



UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
OF ESTATE MANAGEMENT

UCEM Code of Practice

Board of Examiners

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Author: Nick Moore

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1. Introduction

This Code of Practice presents all matters relating to the scope and operation of Boards of Examiners applying to modules and programmes leading to an award by the University College of Estate Management (UCEM).

This Code should be read in conjunction with the related Code of Practice on External Examining and the UCEM Academic and General Regulations for Students.

The Institution is responsible for the standards of its awards, Academic Board discharges this responsibility by delegating relevant powers to make decisions on marks, progression and awards to the Boards of Examiners.

The purpose of this Code is to make explicit UCEM's expectation for the conduct of Boards of Examiners taking into account external quality and compliance requirements, including defining the roles and responsibilities of all staff involved.

2. Boards of Examiners

UCEM requires two levels of Boards of Examiners, both of which have separate and distinct responsibilities:

- Module Boards confirm and agree module marks awarded to candidates for summative assessment tasks
- Progression and Awards Boards (Undergraduate and Postgraduate) verify progression through a programme to awards, and where applicable the classification of awards.

Under no circumstances may Module and Progression and Award Boards unilaterally alter any decision made by the other. A Progression and Award Board, acting on information not available to Module Boards, may invite the Chair of a Module Board to consider whether the marks verified for a specified module(s) were appropriate.

2.1 Chairs of Boards of Examiners

Academic Board will delegate to the Head of Faculties the responsibility for appointing Chairs of Module and Progression and Award Boards.

Each Chair must attend a briefing session provided by the Academic Quality Unit (AQU) before their first Board meeting. All Chairs must also attend annual briefing updates, provided by the AQU, to continue to be on the list of chairs. A list of trained senior academic Chairs should be maintained by the Assessment Manager.

Chairs are responsible for ensuring that the Board is conducted in accordance with this Code of Practice, the UCEM Academic and General Regulations for students, the Undergraduate/Postgraduate Assessment regulations and the Code of Practice for External Examining, in accordance with the principles of rigour, fairness, transparency and consistency.

2.2 Secretaries of Boards of Examiners

The Secretary will be appointed from the UCEM Assessment Team. Secretaries should undertake a briefing session provided by the Academic Quality Unit prior to attending their first Board meeting. They must also attend annual training updates, provided by AQU, in order to continue in the role.

3. Mitigating Circumstances

Mitigating circumstances must be considered in advance of the Module Board by the Mitigating Circumstances Committee, operating in accordance with the Mitigating Circumstances Policy.

The recommendations from the Mitigating Circumstances Committee will be considered for the individual students. Only in circumstances where it is deemed not to be in the student's interest academically will the recommendation not be enacted normally in the Module Board. Should the recommendation potentially impact upon the terminating award for the student, the Progression and Award Board may make the academic judgement in light of the students overall profile.

Where mitigation is pending the Module Board should note the module marks regardless for the purposes of chairs actions whilst recording that the result is not yet available.

4. Module Boards

4.1 Pre Board activity

Prior to the board taking place, external examiners should be provided with the opportunity and time required to:

- Review coursework and where appropriate examination scripts associated with modules being presented, along with access to the question papers.
- Review the second marking and moderation that has been undertaken with associated reports.
- Review the whole cohort results and statistical analysis of them
- Meet with the academic team to provide opportunity to
 - discuss progress of the modules
 - discuss any individual cases as required
 - be advised of any changes that have been implemented since the last visit

4.2 Membership

A Module Board comprises of the following:

- The Chair
- The relevant External Examiner(s)
- The relevant Internal Examiners
- A Secretary
- The Disability and Wellbeing Advisor by invitation

A Module Board may be attended by one or more observers, for example a member of Academic Quality Unit.

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A Module Board will be deemed quorate only where no fewer than 50% of the members are present. Any decisions made by an inquorate board remain provisional until confirmed by a board which is quorate. Where no External Examiner is able to attend, the board may proceed but the Head of Quality and Enhancement and the relevant Head of Faculty must be informed and consulted prior to the decision and agree on the suitable arrangements for EE's to review and approve the relevant results.

Where an External Examiner is unable to attend s/he must be provided with the opportunity to have both reviewed the relevant paperwork and to then provide relevant comments by another means (e.g. e-mail, telephone, video conferencing). In the case of predominately resit Module Boards the External Examiner may advise of their intent not to attend, at the main Module Board but must still approve the module results

4.3 Agenda

Boards must have a formal agenda, which should be circulated in advance and should cover the following:

- Confirmation of minutes of the previous meeting
- Report of Chair's action (if any)
- Declaration of conflicts of interest (including personal relationships with students, involvement in complaints or disciplinary investigations)
- Matters arising
- Receipt of all moderation reports
- Confirmation of the assessment components for the module including weighting
- Receipt of the recommendations of the mitigating circumstances committee
- Report of unresolved academic misconduct matters
- Confirmation that consideration of students with disability and/or special educational need have been taken into account
- Confirmation of the module marks
- Feedback/general comments from the internal examiners
- Feedback from the External Examiner(s)
- Date of next meeting

The following documentation will be available to the Module Board:

- Assessment Regulations relevant to the Modules under consideration
- Module Results by student
- Module Reports from the Module Leader*,
- Report on the recognition of prior certified learning for individual students on the modules and programmes presented.

