

Guide to Examinations and Assessment for Staff and Students

Contents

Introduction.....	3
1. Examiners.....	4
2. Conflict of Interest	8
3. Preparation of Written Examination Papers	9
4. Regulations for Invigilated Examinations	10
5. Procedures in Examination Halls	10
6. Use of authorised materials in Invigilated Examinations	14
7. Medical Certificates and Mitigation	15
8. Deferral or partial deferral of examination associated with pregnancy	17
9. Plagiarism Policy	18
10. Breach of Examination Regulations and Procedures.....	21
11. Delivery and Receipt of Examination Scripts	23
12. Deliberation on Marks	24
13. Returning of Marks to the Student Records and Examinations Office.....	26
14. The Constitution and Conduct of Examination Boards	27
15. Communication of Examination Results.....	31
16. Access to Examination Scripts	32
17. Guidelines for Discussion of Examination Results and Provision of Feedback to Students	33
18. Mitigation Applications.....	35 <i>Error! Bookmark not defined.</i>
19. Regulations for Rechecks and Appeal of Examination Results.....	37
20. Conferring/Deferring of Conferring	42
21. Retention of Scripts and Course Assessments	44
22. Retention of Breakdown of Marks held in a School/Department	44
23. Appendix: NUI Mark Bands and Grade Descriptors.....	46

Introduction

Under the Universities Act, 1997, Academic Council controls all matters relating to the academic affairs of the university, including: the conduct of examinations; the determination of examination results; the procedure for appeals by students relating to the results of examinations; and academic progression. At UCC Academic Board, under delegated authority from Academic Council, approves the assessment regulations and examination procedures annually. It also approves their publication and ratifies all examination results.

This document provides the regulations and procedures for examinations and assessments in taught programmes and guidelines to their implementation. The information in this guide takes precedence in the case of any inadvertent conflict with other institutional documentation of lower standing.

The Examinations Function at UCC is under the remit of the Student Records and Examinations Office (SREO). It supports the entirety of the student lifecycle, from primary registration, through progression, to graduation at undergraduate and postgraduate level. The SREO provides a student-centric service, ensuring the integrity of the examination process and the accurate, secure, curation of the perpetual student record.

Examinations take many forms including: formal examinations, supplemental examinations, essays and continuous assessment (e.g. in-class tests, laboratory work, project work, oral examinations, aural examinations, field work reports, MCQs, theses and tutorial performance) among others.

The Deputy President and Registrar, under the direction of Academic Council, is responsible for the conduct of all examinations. The conduct and management of undergraduate examinations is laid out in *Principal Statute G.2.b. Conduct of examinations*:

<http://www.ucc.ie/en/media/support/ocla/statutesregulations/PrincipalStatuteJune2014.pdf>

Regulations for Higher Degrees by Research are set out separately for the degree of:

- Masters <http://www.ucc.ie/calendar/postgraduate/Masters/page01.html>
- PhD <http://www.ucc.ie/calendar/postgraduate/Doctor/page001.html>

1. Examiners

1.1 Internal Examiners

- 1.1.1 Internal Examiners consist of all permanent or full-time academic staff. Additionally, in the College of Medicine and Health, Medical Clinical Examiners with the title of part-time Lecturer, are also routinely approved as Internal Examiners by College Council. A list of approved Internal Examiners is provided to the Student Records and Examinations Office by the College Office annually.
- 1.1.2 Internal Examiners are eligible to attend and vote at Examination Boards of which they are members and in accordance with regulations governing membership of Examination Boards (See: 16.3).

1.2 Assistant Examiners

- 1.2.1 Assistant Examiners are those who participate in the examining process in addition to those named in Section 1.1.1.
- 1.2.2 Assistant Examiners, on the recommendation of the relevant Head of School/Department, are appointed annually by the College.
- 1.2.3 Each academic year, each College invites Heads of Schools/Departments to nominate Assistant Examiners, citing their relevant academic and professional experience and specific examination area, for approval by Academic Board. Only approved Assistant Examiners may undertake the marking of assessments.
- 1.2.4 In the case of ACE, Assistant Examiners are nominated on an annual basis for approval by Academic Board.

