is highest in NBS, ECO and EDU respectively. These Schools (and others with more than 10 enrolments of this kind such as CMP and ENV) will need to be mindful that this practice will cease within the New Academic Model.

The manner in which students currently exercise Free Choice by taking Level 1 modules is interesting and may indicate where the greatest opportunities are likely to exist with regard to the strategic use of Employability & Enrichment Modules within the New Academic Model. In Table 6 we can see that in the case of Year 2 students taking Year 1 modules, the vast majority of 'out of school' enrolments are in **LCS (54%)** and **NBS (15%)**. CHE and BIO also both benefit from Year 2 Free Choice with 6.3% and 4.2% of the Year 2 'out of school' enrolments in autumn 2011. These Schools are obviously running Level 1 modules which are currently attractive to Year 2 students (see Table 6) and may wish to consider how they can maximise the value of this trend within the NAM by re-accrediting these at level 2 as EEC modules.

In the case of Year 3 students taking level 1 Free Choice modules (see Table 5), the range of Schools is much narrower. Most student enrolments are, again, in LCS which accounts for **86%** of all of those recorded. A total of 231 Year 3 student enrolments on Level 1 modules were recorded in LCS, out of a total of 269 across the University.

The data suggests, therefore, that whilst the current pattern of enrolments indicates that levels and stage are not strictly aligned in the manner described within the FHEQ, students are benefitting from the freedom the CCS provides (in the form of Free Choice) to engage with modules which will have a direct and significant impact on their employability – primarily by engaging with NBS modules on 'business management' etc, and foreign language modules run by LCS. The challenge for the University, as we move to implement the NAM, will be to preserve and even build on these opportunities for enrichment/employability within the framework of 'defined choice' and the provision of Programme Level Choice, Employability and Enrichment modules, and LCS language modules.

**Table 1*****Number of Modules taken by students in Years 2 and 3 against Module level***

Count of SPR Code student level	Module level				Grand Total
	1	2	3	M	
2	353	16679	692		17724
3	272	1785	10419	18	12494
Grand Total	625	18464	11111	18	30218

		Home school	Other school
No of modules taken at level 1 by Year 2 Students	353	24	329
No of modules taken at level 1 by Year 3 students	272	3	269
No of modules taken at level 2 by Year 3 Students	1785	1340	445

**Table 2*****Breakdown of students' programmes (level 2 students taking level 1 modules)***

AMS	13
ART	1
BIO	11
CHE	22
CMP	1
CMPUGBSC	41
CMPUGMCOMP	2
DEV	16
DEVUGBSC	1
ECO	10
EDU	25
ENV	16
FTV	12
HIS	3
LAW	3
LCS	20
LDC	17
MTH	43
MTHUGMMTH	15
MUS	11
NBS	19
PHA	3
PHI	11
PSI	10
SCI	26
SCIUGMNATSCI	1
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>353</b>

**Table 3**  
***Breakdown of students' programmes (level 3 students taking level 1 modules)***

ART	
BIO	7
CHE	9
CMP	24
CMPUGMCOMP	2
DEV	9
ECO	65
EDU	25
ENV	21
LAW	1
MTH	6
MTHUGMMTH	1
MUS	1
NBS	95
PSI	1
SCI	2
SCIUGMNATSCI	1
SWP	1
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>272</b>

**Table 4*****Breakdown of students' programmes (level 3 students taking level 2 modules)***

AMS	13
ART	1
BIO	11
CHE	22
CMP	1
CMPUGBSC	41
CMPUGMCOMP	2
DEVUGBA	16
DEVUGBSC	1
ECO	10
EDU	25
ENV	16
FTV	12
HIS	3
LAW	3
LCS	20
LDC	17
MTH	43
MTHUGMMTH	15
MUS	11
NBS	19
PHA	3
PHI	11
PSI	10
SCI	26
SCIUGMNATSCI	1
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>353</b>

**Table 5***School of student vs school of module: year 3 students, year 1 modules (where module is outside home School)*

