

## **Guide to the Code of Assessment – 3**

### **Reassessment**

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### 3.1 Normal provision for reassessment

§16.6 In §16.7 - §16.8, the 'threshold grade' shall, unless otherwise specified in the regulations for a particular programme, be:

- a) for undergraduate programmes, grade D;
- b) for programmes governed by the generic regulations for taught masters degrees and for programmes governed by the generic regulations for postgraduate certificates and diplomas, grade C.

The following regulations make use – for the sake of succinctness – of a so-called 'threshold grade'. Students achieving this grade will not normally be entitled to retake an assessment while students not achieving this grade will – subject to the exceptions set out below – expect an opportunity to resit an examination and/or otherwise resubmit work for assessment. The threshold grade on undergraduate programmes is D, and on taught masters and postgraduate certificate and diploma programmes it is C.<sup>1</sup>

### 3.2 Opportunities for reassessment and exceptions to normal provision

§16.7 A candidate who, by the end of the course, has failed to attain the threshold grade in that course shall normally be afforded the opportunity described in §16.8 to improve that assessment result. There shall be no such opportunity in respect of courses which contribute to the candidate's honours classification except where permitted under the regulations governing a particular award; in such cases the original grade only shall contribute to the honours classification.

§16.8 A candidate who has failed to attain the threshold grade shall, subject to the provision of §16.9, be permitted one further opportunity to attempt each component of the assessment.<sup>2</sup> This opportunity will be afforded within the same session as the first attempt at the component. In respect of each component, the assessment offered at this opportunity must be in essentially the same form as the assessment attempted by the candidate at their first attempt and must carry the same weighting within the scheme of assessment for the course as that first attempt. A second further opportunity to attempt the component of assessment shall not be available as a matter of right but may be permitted at the discretion of the College responsible for the programme in accordance with its policies and procedures which shall be published in the relevant course documentation.

§16.9 Exceptionally, the opportunity to submit coursework for assessment provided for in §16.8 may not be available to a candidate. This will only be the case where it is not possible to replicate the coursework for the purpose of reassessment. This situation may arise from the nature of the coursework, the context in which it may be generated, and the integrity of the assessment as a whole. The decision that it is not possible to replicate coursework must be approved by the Head of School and details of coursework in which it is considered to be impossible to generate a reassessment must be clearly set out in the relevant course documentation.

§16.10 Where, under §16.45 - §16.53, a Board of Examiners is satisfied that a candidate has been prevented by good cause from completing an assessment, that assessment shall not be counted as an attempt made by, or available to, the candidate.

The right to reassessment extends to all assessments in any course in which the student has failed to attain the threshold grade and not only to those assessments in which the student has achieved a result below this grade.

Honours students may not normally resit an Honours examination or resubmit work which will contribute to their Honours classification. Where there is special provision for resubmitting work – for example to satisfy professional requirements – only the original (first diet) grade will contribute to the Honours classification.

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<sup>1</sup> Students who have not attained the threshold grade include those awarded 'CW' because of a failure to satisfy minimum assessment submission requirements.

<sup>2</sup> This includes offering reassessment in sub-components. [Footnote in the Code.]

Non-Honours students will normally be allowed to resit each examination or resubmit a particular assignment for reassessment only once. However:

- Colleges may, as a matter of policy, and if so published in course information documents, permit students two reassessment opportunities.
- The calculation of the number of 'attempts' made by a student will not include any that a Board of Examiners has discounted on grounds of 'good cause' but will include any opportunity for reassessment that the student has not availed themselves of.

The right of students to resubmit coursework, or to submit it at a later date, may, for the reasons given in §16.9, be closely constrained. Any such limits must be published in course documentation. It may, for example, be impracticable for students to have the access to laboratory facilities they would require if they were allowed a later attempt at an experiment, and contributions to group work must necessarily be submitted as part of the group submission.

Where there are such constraints, course teams should consider whether it is possible to offer an alternative form of reassessment which would assess the same ILOs as the original work. In 'exceptional' cases a course may adopt a policy of not offering any opportunity to be reassessed in coursework. However, the Head of School is required to endorse such a policy at the stage of course approval. On such courses, students should be made aware that the grade achieved at their first attempt will be counted when aggregating to establish the overall course grade.

