

Academic Quality

Operation of Progression/Award Boards (Spring and Autumn 2024) – 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.

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 courses: all re-assessments are to be taken in the Autumn diet; the decision code should reflect this.
- One re-assessment 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 re-assessment 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, re-assessment 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 re-assessment (including discretion of the Progression Board in permitting more than 3 resits or allowing re-assessment in the dissertation/project) should be sought in advance of the Progression Board meeting.

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 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 re-assessment, for both continuing and non-continuing courses, should be taken in the autumn 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.