1.3 Payments to Internal Examiners (Lecturers) and Assistant Examiners

- 1.3.1 Payment for examining is made to full time Lecturers and Assistant Examiners after each examination session. Claim forms, completed by the Lecturer/Assistant Examiner, are available from School/Department offices.
- 1.3.2 In line with current University Policy (<https://www.ucc.ie/en/academicsecretariat/externs/>), it is the responsibility of each Head of School/Department to validate and process the claims made by Examiners within their own Academic Unit. Completed claim forms are returned directly to the Payroll Office.

1.4 External Examiners (Undergraduate and Taught Postgraduate Programmes/Subjects)

- 1.4.1 The role of the External Examiner is to assure academic standards and advise on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. They are formally appointed by the Senate of the National University of Ireland, following consideration of the recommendations of the University.
- 1.4.2 An External Examiner's academic and professional qualifications should be appropriate to the subject area being examined. External Examiners are expected to have high academic standing and expertise, with the experience to adjudicate on comparability of standards.

There must be no conflicts of interest, whether personal, professional or commercial, that would undermine, or be seen to undermine, the independence of the proposed External Examiner and the execution of their role. Former UCC students and staff members can only be appointed as an External Examiner after a period of not less than ten years has passed since leaving the institution.

- 1.4.3 External Examiners are appointed for a maximum of three academic years. Only in exceptional circumstances may that term be extended for an additional year. External Examiners should not be re-appointed to any programme within the same academic unit within at least five years.
- 1.4.4 Over-reliance of a discipline on single institutions over a period of time should be avoided when nominating External Examiners.
- 1.4.5 If the proposed External Examiner is retired, there should be evidence of continuing achievement in the academic area in question.
- 1.4.6 Should an External Examiner not be in a position to fulfil their full term, the process for replacing External Examiners follows the normal appointment process.
- 1.4.7 Established practice recommends that External Examiners should come from leading international universities, but they can be appointed from other constituent universities or recognised colleges of the NUI.
- 1.4.8 A nomination form for the appointment of an External Examiner is submitted by a Head of School/ Department following internal consultation with Academic Leadership and with counterparts in the other constituent universities, where appropriate. The Head of School/Department or nominee will forward the completed nomination form electronically to the Academic Secretariat who in turn will forward the nominations to the Academic Council External Examiner Sub Committee (EESC) for approval. The NUI appoints the External Examiner based on EESC recommendations. Nomination forms are available at: <http://www.ucc.ie/en/academicsecretariat/externs/>

The closing date for the nomination of new External Examiners is **10 working days from the first day of Semester 1**. That date may be varied in the event of resignations/terminations or other exceptional events.

- 1.4.9 Full detail on the roles and duties of the External Examiner are outlined in the *Guidelines for External Examiners*: <http://www.ucc.ie/en/academicsecretariat/externs/>
- 1.4.10 All examination papers, for both core discipline and non-core discipline modules established specifically for an interdisciplinary programme, must be approved by the Programme External Examiner, with the exception of language modules where the Programme External Examiner is not proficient in the language.
- 1.4.11 In cases where 50% or more of a module marks are composed of continuous assessment, then an outline of the assessment(s) set should be sent in advance to the External Examiner.
- 1.4.12 On appointment, the External Examiner is briefed, in writing, by the Head of School/Department or Programme Director. External Examiners must be provided with:
- i. Full information on the programmes and modules under examination, including assessment strategies and methods, in addition to the methods of mark aggregation, averaging or profiling across individual assessment components to generate an overall result.
 - ii. Copies of any relevant policies, assessment procedures and guidelines.
 - iii. A sufficient sample (see: 12.3.3) of graded assessments to confirm standards and to make any relevant recommendations on learning outcomes, assessment and grading practices. In addition, all student work that contributes to the overall final assessment shall be available, on request, to External Examiners.
 - iv. A detailed breakdown of marks for each module and, where appropriate, information on the distribution of grades for courses or modules.
- 1.4.13 External Examiners are members of Internal/Pre-Examination Boards and are expected to attend the relevant School/Department Examination committee meetings (see Section 14: *The Constitution and Conduct of Examination Boards*). They are expected to attend the Programme Inter-Departmental Examination Board meeting and the relevant University Examination Board meeting, if possible. Representatives of professional accreditation bodies may attend relevant Examination Board meetings where this is a stated accreditation requirement.
- 1.4.14 The views of a programme External Examiner take precedence over those of disciplinary External Examiners in relation to interdisciplinary programmes.
- 1.4.15 External Examiners are expected to visit the University at least once during each year of their term of appointment and may engage in discussions with Schools/Departments or key committees within Schools/Departments at any time during their appointment.
- 1.4.16 External Examiners are required to provide an annual report to the University on assessment standards and procedures, together with any observations on necessary improvements. These form part of the programme for annual monitoring and are forwarded to the relevant College Teaching and Learning Committee/or equivalent with a view to those Committees identifying issues of generic interest to the College's academic units.

