Summary of Changes to Quality Management and Student Experience Policies  
July 2019

This briefing note outlines in broad terms the nature of changes to policies and procedures which fall within the remit of University Education Committee (UEC) carried out during the 2018/19 academic year. In addition to these substantive changes, minor editorial changes will have been made to many policies.

The Learning and Teaching Development Service (LTDS) manages the majority of these on behalf of the University. For queries regarding the changes, or for assistance with their implementation, please e-mail ltds@ncl.ac.uk or contact #83978. Please click on a policy title to take you to the relevant documentation or location.

Please see the end of the document for further updates we expect to be able to publish early in the new academic year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Link to the Policy/document</th>
<th>Information about the changes made</th>
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| Annual Monitoring and Review (AMR) | The AMR forms have been updated to include the following  
  - BoS are asked to report on non-anonymous marking.  
  - BoS are asked to report on consideration of reports received from Student-Staff Committees.  
  - BoS are asked to comment on programme alignment with the new Graduate Framework.  
  - The Blackboard Baseline question has now been removed.  
  - The Postgraduate Offer has been removed from PGT form.  
  - The Action plan has been updated to include updates on completed actions, outstanding actions and all new actions. |
| Assessment and Feedback Policy | Following the revision of the Assessment and Feedback Policy in May 2018, UEC considered in November 2018 the proposal for how the approval of new assessments to be marked non-anonymously. The policy has been revised to include the following agreed approach:  
  - Assignments currently marked non-anonymously due to practicalities would remain so and fall outside of this approach.  
  - BoS would be required to provide a rational for any assignment that they wished to mark non-anonymously.  
  - SSCs would be given the opportunity to consider proposals to mark non-anonymously and it was incumbent on them to provide an outcome to the BoS.  
  - The approach of defining a threshold was not approved.  
  - SSCs and BoS would need to agree before an assessment could be marked non-anonymously |
| Assessment Irregularities Procedure | Updates to the policy were approved at June UEC. These include:  
  - Clarification around PGR Assessment Irregularities, in particular, how such cases will be investigated and the sanctions that can be applied.  
  - More detailed explanation of breach of ethical approval as an assessment irregularity. |
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<tr>
<th><strong>Assessment Retention Schedule</strong></th>
<th>Based on existing guidance and practice across the University a single retention schedule has been developed for all assessment and feedback related activity.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes</strong></td>
<td>Updated Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes to include the removal of the need for an independent chair in cases where the internal chair was an experienced examiner and had attended the ‘Assessing and Progressing the Doctorate’ training programme (or equivalent)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Degree Programme Handbook Guidance</strong></td>
<td>Minor updates to the Degree Programme Handbook guidance for 2019/20</td>
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| **Educational Partnerships Policy** | A revised policy was approved in October 2018 which aims to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of this area of work including:  
  - Removal of the Initial Proposal Template  
  - The establishment of Partnership Approval and Renewal Committees to replace the Educational Partnerships Sub-Committee  
  - To allow a PARC to approve articulation and joint/dual research arrangements and report this approval to UEC.  
  
  Supporting documentation has also been updated and streamlined with certain documents, such as the Academic Governance arrangements for TNE and partnership activity and External Examining for Taught programmes offered in multiple locations removed and embedded within other existing policies and guidance. |
| **Graduate Framework** | The new Graduate Framework replaces the Graduate Skills Framework and provides provide an accessible and crucially, usable, resource for students, staff including personal tutors and external stakeholders to understand the key attributes gained by studying at Newcastle University. |
| **Personal Relationships at Work: Code of Conduct** | The Code of Conduct applies to all employees and this includes students when they are undertaking paid employment within the University. |
| **Policy and Procedure for Learning and Teaching Review** | Following discussions of the Annual Overview of Learning and Teaching Reviews at TPSC and UEC, it was decided to update the LTR process to recognise the 4 elements of the Education Strategy. As part of this action Subject areas are to explicitly reflect on the 4 key elements of the Education Strategy in their SWOT. To this end, pages 5, 9 and 13 of the policy were updated.  
  
  Following UEC’s decision in May 2019 to only carry out three LTR’s during 2019/20 a revised schedule will be published in early 2019/20. |
| **Policy and Procedures for External Examiners of Taught Programmes** | Following changes to the process for Right to Work (RTW) to checks the following have been updated  
  - Policy for External Examiners of Taught Programmes  
  - Guidance on Right to Work Checks for External Examiners of Taught Programmes  
  - External Examiner Nomination form  
  
  The changes include  
  - RTW must be confirmed no less than 24 hours prior to commencing any (including remote) work for the institution. |
- RTW checks must be done with the original documents in University possession and a visual confirmation (by Skype if not in person) of the individual.
- RTW checks for taught external examiners will be carried out by LTDS in liaison with HR. Academic Units should no longer do RTW checks.
- The RTW check has been moved to after the nomination process and therefore the nomination form no longer contains RTW questions.
- External Examiners will now receive a *conditional* appointment email until the RTW check has been carried out.
- Academic units are no longer required to carry out RTW checks for new appointments.

