LTC14D103

Title:	**Support for students undertaking reassessment**
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Issue

It is important to ensure that students are treated in a consistent way, and that they have similar opportunities to learn. This applies to students who fail a module (or multiple modules) and who are then required to undergo reassessment. In cases where students fail, it might reasonably be assumed that they failed for a particular reason or due to a more complex series of factors. This might include poor engagement, but in many cases it will be because a student was either unable to understand module content, employed poor exam preparation strategies, or was unable to act upon feedback provided on previously submitted coursework. It is important, therefore, that students understand why they have failed a module (or multiple modules) and that they are supported to develop study strategies that enable them to pass at reassessment. It is also important, therefore, that Schools provide the kind of support that is likely to enable students to address and enhance their learning strategies prior to reassessment.

The ADTP has worked with colleagues in TPPG to undertake a rough 'audit' of existing practices within each Faculty in order to determine whether the support provided to students is of a consistent quality, even if it might be different in detail. The paper attached summarises the results of this audit. It is not 100% comprehensive in the sense that information was not forthcoming from all Schools of Study. However, it does provide a useful summary of existing practices with examples from all four Faculties included. The paper illustrates that there is considerable variation in the nature of the support provided to students. The approach in some might be described as reactive, whilst that in others is more proactive. In some Schools of Study the support provided takes a number of different forms, and appears to be comprehensive and robust. In others, the support provided might be viewed as more limited in extent or quality. This paper seeks to 'flag' what might be considered existing 'best practice' and puts forward some recommendations as to how a more consistent approach might be developed at UEA in future which ensures a more consistent quality of support provided for students undertaking reassessment.

Recommendation(s)

LTC members are asked to endorse the following recommendations which are aimed at ensuring a more consistent quality of academic and study skills support between assessment and reassessment (the timing of which will vary between different Schools of Study):

Learning & Teaching Service (HUBs)
1) That HUBs inform MOs of students who will be sent to reassessment for their module, encouraging them to contact the students concerned to offer a one-to-one tutorial or a small group session focused on preparing for reassessment.
2) HUBs to inform Personal Advisers of their advisees who will be going to reassessment (by Module).
3) HUBs to inform students going to reassessment of study skills support provided via DOS.

Note: Discussions around providing individual feedback on Exam scripts are still ongoing, but if it is decided to return all Exam scripts to students with associated feedback, this could be another valuable addition to the support provided to students referred to reassessment.

Schools of Study
1) MOs to coordinate offer of a one-to-one tutorial <u>or</u> a small group session focused on preparing for reassessment[1]. The content/focus of tutorials and/or group sessions would depend on whether the reassessment was a piece of coursework, an OSCE, or an exam. Some might, therefore, be overtly focused on 'Exam Revision' or 'Developing Examination Strategies'. In large cohorts (with corresponding numbers of students undertaking reassessment) MOs may choose to run sessions on more than one occasion, and may draw upon expertise of academic colleagues to assist in delivering them.
2) In cases where learning/revision materials to support students referred to reassessment are available, these should be made available to students via the appropriate BB site.
3) Where MOs are unavailable due to other commitments (e.g. fieldwork, research, conferences etc), the responsibilities of the MO to be delegated to a named staff colleague.
4) Advisers to offer an advising session to students referred to reassessment – up to students to choose whether they wish to attend (i.e. optional). Personal advisers to be provided with a guidance sheet on 'Academic failure and how best to support students going to reassessment'[2].
5) Schools to ensure that students are informed of the student support provided for reassessment at the outset of their Stage of Study – e.g. at Induction, in Module Outlines, Course Handbooks, BB sites etc.
6) Exam Boards to monitor success at reassessment, and to identify for Teaching Director modules where the % reassessment success rate appears anomalous.

The recommendations above should be viewed as the 'minimum' expectation – Schools may offer additional sources of support for specific types of reassessment (e.g. 'mock' OSCEs in HSC, access to Clinical Skills Suite in MED, meetings with Placement Lead/Marker and use of Placement Video Clips in what was formerly RSC).

Resource Implications
The recommendations above will require some schools to adapt/change their existing practices, and this will require staff to work differently to provide an appropriate and more consistent level of support in future. This may mean an increase in workload for some staff (e.g. staff in LTS HUBs; Module Organisers).

Risk Implications
The provision of support to students undergoing reassessment is an important aspect of the overall student experience. It is also a factor in student retention and a positive student experience. Future enhancements in this area are likely to have a positive impact on students' academic progression and performance, student retention, and a positive student experience of study at UEA, resulting in enhanced NSS/PTES/PRES results.

Equality and Diversity
It is not envisaged that any of the recommendations contained in the report will impact negatively on groups with protected characteristics – rather, the recommendations above are aimed at ensuring that all students receive a high quality of support.

Timing of decisions
LTC members are asked to endorse the recommendations attached with a view to ensuring a more consistent level of support from 2014/15 onwards.

Further Information
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[1] Exception – Year 5 students in MED who do a full re-sit year

[2] Some Schools like MED have invested in a dedicated academic adviser who focuses on supporting students going to reassessment. This is a positive development but probably not one that is easily replicated in other Schools.

