

## Academic Quality

### Operation of Progression/Award Boards (Spring and Autumn 2025) – Guidelines for Deans, Associate Deans and Representatives

Deans or their representatives (Associate Dean or other nominated representative, who should normally be a senior member of academic staff) are required to attend *all* undergraduate and postgraduate taught Award Boards in order to monitor the operation of the Board and to report to University Committees where appropriate. This paper outlines a series of brief guidelines on assessment and examinations procedures, in order to assist the Deans and their representatives in their monitoring role.

#### 1. Reports from Deans

Deans and representatives should complete and submit the 'Operation of Exam Boards' report proforma following each Award Board, making a note of issues raised in connection with assessment and examinations procedures. Reports should be completed via this [Microsoft Form](#). If there are any problems email [deansadministrator@hw.ac.uk](mailto:deansadministrator@hw.ac.uk).

For managing and reporting on suspended Boards of Examiners, please refer to Document 11, "Process for Managing Suspended Boards of Examiners".

#### 2. Supporting Information

Prior to attendance at Boards, Deans and their representatives should be familiar with the [Examination and Assessment Guidelines](#) and particularly:

- Document A: Key Points to highlight
- Document B: Academic Decision-Making: Summary of Approach (for Staff)
- Document C: Academic Decision-Making: Guidelines for Boards of Examiners in Maintaining Academic Standards (for Staff)
- Document 1: Undergraduate and Postgraduate Assessment Procedures
- Document 2: Decisions and Decision Codes
- Document 3: Policy on the Discretionary Award of Credits
- Document 4: Heriot-Watt University Assessment and Progression System (HAPS)
- Document 6a: Policy for Undergraduate Degree-Classification Borderline Cases
- Document 6b: Policy for Postgraduate Degree-Classification Borderline Cases
- Document 10: Managing Suspended Examination Boards
- Document 12a: Guidelines for Deans, Associate-Deans and Representatives (*this document*)

#### 3. Marks and Grades

The following key points are provided as a reminder:

- Any instances of inconsistent application of HAPS or other aspects of the assessment process should be noted on the Dean's Report Proforma.
- Marks should not be altered whilst mapping onto grades.
- Justification for abnormal mapping of marks onto grades should be recorded.
- Justification for any alteration of grades, including discretionary award of credits, by the Examination Board should be recorded.

#### 4. Re-assessment and Repeat

The following key points are provided as a reminder:

##### Re-assessment

- Re-assessment should be required for Grade E only for *continuing* courses.
- Only one re-assessment opportunity is permitted for UG courses: all UG re-assessments are to be taken in the May Semester (i.e. August reassessment diet); the decision code should reflect this. January start PGT students may be reassessed at the end of the January Semester (i.e. April/May diet)
- One reassessment opportunity is permitted for non-final year qualifying courses – *for credit points only*, the original mark remains in the calculation of the degree.
- In exceptional circumstances, the Progression Board has the discretion to grant a further reassessment opportunity, the justification for which must be recorded in the Board's Minutes.
- For UG, opportunities up to a maximum of four may be permitted by the Progression Board; fifth opportunities must be considered and approved by a Dean of the University.
- For PG taught programmes, reassessment is permitted in a maximum of three taught courses – this may include re-sit for progression to Masters (if Grade D, E or F has been gained). Clarification on PGT regulations regarding reassessment (including discretion of the Progression Board in permitting more than 3 resits or allowing reassessment in the dissertation/project) should be sought in advance of the Progression Board meeting.
- The Regulations implicitly allow Boards of Examiners the discretion to determine that no further reassessment opportunities are given, in cases where students have a high number of reassessments (e.g. 5). Boards of Examiners are reminded that they have the discretion to reach this decision. (Regulation A6 Progression, para 2.3.5)

##### Repeat

- Repeat is not an automatic entitlement but is at the discretion of the Progression Board. The justification for repeat must be recorded in the Board's minutes.
- Repeat/Re-attend decision can be made at June or August Progression Boards.
- Repeat means re-attend and retake all assessments – full course fees to be paid.
- The Board can recommend alternative courses, rather than a repeat.

#### 5. Decision Codes

The following key points are provided as a reminder:

- Decision codes entered on Banner should correspond to the decisions taken by the Progression Board.
- UG reassessment, for both continuing and non-continuing courses, should be taken in the May Semester (i.e. August reassessment diet); only in exceptional circumstances should students be permitted to defer until the next academic session and a justification for such decisions should be provided.