§16.11 Exceptionally, where a second or permitted subsequent attempt at an assessment is not available to the candidate until a subsequent academic session, the candidate shall not be entitled to assume that the content of the course will be unchanged, and it shall be the responsibility of the candidate, in conjunction with the School responsible for the course, to make appropriate preparation for that assessment.

While the regulation places a primary responsibility on individual students, Schools should be aware of any students who have registered for a course on an 'exams only' basis. These students should be informed of any changes to course content and advised of its timetable so that they might attend class meetings if they wish to do so. They should be permitted access to any associated Moodle provision and allowed to collect course handouts.

#### *The nature of reassessment: coursework*

Normally a student being reassessed on a coursework component will be required to complete a fresh piece of work rather than revising the original submission. It would not be appropriate to permit submission of revised work for 'standard' essay assignments in which students choose a question from a list presented by the lecturer, as all students in the cohort would have received grades/feedback on their essays before the re-assessment period. For some types of assessment, however, the practice of permitting re-assessment of coursework by re-working an original submission may be appropriate. For example, where the assignment was a student-chosen research topic, or an exercise involving personal reflection (such as a learning log).

Group work is normally identified on the course specification document as not suitable for re-assessment. However, there may be cases where group work leads to a wholly individual assessment submission (or a clearly defined sub-component which is individual). In these exceptional cases, re-assessment involving re-working of the original submission might be appropriate where the student had in fact engaged with the groupwork activity that led to completion of the individual submission.

### 3.3 Outcomes of reassessment

- §16.12 a) Unless otherwise specified in the regulations for a particular programme, the final grade awarded for a course following reassessment shall be calculated as follows:
- i) The best grades for each component of assessment will be used, and
  - ii) Where any coursework cannot be replicated the original grade for that component shall be used in the calculation.
- b) The grade so calculated will be published by Registry subject to the following provisions:
- i) for undergraduate programmes, the number of grade points derived from the final result for a course following reassessment shall be not more than 9;
  - ii) for programmes governed by the generic regulations for taught masters degrees and for postgraduate certificates and diplomas, the number of grade points derived from the final result for a course following reassessment shall be not more than 12; there shall be no capping in relation to reassessment of a Masters dissertation or other substantial independent work.

The 'final grade awarded' (§16.12 a)) will be that calculated when the best performances in each component of assessment are combined. This is what should be reported following the reassessment diet. Thus if a student performs worse in any component of assessment at the reassessment diet, the result from that component will never be reflected in what is reported to Registry. It also follows that the final course grade awarded will never be lower than that reported at the first diet, though it may be the same.

#### *Example 3.A*

In a level 2 course where there is an exam (weighted at 50% of the assessment) and coursework (also weighted at 50%), Karen achieves the following results:

Diet 1: exam F1 (5 grade point equivalent); coursework D1 (11 grade point equivalent). Her overall course grade returned to Registry for her first diet is E1  $((5 + 11)/2 = 8)$ . Karen has failed to achieve the D3 threshold so is eligible for reassessment and elects to retake both components.

Diet 2: exam C2 (13 grade point equivalent); coursework D3 (9 grade point equivalent).

The Code of Assessment says that the final course grade should be calculated using the best performance from each component of assessment. For Karen these are as follows: Exam C2 (from 2nd diet) and coursework D1 (from 1st diet). The final course grade to be reported to Registry is therefore C3  $((13 + 11) / 2 = 12)$ .

#### *Capping*

A limit is placed on the extent to which the performance carried forward for calculation of programme outcomes may be improved as a result of reassessment and we refer to this process as capping. Performance in undergraduate assessments is capped at the equivalent of Grade D3 and in postgraduate assessments at the equivalent of Grade C3 (except where degree regulations specify otherwise): the score derived from reassessed courses for undergraduate programmes is capped at 9 grade points, as per Schedule A of the Code, and this will be factored into the calculation of any undergraduate programme grade point averages; in taught postgraduate programmes, the score contributing to the grade point average required for final award or progression will be capped at 12 grade points as per Schedule A of the Code.

