

# Annual Course Monitoring and Exam Board Procedures

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## Background

This document aims to provide a framework for Annual Course Monitoring (ACM) and Exam Boards to operate within with regards to identifying, investigating, and resolving issues which come up at the exam boards. A three stage process is proposed which allows the initial identification of issues to be drawn widely, a review of the courses which are identified is then carried out, and finally, if required, a proposal for courses of action is identified.

## Identification of courses

In drawing up a scheme to be able to mitigate against adverse situations, it is important to be able to identify courses where the results fall outside the expected range. This may be for number of reasons and a number of criteria are proposed which would trigger further investigation

Courses which are identified by any of the following metrics should be further investigated:

- average (excluding students graded CR and CW but including those students who were awarded a grade H) >70% or <50%, or the grade point average >17.5 or < 11.5<sup>1</sup>;
- average has changed by more than 10% in a single year, or GPA changed by more than 3;
- standard deviation of the percentage mark is < 10, or the standard deviation of the Grade Points is < 3 (need to check correlation and values here);
- percentage of students achieving a grade A1–D3 pass is < 75%;
- poor student feedback on the course<sup>2</sup>;
- no student feedback for the course completed;
- students have raised significant issues about the course either through the Staff Student Liaison Committee (SSLC), or direct emails to the course lecturers, course coordinators, Head of Discipline, Convener of Learning and Teaching or Head of School.

## Further investigation

Where a course has been identified above further investigation should be undertaken, preferably before the exam board and ACM board, to identify whether there is a significant issue that requires action. During this process the relevant HoDs should be consulted.

## Outcomes

When an investigation has been completed there are a range of outcomes that can be decided upon. In most cases it is expected that no immediate action will be necessary other than standard

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<sup>1</sup> It is expected that this should apply to components of assessment as well the overall assessment in future.

<sup>2</sup> It is suggested that a threshold for this could be < 50% students completing the student feedback form give agree or strongly agree to the overall rating of the course in future.

reflection on the course with changes implemented the following year. The following outcomes may be decided upon:

- Where there is no evidence of any issues affecting student performance in the assessment and no valid concerns have been raised by students, then no action should be taken for the current results. Where the results for a course are persistently outwith the norms detailed above, the course lecturers or course coordinators will be asked to consider altering the delivery or the assessment of the course to bring the course within the accepted norms. The requirement for such action will be identified to the internal board. The actions taken should be decided upon by the course lecturers in consultation with the relevant HoDs;
- Where there is evidence of issues affecting the student performance in the assessment, or valid concerns have been raised by students, then an assessment of the severity of the issue needs to be made. Where possible, the External Examiner should also be consulted;
  - If the issue is not considered significant, then a note to this effect should be included in the minutes of the Exam Board.
  - In the rare situations where the issue is considered significant then the board must decide upon an appropriate course of action. Whilst there is no definitive list of significant issues, examples of cases which would be regarded as significant include:
    - assessment not in agreement with published assessment;
    - incorrect procedures in assessment;
    - changes to assessment which have not been adequately communicated to students;
    - severe disruption in the delivery of the course
  - The courses of action available to Boards include:
    - a decision to remove a component of the assessment and recalculate the overall grade based upon the remaining components;
    - a decision to nullify the assessment or component of assessment and require all students to retake the assessment or component of assessment;
    - a decision to publish the results as they stand, but to note the concerns raised and relax the progression requirements or remove the result from an overall calculation;
    - a decision to award an ungraded credit for the course;
    - a decision to defer the publication of the results pending further consultation on action. This may include the holding of a whole School Board where consideration may be given to using a different grade mapping.
- If the investigation was as a result of an issue raised by students, then they should be contacted with an explanation that their concerns have been considered, the External Examiner consulted, and appropriate action taken over the grading for the course.