

Learning & Teaching Bulletin – July 2013

As we approach the end of another academic year it is timely to reflect upon initiatives launched during 2012/13 and to alert you to changes being introduced in 2013/14. It has been another busy year with considerable detailed work necessitated as we implement the New Academic Model in addition to reviewing other policy areas. Once again we thank you all for your forbearance and constructive comments when things have not run smoothly and for your assistance in working with us to provide efficient and effective services for both staff and students.

This bulletin contains a digest of the policy work undertaken this year with a summary of regulatory and other changes which will come into effect on 1 August 2013 and an update on a number of on-going reviews. Please read through the bulletin and if you have any queries or questions please come along to our Q&A session on Wednesday 3rd July at 2:00pm in the Elizabeth Fry Building, Room 01.02. The session will last approximately one hour.

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Section A - Reflection on 2012/3

1. Quality Code

As many members of staff will be aware the QAA are replacing the Academic Infrastructure Framework with the new Quality Code. The Quality Code details, in thematic chapters, the expectations that are placed upon Universities with regard to our management and delivery of a number of key activities. Each Chapter within the Quality Code is published following a consultation process. A number of chapters have already been finalised and it is expected that final chapters will be published by the end of the calendar year.

The University has established Chapter Implementation Groups, each led by a Chapter Champion who have been tasked with ensuring that the University meets the expectations set out within the relevant chapter. These groups have at least one student member, which reflects our commitment to working in partnership with our student body.

Full details of the Quality Code can be found at:

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/AssuringStandardsAndQuality/quality-code/Pages/default.aspx>

2. Higher Education Review

In last year's LTS Bulletin we announced that the University would be subject to Institutional Review in the 2013-14 academic year. However, staff may be aware, the audit model for Higher Education Providers has been amended following a requirement from B.I.S that consideration be given to a less time costly and more risk based approach to Quality Review.

Due to the introduction of the new audit model, known as Higher Education Review (HER), the University will now be audited in the 2015-16 academic year. Preparations for the audit visit have already begun with the establishment of a HER Preparation Group. The review event will be focused to a large extent on the institution's effective implementation of the Quality Code and Initial preparations will be led by the Chapter Champions working with their Implementation Groups. However, we will no doubt need to call on all staff to get involved as the event draws nearer and a number of events will be organised to ensure that the University community is fully aware of the scope and importance of the review event.

The HER handbook can be found at:

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Documents/HER-handbook-13.pdf>

3. Internal Monitoring and Review

Background

The policy for Annual Monitoring and Course Review was reviewed and a new procedure implemented for 2011-12. The new process for Module Monitoring was risk-based and was designed to enhance our internal QAE processes and address the demands of the QAA, PSRB and the Corporate Plan.

Looking Back – 2011-13

- All schools are required to review any module that meets one of the University defined triggers. However, some schools have decided to go beyond the minimum requirement. We would recommend that Schools adopt the risk based approach as this provides sufficient quality assurance and optimises the amount of academic time spent on review activities.
- Many schools continue to collect student evaluation for all modules.
- There is some mixed practice in the timing of Module Monitoring due to availability of data and the running of exam boards, etc.
- By bringing forward the timing of the annual review, it is anticipated that many of the outcomes can feed forward to the subsequent academic year.
- Where the outcomes indicate a need to amend published information, these will feed forward to the subsequent year plus one
- Recommendations for a lighter touch annual review process conducted at course level were discussed in some detail with the Academic PVC, the ADTP, ADs and LTS and agreement reached to consolidate the current agreed process and review it after the 2015-16 HER.

Looking Forward

The Annual Module Monitoring and Course Review Process will be reviewed at the end of the 2012-13 academic year and comments on the experiences of academic colleagues and the LTS Service will be sought. Minor enhancements to the process may be fed forward in the next academic year. However, the University is committed to the current agreed policy and no major review will be conducted until after the 2015-16 HER.