Count of SPR Code	school of module										
											<b>Total</b>
students' school	AMS	ART	BIO	ECO	EDU	FTV	HIS	LCS	NBS	PSI	
<b>Year 3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>269</b>
ART					1						1
BIO								6	1		7
CHE			2					7			9
CMP			2		2		2	15	3	1	25
DEV					1			8			9
ECO		1						62	2		65
EDU						5		18			23
ENV							1	18	1	1	21
LAW								1			1
MTH						2		5			7
MUS								1			1
NBS	1			3		1		87		3	95
PSI								1			1
SCI			1					2			3
SWP				1							1
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>269</b>



**Table 6**

*School of student vs school of module: year 2 students, year 1 modules (where module is outside home School)*

Students' school	AMS	ART	BIO	CHE	CMP	DEV	ECO	EDU	ENV	FTV	HIS	LAW	LCS	MTH	NBS	PHA	PHI	PSI	SCI	Total		
<b>2</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>329</b>	<b>329</b>
AMS											2		4				4	3			13	13
ART										1											1	1
BIO				2									7		1						10	10
CHE			5						2				2		1	9					19	19
CMP				1			2				1		30		10						44	44
DEV							2						15								17	17
ECO													8								8	8
EDU			4										21								25	25
ENV						2	1	1			1		8		1		2				16	16
FTV													12								12	12
HIS													3								3	3
LAW													2								2	2
LCS															2		1				3	3
LDC													17								17	17
MTH				9	1		5		3				9		30					1	58	58
MUS					1						1		7				2				11	11
NBS	1												17				1				19	19
PHA													3								3	3
PHI			1							2	1		6						1		11	11
PSI										2		1	5		2						10	10
SCI			5	9					7				2	2	1	1					27	27
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>329</b>	<b>329</b>

## 5) National Teaching Fellowships (NTF) Applications

### Introduction

The HEA National Teaching Fellowship awards are the 'Oscars' of the high education world and recognise outstanding practitioners working in UK higher education settings. In February the HEA launched its NTF applications for 2012. Each HEI can submit a maximum of three applications. Nominees can be academic or staff in support role which impact directly on the student learning experience. In the past UEA has submitted applications on behalf of staff within both categories. So far the University has succeeded in having two staff recognised with a National Teaching Fellowship:

- Adam Longcroft (EDU)
- Annie Grant (DOS)

Some of our applications/nominees for individual Teaching Fellowships have not been successful and three applications for £200k National Teaching Fellowship Project funding strands have also been unsuccessful. Whilst UEA has two NTFs, our ambitions to be a 'top of 94 group' performer in League Tables suggests that we should have more. Many of our direct competitors have three or four times as many NTFs than we do.

### This year's nominees from UEA

This year four members of staff were approached by the Academic Director for Taught Programmes, two of whom were academic staff, two of whom were in support roles. Following discussions and detailed examination of the NTF criteria, three colleagues decided not to put themselves forward.

### **This leaves one remaining nominee.**

The ADTP's view is that the single nominee we will be sponsoring has developed a strong application which stands a very good chance of meeting all the HEA criteria, but only time will tell.... All applications are to be submitted by 21 March 2012.

### Suggestions for changing the way UEA manages the NTF nomination process

UEA needs to be much more proactive than it has been in the past in nurturing and identifying staff who it believes have the potential to succeed as NTF applicants.

- Raise the issue of NTF nominations for 2013 at Head of Schools meeting. Circulate NTF papers/criteria in advance. Encourage HoS to discuss with their School management teams and to consider which of their academic staff are likely to:
  - a) Meet the criteria in 2013
  - b) Meet the criteria following a further period of experience/development in 2014
- Convene a meeting of the University's Secretary and Heads of Services to consider which members of their team are likely to meet the NTF criteria in 2013/2014. HEA does encourage staff to be nominated who fulfil a 'supportive role' in student learning and enhancing the student learning experience.
- Ask HEA colleagues to assist in leading a workshop on the HEA NTF scheme and its benefits to individuals and institutions. Our institutional HEA partner (Jenny Kenning) will be able to advise on this. The ADTP is meeting with Jenny on 12 April and will raise it then.
- Once likely nominees for 2013/2014 have been collated, ensure that they are invited to the HEA-led workshop/briefing event.
- Require likely nominees to produce a brief summary of how they believe they can meet the criteria, with evidence etc. Submit to
- Convene an NTF Nominations Panel – chaired by PVC Academic, with ADTP, Faculty Deans, Faculty Assoc Deans for T & L, and Heads of Services. Meet in November each year to

consider possible nominees and produce a short-list of three strongest to be submitted in following March.

