

**Meeting of the Senatus Academic Policy and Regulations Committee (APRC)
Online meeting via Teams
Tuesday 8 August 2023, 11:00-12:30pm**

Minute

<p>Present: Dr Aidan Brown Dr Adam Bunni Professor Jamie Davies Dr Murray Earle Professor Patrick Hadoke (Convenor)</p> <p>Clair Halliday Carl Harper Karen Howie Professor Antony Maciocia Rachael Quirk Professor Tim Stratford Dr Uzma Tufail-Hanif Stephen Warrington (Deputy-Convener) Kirsty Woomble</p> <p>Substitute members present: Nichola Kett Isabel Lavers Dr Neil Lent Katy McPhail</p> <p>In attendance: Olivia Hayes (Minutes)</p> <p>Apologies: Philippa Burrell Professor Jeremy Crang Lisa Dawson Alexandra Laidlaw Callum Paterson Emily Taylor</p>	<p>Elected member of Senate (CSE) Head of Academic Policy and Regulation, Academic Services Dean of Taught Education (CMVM) Elected member of Senate (CAHSS) Director of Postgraduate Research and Early Career Research Experience (CMVM) The Advice Place, Deputy Manager Vice President Education, Students' Association Head of Digital Learning Applications and Media, ISG Dean of Postgraduate Research (CSE) Head of Taught Student Administration & Support (CAHSS) Dean of Learning and Teaching (CSE) Elected member of Senate (CMVM) Dean of Student Experience (CSE)</p> <p>Head of PGR Student Office (CAHSS)</p> <p>Interim Director, Academic Services, Registry Services Academic Administration Manager (CMVM) University Learning and Teaching (IAD) Deputy Head of Academic Affairs (CSE)</p> <p>Academic Policy Officer, Academic Services</p> <p>Head of Academic Administration (CMVM) Dean of Students (CAHSS) Academic Registrar, Registry Services Head of Academic Affairs (CSE) Academic Engagement Coordinator, Students' Association (Co-opted member) Dean of Quality Assurance and Curriculum Approval (CAHSS)</p>
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1. Welcome and Apologies

The Convener opened the meeting and extended his thanks to the Committee and substitute members for attending the first meeting of APRC in 2023/24, which is an additional meeting to consider the approach to resit assessment and application of temporary variations due to industrial action.

	<p>The Convener noted that Dr Aidan Brown, Dr Murray Earle and Dr Uzma Tufail-Hanif continue on APRC as elected members of Senate in 2023/24. Thanks were extended to the elected Senate members for their input so far and for their contributions in the year ahead.</p> <p>The Convener noted that formal welcome to new members joining the Committee will be held over to the first Ordinary meeting on 21 September.</p> <p>The Convener reminded members that the APRC Internal Effectiveness Review is currently underway and asked members to please submit their feedback by 5pm, Friday 11 August 2023.</p>
2.	<p>Minutes of previous meetings - APRC 23/24 1A For approval</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 June 2023 (enclosed) • 31 July 2023 (enclosed) <p>The Committee approved the minutes of the 30 June and 31 July meetings as presented and no objections were raised.</p>
3.	<p>Update on concessions related to industrial action – Verbal update To note</p> <p>There have been no further concessions relating to industrial action since the previous meeting of APRC on 31 July. The Convener noted that any concessions received will be handled in the manner previously agreed by the Committee.</p>
For approval	
4.	<p>Redeeming failure or missing credit for taught courses with delayed results - APRC 23/24 1B For approval</p> <p>Ahead of introduction of this item, the Convener noted that the Committee are asked to endorse the approach to resit assessment proposed in section 10 of the paper and to approve the proposed application of an existing variation to Taught Assessment Regulation 13 set out in section 15 of the paper.</p> <p>Dr Adam Bunni, Head of Academic Policy and Regulation introduced the item. He noted that the paper presents options regarding the redemption of failure or missing assessment for undergraduate students continuing their studies in 2023/24 who are found to have failed courses from 2022/23. This is possible where results have been delayed due to the marking and assessment boycott, or where students were granted null sits due to Special Circumstances. The paper proposes that Schools be permitted to exercise discretion over where these options are used, based on what is considered academically appropriate. The primary approach to redeeming failure will be based on resits taking place, within existing exam diet periods, but with an increased cohort of students which includes those students taking assessment to redeem failure from the previous academic year.</p> <p>The Committee considered Section 10 of the paper. The following points were raised in discussion:</p>

