

## Section 3: General assessment regulations for taught programmes

### 1. Authority

1.1 The Academic Board is responsible for all teaching, assessment and research undertaken within the School and the School's academic reputation. The authority to confer and revoke the following awards lies with Academic Board:\*

*\* The Academic Board will delegate its authority to ratify individual awards to the School Board of Examiners.*

Approved degrees and their associated exit awards of the Guildhall School of Music & Drama:

- BA in Acting
- BA in Production Arts
- BA in Digital Design and Production
- BA in Performance Design
- BMus
- PGCert in Performance Teaching
- MMus
- MPerf (Guildhall Artist)
- MComp (Guildhall Artist)
- MA in Music Therapy
- MA in Opera Making & Writing
- MA in Collaborative Performance Making
- Artist Diploma

Approved non-degree awards:

- AGSM (Associate of the Guildhall School)
- Advanced Certificate
- Short Term Music Programme

1.2 City University London, as validator, has oversight of the School's research degree programme and the awards of MPhil, DMus and PhD.

1.3 The Academic Board may consider (and recommend to the relevant validating institution where relevant) the revocation of any award if it is discovered at any time and proved to the satisfaction of the Academic Board that:

- a) there was a significant administrative error in the decision-making process leading to the award; or
- b) subsequent to award, relevant and significant information, which was unavailable at the time the award decision was made, determines that a student's classification and/or award should be altered.

## **2. Principles of assessment**

### 2.1 Assessment will be:

- related to the learning outcomes specified in the associated programme/module specification;
- rigorous and designed to support high standards;
- transparent in process;
- equitable in both design and operation;
- varied, both supporting individual development (formative) and evaluating individual achievement (summative);
- reliable.

### 2.2 In furtherance of these principles, the School will:

- have regard to the Office for Students' (OfS) *Regulatory Framework for Higher Education in England*;
- facilitate the maintenance of standards in awards by ensuring that external scrutiny of its programmes of study is undertaken through the appointment of External Examiners;
- ensure that, wherever practicable, all initial assessment decisions involve two or more examiners acting together either via panel assessment, double marking or sample moderation;
- ensure that the criteria for the assessment of awards are kept under review;
- have in place procedures for the consideration of extenuating circumstances;
- ensure that proper mechanisms exist for the resolution of complaints and appeals of an academic nature;
- establish regulations and procedures for dealing with misconduct of an academic nature, specifically that concerning examinations and assessments and research;
- encourage students to participate in the improvement of teaching and assessment practices in the School by facilitating arrangements for obtaining and considering student feedback;
- have regard to the rules of any validating or external professional accrediting body.

## **3. Appointment of External Examiners & Specialist External Assessors**

3.1 External Examiners will be appointed by the Academic Board following consultation with the Programme Board in accordance with the procedures approved by the Academic Board.

3.2 The duties of an External Examiner will be prescribed by the School or validating body (for research degrees) but will include:

- familiarisation with School assessment procedures and criteria;

- taking an overview of assessment incorporating, as appropriate, moderation, attendance at assessment events, review of recordings of assessment events, review of marked coursework, and monitoring of assessment procedures;
- attendance at the Programme Assessment Board (taught programmes);
- submission of an annual report (taught programmes).

3.3 Specialist external assessors for Music will be appointed by the Music Programme Board under delegated powers from the Academic Board. Appointments will be considered on an annual basis at the summer-term Programme Board.

3.4 The appointment of a specialist external assessor will be determined by the individual's professional standing in the relevant Principal Study area\*. The Music Programme Board may exclude or terminate an appointment where:

- i. an assessor has been a teacher of the student being examined in the last two years;
- ii. an assessor has served for more than four years in a row (reappointment may not occur until a period of two years has elapsed);
- iii. an assessor is an External Examiner for the School or has previously served as an External Examiner for the School within the last two years.

\* *e.g. institutional affiliations, recent high-profile engagements.*

3.5 The duties of a Specialist External Assessor are:

- familiarisation with School assessment procedures and criteria;
- attendance at specified assessment events;
- contributing to panel discussions and arriving at an agreed final mark;
- submission of written feedback for the student being assessed.

## **4. Setting of assessment**

4.1 The methods of assessment will be listed for each module in the module specification. Students will be entitled to be examined in accordance with the module specification extant at the time of annual enrolment.