- 1.4.17 Academic units detail their response to External Examiner comments (<https://www.ucc.ie/en/media/support/academicsecretariat/externalexaminer/BriefingNotetoCollegesJune2017.pdf>). Both reports are forwarded to the relevant Colleges for information and comment and are reviewed by the External Examiner Sub-Committee as part of its annual report.
- 1.4.18 Where an External Examiner has significant concerns about the academic programme(s) or procedures, they may provide a confidential report to the Deputy President and Registrar.
- 1.4.19 Payment to External Examiners is made by the relevant School/Department in accordance with University procedures. Payment is made in the form of a fee per day for examination services, together with a subsistence fee and travelling expenses. Information regarding fee claims and expenses are available at:
<http://www.ucc.ie/en/academicsecretariat/externs/>

1.5 Special External Examiners for dissertations in Postgraduate Taught Programmes

- 1.5.1 Where the Programme or Subject External Examiner is unable to examine a dissertation due to the subject matter being outside of his/her competency, a Special External Examiner may be appointed. This should only be done in exceptional circumstances. The nomination form is available at: <http://www.ucc.ie/en/academicsecretariat/externs/>

2. Conflict of Interest

- 2.1 No Internal Examiners/Assistant Examiners (including Head of School/Department) may be involved in setting or examining any essay, examination script or other examinable material in circumstances such that a conflict of interest exists with the examinee. Information regarding conflict of interest can be found at: <https://www.ucc.ie/en/media/research/researchatucc/policiesdocuments/CONFLICTOFINTEREST.pdf>
- 2.2 It is the obligation of all Examiners to declare potential conflicts of interest to the relevant Head of School/Department.
- 2.3 Where a conflict of interest arises, an Internal Examiner/Assistant Examiner must exclude themselves from the relevant Examination Board(s) and any other discussion relating to the examination process.
- 2.4 Responsibility rests with the Head of School/Department to manage any conflict of interest.
- 2.5 At the commencement of an internal/Pre-Examination Board, the Chair **must confirm** that any conflicts of interest have been addressed appropriately.

3. Preparation of Written Examination Papers

- 3.1 The SERO generates a detailed examination schedule in advance of all examination periods.
- 3.2 For each required examination paper, the Head of School/Department must (i) appoint an academic member of staff as responsible for that paper and (ii) provide details of that appointee to both the SREO and the appropriate External Examiner.
- 3.3 All examination papers must be approved by the External Examiner(s). Draft examination papers and assignments for continuous assessment (see: 1.4.11) should be sent in sufficient time for the External Examiner(s) to (i) be able to propose changes and (ii) for timely discussion of any proposed changes. In the relevant disciplines and upon agreement with the External Examiner, draft papers may be accompanied by a description of indicative answers or solutions to problems. A marking scheme may be provided for each paper. External Examiners may submit questions for inclusion in examination papers. **Examination papers or part thereof, when transmitted by email (between examiners and/or to the SREO), must be secured to ensure confidentiality.**
- 3.4 Papers must be in the format designated by the SREO, contain all the necessary instructions, ancillary tables etc. and **clearly specify** any material(s) permitted in the examination hall.
- 3.5 Each paper must be carefully checked and proof-read by the responsible academic staff member, **before** submission to the SREO.
- 3.6 The Head of School/Department is responsible for ensuring that all papers are submitted to the SREO according to agreed deadlines.
- 3.7 The Head of School/Department is responsible for the security of examination papers within the School/Department.