- ADTP and Faculty ADs to mentor nominees to ensure that their 5,000 word statements and CVs are as strong as possible and closely aligned with the NTF criteria. ADTP and Faculty ADs to draft Nominees' References for PVC Academic to sign-off on behalf of the University.

Dr Adam Longcroft  
Academic Director for Taught Programmes  
16 March 2012

**Press release re the Launch of National Teaching Fellowship Scheme 2012:**

*Nominations are now open for the individual awards in the National Teaching Fellowship Scheme 2012. Up to 55 awards of £10,000 are made each year in recognition of teaching excellence. The most prestigious awards for learning and teaching in UK higher education, they are designed to support professional development and to celebrate individuals who make an outstanding impact on the student learning experience. The NTFS also provides a national focus for institutional learning and teaching excellence schemes, and helps to raise the status of teaching in UK higher education - a key focus for the Higher Education Academy. Professor Craig Mahoney, Chief Executive of the HEA, said: "Over the last 11 years the National Teaching Fellowship Scheme has played a special role in celebrating excellence in learning and teaching practice. "The UK higher education landscape continues to change and brings new challenges to everyone involved in learning and teaching. The innovation shown by our National Teaching Fellows over the years demonstrates that we are well placed not only to meet these challenges but to push the boundaries of excellence in learning and teaching. The commitment and expertise of our National Teaching Fellows remains an inspiration to teachers and students alike." The deadline for submissions is 21 March 2012, after which the National Teaching Fellowship Scheme (Individual) Advisory Panel will oversee the selection of successful applicants.*

## **6) Teaching and Learning Day 15 May 2012**

An update from the ADTP on the Teaching & Learning Day 2012 will be circulated separately.

## Appendix A

### *Links between attendance, engagement and performance in Universities: the Research Literature.*

Luca Stanca, 'The effects of attendance on academic performance: panel data evidence for Introductory Microeconomics', *Economics Department, University of Milan Bicocca July 2004*

#### Abstract

This paper presents new evidence on the effects of attendance on academic performance. We exploit a large panel data set for Introductory Microeconomics students to explicitly take into account the effect of unobservable factors correlated with attendance, such as ability, effort and motivation. Panel estimators indicate that attendance has a positive and significant impact on performance. Lecture and classes have a similar effect on performance individually, although their impact cannot be identified separately. Overall, the results indicate that, after controlling for unobservable student characteristics, teaching has an important independent effect on learning.

David O. Allen and Don J. Webber, 'Attendance and Exam Performance at University', *School of Economics, University of the West of England,*

#### Abstract

This paper presents an alternative exploration into the link between absenteeism and exam performance by assessing the impact of *implementing* a module-specific attendance policy. Our results suggest the link between absenteeism and exam performance is strong, and that student-specific factors are important, including revision strategies and peer group effects. These results question the uniformity of the relationship between attendance and exam performance.

James W. Westerman<sup>1\*</sup>, Luis A. Perez-Batres, Betty S. Coffey, Richard W. Pouders, 'The Relationship Between Undergraduate Attendance and Performance Revisited: Alignment of Student and Instructor Goals' *Journal of Innovative Education*, Jan 2011

#### Abstract

We revisit the relationship between attendance and performance in the undergraduate university setting and apply agency theory in the instructor–student context. We propose that attendance does not equally affect lower- and higher-performing students and that absences are also negatively related to students' cumulative grade point average. Our results show that attendance is positively related to exam performance, there are more pronounced negative effects of an absence for lower-performing students than for higher performers, and absences are negatively related to a student's cumulative grade point average. We discuss the implications of our findings for students, instructors, and universities as well as practice in teaching and learning.