4.2 External Examiners will be required to comment on the validity of the assessment methodology in their annual report.

4.3 A Programme Assessment Board may recommend exceptionally to the School Board of Examiners or its successor that provision is made for a student to undertake an alternative form of assessment where it is impracticable for the student to be assessed or reassessed in the prescribed elements and/or methods of the examination. However, a student given alternative arrangements shall be assessed on equal terms with other students.

## 5. Attendance at examinations & submission of coursework

5.1 Students are required to attend all scheduled assessment events. Non-attendance without prior approval or good cause (see 5.6) will result in a mark of zero being awarded.

5.2 A student may be excluded by the Head of Department from an assessment event/component where the assessment event/component is a performance and the student has either not participated in the relevant rehearsals, has not participated in the planning and preparation activities or has not complied with health and safety expectations. Exclusion from an assessment may impact the overall assessment and programme mark.

5.3 Students are required to submit coursework by no later than the dates published in the relevant programme or departmental handbooks or other communicate. Late submission, for assessments submitted as a first attempt, will be subject to an escalating penalty (as detailed in (b) to (c) below and non-submission after 4:00pm on the Friday of the submission week without good cause will result in a mark of zero being awarded. Pass/Fail assessments will be considered a fail if submitted after the deadline. As resits are already capped at the pass mark, assessments submitted at resit must be submitted on the due date; a late submission will be considered a non-submission and a mark of zero awarded.

(a) Submissions will normally be scheduled to fall on a Monday; 4pm for all departments, and 10am for Music.\*

*\* Any submission after the published time will count as a Tuesday submission. Similarly, any submission received after 4.00pm or 10am (according to department deadline) on Tuesday will count as a Wednesday etc, and will receive the commensurate penalty for that day. With the agreement of the department, hard copy submission may follow electronic submission where both are required. All times are UK time.*

### At the first attempt

(b) If the deadline is missed, the penalties for late submission on the same week will be as follows:

- Hand in on Tuesday: Deduct 5 percentage points\*, but not below minimum pass (40 or 50) if a pass.
- Hand in on Wednesday: Deduct 10 percentage points, but not below minimum pass (40 or 50) if a pass.
- Hand in on Thursday: Deduct 15 percentage points, but not below minimum pass (40 or 50) if a pass.\*
- Hand in on Friday: Deduct 20 percentage points, but not below minimum pass (40 or 50) if a pass.

*\* A percentage point relates to point on a marking scale of one to one hundred and not a percentage of a mark on a different scale.*

(c) Failure to hand in work by 4.00pm for all departments, or 10am in Music, on the Friday of the submission week will be considered a fail and a resit fee will apply for resubmission.

5.4 A student may not repeat a module already taken as part of a different programme of study or submit the same piece of work, or present the same piece for performance, for more than one module or module component. Neither may a student count a formal assessment event towards more than one module or module component

5.5 A student is responsible for their own health and wellbeing. If a student submits coursework or attends an assessment event (e.g. recital) they are declaring that they are fit (physically and emotionally) to take that assessment. Therefore, if a student feels that their personal circumstances are seriously affecting their ability to prepare for, or take an assessment, they should seek a deferral under 5.7.

5.6 A significant personal, medical, or family problem that was unplanned and unforeseen and is outside of a student's control that is negatively affecting their academic performance is known as a 'personal extenuating circumstance'. Holiday arrangements will not be accepted as an exceptional circumstance. A professional extenuating circumstance is a performance opportunity (or associated rehearsal) relevant to a student's programme that creates a clash with a scheduled assessment. The demands or stresses of employment will not be considered a professional extenuating circumstance.

5.7 The rescheduling (deferral) of an examination or the extension of a deadline may be granted for extenuating circumstances.

- i. In the case of a medical reason, a certificate from a medical practitioner\* must be submitted at the first opportunity along with the relevant proforma. Self-certification will not be acceptable except where special circumstances apply (e.g. Covid-19).
- ii. In the case of professional reasons, students must seek permission in advance using the relevant form (as detailed in the relevant programme handbook). In general, all extensions and rescheduling for professional reasons will normally be required at least a week in advance of the original date.

Any deferral granted prior to the Extenuating Circumstances Panel will be subject to confirmation by the Panel (see 5.9 below).