- There are concerns that an increased volume of assessment for students seeking to redeem failure alongside assessment in the next year of study may overburden students. Boards should give consideration to the timing of assessment for redeeming failure, this was flagged as a particular concern for outcomes published following the October Boards and where a resit is expected to take place in the December diet.
- Boards of Examiners will have discretion to determine whether a resit assessment or alternative assessment should take place and the timing of these. There is concern among some members that Board discretion will not account for the individual impact of whether a resit or alternative assessment is offered, in particular those with a greater volume of failed courses or caring responsibilities.
Other members noted that Boards should retain the discretion to balance mitigation measures alongside the requirement to maintain academic standards.
- There are a number of students who have been awarded a Null Sit but a Board of Examiners has not ratified the decision. Therefore, these students have not been able to take the resit assessment despite knowing they are required to do so.

The Committee endorsed section 10 as drafted and no objections were raised.

The Convener noted the comments raised regarding the motivation of Boards of Examiners. However, the responsibility for determining the format of assessment, and a Board's competency is deferred to Boards of Examiners who are trusted to make decisions as appropriate.

The Committee agreed that graduating students are additionally impacted by lengthy delays in confirming final results. Boards should be encouraged to set alternative assessments where possible to allow graduating students to make up missing credits as soon as possible and ahead of the usual assessment periods, particularly where these fall within Semester 2.

The Committee noted that the format of reassessment for redeeming failure is a decision which is within the gift of Boards of Examiners.

The Committee agreed that students redeeming failure should be given adequate notice of the format of assessments and sufficient time to prepare for resit or alternative assessments and deadlines should be set to reflect this.

The Committee considered section 15 of the paper. The following points were raised in discussion:

- Boards of Examiners are responsible for determining which higher level courses can be used to award passes for courses at a lower level, and determining where this is appropriate. This decision will be taken by Boards at the point where course results are confirmed and progression decisions are being made.
- It will be challenging for Schools to provide students with information on what courses can be taken to demonstrate achievement at the higher level in time for Semester 1 enrolment. Foundational work can be undertaken in Schools to determine what courses may be suitable to demonstrate achievement at the higher level; however, this information will not be required in time for the start of Semester 1.
- The guidance to Schools will recommend that the usual information be provided to students on course choices, and that the available options to redeem failure be confirmed to individual following the October Boards.
Due to the timing of course choices and October Boards, students are unlikely to have the information required to make an informed choice on whether they need

	<p>to redeem failure in 2023/24. It is acknowledged that some students will be dissatisfied that they were unaware of the ability to redeem failure with enrolment at a higher level. Equally, there is an unwelcome risk that students' course choices will be influenced by a desire to avoid further assessment at the lower level.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where possible, students should be offered a choice between being awarded a pass for achievement at a higher level, or taking a resit assessment. Students may prefer to have a numeric grade and mark on their transcript. The approach is likely to depend on whether a course is core or optional and the specific programme requirements. Schools are likely to need to offer resit assessments to students who either do not demonstrate achievement or do not take associated courses at the higher level. • The Committee acknowledged that a large amount of work surrounding marking, redeeming failure and administrative support for assessment is being carried forward from 2022/23 into 2023/24. The implementation of the proposal may require manual intervention of student records to allow pass/fail grades to be awarded where a numeric grade is usually given. • An upcoming workshop is being held with Central University staff, Colleges and a small number of School contacts to work through the practical application of the redeeming failure proposal. This workshop will help to identify gaps and further develop guidance for Schools and Boards of Examiners. <p>The Committee approved section 15 of the paper as presented and no objections were raised.</p> <p>The Committee agreed that Schools and Boards of Examiners should be strongly encouraged to take account of student preference when deciding whether to award a resit assessment or awarding a pass where the student demonstrates achievement at the higher level.</p> <p>The Committee support any actions that can be taken to reduce or simplify administrative processes associated with redeeming failure and help to reduce the burden of any workload carried forward from the previous academic year.</p>
5.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>The Committee considered a request to update the Appeals Committee membership to take effect from 1 September. The update will remove two retiring members and add Dr Paul Norris to the Committee who will act as Committee Convener.</p> <p>The Committee approved the revisions to the membership and agreed that further changes to the Appeals Committee membership can take place via Convener's Action.</p> <p>The Convener noted that the first Ordinary meeting of APRC will take place on Thursday 21 September 2023 at 2.00pm. The meeting will be held in hybrid format and the format of meetings for the year ahead will be discussed at this meeting.</p>