4. Plagiarism & Collusion

A number of amendments to the Plagiarism & Collusion have been approved by LTC for introduction in 2013-14. Full details can be found at:

<https://intranet.uea.ac.uk/committeeoffice/ueacombds/ltc/ltc1213/260613/ltc12d143dividere>

The main changes are intended to ensure that the process remains transparent, fair and that the outcomes for students are determined without undue delay. Key changes are:

- Guilt and level of offence will now be determined by a panel of two Plagiarism Officers
- The Faculty Meeting has been removed in order to avoid undue delay
- Students whose work is suspected of containing plagiarised elements and/ or evidence of collusion will have their work marked and returned in accordance with normal marking arrangements. They will receive, coincident with the mark, a notification of the suspicion and the need for a meeting along with advice that this may result in a change to their mark
- Students will receive a copy of any Turnitin report that is produced in support of a plagiarism investigation in advance of any meeting
- Students will be advised of the specific material that is suspected of being plagiarism or evidencing collusion in advance of any meeting

5. Code of Practice for Placement Learning and Work-Based Learning

The Code of Practice has now been in place for one year and a review looking at the uptake of its principles, what works well and what would benefit from revision, will be undertaken at the beginning of the 2013/14 academic year. The Code of Practice is referred to in the University's mapping of its provision against the The UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Section [B10: Managing higher education provision with others](#)

Software to record placement and work-based learning activity is being investigated. One of the aims is to develop a University-wide platform to record and monitor student engagement in such activity and to provide good reporting facilities for all staff involved in this area. More information on this will be circulated in the Autumn semester.

6. Coursework word count – limits & penalties

The policy on word counts/limits has changed during the academic year 12/13 and the revised policy can be found in section 7a) at:

<http://www.uea.ac.uk/calendar/section3/regs%28gen%29/submission-of-work-for-assessment-%28taught-programmes%29>.

Please note that section 7 b will not apply in the academic year 13/14 as it refers to interim arrangements made for the academic year 12/13.

7. Coursework Submission and Return

2012-13 saw the introduction of the recommendations of the Process Fix consultancy. These changes have improved the coursework process, including, from the students' perspective, the use of tracking 'where's my work?', return of work via academic staff or Hubs (but see below) and greater use of electronic submission. However, stopping the enveloping of work and return in open-access areas has caused some concern amongst staff and students. We are reviewing this, and will be modifying the current process in time for next year.

This year we have been able to track the coursework management process to identify those areas where the 20-day turnaround was not met. This information has been shared with Schools, and those Schools where the marking is taking too long have been asked to comment by 6th September 2013. The detailed raw data also reveals the occasions where the processing time in the Hub is unacceptably high and we will be investigating and addressing these instances to ensure there is no repetition next year.

8. Peer Assisted Learning

As reported last year, PAL has been rolled out across the University, with the first phase taking place in Semester 2 this year. A further 12 Schools are signed up for the next phase. The students who have taken part, either as a learner or as a student mentor or officer, have found it immensely rewarding. The PAL Champion, Dr Anne Guyon, will report to LTC early next academic year with progress so far.

For further information, please contact Dr Anne Guyon, anne.guyon@uea.ac.uk, or Vicky Hawkes Victoria.hawkes@uea.ac.uk

9. UEA Learning & Teaching Day

The UEA Learning & Teaching Day 2013, with the theme 'Future Educations' was well attended and well received. Approximately 150 colleagues attended either the whole or part of the day. A summary of the feedback received from attendees has been shared with LTC. Following feedback from last year's event, we were able to involve more staff from UEA London and partner colleges, including a workshop on the use of iPads in teaching, and give colleagues on the MA HEP opportunities to contribute to the programme.

Planning for the 2014 day will begin shortly. The date, format and theme for the event will be confirmed early in the autumn semester 2013.