A. O. Dwyer, 'Does a link exist between examination performance and lecture attendance for first year engineering students?', *School of Electrical Engineering Systems, Dublin Institute of Technology, Dublin, Ireland,*

#### Abstract

The objective of this study is to examine if a link exists between lecture attendance and examination performance of Level 7, Year 1, Electrical Engineering students at Dublin Institute of Technology in the Electrical Systems subject. Lecture attendance was monitored and analysed over four academic years (2007-8, 2008-9, 2009-10 and 2010-11).. A statistically significant positive correlation between lecture attendance and examination performance was established. Each 10% increase in student attendance at lectures improved both Module 1 examination and terminal examination performance by approximately 3% on average, a finding similar to that reported in other studies.

Marcus Credé, Sylvia G. Roch and Urszula M. Kieszczyńska, 'Class Attendance in College: A Meta-Analytic Review of the Relationship of Class Attendance With Grades and Student Characteristics', *Review of Educational Research* June, 2010 80: 272-295

Abstract

A meta-analysis of the relationship between class attendance in college and college grades reveals that attendance has strong relationships with both class grades and GPA. These relationships make class attendance a better predictor of college grades than any other known predictor of academic performance, including scores on standardized admissions tests such as the SAT, high school GPA, study habits, and study skills. Results also show that class attendance explains large amounts of unique variance in college grades because of its relative independence from SAT scores and high school GPA and weak relationship with student characteristics such as conscientiousness and motivation. Mandatory attendance policies appear to have a small positive impact on average grades

Stephen Devadoss and John Foltz, 'Evaluation of Factors Influencing Student Class Attendance and Performance', *American Journal of Agricultural Economics*, Vol. 78, No. 3 (Aug, 1996), pp. 499-507

Maureen Maloney and Breda Lally, 'The Relationship between Attendance at University Lectures and Examination Performance', *The Irish Journal of Education*, Vol. 29, (1998), pp. 52-62

Daniel R. Marburger, 'Absenteeism and Undergraduate Exam Performance', *The Journal of Economic Education*, 32, No. 2 (Spring, 2001), pp. 99-109

Van Blerkom, Malcolm L, 'Academic Perseverance, Class Attendance, and Performance in the College Classroom', Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the *American Psychological Association (104th, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, August 9-13, 1996)*.

Abstract

Analysis of the data indicated a significant correlation between class attendance and final grade in the course. Correlations among academic perseverance, self-efficacy, class attendance, and course grades were all fairly low. The low correlations could have been affected by range restrictions (in higher level courses there is typically little variation in either grades or attendance behavior). Since motivation may be a multiplicative relationship between self-efficacy and value, students may only be motivated if they feel competent to complete a task successfully.

Moore, R, 'Attendance and Performance: How Important Is It for Students To Attend Class?', *Journal of College Science Teaching*, v32 n6 p367-71 Mar-Apr 2003

Abstract

Explores the correlation between class attendance and performance in a biology course. Shows that class attendance by most students in nonmajor science classes is influenced by whether they receive points for attending class. Indicates the value of stressing to introductory science students the importance of class attendance to their academic success. (Author/KHR)

Rogers, J.R., 'A panel-data study of the effect of student attendance on university performance' *Australian Journal of Education*, Dec, 2001, Vol 45 (3)

Abstract

The literature indicates that absenteeism from university classes is a common phenomenon in Australia and North America.. The study reported here used panel data on business and economics students in an introductory statistics class at an Australian university to estimate the effect of attendance on performance. Attendance is found to have a small, but statistically significant, effect on performance.

Garey C. Durden and Larry V. Ellis, 'The Effects of Attendance on Student Learning in Principles of Economics' *American Economic Review*, May 1995, pp. 343-346 .

Abstract

The results of this study indicate that attendance does matter for academic achievement in a Principles of Economics course. The evidence suggests that the effect is nonlinear, becoming important only after a student has missed four classes during the semester. What really seems to matter is excessive absenteeism.

Chen, J., 'Class Attendance and Exam Performance: A Randomized Experiment', *The Journal of Economic Education*, Volume 39, Issue 3, 2008

Abstract

The determination of college students' academic performance is an important issue in higher education. Whether students' attendance at lectures affects students' exam performance has received considerable attention. The authors conduct a randomized experiment to study the average attendance effect for students who choose to attend lectures, which is known in program evaluation literature as the average treatment effect on the treated. On average, the effect of attending lectures corresponds to a 9.4 percent to 18.0 percent improvement in exam performance for those who choose to attend classes. In comparison, the improvement is only 5.1 percent, using the empirical method of existing studies, which measures the overall average attendance impact.