4. Regulations for Invigilated Examinations

- 4.1 It is the responsibility of each student to acquaint him/herself with the regulations concerning each examination, including the timetable of examinations and the location thereof. Examination timetables (provisional and finalised) are available at www.ucc.ie/en/sit/
- 4.2 All correspondence regarding the examination timetable is sent *via* the UCC student email system (xxx@umail.ucc.ie) **only**.

5. Procedures in Examination Halls

- 5.1 Examination halls are supervised by Invigilators and overseen by Senior Invigilators.
- 5.2 Strict silence must be observed on entering the examination hall and during the examination.
- 5.3 Students are required to be in attendance at least fifteen minutes before the commencement of each examination.
- 5.4 Unless permitted to do so by the Senior invigilator, students **will not be:**
 - i. admitted to the examination hall if they are more than fifteen minutes late;
 - ii. permitted to leave the examination hall until one hour after the examination start time
 - iii. permitted to leave the examination hall within the last twenty minutes of the examination
 - iv. allowed to return to the examination hall having handed in their examination answer book(s) and left the examination hall
- 5.5 The student will not be allowed to sit the examination paper and no alternative arrangements will be made when they arrive:
 - i. late for an examination, but after another student has left the examination hall
 - ii. after the examination has finished
 - iii. the day after the examination

In such cases, the student will be accommodated at a subsequent official examination sitting e.g. autumn supplemental or in a repeat year.

- 5.6 Invigilators are present in the examination hall to ensure the proper conduct of the examination and to deal with problems which may arise. Any such problems or any student requirements during an examination should be brought to an invigilator's attention by the raising of a hand.

Under no circumstances should a student leave their seat unless permitted to do so by the invigilator.
- 5.7 Checks for unauthorised material will be carried out during examinations; students may be asked to empty their pockets at any point.
- 5.8 Students are required to print a copy of their examination timetable and to bring a **clean copy** with them to each examination. Students **must not, under any circumstances,** write on their timetables either prior to or during the examination.

- 5.9 A clean copy of the timetable, without any additional annotation, together with a valid student ID card must be displayed for inspection by the invigilator at each examination.

Where writing is present on a timetable, it will be **confiscated and reported as a breach of examination regulations** (See Section 10).

- 5.10 Students **must not, under any circumstances,**:

- i. turn over the question paper cover sheet until instructed to do so by the Invigilator
- ii. commence writing on their examination paper or answer book(s) until instructed to commence writing by the invigilator

Such activity will be reported as a **Suspected Breach of Examination Regulations** (See Section 10).

- 5.11 All electronic devices, including mobile phones but excluding those calculators permitted for a specific examination and any other electronic device **specifically permitted** must be **switched off** and **placed, face down, on the floor**. If the student is found to have an electronic device that is switched on and/or not on the floor, it will be immediately confiscated and reported as a breach of examination regulations. All confiscated material is retained until this process is complete (See Section 10).

- 5.12 A point of contact capable of answering queries, preferably the responsible academic examiner, must be available in person/by telephone during the examination.

Where possible, the academic examiner responsible for a paper should attend/arrange for attendance by a nominee capable of answering relevant queries to visit the relevant examination hall(s) during the examination.

- 5.13 If it is essential for amendments to the examination paper or explanations to be made, the academic examiner/nominee will instruct the Senior Invigilator who will make the necessary announcements. As such announcements are very disruptive to other students they will be reported to the Student Records and Examinations Officer for consideration by Academic Board.

The examination question papers and answer books will be distributed by the Invigilators prior to students entering the hall.

- 5.14 It is the responsibility of each student to ensure that they are answering the correct paper. Each student must:

- i. check the **module code**
- ii. **module title**
- iii. examination **paper**
- iv. read any **instructions** carefully before commencing an answer.

Any queries should be brought to the attention of the invigilator **immediately**.

Students are required to carefully enter all required information on the answer books.