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- Matters arising from previous minutes
- Standard Deviation statistics relevant to the results for approval
- Copy of the BOE Supplement: Guidance and Denominators for MABs and PABs

*It is an expectation that the Module Leader will be able to feedback about the delivery, the results and performance on the module including feedback from students.

5. Academic Misconduct

The Module Board must be informed of any academic misconduct cases awaiting a decision. Where the Board is informed of a penalty imposed by the Academic Misconduct Committee the Board must apply that penalty to the module in question and confirm the mark. Under no circumstances is a Module Board permitted to change the decision specified by the Academic Misconduct Committee. Where a case is ongoing the Module Board must defer decision for the student(s) in question.

5.1 Confirmation of Marks

Agreement of the marks awarded, and therefore resolution of any disagreement between examiners, should be achieved before the Module Board sits. All marks must have been moderated before the Module Board. Any marks bordering the pass threshold boundary should have been discussed and a determination made as to if the student's work warranted a pass grade prior to the Board. The Board should therefore be able to focus on confirming the marks awarded taking into account and confirming any recommendations of the Mitigating Circumstances Committee.

In confirming the marks awarded the Board's decision must be informed by the relevant module results data. Boards must consider any anomalies which become apparent and take steps to address any unfairness, including additional moderation of marks where appropriate. Any additional moderation of marks must be agreed by the External Examiner.

The Module Board paperwork must be signed by the chair of the Board and the External Examiner(s). Where a number of modules have been considered by Boards chaired by the same Chair and involving the same External Examiner(s) it is acceptable to sign a cover sheet applicable to all the modules considered, provided that Module Board paperwork is completed for each module.

If an External Examiner is absent from the Board the Module Board paperwork will be sent to them for approval after the meeting.

5.2 Recording of Outcomes

5.2.1 Recording of Marks

The marks confirmed by the Module Board must be recorded on SITS as the agreed mark. Agreed marks cannot be amended without the agreement of the Chair acting under Chair's action which must be reported to the next Module Board.

5.2.2 Re-sits, Retakes and Below Threshold Standard

The Module Board should agree and note the module resit or retake requirements for the students and any outcomes that can be made as a 'below threshold standard (BTS)'. These decisions need to be in line with the Assessment Progression and Award Regulations of the programme.

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5.3 Minutes

The Chair is responsible for approving the minutes of the Module Board. Copies of the approved minutes and the signed Module Board paperwork should be kept and stored securely.

5.4 Progression and Awards Boards (Undergraduate and Postgraduate) Membership

A Progression and Award Board comprises of the following:

- The Chair
- The relevant External Examiner(s)
- The relevant Programme Leader(s)
- A Secretary in attendance

Progression and Award Boards may be attended by a member of the Academic Quality Unit to observe the meeting.

A Progression and Award Board will be deemed quorate only where no fewer than 50% of the members are present. Where the External Examiner is unable to attend the board may proceed but the Head of Quality and Enhancement and relevant the Head of Faculty must be informed and consulted prior to the decision and agree on the suitable arrangements for EE's to review and approve the relevant awards.

Where an External Examiner is unable to attend s/he must be provided with the opportunity to provide relevant comments by another means (e.g. e-mail, telephone, video conferencing). In the case of predominately re-sit Progression and Award Boards the External Examiner may advise of their intent not to attend at the main Progression and Award Board. In such cases all awards must be signed off by External Examiners after the meeting.

5.5 Agenda

Each Progression and Award Board must have a formal agenda, which should be circulated in advance and should cover the following:

- Confirmation of minutes of the previous meeting
- Report of Chair's action (if any)
- Declaration of conflicts of interest (including personal relationships with students, involvement in complaints or disciplinary investigations)
- Matters arising (including consideration of candidates referred at the previous stage)
- Confirmation of the classification weighting for the programme (where applicable)
- Progression decisions through the programme
- Progression to the award (for candidates on the final stage of an award) and classification (where applicable)
- Confirmation of award for those wishing to exit the programme and who may be eligible for a lesser award.
- Award of prizes
- Feedback/general comments from the programme leaders

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- Feedback from the external examiner(s)
- Date of next meeting.

The following documentation will be available to the Progression and Award Board:

- The Academic Regulations relevant to the Programme being considered
- Programme results by student
- Programme Leaders report*
- A sample of student work
- Matters arising from previous minutes
- Details of prizes that the Board may approve.
- the marks for all modules relevant to the programme being considered, and the credits for any modules where the student has RPEL/RPL.
- the number of attempts a candidate has had on a module
- the weighted average of any previous stage which is relevant to classification
- Mitigating Circumstances Committee recommendations for students coming up to terminating awards.
- The details of ongoing Academic Misconduct cases (where the module board has necessarily deferred decision on the module in question).
- Copy of the BOE Supplement: Guidance and denominators for MABs and PABs

*It is an expectation that the Programme Leader will be able to talk about the delivery, the results and performance on the programme including feedback from students.