Clark, Gordon and Gill, Nick and Walker, Marion and Whittle, Rebecca (2011) Attendance and performance : correlations and motives in lecture-based modules. *Journal of Geography in Higher Education*, 35 (2). pp. 199-215. ISSN 1466-1845

Abstract

Using novel attendance data, we examine statistically the relationships between attendance and performance for first-year and third-year students. The relationship is moderately positive: very high attendance is significantly associated with an improvement in performance over very low attenders of between 5.3% and 12.8%, depending on circumstances

.

David O. Allen and Don J. Webber, *Attendance and Exam Performance at University*

Abstract

Marburger (2006) explored the link between absenteeism and exam performance and found the link between absenteeism and exam performance was weak. This paper presents an alternative exploration into the link between absenteeism and exam performance by assessing the impact of *implementing* a module-specific attendance policy. Our results suggest the link between absenteeism and exam performance is strong, and that student-specific factors are important, including revision strategies and peer group effects. These results question the uniformity of the relationship between attendance and exam performance.

Pierre-Pascal Gendron and Paul Pieper, *Does Attendance Matter? Evidence from an Ontario ITAL* The Business School, Humber Institute of Technology & Advanced Learning Toronto, Canada

Abstract

Preliminary OLS results using our baseline model shows that attendance has a strong positive impact on final course grade. Our fixed-effects model (with class-specific effects) shows again a strong impact of attendance on final grade. In both models, the relationship is non-linear in a way that suggests diminishing returns to attendance. Unlike some of the previous literature, however, we do not find in our sample a threshold beyond which attendance would negatively affect achievement.

Arulampalam, Wiji & Naylor, Robin A. & Jeremy Smith, 2007. 'Am I missing something? The effects of absence from class on student performance', *The Warwick Economics Research Paper Series (TWERPS) 820*, University of Warwick, Department of Economics.

### Abstract

Among other results, we find that there is a causal effect of absence on performance for students: missing class leads to poorer performance. There is evidence from a quantile regression specification that this is particularly true for better-performing students, consistent with our hypothesis that effects of absence on performance are likely to vary with factors such as student ability.

R. Rodgers, 'An Investigation into the Academic Effectiveness of Class Attendance in an Intermediate Microeconomic Theory Class', *Education Research and Perspectives*, 30(1), 2003, 27-4. J. University of Wollongong University of Wollongong

### Abstract

Increasing rates of absenteeism from university classrooms raises concern about the consequent effect on student learning. This paper adds to a small but growing body of knowledge from Australia and other countries, about the extent of absenteeism and its effect on academic performance. We find strong support for the proposition that class attendance has a significant effect on academic performance.

Christopher Viney, *Initiatives to Improve the Academic Performance of Finance Undergraduate Students – a Case Study*, School of Accounting and Finance, Deakin University

### Abstract

Falling student academic performance, in particular increasing undergraduate finance student fail rates necessitated the implementation of a new ethos of student learning. The approach adopted in this case study comprised a compulsory attendance requirement, specific study incentives and improved student access to academic staff. Students were required to attend 70% of lectures and tutorials. Student fail rates reached a high of 74.34% in 1997, but with the implementation of the compulsory attendance and study incentive approach the fail rate fell significantly to 19.50%. Furthermore, academic performance improved across the total student cohort.

Tsui-Fang Lin & Jennjou Chen, 'Cumulative class attendance and exam performance' *Applied Economics Letters*, Volume 13, Issue 14, 2006, pp.937-942

### Abstract

This study considers the effect of cumulative class attendance while estimating the relationship between class attendance and students' exam performance, using an individual-level data. We find that, cumulative attendance has produced a positive and significant impact on students' exam performance. Attending lectures corresponds to a 4% improvement in exam performance, and the marginal impact of cumulative attendance on exam performance is also close to 4%.