*\* A current medical certificate from one of the following (or their overseas equivalent) will be acceptable, (i) a practitioner recognised by the GMC, GDC or HCPC, or (ii) a nurse practitioner recognised by the NMC. In the case of mental health, confirmation may be required of a recognised mental health practitioner; a mental health nurse, a psychiatrist or psychotherapist/counsellor registered with a recognised national body.*

5.8 An assessment may only be deferred once for medical reasons unless there are exceptional circumstances. A request for a second deferral will need to be considered by the full Extenuating Circumstances Panel with supporting documentation.

## Extenuating Circumstances Panel

5.9 An Extenuating Circumstances Panel will be established to:

- i. evaluate extenuating circumstances submissions made prior to a scheduled assessment event or deadline for confirmation or alteration of decisions to defer;
- ii. monitor the approval of extension requests to ensure a consistent approach across departments;
- iii. consider extenuating circumstances submissions made after the scheduled assessment event or deadline with a view to recommending to the Programme Assessment Board retrospective approval of deferral;\*
- iv. consider extenuating circumstances submissions made after the scheduled assessment event or deadline with a view to recommending to the Programme Assessment Board that consideration be exercised in the determining of a student's progression or award classification;
- v. convene as required to consider any appeals on grounds of extenuating circumstances which have been referred back to the Extenuating Circumstances Panel for consideration following an appeal.

*\* A minor illness that would not normally prevent a professional recital from proceeding will not be grounds for a deferral, or grounds for exercising discretion for an award classification.*

5.10 The Extenuating Circumstance panel members will comprise:

- Chair: A Programme Leader or their teaching staff nominee (to alternate annually between the three Faculties)
- Six teaching staff members, two drawn from each Faculty.

The quorum shall be four; the Chair plus one academic staff member from each Faculty. A nominated member of professional services staff shall act as clerk to the panel.

5.11 The following staff members shall be in attendance to provide advice but shall not be involved in the academic decision making:

- Head of Student Services (or nominee)
- Head of Music Administration (or nominee)
- Head of Production Arts & Drama Administration (or nominee)
- Academic Registrar (or nominee)

5.12 Extenuating circumstances submitted after a School Assessment Board can only be considered under the academic appeal procedures (see 13 below).

5.13 Any adjustments in respect of extenuating circumstances will be mindful of the need to ensure the student can, under the revised arrangements, demonstrate the learning outcomes associated with the original assessment, and will also be mindful of the need to ensure parity in the assessment of all students. The approval of

adjustments to already approved adjustments will require a Special Scheme of Study.

## **6. Marking**

6.1 Assessment criteria for a programme of study will be drawn up at validation and reviewed as part of programme review. In designing criteria, consideration should always be given to current policy and practice.

6.2 All examiners and assessors will be given a copy of the relevant assessment criteria and the relevant classification bands.

6.3 All marking decisions will, where practicable, involve at least two examiners/assessors in addition to the assessment overview of an External Examiner. In practice this means for recitals and other practical examinations at least two examiners/assessors shall act together either in person as a panel or through the recording of the event and for written submissions, as a minimum, there will be one marker followed by internal moderation.

6.4 An examiner may not mark/assess the work of a student where they have, or have had, a close personal relationship with that student.\* Any potential conflict of interest should be reported by the examiner to their Head of Department prior to the marking taking place. The Head of Department, in consultation with the relevant Programme Leader, will determine whether there is a conflict of interest and, if so, the new arrangements for examining the student's work.

6.5 Feedback on assessment will be provided to the student within six weeks of the assessment event or the coursework deadline.

*\* A close personal relationship may be familial, business, or of an intimate nature. In the case of a non-familial relationship staff members are advised to consult the School's policy statement on relationships between staff and students.*

## **7. Resit**

7.1 A student will be permitted a maximum of two attempts at an assessment, an initial attempt and a resit.

7.2 Where a student has failed at a first attempt the Programme Assessment Board will determine the method and timing of the resit in line with the programme specification. The Programme Assessment Board will recommend to the School Board of Examiners (or its successor) whether resit will require the student's attendance at additional classes.