5.6 Role of the Progression and Award Board

5.6.1 Student with Resits

If the programme has resits all considerations of students requiring resits will have their considerations of progression and award deferred until after the resits Module Board.

5.6.2 Responsibility of Progression and Award Board

Progression and Award Boards (PAB's) are responsible for:

- determining the progression of students through the programme, with attention paid to failure at a third attempt,
- to determine the award for students completing or exiting programmes of study where they meet the requirements of the awards and, where applicable, determining the classification of the award.
- consideration of Below Threshold Standard (BTS) outcomes and the overall profile of the student in order to determine if
 - a BTS should be held,
 - a compensated pass awarded at the end of the appropriate level or

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- if the student has too many BTS results and must retake one or more of them.
- on reviewing a student profile, PAB may change the Module Result to a condoned fail.
- Under no circumstances is a PAB permitted to change the actual marks achieved on a module.

5.7 Progression

5.7.1 Progression General

The Progression and Award Board will ensure that the progression outcomes for students' are recorded to determine the individual student's next study pattern, whether in the coming semester or the subsequent semester.

5.7.2 Failure and Condonation

The decision whether to fail a student or grant condonement, provided the conditions specified in the UCEM regulations are satisfied, is a matter of discretion for the Progression and Awards Board. For the benefit of internal and external members of the Board, the Chair should confirm at the start of the meeting the factors and evidence which the Board will consider in exercising discretion. The Board must ensure that such discretion is exercised fairly and consistently between students, and that the factors taken into account in making the decision are recorded in the minutes of the Board.

5.7.3 Recording of Decisions

The decisions of the Progression and Awards Board must be recorded on the Official Student List which constitutes the official record. The Student List, or group of lists considered at the same board, must be approved by the Chair of the Board and the External Examiner(s).

If an External Examiner is unable to attend the meeting in person, the Student List must be sent to the External Examiner for approval after the meeting.

The results confirmed by the Progression and Awards Board are recorded on the Student List and will be recorded in SITS.

5.8 Minutes

It is the responsibility of the Chair of the Progression and Award Board to ensure that the meeting and decisions reached are formally recorded in the minutes.

The Chair is responsible for approving a copy of the minutes of the Progression and Award Board.

5.8.1 Communication of Results

Results of the decisions of Module and Progression and Award Boards must be communicated securely to students by the relevant deadline.

All candidates reaching the end of a programme leading to an award will receive a Diploma Supplement.

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5.9 Module and Progression and Award Board Minutes

The minutes of Module and Progression and Award Boards must be capable of demonstrating that the Board acted in a fair and impartial manner and in accordance with UCEM regulations and codes of practice.

It should also be borne in mind that under Data Protection Act, students may have a right under certain circumstances to see any minutes of discussions regarding them.

The minutes should record where relevant individual circumstances were raised at the Board and considered, and the outcome. This should include mention of performance affected by external events, including instances where an examination was disrupted.

Where relevant at any point in the meeting reference must be made in the minutes to any guidance or regulations consulted or invoked.

The minutes must record the discussion and outcome for any borderline students.

The minutes must record the outcome of any vote during the meeting.

Where discussion of individual students is necessary the minutes must record the candidate number of the student, and the final decision reached.

The minutes must record the comments of the External Examiners and Programme/Module leaders about the programme or the modules and the performance of the students.

The Module Board paperwork and Student Lists which are attached to the minutes must record a decision in respect of every student.

Minutes should never be verbatim or attribute comments to individual members of staff.

5.10 Module Board Minutes

Module Board minutes **must** include the following information:

- Title (e.g. Module Board for April Semester modules at stage 1 on the BSc)
- Date
- Those present
- Apologies received
- Any declaration of conflict of interest
- A report of any Chair's action since the previous meeting
- A summary of any issues with the Module that required consideration
- Confirmation that moderation has occurred
- A summary of any feedback provided by the Internal and External Examiners
- The attachment of the Module Board paperwork to verify the consideration of each student
- Date of next meeting.

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5.11 Progression and Award Board Minutes

Progression and Award Board minutes **must** include the following information:

- Title – e.g. Progression and Award Board for the UCEM MSc Programme
- Date
- Those present
- Apologies received
- Any declaration of conflict of interest
- A report of any Chair's action since the previous meeting
- A summary of each student case (factors/evidence considered, and decision reached) involving failure, condonation, borderlines cases
- A summary of any feedback provided by the Internal and External Examiners
- The attachment of the Student List to verify the consideration of each student
- Date of next meeting.

6. Associated documentation:

Board of Examiners Supplement: Guidance and denominators for MABs and PABs.