Harb, Nasri and El-Shaarawi, Ahmed (2006) 'Factors Affecting Students' Performance', *Journal of Business Education*, Vol. 82, No. 5 (2007): pp. 282-290.

### Abstract

Determinants of students' performance have been the subject of ongoing debate among educators, academics, and policy makers.. Using a sample of 864 CBE student and regression analysis, our results show that the most important factor that affects student's performance is the student's competence in English. The factors that negatively affect student's performance the most are missing too many lectures and living in crowded household. The results also show that non-national students outperform national students and female students outperform their male counterpart.

By Nancy Lawson Remler, 'Fighting the Big Mac Mentality: Attendance Policies and Performance in an Active Learning Environment'

### Abstract

While I believe more research is necessary before I draw firm conclusions, my current data suggest



that attendance does not make students better writers. However, good attendance might make them better students and improve their chances of success. Such a result could somehow affect their writing skills as well as their performance in other classes. In other words, regular attendance may make the difference in whether students receive a Big Mac of a college education or a four-course meal.

Steven E. Gump, The Cost of Cutting Class: Attendance as a Predictor of Student Success, *College Teaching*, Vol. 53, No. 1 (Winter, 2005), pp. 21-26

Abstract

A study of three hundred undergraduates enrolled in a general education course at a large mid-western state university revealed, as expected, a strong negative correlation between absences and final grades. Although the complex equation for academic success involves many more variables than attendance alone, attendance should be one of the easiest variables for students to control. Students who wish to succeed academically should attend class, and instructors should likewise encourage class attendance.

## Appendix B

### *The extent of condoned failure for 2010/11 across the University on PGT Programmes*

The data contained in the tables within this appendix provide useful insights into the use of condoned failure in particular areas of the University – and (perhaps as importantly) its use on specific modules on certain programmes.

This should assist Associate Deans for Learning & Teaching and School Directors of Teaching & Learning to identify modules where, for example, there might be a weak alignment between what students are being asked to do, by way of assessments, and the degree to which they are prepared, equipped or supported to complete those assessments.

It might also help ADs and Faculty colleagues to explore how reassessment opportunities can be facilitated for students who fail their 1<sup>st</sup> sit or submission.

- Data is from 2010/11
  - 404 instances of condoned failure are represented
  - 301 individual students are represented
  - This data doesn't include information on what happened to the students in the end, eg whether they achieved an award or what the award was.
- NB: CFs = condoned fails

**Table 1:** Basic table showing number of CFs at attempts 1 and 2

Instances of CF	Mark Band (%)					Grand Total
	25-29.99	30-34.99	35-39.99	40-44.99	45-49.99	
CF at attempt 1	3	2	4	81	248	338
CF at attempt 2			2	28	36	66
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>284</b>	<b>404</b>

**Table 2:** This table shows School of student against CF modules. Please note that each instance represents CF in a module rather than an individual student. 301 students are represented – some students had 2 or even 3 CF modules.

School of student	CF at attempt 1					Total	CF at attempt 2			Total	School totals
	Mark Band (%)						Mark Band (%)				
	25-29.99	30-34.99	35-39.99	40-44.99	45-49.99		35-39.99	40-44.99	45-49.99		
BIO				2	5	7			1	1	8
CMP		2		5	6	13					13
DEV				3	21	24		2	2	4	28
ECO				1	58	59			4	4	63
ENV			1	2	15	18		1	1	2	20
FTV					2	2	1			1	3
LAW					14	14		1	5	6	20
LCS	1			1	3	5					5
LDC					1	1					1
MED									1	1	1
NBS	2		3	66	114	185	1	23	22	46	231
PSI				1	7	8		1		1	9
SWP					2	2					2
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>338</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>404</b>

**Table 3:** This table again shows the School breakdown, but also includes details of the modules for which students in a particular School were given CFs, with how many instances of CFs per module. One or two modules, e.g. BIO-M109, may appear under more than one School. This data highlights ‘problem’ modules with high levels of CFs, e.g. NBS-MA19 Information Systems and Operations.