- 5.14 No student shall aid or attempt to aid other students, or obtain or attempt to obtain assistance from other students, or communicate in any way with other students in the examination hall.
- 5.15 No student shall take out of the examination hall any answer book(s) or part of an answer book, whether used or unused, or other supplied material. Such action may constitute a Suspected Breach of Examination Regulations (See Section 10).
- 5.16 In no case may a student leave an examination hall unless the invigilator has collected the student's answer book(s).
- 5.17 Smoking breaks are not allowed.
- 5.18 If a student feels unwell during an examination, s/he should inform an invigilator – a student may access the Student Health Service accompanied by an invigilator.
- 5.19 Students must assemble **all** answer books received, **whether used or unused**, on the treasury tag provided.
- 5.20 Students who wish to leave the examination hall before the final twenty minutes of the examination period must call an invigilator and hand their answer books to the invigilator.
- 5.21 At the end of the examination students must remain in their seats until all answer books have been collected. Answer books must be handed up **immediately on request** to the invigilator. In the case of Multiple Choice Question papers, students are required to hand up **BOTH** the **EDPAC answer sheet AND the Question Paper**.
- 5.22 Any student found violating these regulations or undertaking any irregularities of conduct within the examination hall will be reported and may be deemed to have breached examination regulations (See Section 10). A student, who, in the opinion of the Senior Invigilator, is disruptive to the proper conduct of the examination for other examinees, may be required to leave the examination hall.
- 5.23 **Fire Alarm:** If a fire alarm is activated, invigilators will instruct students to leave the hall and to leave examination papers and answer books on their desks and to remain silent at all times. When it is safe to do so, students will be allowed back into the hall to complete their examinations. Additional time will be allowed for the disruption. An incident report will be completed for the SREO, a copy of which will be presented at Examination Board.

6. Use of authorised materials in Invigilated Examinations

6.1 No student shall bring into the examination hall or have in their possession while in an examination hall any materials/documentation other than those explicitly permitted for that examination.

6.2 The relevant School/Department is responsible for ensuring supply of authorised materials/documentation permitted in the examination hall. Where permitted materials/documentation is not provided, the School/Department is responsible for instructing students to bring **clean copies** of the permitted materials/documentation with them to the examination hall.

6.3 Calculators

6.3.1 Calculators may only be used in an examination if specified on the examination paper. The type of calculator allowed is specified on the examination paper; the relevant School/Department is responsible for informing students in advance of the examination and for checking the suitability of calculators during the examination.

6.3.2 Mobile phones may not be used as calculators.

6.4 Dictionaries

6.4.1 Visiting non-degree students, where English is not a primary language, are allowed to use a hard copy language dictionary (student's language/English + English/candidate's language).

6.4.2 Degree students, where English is not a primary language and who enter a UCC degree programme after year 1, are permitted use of a hard copy language dictionary (student's language/English + English/student's language) for their first year only.

However

6.4.3 Visiting non-degree students and degree students who are not native English speakers are not permitted to use dictionaries in language examinations.

6.4.4 Schools/Departments are required to complete the relevant dictionary use permission form for presentation by the relevant student at the examination hall (<https://www.ucc.ie/en/media/support/recordsandexaminations/exams/DictionaryPermissionForm.pdf>).

6.4.5 Use of electronic dictionaries is not allowed.

7. Medical Certificates and Mitigation

7.3 General

7.1.1 It is in the best interest of a student undergoing debilitating personal or medical difficulties that the University, through the relevant School/Department, is aware of the existence of circumstances that may affect their academic performance.

7.1.2 All documentation submitted will be treated with the utmost sensitivity and confidentiality.

7.2 Medical Certification

7.2.1 During the academic year, medical certificates should be submitted locally by students to the relevant School/Department. Each medical certificate, provided by a relevant professional medical practitioner, who must not be a first degree or second degree relative of the student, should:

- i. specify the name, address and MCRN number of the prescribing doctor
- ii. identify the **date of the examination/GP visit**
- iii. identify the date the certificate was issued
- iv. **align directly** with the date of the examination/assessment impacted
- v. **verify** the nature of the circumstances submitted by the student
- vi. specify the **date of return to study** or identify a chronic/on-going condition
- vii. state the **impact** on the students ability to attend for examination/submit the relevant programme assessment(s)
- viii. be returned to the School/Department **no later than TWO WEEKS after the date of examination/assessment deadline or approved assessment submission date.**
- ix. be initialled and stamped on receipt in the School/Department, where the original is retained

Medical certification should state the date a chronic condition was first diagnosed and any on-going rehabilitative considerations.