10. Learning and Teaching Service Website and Teaching Excellence Website

The Learning and Teaching Website has been revamped this year, bringing together in one place information for students and staff in the support of Teaching and Learning. In addition, we have introduced online access to forms students may wish to use, rather than picking up a hard copy at the Hub. Forms include absence, concession, extensions, change to course, intercalation etc.

The 'Teaching Excellence' website mentioned last year has not been our priority this year, but plans are in place to launch this shortly. We are currently coordinating the reorganisation of the 'new students' website, to improve navigation and quality of information for students joining us in September.

The Website is available at: <http://www.uea.ac.uk/learningandteaching>

11. Start of Year and Induction

September 2012 saw the introduction of a University-wide registration event for students starting their studies at the beginning of the standard academic year. In addition a focus on Week One encouraged more course level and teaching events to be timetabled to ensure students had a full schedule of activities. The registration event itself was co-ordinated by the LTS and involved many other services and co-operation from all Schools. On behalf of the team we thank everyone involved as overall it went smoothly and feedback was positive. Planning is well underway for a repeat event this September and things that did not go quite so smoothly will be addressed. In particular there were some timetabling issues around Induction events in some Schools and this will be remedied this year with all induction events appearing on student timetables. It may be of interest to note that a feasibility study

is to be undertaken to determine whether or not it would be possible to move the event to the weekend for 2014/15.

12. New Course Approval Documentation

The New Course Approval process has been extensively reviewed and new documents and comprehensive guidance notes are available on the LTS website:

http://www.uea.ac.uk/learningandteaching/documents/course_module/CourseProposalProcedureandGuidance

(The forms are available from the same page, but as Word documents)

Please can any School considering a new course, or a modification of a course, talk to the LTS co-ordinator supporting your School, who will guide you through the process, and ensure the document is considered in a timely manner by each stakeholder. If there is a particular urgency for a proposal to be considered, please alert one of the Heads or Director of DUS for advice.

13. Timetabling

Complaints and concerns about timetabling and rooms were captured by the Director of Planning and a review of timetabling is underway, led by the PVC Academic. For the new academic year we hope that:

- Pressure on large rooms available at the start of year will be eased by the use of the main hall in the Sportspark on 23 & 24 September 2013.
- All induction events will show on student timetables.
- Data checking undertaken by the Planning Office should reduce the number of weekly changes in rooms for modules, reduce travel times for lecturers and improve the suitability of rooms.
- There will be improvements in the IT support to teaching rooms.

14. Academic Appeals & Complaints

The new Academic Appeals and Complaints regulations were introduced in this academic year. The significant changes to the way in which academic appeals and complaints are considered suggested that we might face considerable teething troubles in the move from Head of School consideration at Stage One to the introduction consideration by faculty panel. However, there have been no major difficulties in the implementation of the new procedure and it seems that students have found the new procedures easy to access and follow. We will be looking closely at the overall performance of the new procedure once it has been in place for a full

academic year. This will take form part of the work of the Quality Code Academic Appeals (Chapter B9) Chapter Implementation Group.

Section B - New Regulations and Procedures for 2013/4

15. New Academic Model

1. The regulations for the new Undergraduate and Integrated Masters degrees were approved by LTC on 26 June 2013:

<https://intranet.uea.ac.uk/committeeoffice/ueacombds/ltc/ltc1213/260613/ltc12d150dividerg>

There have been some changes or clarifications to the original proposal, the main ones being:

- Although students will be required to pass all modules to proceed, Boards of Examiners, on the recommendation of the School's Extenuating Circumstances Panel, may offer affected students remedies such as delayed sittings or repeat periods of study, as stipulated in the new EC regulations.
- Although attendance will be monitored for all students, the requirement for a minimum attendance to be eligible for reassessment has been put on hold.
- All marks will continue to be recorded and displayed to two decimal places but progression and classification decisions will consider the marks as integers ie marks within 0.5% of a threshold will be treated as meeting that threshold. Further information is available at:

<https://intranet.uea.ac.uk/committeeoffice/ueacombds/ltc/ltc1213/260613/ltc12d149dividerf>

- Classification upgrade rules have been simplified, so that students within 2% of a classification boundary will be automatically upgraded when they meet the upgrade algorithm. Details are in the new regulations referenced above.