Support provided to students between Fail at initial assessment and subsequent Reassessment

School	None – only written feedback on original failed submission	Dedicated group tutorial/revision session	Individual tutorial(s) (on request from student)	Invited to attend tutorial (Attendance is expected)	Students asked to see their Adviser	Students asked to meet with MO (to discuss reasons for the Fail)	Students referred to revision materials on Blackboard	Students meet with Programme or Course Director	Notes
Dedicated Type of support provided									
SSF									
NBS		✓ (for MSc)				✓	✓	✓ (for MBA)	
LAW	✓								
EDU						✓			
SWK		✓ (for Exam)		✓					
PSY					✓				
DEV			✓		✓			✓ (for Masters)	No prescribed system of support for reassessment candidates. It does not state a number of support sessions or hours that should be provided. One area where provision of support may be at risk of becoming inconsistent is where staff are away from UEA.
ECO	✓		✓ (but no expectation that all staff will provide them)						

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FMH									
MED		✓ (with exception of Year 5 students)		✓		✓ (coursework fails only)			**Year 5 finals** – attend a full resit year, with a tutor dedicated to supporting them through c. 10-15 half-day remediation sessions, in addition to their repeating year 5 placement and teaching activities. **OSCE failures** –sessions to help with procedural skills, and students are welcome to access the 24 hour access to Clinical Skills suite (CSRA), and to undertake additional clinical placement as they consider needed to support their remediation. **Advising** - Investment in a dedicated academic adviser – deliberately to allow students to gain targeted advice about academic failure.
HSC					✓ (Dissertation & Portfolio fails)	✓ (Coursework fails)			**Exams** - HSC offer one progress meeting half way to re-examination date. **OSCEs** - one or more revision sessions and mock OSCEs are offered, learning/remedial plan is agreed and students may book drop in sessions to practice equipment etc. Where they are on placement the learning/remedial plan may specify skills they can undertake to gain exposure and confidence in the required areas of practice. The practice mentor may provide additional support.

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RSC					✓	✓			There are considerable differences between RSC and NSC regarding the provision of support for re-assessing students. The School recognises that its needs a more standardised system. **SLT Placement Reports** - a more <u>formalised</u> support system is in place: SLT Placement Reports. This assessment is based on video data collected while the student was on placement. Where a student is referred for reassessment here the following happens: • Meeting is arranged with student, PA and marker. • Marker selects one clip from the student's presentation to discuss in detail and they and the student go through this clip. Areas for improvement are highlighted and discussed. • PA notes reflect the key points of the meeting and areas to be actioned. Student can also get general support from PA, but no further specific support or guidance is provided.
SCI									
PHA		✓ (for some assessments)	✓ (this is a minimum expectation of all staff)			✓ (encouraged via an assessment letter)	✓		There is no set method of delivering feedback and support between assessment and reassessment. It is usually outlined in module outline what can be expected but as a minimum all students are entitled to a one- to-one session with a member of staff for feedback but it may be up to the student to request this.
CHE									
CMP									

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MTH			✓				✓		Students who fail the initial assessment request tutorials/meetings with MO or lecturers on the failed modules. General exam feedback is posted after the initial exam on BB.
BIO									
ENV			✓ (Students are free to contact MO for guidance / tutorial meeting but is not explicitly offered)						Reassessment coursework is not restricted to the summer vacation, however for reassessments following standard exams; period between initial assessment and subsequent reassessment occur over the summer vacation when students are absent from UEA. ENV have recently taken steps to ensure module content on Blackboard remains available to reassessment students. ENV already offer students option to meet with their advisor to receive feedback on their assessments.
HUM									
PPL		✓		✓					No prescribed system of support for reassessment candidates. It does not state a number of support sessions or hours that should be provided. One area where provision of support may be at risk of becoming inconsistent is where staff are away from UEA.

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AMA	✓								Students going to reassessed are sent e mail referring them to study skills support provided by DOS. Sen Adv had several students contact her requesting further academic support. AMA staff have been willing to make themselves available to students to offer support, but this is sometimes problematic due to summer research leave.
HIS			✓			✓	✓	✓ (In cases where a student may have failed a large number of assessments. Meeting could be with MO, TD, or Sen Adv)	No prescribed system of support for reassessment. School provides extensive feedback given on all coursework. Students are expected to reflect on this when preparing for reassessment. Where extensive amount of work is required over summer period, TD will develop an action plan in meeting with the student. Often problematic since students not always available to meet after Exam period. Exam fails – student can contact their MO for further support. HIS is working with HUB to develop an automated system whereby MOs will be prompted to contact students who have failed multiple modules re a meeting where a plan of support can be agreed.
LDC									
FTM	✓								Done at module level. Support varies according to leave arrangements of Module Organisers.
HUM FY		✓ (LCS Language modules only – problematic in 2013/14)		✓ (Where student fails a module - automatically invited to meet with their seminar leader)		✓		✓ (Where a student failed a large number of assessments)	