Medical certification must be legible.

7.2.2 A copy of each medical certificate must be submitted **immediately** to the SREO by the School/Department.

7.2.3 During the University Written Examinations period, medical certificates should be submitted directly to the SREO for inclusion in and consideration by the Examination Board. **Medical certificates will be accepted no later than ONE WEEK after the relevant examination period (i.e. the last examination of an examination period). Medical certificates submitted after the relevant Examination Board may not be considered as the basis for a change of mark.**

7.2.4 Retrospective medical certification will only be accepted for consideration in **exceptional circumstances**, where legitimate reasons for lack of submission within the defined timeframe are demonstrated.

7.2.5 It is the responsibility of Schools/Departments to inform each student of the procedures for submitting medical certificates.

7.3 Deadlines for submission of essays/assigned work

7.3.1 If illness, as supported by appropriate medical certification (See 7.2.1), prevents a student from meeting a deadline for the submission of an essay, or other assigned work for assessment, then an appropriate extension may be granted by the relevant School/Department.

7.4 Tests administered by Schools/Departments

7.4.1 Where a medical certificate includes the time of a missed test administered within a School/Department, the School/Department should set an alternative test, if possible. If an alternate test is not possible, the student should not be disadvantaged (e.g. the missed test is discounted in the overall module assessment).

7.5 Medical Certificates and Mitigation

7.5.1 Where a student misses a University invigilated examination through illness and produces an appropriate Medical Certificate to support their absence, it is possible to apply, through the Mitigation process, for capping of marks to be waived when the examination is taken. Application for the waiver of the capping of marks through the Mitigation process is made using the relevant application form (<http://www.ucc.ie/en/exams/procedures-regulations/>) and **must be accompanied by appropriate supporting documentation**. The categories under which Mitigation is considered are clearly laid out (see: Section 18); **applications outside of these categories will not be considered**.

7.5.2 Where a student wishes to defer/partially defer Semester 1/Semester 2 examinations due to illness, application is made using the relevant application form (<http://www.ucc.ie/en/exams/procedures-regulations/>). Deferral of examinations will **only** be considered through this process; partial deferral is only considered in **substantiated exceptional circumstances**.

7.6 Medical Certificates and Determination of Results

7.6.1 Appropriately certified illness (see: 7.2.1), either before or during an examination, which it is claimed to have adversely affected performance in the examination, should be considered on its merits by the internal Examination Board or Interdisciplinary Board of Studies. Deliberations, including final recommendations, must subsequently be reported to the University Examination Board to be included in any deliberations.

7.7 Prevention of attendance at Examinations

7.7.1 If students are prevented from attending the first sitting of an examination due to a natural disaster, e.g. epidemic illness, volcanic ash, snowbound, or through circumstances clearly outside of the control of the student which make it legally or physically impossible for the student to attend the examination, they should apply for capping of marks to be waived at the supplemental examination (see: Section 18). Where such applications are successful, the student will not be liable for the examination re-entry fee. If prevented from sitting at a supplemental examination due to such circumstances, a date, subsequent to the completion of the written examinations, may be set aside to take an alternative examination paper/assessment.

8 Deferral or partial deferral of examination associated with pregnancy

8.1 Students may choose to defer or partially defer examinations as a result of pregnancy and/or childbirth following completion of the relevant application form (<http://www.ucc.ie/en/exams/procedures-regulations/>).

Academic staff are advised to consult the Guidelines for the Support of Pregnant Students available at: <http://www.ucc.ie/en/studentexperience/policies/>

9 Plagiarism

9.1 Definition

9.1.1 Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else's work as your own without appropriate attribution. Whether done **deliberately or inadvertently, it is unacceptable**, since it is an attempt to claim credit for work not done by you and fails to give credit for the work of others. Plagiarism applies not just to text, but to graphics, tables, formulae, or any representation of ideas in print, electronic or any other media, in addition to computer software and algorithms. Whether deliberate or inadvertent, as in the case of carelessness or poor academic discipline, plagiarism undermines scholarship, is a form of academic misconduct, and conflicts with the ethos of the University.

