For the Academic Policy & Regulations Committee
11 February 2013

APRC.13.02.04

Amendment to Code of Practice on Taught Programmes and Module Assessment

Purpose of Paper

1. APRC is asked to ***consider*** and, if thought appropriate, ***approve*** an amendment to the Code of Practice on Taught Programme and Module Assessment, with effect from 2013/14.

Proposal

2. It is proposed that a classified degree may be recommended to Progress and Awards Board for students who show no reasonable chance of completing their studies due to rare and exceptional circumstances.

3. The proposed addition to the Code of Practice on Taught Programme and Module Assessment is as follows:

12.5.6
Where there is no prospect that a Registered Student will be able to complete their programme of study, for example because of death or significant illness, the Board of Examiners may recommend to the Progress and Awards Board the award of either a Certificate of Higher Education; a Diploma of Higher Education; an aegrotat degree; or a classified degree. For the award of a classified degree the Registered Student must have achieved both:

a) For a Bachelors degree:
- *i) Successful completion of stages 1 and 2 of their programme, and any additional stages which form part of the programme requirements, for example a year abroad; and*
- *ii) At least 60 credits in the final stage of the programme.*

or

b) For an Undergraduate Masters degree:
- *i) Successful completion of stages 1 and 2 of their programme, and any additional stages which form part of the programme requirements, for example a year abroad; and*
- *ii) At least 180 credits in the final stage of the programme.*

The weighted mean mark for the final stage will be determined by using the total number of credits achieved in the final stage as the "sum total of the credit values of the modules required" for that stage (Regulation 7).

These circumstances are likely to be rare and exceptional such that the Extenuating Circumstances and Fit-to-Sit procedure will not apply. The Head of School will make an appropriate recommendation to the Board of Examiners after receiving independent, third-party evidence confirming the circumstances. The Board of Examiners, having endorsed the recommendation, will further recommend the award to the Progress and Awards Board which has final authority on the matter.

Background

4. A small number of Registered Students of the University do not complete their studies due to exceptionally adverse circumstances. These circumstances may

include the death of a Registered Student, the diagnosis of a terminal illness or other equally significant occurrence.

5. Currently the Code of Practice permits the award of a classified degree to a Registered Student who has not completed the final assessments for their award, as stated:

12.5.4
Where a Registered Student is prevented by illness or other cause from attending all or part of the final assessments for an award, and sufficient evidence of achievement (normally consisting of the majority of assessed work and evidence that the main learning outcomes of the programme have been achieved) exists, the Board of Examiners may either:

(a) For undergraduate programmes, recommend the award of the degree (classified or unclassified/aegrotat), Diploma of Higher Education or Certificate of Higher Education.

(b) For graduate programmes, recommend the award of the Graduate Diploma or Graduate Certificate.

(c) For postgraduate programmes, recommend the award of the degree, Postgraduate Diploma or Postgraduate Certificate.

12.5.5
Where a Registered Student is prevented by illness or other cause from attending all or part of the final assessments for an award, and insufficient evidence exists, the Board of Examiners may recommend that the Registered Student be provided with a further opportunity to complete the requirements of the qualification concerned.

6. This, however, provides for a classified degree in less exceptional circumstances, and therefore requires the majority of the final stage assessments to have been completed, or for the Registered Student to have further opportunity to meet the requirements of their award.

7. The proposed addition, paragraph 3 above, is intended to supplement sections 12.4.4 and 12.5.5, and provide the option of a classified degree in truly exceptional circumstances.

Arguments to Support the Proposal

8. The University is committed to offering a distinctive high-quality experience for its students by, amongst other things, enhancement of the student experience including student support facilities. The above proposal fits with this aim, and will provide Schools, Registered Students and their families with fitting recognition of the ability and potential of those who are prevented, for quite exceptional reasons, from completing their studies.

Gillian Davis
January 2013