2. Transition arrangements for continuing students were approved by LTC on 26 June 2013:

<https://intranet.uea.ac.uk/committeeoffice/ueacombds/ltc/ltc1213/260613/ltc12d156>

3. Introduction of the New Academic Model for Postgraduate Taught degrees has been postponed.

16. Common Masters Framework

A merit award will be introduced from 2013/4 for students whose aggregate mark for 180 credits is between 60% and 69.99%. The specific criteria will be specified in the updated CMF regulations to be published in the 2013/4 Calendar.

17. Extenuating Circumstances

Background

New Extenuating Circumstances Regulations for Taught Programmes were approved by LTC on 26 June 2013 for implementation in the academic year 2013-14. The new regulations are designed to provide clarity to staff and students with regard to the definition of extenuating circumstances, guiding principles, deadlines, consideration of applications and the adjustments that are available.

Summary

Key themes and principles of the new regulations are as follows:

Acceptable Extenuating Circumstances

- An extenuating circumstance is defined as an acute factor or acute expression of a chronic condition outside of the student's control which affects assessment, normally within 3 weeks
- The University has adopted as a guide the list of acceptable extenuating circumstances, as recommended by the Academic Registrars' Council (ARC)

Assessment Types

Extenuating Circumstances can be reported by students in relation to the following assessment types:

- 'Deadline' assessments - Coursework, Written Assignment, Dissertation, Project, Presentation
- 'Event' assessments - Examination, Course Test, Objective Structured Clinical Examination, Objective Structured Pharmacy Examination

Consideration of Extenuating Circumstances

- An Extenuating Circumstances Panel (ECP) will be established in each School of Study
- Applications in respect of assessments for circumstances that map to the ARC criteria, can be approved by LTS Co-ordinators
- The ECP will consider cases where a remedy cannot be approved in LTS, in accordance with the regulation
- The ECP will consider circumstances reported in advance of a meeting of the Board of Examiners

Deadline Assessments

- Students may self-certify for an extension of 7 working days on one occasion per semester – approval is automatic on submission of the required form
- Further extension requests within one semester must be supported by acceptable evidence

Event Assessments

- Delayed Assessment/Reassessment/Further Reassessment (DA/DR/FA) is the agreed terminology and replaces Good Cause
- A Delayed Assessment/Reassessment cancels the original assessment
- A Further Reassessment provides an additional opportunity but does not cancel the original assessment attempt
- As in the past, the new regulations allow a DA/DR where the student fails to attend
- In addition, the new regulations allow for a DA/DR to be considered where the student has attended but believes that s/he did not have a fair attempt due to extenuating circumstances
- A DA/DR may be considered where the delivery of the programme has hampered the ability of student to be assessed fairly
- Students must seek medical evidence on the day of the event, unless prevented from doing so, in which case evidence confirming the reasons why medical evidence could not be sought on the day should be submitted
- A student can choose whether to accept the opportunity for a DA/DR, and, if accepted, the existing mark will be voided and replaced by the new mark

Pre-Board Consideration by ECP

- All extenuating circumstances and any previous adjustments should be reported to the Pre-Board ECP
- Additional adjustments may be recommended where the circumstances have already been considered
- The ECP determines the impact and recommends any remedy
- The list of available remedies is outlined in the regulation
- The Board of Examiners determines the remedy (which must comply with any PSRB requirements)

Deadlines

- Students are required to report extenuating circumstances as soon as they occur, and no later than the deadlines below
- For Event Assessments, applications should be made within 48 hours of the assessment
- For Event Assessments, evidence should be submitted no later than 10 working days after the application is made
- Evidence submitted later than the deadline may be accepted by the Chair of the ECP
- Circumstances to be considered by a Pre-Board ECP must be reported to the Hub no later than 10 days before the meeting
- Dates of Pre-Board meetings will be published in advance

The final proposals of the new extenuating circumstances policy which LTC has approved can be found at:

<https://intranet.uea.ac.uk/committeeoffice/ueacombds/ltc/ltc1213/260613/ltc12d145dividerh>

Further guidance and flow charts will be available for the academic year 2013-14.