7.3 Where a student cannot be reassessed in the same format as at the first attempt due to practical difficulties related to performance and/or collaborative work, a Programme Assessment Board may recommend, where permitted in the programme documentation, an alternative form of assessment which equally meets the learning outcomes and standards. This should be in the format of a special

scheme of study (see also Regulation 5.1 Emergency provision in Section 1: General Provisions).

7.5 All resits will be capped at the pass mark.

7.6 Failure at resit, where a failed module or a failed component cannot be compensated, may lead to a recommendation of Fail/Withdraw to the relevant assessment board and termination of the student's student status.

## 8. Consideration of results

8.1 The module requirements for award, compensation provisions, the method for calculating the degree classification (or other award divisions), and the availability of an exit award (and award requirements) shall be detailed in the programme specification. However, the following minimum pass marks and classification boundaries shall apply:

a) Undergraduate awards (levels 4, 5 & 6)

<b>Award</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
First Class (or distinction)	70%
Upper Second Class (or merit)	60%
Lower Second Class	50%
Third Class (module pass/overall pass)	40%

b) Masters level awards (level 7)

<b>Award</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Distinction	70%
Merit	60%
Module Pass/Overall Pass	50%

8.2 The overall aggregate produced from the algorithm as detailed within the relevant programme specification will determine a student's classification. Where a student's overall mark falls within 0.5% of a higher classification, the higher classification will be awarded but the mark itself will not be rounded up. The treatment of borderline classifications will be applied consistently across the School's departments. This will be based on mathematical calculation alone and will have been determined prior to the meeting of the Assessment Board. Students' individual performance in modules, their profiles or trajectories will not factor in the calculation. Students whose overall final mark puts them at a Fail, but which falls within 0.5% of



an overall degree mark of 40 will not have their mark rounded up, but will be awarded a Third Class classification.

8.3 Where through illness or other grave cause there is insufficient evidence to determine the recommendation of an award for a student who has completed the whole or a substantial and sufficient part of their programme, they may be considered for the award of an Aegrotat degree without distinction or class, provided the examiners are satisfied that they would be unlikely to meet the requirements in future and would otherwise have reached the standard required to qualify for the award of the degree. The School Board of Examiners will normally consider such cases not later than the end of the academic year in which the student was last entered for examination. Once a student has been awarded an Aegrotat degree, they may not subsequently enter examinations with a view to gaining a classified degree.

#### **8.4 Chair's action**

The School Board of Examiners (or its successor) may authorise the Chair of the School Board of Examiners to take action on its behalf outside of a meeting in respect of matters urgent or non-contentious. Such matters include, but are not limited to, the approval of student progression or the award of a degree where results have missed being considered by the full Board due to deferral for extenuating circumstances. Chair's action will be reported to the next meeting.

#### **8.5 Conferment**

An academic award based on the successful completion of all assessment will be conferred by the signing of the official pass list for that award. Progression outcomes will also be confirmed by the signing of the official pass list. Any student with outstanding tuition related debt will not have their award conferred or their progression confirmed until the debt is cleared.

### **9. Academic misconduct (including plagiarism)**

9.1 Students are required to abide by the relevant general and specific regulations governing assessment. Failure to observe any of the regulations may result in a fixed penalty mark (e.g. where a recital is too long or short) or consideration under the academic misconduct procedure.

9.2 Any irregularity connected with a musical performance assessment, e.g. not abiding by time-limits, memory requirements etc., will be considered by the Music Department's Performance Irregularities Committee.

9.3 Any coursework presented for assessment may be submitted to a plagiarism/collusion detection service and the findings considered as part of an investigation under the academic misconduct procedure.

9.4 In the event of plagiarism or other academic misconduct, including the inappropriate use of 'Artificial Intelligence' (AI) software, being suspected in any assessment whether written or practical, for a taught programme, the matter will be reported to the Programme Leader for action. The Programme Leader will consult at

least one other teaching member of staff, and/or an external examiner, who will together determine whether there is, at first sight, an allegation of poor academic practice\* (which can be considered within the context of the assessment criteria) or academic misconduct (i.e. action, intentional or accidental, that produces an improper advantage for the student in relation to their assessment, or deliberately and unnecessarily disadvantages other students).