9.2 Types of plagiarism

9.2.1 Preparation of any work to be presented as part of an assessment, examination or other research or scholarly submission, can draw on the previous work or ideas of others. It is imperative, however, that this work is fully acknowledged, following the standard referencing practice within the particular discipline.

9.2.2 Self-plagiarism, the presentation of work previously submitted in a different context without citing that it was previously presented, is treated in the same way as any other form of plagiarism.

9.2.3 In some cases, particularly in the professional academic arena, plagiarism will also be a breach of copyright, which can expose the copier to civil or even criminal legal proceedings if within the timeframe of the copyright. Plagiarism also relates to unpublished material, such as the notes of others, which may not be covered by copyright. There is no expiry date on plagiarism.

9.2.4 Collusion, where work is permitted to be copied, is a form of plagiarism by both parties. Collusion also applies where a joint effort is presented by an individual without due recognition of the input of others.

9.3 Best practice

9.3.1 At a minimum, clear indication as to when any material is being quoted directly (e.g. by enclosing it in quotation marks [" "] in the case of text) must be provided, in addition to citation of the source. Acknowledgement of the influence of other sources, even when they are not quoted directly must also be made. Acknowledgements must be provided at the appropriate point throughout the work. The discipline-specific citation, referencing, credit and/or acknowledgement requirements must be applied in all submitted material.

9.3.2 School/Departmental plagiarism policies should identify any cultural, technical or other issues that may arise within a particular discipline.

9.3.3 Each School/Department is responsible for informing students of the plagiarism policy through lecture(s), handbooks, hand-outs, the web, etc.

9.3.4 Each School/Department should provide adequate training early in the academic programme, reiterated at the beginning of each academic year, on plagiarism, collusion, and the specific best practice expectations, to include definition and explanation of standard referencing conventions, for submitted work. Work submitted to Schools/Departments should have a declaration, signed by the student, that all submitted work is wholly their own work.

9.4 Procedures, penalties and appeal

9.4.1 All essays, dissertations, projects, portfolios or other forms of academic submission for evaluation will be checked for plagiarism. Where a supervisor, examiner or an invigilator suspects plagiarism during an invigilated or non-invigilated examination or assessment, then s/he will consult their Head of School/ Department or nominee in the first instance.

9.4.2 If the Head of the School/ Department or nominee suspects that an offence has occurred, the Head or nominee will inform the student, in writing, of the allegation and provide the student with reasonable opportunity to provide an explanation, following which the Head or nominee has the choice of two options:

Option A: Immediately make a full report in writing to the Student Records and Examinations Officer, in which case the procedures for Breach of Examination Regulations and Procedures will be invoked. The process –as defined in Sections 10.2.4 to 10.2.13 will apply.

Option B: Exercise discretion to pursue the matter without reference to the Student Records and Examination Officer, in which case the Head or nominee will determine the appropriate penalty (if any), which will not exceed assigning a mark of zero in the piece of work to which the offence relates.

For the avoidance of doubt, this provision relates to the mark allocated to the full piece of work concerned and not the section or part deemed to have been in breach of examination regulations. No sanction from a Head of School/Department or nominee may be extended beyond the result for the piece of work concerned.

Should a penalty be imposed, the student, having been informed of the penalty, may choose either:

- i. to accept the penalty as a final decision, in which case a summary report of the circumstances of the case and level of penalty exacted will be lodged by the Head or nominee with the Student Records and Examination Officer.
- or**
- ii. to have the matter considered by the Student Records and Examinations Officer, thereby invoking the Breach of Examination Regulations process, whereupon the Head or nominee will make a full report in writing to the Student Records and Examinations Officer. The process as defined in Sections 10.2.4 to 10.2.13 will apply.

Whether Option A or Option B is taken, copies of all relevant documentation will be made available to the student.

9.4.2 Students have a right of appeal, where they believe that they have been treated unfairly by the plagiarism procedures. Such appeals are dealt with through the standard UCC Examination Appeals process (see: Section 19).