18. Moderation and Double Marking

A review group has been working on a new policy for internal moderation and double marking during the current academic year and the previously confusing criteria for double marking have been more clearly defined. Major principles of the policy are:

a) Coursework/Projects

- Any assessment item worth more than 30% of the module is subject to moderation
- If a module consists of assessment items worth less than 30%, the module organiser will choose one assessment item to be moderated
- Blind double marking is required for all projects or dissertations worth at least 40 credits or if the assessment item is the sole summative assessment item worth at least 40 credits

b) Examinations

Schools should choose one of the options below:

- Blind double marking where resources allow it
 - Moderation of a sample of scripts in line with the requirements set out in the moderation policy
- c) Presentations/Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCE's)/Objective Structured Pharmacy Examinations (OSPE's)
- Presentations should ideally be double marked and if not double marked then they should be recorded to enable remarking
 - OSCE's/OSPE's should ideally be double marked or recorded, but if logistically this is not possible, a suitable moderation process which includes an external examiner should be in place or they need to be subject to a post-hoc assessment analysis. Schools are working towards double marking or recording of all OSCE's/OSPE's in future years to enable robust processes.

d) Requests for remarks:

- Coursework: A student can't request a remark for an assignment which has been blind double marked. Students can request a remark for assignments which have been moderated irrespective if they were part of the moderation sample or not within 10 working days of the result being published on E:Vision
- Presentations can only be requested to be remarked if they have not been double marked and the recording would be used for the remarking process, remarking should be requested within 10 working days of the publication of the presentation mark on E:Vision
- Even if OSPE's and OSCE's have not been recorded, but have been moderated with external examiner input or are subject to a post-hoc assessment analysis, they are considered in the interim as having been robustly assessed and are therefore not subject to any remarks while schools are working towards double marking or recording all of them in future years
- Examinations: A student can't request a remark for an examination which has been blind double marked. Where an examination has been moderated irrespective if the examination script has been in the moderation sample or not, a student can appeal against a confirmed mark using the Academic Appeals' procedure

The final proposals of the moderation and double marking policy which LTC has approved can be found at:

19. Attendance Monitoring

LTS will be working with Schools to identify key modules to monitor attendance on for 2013/4. There is an expectation that Schools will monitor at least 2 modules per semester for undergraduate students, which should equate to at least once per fortnight. LTS will be drawing up a process to manage this, and set agreed trigger points (noting that monitoring in professional schools is much greater).

SITS developments which should be in place for next year include:

- eVision facility for students to self-certify their absence (up to 7 consecutive days), and report their absence, backed up with medical evidence (over 7 days).
- Improvements to the eVision register completed by academic staff, so that input screens have fewer 'clicks'. Where students have already reported absence, this will show on the e-register.
- Improvement to students' reports so they can see more detailed information on their reported absence
- Improvement to academic/admin reports to see students' absence and for academic staff to see register logs.

Requirements at PGT level are still being considered.

20. Other Regulatory Changes

1. Students who are referred to Senate Student Disciplinary Committee for an alleged breach of Regulation 14 (Professional misconduct and/ or unsuitability) shall receive a copy of the summons and fully supporting paperwork not later than 20 working days before the date of the panel hearing.
2. Change to Regulation 13 (Attendance, Engagement and Progress) in relation to students suspended as a result of a breach of the UK visa regulations. If a student does not contact the University within a month of suspension, the student will be withdrawn from the University.