*\* Poor academic practice should only be considered where the level of suspected plagiarism is minor and it is believed that there was no intent to gain an unfair advantage. An example of poor academic practice would be where a student has clearly made an attempt to reference by providing details of their source in the bibliography and /or made an attempt of referencing within the text but has done so improperly. Poor academic practice should be only used where the plagiarism is confined to a small number of sentences. Use of Essay Mills would be considered academic misconduct. Where principle concepts/ideas and/or blocks of text are plagiarised, or there is no attempt at referencing, 9.5 should apply.*

9.5 (a) In the event of an allegation of academic misconduct the Chair of the Programme Assessment Board will be notified that an Academic Misconduct Panel is to be convened. The Panel will comprise three members of staff, two of whom must be from the teaching staff, with the Programme Leader or their deputy in the Chair.

(b) The Panel will require the attendance of the student (together with any friend). However, none of the Panel's proceedings will be invalidated or postponed by reason of the absence of the student provided that the student has been given five working days' written notice of the date and time of the panel's meeting; the written notice must include an outline of the matter under investigation and a copy of these regulations.

(c) At the meeting the student will be presented with the evidence of academic misconduct and will be asked to respond generally and specifically. The Panel, as part of its investigation, may test the student on their understanding of the subject matter included in the suspect work.

(d) The Panel shall investigate the case and decide whether academic misconduct has taken place. The Panel is not required to prove intent but instances of deliberate deception may carry more severe sanctions.

(e) Where the Panel determines that academic misconduct has occurred the Panel will follow the procedures and sanctions set out in 9.6 and 9.7 below and make an appropriate recommendation to the Programme Assessment Board. The Panel is not required to prove intent but instances of deliberate deception may carry more severe sanctions.

(f) The student's right of appeal is incorporated in the general request for a review of an Assessment Board's decision (see below).

9.6 Where academic misconduct has taken place, the Panel must decide an appropriate sanction to recommend to the Programme Assessment Board. Different

sanctions exist to accommodate different levels of academic misconduct. Recommendations as to sanctions should be based on the following facts:

1. The instance of the misconduct (first or subsequent).
2. The extent of the misconduct (major or minor). This is a decision based on academic judgement.
3. Whether the misconduct was deliberately plagiarised.

In addition, the following circumstances may influence the choice of sanction:

1. The effect a sanction would have on the student's ability to enter their chosen profession.
2. The student's year of study.
3. The nature of the module (number of credits, structure, aggregation formula).
4. Any extenuating or mitigating circumstances.

The reasons for the recommendation must be clearly recorded. The Panel must also make clear the rationale for any deviations from sanctions that are the norm for a given type of misconduct.

9.7 The sanctions a Panel may recommend are:

- i. Minor first instance: marking work with appropriate mark reductions for affected sections (which may mean marking the work excluding the affected sections). In addition, a written warning may be given.
  - ii. Major first instance or subsequent minor instance: a fail (0%) for the assessment component with the right to remaining resit(s) retained (capped at the pass mark)
  - iii. Major first instance or subsequent instance (major or minor): a fail (0%) for the module with the right to remaining resit(s) retained (capped at the pass mark)
  - iv. Major first instance or subsequent instance (major or minor): a fail (0%) for the assessment component or module with the right to remaining resit(s) retained; however, although the student can gain the credit for the component or module they will not be given any marks for it
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- i. Subsequent instance (major or minor): a fail (0%) for the assessment component or module with the right to remaining resit(s) retained (capped at pass mark) but where the student's marks in other assessments in the same diet are capped

9.8 Where academic misconduct has occurred and a student is given the opportunity to redeem the assessment, the fail mark (0%) will be carried forward for use in any award/progression calculation. However, the panel will have regard to the overall impact of this on the student's degree result.

## 10. Publication of results & transcripts

10.1 Students will be notified of the decision of a School Board of Examiners within 5 working days of its decision or ratification by the validating body (only where applicable). The recommendations of a Programme Assessment Board may be communicated to a student prior to the School Board of Examiners provided that they are clearly marked as 'recommendations'.

10.2 Marks will be released only to the relevant student except where disclosure to a third party is a contractual requirement of the student's sponsorship (e.g. Student Finance England and Research Councils).

10.3 Award classifications will not be made public but prizes and the achievement of a distinction for a final recital will be indicated in graduation documentation which will be in the public domain. All students with an academic award will be included in the graduation programme for that year.