### Example 3.B

In one of her 20 credit level 1 courses Pam was awarded grade D1 for her essay (30% of the course assessment) and E2 in the examination which made up the remainder of the assessment. Her course grade was, therefore, E1.<sup>3</sup>

As Pam has failed to achieve the course threshold grade of D3, she is eligible to be reassessed in both the essay and the examination. She elects to be reassessed in the examination only. She achieves grade C2, thus raising her course grade to C3 which, according to Schedule A of the Code, corresponds to 12 grade points.<sup>4</sup>

Although this grade as well as the original will be recorded on Pam's transcript, the fact that it was achieved after reassessment means that she is allowed to take forward only 9 grade points per credit to the calculation of her GPA.

### Example 3.C

Peter achieved the same marks as Pam for his coursework and in the original examination. But, without being able to demonstrate good cause for failing to attend, he misses the resit examination. The final course grade awarded is the same as the grade reported at first diet and his original score is therefore retained, contributing 8 grade points to the calculation of his GPA.

### Example 3.D

Qingling is following a masters programme consisting of a dissertation (60 credits) and four courses each of 30 credits. Her grades in these courses were C2, C3, D1 and D2 (with grade points of 13, 12, 11 and 10). She elects to resit the examinations (but not the coursework) in the courses in which she failed to achieve the threshold C3 and improves the course grades to B3 and C1 (grade points of 15 and 14). However capping is applied and, when Qingling's grade point average is calculated, the scores 13, 12, 12 and 12 will be used.

## 3.4 Completing a non-honours graduating curriculum

§16.13 a) Further to §16.7, a candidate who, by the end of the course, requires an improved assessment result in order to complete a minimum graduating undergraduate non-honours curriculum in that academic session, shall normally be afforded the opportunity described in §16.8 irrespective of the result obtained on completion of the course. This entitlement to reassessment in courses where the threshold grade has been achieved at the first attempt shall be limited to courses totalling no more than 60 credits.

b) Notwithstanding §16.12, such a candidate shall be awarded the number of grade points corresponding to the final course result following reassessment for a total of no more than 60 credits. This entitlement applies regardless of the basis on which the candidate was permitted reassessment.

### Example 3.E

Rafael is hoping to graduate with an ordinary MA for which he must obtain 360 credits and achieve a GPA of at least 9.0.

Although he has been awarded grades of at least D3 for most of his courses, two 20 credit E2s reduced his GPA below 9.0. Despite having already achieved the normal threshold grade of D3 at the first attempt in each of two 20 credit History courses he may take the resit examinations. As a result, he is able to improve his grades in these courses to C2 and C1 which, according to Schedule A of the Code, correspond to grade points of 13 and 14.

<sup>3</sup> Worked examples of the calculation of course grades will be found in Chapter 2 of this Guide.

<sup>4</sup> Schedule A and its application are discussed in Chapter 2 of this Guide.

In this case Rafael's grade points will not be capped – recalculating his GPA, the two C grades bring his overall GPA above 9.0, and he is able to complete his graduating curriculum.

s.16.13 (b) notes that if a student in this situation is reassessed in courses where they had achieved the threshold grade (in accordance with §16.13 (a)) as well as in courses where they had not achieved the threshold grade (in accordance with s. 16.8), the grade points for up to 60 credits will be uncapped irrespective of whether eligibility for reassessment arose under §16.8 or §16.13 (a).

*Example 3.F*

Adil needs to improve his grade point average in order to graduate with an ordinary degree. At first diet he achieved overall course grades of D3 and D2 for courses W and X, and overall course grades of F1 and E2 for courses Y and Z (all courses worth 20 credits). He elects to resit an exam for course W and to resubmit coursework for course X (as permitted by §16.13(a)), and to resit the exams for courses Y and Z (as permitted by §16.8). Following reassessment he achieves the following final course grades:

Course W – D1	Course Y – C2
Course X – B3	Course Z – D2

The uncapped grade points derived from the best 60 credits can now contribute to his final grade point average (11, 15 and 13 from courses W, X and Y respectively). In other words, in identifying which 60 credits can be used, it is irrelevant whether the course threshold grade had been achieved at the first attempt.