An on-line Handbook for External Examiners has been produced is available [here](#).
Guidance on attending Board of Examiners virtually is available [here](#).

| **Policy for Holiday Entitlement for Postgraduate Research Students** | Updated to include Home/EU students to undertake employment on campus of over 20 hours per week during their ‘under examination’ period, provided students have the approval of the supervisory team. |
| **Policy on Postgraduates Who Teach** | Minor updates to policy for simplification and clarification purposes |
| **Principles for the Bidding, Operation and Management of Doctoral Training Centres** | Minor update to remove reference to the requirement to submit an Initial Proposal Template prior to any bid being permitted to progress. |
| **Rules for Submission of Work for Higher Degrees** | Updated to incorporate electronic thesis submission as the default submission method for initial and re-submission of theses. |

**Student Academic Queries and Appeals Procedure**

Updates to the policy were approved at June UEC. These include:
- Clarification for schools on how ‘late’ Level 1 appeals should be dealt with.
- Clarification that where a Level 1 appeal is upheld and referred back to the deciding body, the only recourse is a request for review at Level 3 of the procedure.

**Student Complaint and Resolution Procedure**

Updates to the policy were approved at June UEC. These include:
- Removal of the word ‘Adjudicator’ on the recommendation of the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) changed to Chair of Complaint Committee.
- Notification of HR where a potential staff disciplinary matter is raised. Already agreed with HR.
- Ability to terminated Complaint where student behaviour is deemed unacceptable or malicious moved from level 1 to the ‘Policy & Scope’ section as relates to all complaint investigations
- Addition of ‘Authorised Person’ at Level 1 to allow a complaint to be dealt with by a senior member of staff nominee in addition to the Head of School.
- Introduction of clause to allow consideration of complaints by registered students outside of the normal submission timeframe, if appropriate, as previously discussed at UEC.
| **Student Disciplinary Procedure** | Updates to the policy were approved at June UEC. These include:  
- List of all investigation Protocols and links updated.  
- Explanation as to how disciplinary matters involving NUSU societies are to be investigated.  
- Additional point to highlight that students, whose cases are under criminal investigation, are able to request that their case be investigated by the University, alongside the criminal process.  
- Change to definition following agreement at the University Initiations Task and Finish Group to the list of examples of misconduct.  
- Example added to definitions of misconduct to emphasise ‘failure to obtain or observe ethical approval for research undertaken as part of a degree’.  
- Clarification given as to how mitigating and aggravating factors are considered in relation to disciplinary sanctions.  
- To consider the length of time in which a disciplinary interim suspension should be reviewed.  
- Clarification as to the timeframe by which appeals are to be submitted following a Student Disciplinary Committee Hearing, following submission of the Statement of Reason.  
- Point added to explain that the Student Disciplinary Convenor (or nominee) will make a decision as to whether an appeal case is to be re-heard in full or just to consider sanctions. |
|**Student Representation Policy** | Minor updates to the policy and supporting documents were approved at July UEC. These include:  
- Clarification that the policy applies to Postgraduate Research Students  
- Including in the [Student-Staff Committee Constitution](#) the ability to appoint an EDI Representative and a Society Representative  
- Minor updates to remove instances of repetition, overlap and out-of-date information to make more use-friendly for Staff Facilitators and Student Chairs and Secretaries. |
|**Support to Study Procedure** | Updates to the policy were approved at June UEC. These include:  
- Clarification to procedure, as suggested by senior colleagues within Student Health and Wellbeing to ensure this covers all relevant student circumstances and to make the procedure more accessible to students.  
- Clarification to the definition of interruption versus suspension. |
|**Terms of Reference for Appeal Panel Members** | The policy was updated and approved at June UEC to include:  
Inclusion of Emeritus Professors/retired staff who are qualified by reason of their experiences of student academic progress and/or welfare matters to the types of staff who can act as Appeal Adjudicators. |
| Travel and Outside Study (off-campus and abroad) Guidance for Postgraduate Research Students | The policy replaces the Policy for Postgraduate Student Travel and Outside Study and was approved by UEC in July 2019. |
| University Regulations | Key changes to University Regulations for 2019/20. |
| Work-Based and Placement Policy | The Work-Based Placement Policy has been replaced with a Placements website. |

**Coming soon**

- A revision to the University Assessment Tariff will be considered by UEC in autumn for implementation in 2020/21.
- Policy for the Consideration of Accreditation Reports from Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies; an updated process for the collection of data will be available in autumn 2019.
- Board of Studies Terms of Reference and Schedule of Business has had a minor update; further information will be circulated once it has been considered by Senate in late September. The initial UEC paper for information can be accessed at: [https://internal.ncl.ac.uk/ltds/assets/internal-documents/UEC-12062019-DocE.pdf](https://internal.ncl.ac.uk/ltds/assets/internal-documents/UEC-12062019-DocE.pdf)
- Student Evaluation of Teaching, UEC approved a significate change from existing policy in May 2019 and detailed work is currently on-going to support the changes agreed. The proposal considered by UEC can be accessed at: [https://internal.ncl.ac.uk/ltds/assets/internal-documents/UEC-2019-05-01-DocE.pdf](https://internal.ncl.ac.uk/ltds/assets/internal-documents/UEC-2019-05-01-DocE.pdf). UEC approved option C. A separate communication with full details of the changes and implementation will be provided in October 2019.
- Minor updates to the Programme Approval Policy to include information about the requirements for the approval of new degree apprenticeship programmes.