10.4 The School complies with the Data Protection Act 2018 which establish legal rights for individuals with regard to the processing of personal data, including assessment marks and results. However, the School reserves the right to withhold a transcript, certificate and/or invitation to a graduation ceremony where a student is in debt to the School.\*

*\* However, results will be sent out and degree results will be confirmed with prospective employers or institutions.*

## 11. Academic Appeals

A student may request a review of a School Board of Examiner decision in accordance with the procedures set out below but in no instance will a challenge to the academic judgement of the examiners, embodied in the decision of a Board, be considered. Research students should submit an academic appeal under Regulation 21B of City, University of London's regulations.

### 11.1 Definition of an Academic Appeal

An academic appeal is a request from a student or former student (the "appellant") to review a decision of the School Board of Examiners (e.g. a review of a ratified award classification), against strict criteria. Complaints about the provision of services (academic and non-academic) and/or facilities shall be considered under the *Student Complaints Procedure* and students are encouraged to use the *Complaints Procedure* during the course of their programme to resolve, at the earliest opportunity, any issues affecting their studies.

### 11.2 Criteria for an Academic Appeal

One or both of the following grounds for appeal must be demonstrated for an appeal to be heard:

- i. that there was a material error, either in the conduct or the assessment itself, or in the proceedings of the Programme Assessment Board or School Board of Examiners, which materially affected the Board's decision;

and/or

- ii. that the appellant was subject to extenuating circumstances at the time of the assessment:
  - which meet the definition of extenuating circumstances as set out in the Assessment Regulations, and
  - were unknown to the Programme Assessment Board, and
  - were not made known to the Programme Assessment Board via the Extenuating Circumstances Regulations for a demonstrated, valid and over-riding reason; and
  - which are verifiable by way of a doctor's certificate or other formal documentation.

### **11.3 Invalid grounds for Academic Appeals**

There is no appeal against the academic or professional judgement of the examiners in relation to marks, grades, progression or award.

The School publishes all its assessment policies and procedures on MyGuildhall, including the extenuating circumstances procedures, and draws the student's attention to these matters via the *Student Handbook* and the Programme Handbooks. The School also communicates with students on a regular basis via their School email account. It is a student's responsibility to seek clarification on any instruction or procedure they do not understand prior to the assessment; failure to understand an instruction, where no attempt had been made to clarify that instruction, will not be considered a ground for appeal.

### **11.4 Fit to sit**

A student is responsible for their own health and wellbeing. Except in the most extraordinary cases, a student undertaking an assessment is declaring that they are fit (physically and emotionally) to take that assessment and may not subsequently claim extenuating circumstances on these grounds.

## **12. Submission of Appeals**

12.1 The appeal deadline will be set by the School Board of Examiners, and will be 15 working days (i.e. excluding all weekends and bank holidays) from the release of results following the School Board of Examiners. The appeal deadline will be included in each student's results letter which will also include information about where to find these regulations and the AP1 appeal form.

The Academic Appeal Form AP1 will be available from Registry and downloadable from the Registry pages on MyGuildhall. Appellants will be able to seek procedural

advice from Registry. An appellant will be able to seek advocacy and support from the Students' Union.

12.2 All appeals must be submitted in writing by the published deadline, using the AP1 form, clearly stating the grounds for appeal and accompanied by supporting documentary evidence. No correspondence will be entered into in respect of incomplete applications. Incomplete applications will be considered on their merits as presented on the deadline.

Appellants are advised to use secure guaranteed or recorded delivery and retain proof of postage if not using email.

12.3 Academic appeals submitted outside the relevant timescales will not normally be considered. Exceptionally, a late application will be considered if there are clear circumstances that it was not possible for the appellant to meet the deadline. If an appellant is awaiting documentation from a third party, it is their responsibility to ensure it is available by the deadline or to notify in advance of the deadline of any potential problems in order that a deadline extension can be negotiated.

Holiday arrangements will not be accepted as an exceptional circumstance.

12.4 All submissions will be considered in strict confidence on a "need to know" basis and in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018.

12.5 An acknowledgement of the appeal will normally be made within 5 working days of the appeals deadline which should be retained as evidence that the appeal was submitted.

### **13. Academic Appeal Process**

The Academic Appeal process will have three stages:

Stage One: Initial consideration.