NB School totals are at the top of each section:

Condoned Failure by School of Student and by Modules taken			
Module Code	Attempt 1	Attempt 2	Total
<b>BIO</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>8</b>
BIO-M101		1	1
BIO-M103	1		1
BIO-M109	1		1
BIO-M55Y	1		1
BIO-M637	4		4
<b>CMP</b>	<b>13</b>		<b>13</b>
BIO-M109	1		1
CMPSMB11	1		1
CMPSMB17	2		2
CMPSMB22	3		3
CMPSMC1Y	1		1
CMPSMC31	1		1
CMPSMC34	1		1

CMPSMD22	1		1
CMPSME22	1		1
CMPSME27	1		1
<b>DEV</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>28</b>
DEV-M003	1		1
DEV-M007	2		2
DEV-M027		1	1
DEV-M028	1		1
DEV-M032	1		1
DEV-M036	1	1	2
DEV-M038	1		1
DEV-M048	4		4
DEV-M051	2	1	3
DEV-M056	1		1
DEV-M057	1		1
DEV-M065	1		1
DEV-M070	1		1
DEV-M07Y	2		2
DEV-M084	1	1	2
DEV-M086	2		2
PSIIM006	1		1
PSIIM011	1		1
<b>ECO</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>63</b>
ECO-M001	6		6
ECO-M002	1		1
ECO-M003	1		1
ECO-M005	3		3
ECO-M006	4		4
ECO-M007	1		1
ECO-M011	2		2
ECO-M013	3	1	4
ECO-M014	3		3
ECO-M015	1	1	2
ECO-M017	2		2
ECO-M019	19	1	20
ECO-M022	6		6
ECO-M024	4		4
PSIPM012	2		2
PSIPM014	1	1	2
<b>ENV</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>20</b>
BIO-M522	1		1
DEV-M093	1		1
ENV-MA38	1		1
ENV-MA39	1		1
ENV-MA44	4		4

ENV-MA46	1		1
ENV-MA54	1		1
ENV-MA63	3		3
ENV-MA74	1		1
ENV-MA83	2	2	4
ENV-MA94	1		1
ENV-MB2Y	1		1
<b>FTV</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>
FTVFM023	2		2
FTVFM058		1	1
<b>LAW</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>20</b>
LAW-M585	2	1	3
LAW-M589	1		1
LAW-M591	1		1
LAW-M595	1	1	2
LAW-M599	1		1
LAW-M600	2	2	4
LAW-M608		2	2
LAW-M610	1		1
LAW-M614	1		1
LAW-M639	2		2
LAW-M642	1		1
LAW-M644	1		1
<b>LCS</b>	<b>5</b>		<b>5</b>
FTVFM032	1		1
LCS-MA01	2		2
LCS-MA03	2		2
<b>LDC</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>1</b>
LITEM023	1		1
<b>MED</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
MED-M33E		1	1
<b>NBS</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>231</b>
CMPSMB15		1	1
DEV-M069	1		1
ENV-MA85	9		9
NBS-M003	2		2
NBS-M005	5		5
NBS-M006		1	1
NBS-M007	1		1
NBS-M009	3		3
NBS-M020	1		1
NBS-M026		1	1
NBS-MA04	2		2
NBS-MA10	3		3
NBS-MA14	9	3	12

NBS-MA15	31	10	41
NBS-MA16	1		1
NBS-MA17	13	4	17
NBS-MA19	49	10	59
NBS-MA21	3		3
NBS-MA22	11	2	13
NBS-MA28	2		2
NBS-MA30	1		1
NBS-MA32	6	1	7
NBS-MA34	7	6	13
NBS-MA38	5	2	7
NBS-MA40	1	3	4
NBS-MA44	4		4
NBS-MA48	4		4
NBS-MA50	1		1
NBS-MA58		1	1
NBS-MA66	6		6
NBS-MA68	1		1
NBS-MA72	2		2
NBS-MA74		1	1
NBS-MA82	1		1
<b>PSI</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>9</b>
AMSAM018	1		1
DEV-M07Y	2		2
FTVFM035	1	1	2
PSIPM009	1		1
PSIPM012	1		1
PSIPM025	1		1
PSIPM11Y	1		1
<b>SWP</b>	<b>2</b>		<b>2</b>
SWP-M436	2		2
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>338</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>404</b>