Stage Two: Referral to Academic Appeals Panel or Referral to Extenuating Circumstances Panel

Stage Three: Formal review

### **14. Stage One: Initial consideration**

14.1 Following the submission of an academic appeal, further investigation will be undertaken to make an initial determination on whether sufficient information has been provided on one or both of the grounds for appeal supporting further consideration.

14.2 Where insufficient evidence has been provided the appellant will be notified within 15 working days of the appeal deadline, with the reason why their appeal has

been rejected. An appellant whose appeal has been rejected may be entitled to request a review of that decision under Section 18 of these Regulations.

14.3 Where sufficient evidence has been provided supporting further consideration, the appeal will be passed to the relevant Programme Leader and the Chair of the Music or Production Arts & Drama Assessment Board with one of the following recommendations:

- i. in the event of a material administrative error connected with the calculation of marks and/or award, that immediate corrective action can be taken by the Chair of the Music/Production Arts & Drama Assessment Board.

Or

- ii. for appeals made on the grounds of material error, or appeals made for mixed reasons (material error and extenuating circumstances), referral to the next Academic Appeals Panel meeting (usually within 15 working days of the appeals submission deadline) and/or immediate corrective action.

Or

- iii. for appeals made on the grounds of extenuating circumstances only, referral to the next Extenuating Circumstances Panel for consideration in accordance with Regulation 8.8 above.

14.4 Where sufficient evidence has been provided, the appellant will be informed, normally within 15 working days of the appeals deadline, either of the corrective action to be taken or the date of the Appeals Panel or the Extenuating Circumstances Panel.

## **15. Stage Two: Referral to Academic Appeals Panel**

15.1 The Academic Appeals Panel shall comprise:

- i. The Chair or Deputy Chair of the Music or Production Arts and Drama Assessment Board (not from the appellant's home faculty);
- ii. Two academic members of staff drawn from the Board of Examiners or their nominee other than the appellant's home department
- iii. The Students' Union President\* or their student nominee; and for appeals stating both material error and extenuating circumstances,
- iv. The Head of Student Services or their nominee.

*\* The President will be excused where they know the appellant well or if the appellant is a member of the SU Cabinet.*

A member of professional services staff will act as clerk to the Panel who will make a record of the meeting.

15.2 The quorum shall be three and shall include the student panel member and in the case of a mixed appeal shall include the Head of Student Services or their nominee.

15.3 The appellant will be invited to attend the appeal panel hearing and can opt to be accompanied by one other person (name and relationship to appellant to be advised at least two days before the panel hearing). However, the panel meeting will not be invalidated or postponed by reason of the absence of the appellant provided that the panel meets within the published timescale and the appellant has been given five working days' notice of the date and time of the panel meeting.

15.4 The Programme Leader or their nominee will be invited to attend to the panel meeting or submit a written response to the appellant's appeal. The Chair of the Appeal Panel may call other parties to provide specialist advice to the panel on regulatory, equality or other issues.

15.5 The Academic Appeals Panel will consider the written appeal submitted by the appellant and any written response from the relevant Programme Leader. The appellant will be invited to make a short statement and the Programme Leader will be invited to make a short statement. The Panel, via the Chair, may ask questions of the appellant or the Programme Leader. The appellant and Programme Leader will be invited to make a concluding statement.

15.6 The Panel will deliberate in private and will determine whether one or both of the grounds for appeal have been met. The standard of evidence shall be on the balance of probabilities.

15.7 In the event that the grounds for appeal have not been met the appeal will be rejected and clear reasons will be provided to the appellant in writing.

15.8 In the event that one or both of the grounds for appeal have been met the Panel will determine the significance of this determination on the appellant's assessment and will make one of the following recommendations to the Chair of the School Board of Examiners;

- Allow the appellant to resit some or all failed assessments as a first or additional attempt, where necessary reinstating them on the programme;

OR

- Refer the case back to the Assessment Board with commentary.

The panel may not recommend any alteration to the original marks.

Additionally, the panel may make other recommendations for the improvement of processes, procedure or policy and this will be reported to the School Board of Examiners and the Academic Board.



15.9 The appellant will be notified in writing of the decision of the Appeal Panel, including the reasons for that decision, within 5 working days of the panel meeting. In the event that the appeal is referred back to the School Board of Examiners with commentary, the appellant will be advised of the date of the next School Board of Examiners.

## **16. Stage Two: Referral to Extenuating Circumstances Panel (ECP)**

16.1 Where an appeal has been referred to the Extenuating Circumstances Panel, consideration of the appeal will take place at the next scheduled meeting in accordance with Regulation 5.8 above.

16.2 The Panel will consider those extenuating circumstances directly relevant to the assessment event(s) that are the subject of the appeal and will determine, had the Panel been presented with the extenuating circumstances at the appropriate time, which of the following recommendations to the Programme Assessment Board would apply:

- i. Retrospective deferral of the assessment event (or extension to a deadline),
- ii. Consideration be exercised in the determination of the progression or award classification,
- iii. No action.

16.3 The recommendations of the ECP will be considered at the next scheduled meeting of the Programme Assessment Board. The appellant will be notified in writing of the recommendation of the ECP within 5 working days of the panel meeting and the scheduled date of the Board to consider the recommendation.

## **17. Conclusion of Stage Two**

17.1 Following the conclusion of Stage Two of the appeal process including any subsequent referral to the School Board of Examiners, the appellant will be written to and alerted of their rights in respect of Stage Three.

## **18. Stage Three: Formal review**

18.1 An appellant may request a formal review where they can demonstrate that there were significant procedural irregularities on the part of the School in the processing of the appeal (at stage 1 or 2) or in the conduct of the Appeal Panel or the Extenuating Circumstances Panel, or the Programme Assessment Board or the School Board of Examiners considering the recommendation from either panel (e.g. evidence of lack of independence of judgment in the proceedings).

18.2 A request for a review must be submitted in writing, using the AP2 form, within 10 working days (excluding weekends and bank holidays) providing a reasoned argument for the request and accompanied by supporting documentation. No correspondence will be entered into in respect of incomplete applications. Incomplete applications will be considered on their merits as presented on the deadline.

18.3 On receipt of a request for a formal review, Registry will send the appellant a receipt and forward the review documentation and any related documentation relating to the appeal (e.g. minutes of panel meetings or assessment boards) to the review team for consideration. The Review Team will comprise;

- Senior member of teaching staff without previous involvement in the appeal process, nominated by the Principal
- Member of the Board of Governors nominated by the Principal
- Academic Registrar or other senior administrator nominated by the Academic Registrar

18.4 The review will normally be paper-based, but the Principal's nominee will have the absolute discretion to invite the appellant and any other interested party to be interviewed by the Review Team (e.g. where the interpretation of evidence is disputed). In such an instance the appellant will be given at least 5 working days' notice of the meeting, but the meeting will not be invalidated or postponed by reason of the absence of the appellant provided that the notice has been given.

18.5 The Review Team will consider whether the ground for review has been demonstrated and will determine one of the following courses of action:

- i. where the ground for review has not been demonstrated, that the matter be deemed closed. The appellant will be issued with a completion of procedures letter.
- or
- ii. where there is evidence of significant procedural irregularities, that the matter is referred back to the point in the process where the error occurred, and processed a fresh from that point onwards, with clear instructions from the Review Team.

Additionally, the Review Team may make other recommendations for the improvement of processes, procedure or policy and this will be reported to the School Board of Examiners and the Academic Board.

18.6 The decision of the Review Team will be communicated in writing to the appellant and the relevant Chairs within 15 working days of receipt of the request for formal review.

18.7 A completion of procedures letter will be issued once the outcome of any referral under 5.9 (iii) or (iv) has been determined. Once all internal procedures have been exhausted if the student remains dissatisfied with the outcome, they have the right to apply to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) for Higher Education, see Section 5.

## **19. Student Status**

Until an appeal has been resolved, the original decision of the School Board of Examiners and the associated student status of the appellant will remain unchanged. Only students who have already satisfied the examiners in respect of their progression will be allowed to progress, an appellant who is appealing against a Fail/Withdraw decision will not be permitted to enrol unless or until their status is changed as a result of a successful appeal.

## **20. Reporting requirements**

An annual report outlining the number and nature of the Academic Appeals considered at all stages of the procedure will be submitted to the School Board of Examiners and the Academic Board for its annual report to the Board of Governors. The report shall also include reference to any additional recommendations on process, policy and/or procedure.