9.5 Plagiarism at postgraduate level

9.5.1 Theses/dissertations, subject to External Examination, may be failed where significant plagiarism is detected by an External Examiner. Postgraduates have a right of appeal against such decisions by External Examiners (see: Section 19).

10 Breach of Examination Regulations and Procedures

10.1 Definition

10.1.1 Cheating means an attempt to benefit oneself, or another, by deceit or fraud or other breach of the examination regulations and procedures. Such breaches also include personation, collusion and plagiarism.

10.1.2 Any communication between students and External Examiners outside of normal Examiner-student interaction is prohibited and will be considered a serious breach of examination regulations.

10.2 Process

10.2.1 Where, during an invigilated examination, an Invigilator suspects a student of cheating, the Senior Invigilator, or at least one other Invigilator, will be informed and asked to confirm their suspicions. The student will be approached and questioned. Any unauthorised material or electronic devices will be confiscated.

10.2.2 The student will be informed that a report will be made to the Student Records and Examinations Officer. The student will be allowed to finish the examination. Any confiscated items will be retained by the SREO/Deputy President and Registrar until the process has completed. Results of the associated examination will be withheld until the process has completed.

10.2.3 Alternatively, an Examiner, who, when marking examination scripts, suspects that cheating has taken place will consult the Head of School/Department or nominee. If the Head or nominee considers that there is evidence that cheating has occurred, he/she will make a written report to the Student Records and Examinations Officer.

10.2.4 The Head of School/Department or nominee will inform the student, in writing, that a written report regarding a suspected breach of examination regulations has been made to the Student Records and Examinations Officer.

10.2.5 Copies of relevant documentation shall be made available to the student.

10.2.6 Where a report is made to the Student Records and Examinations Officer, the student will be contacted by the SREO after the completion of the examination period and invited to submit a written statement of events (Personal Statement).

10.2.7 The Student Records and Examinations Officer may also request, where appropriate, a report from the Head of the relevant School/Department.

10.2.8 All reports relating to a suspected case of a breach of examination regulation will be considered in the first instance by the Student Records and Examinations Officer or nominee and the Head of the relevant College or nominee.

10.2.9 The student will be invited to a meeting to discuss the matter by the SREO. Where the Head of College is a member of the School/Department responsible for the examination in question, the Deputy President and Registrar may nominate another Head of College to attend this meeting. A student may bring another person to this meeting to provide support, but not to advocate or to make representation on that student's behalf.

10.2.10 In the event that a student cannot attend the meeting, a decision will be made based on the Invigilator Report, the confiscated material/electronic device and the written Personal Statement submitted by the student.

10.2.11 Considering all information, where it is considered that there is not a case to answer, the matter will end there and the Student Records and Examinations Officer will inform the student and where relevant, the Head of School/Department.

10.2.12 Where it is considered by the Student Records and Examinations Officer or nominee and the relevant Head of College or nominee that there is a case to answer the Student Records and Examinations Officer or nominee will refer the matter to the Deputy President and Registrar and will accordingly inform in writing both the student and, if applicable, the relevant Head of School/Department. A referral report of the initial meeting will be sent to the SVPA&R; this will also be made available to the student.

10.2.13 Where referred to the Deputy President and Registrar, s/he or nominee and the Chairperson of the Student Discipline Committee or nominee will consider all relevant information and provide the student with an opportunity to present an explanation in writing or orally. Where it is concluded that cheating has occurred they will determine an appropriate penalty. The Deputy President and Registrar will inform the student, the Student Records and Examinations Officer and the relevant Head of School/Department, in writing of the outcome of this process. The penalty may, among others, include one or more of the following:

- i. Assigning a mark of zero for the particular examination concerned
- ii. Assigning a mark of zero for all or part of the course/unit/module of which the examination was a component part
- iii. Setting aside all or part of the overall examination while permitting the student to take the examination again at the next available opportunity or in the following year
- iv. Suspension of the student from the University for a period not exceeding two years
- v. In cases of personation, the personator and the personated will be liable to exclusion from the University for a period to be determined, or to any other appropriate penalty.

10.2.14 Examination Results will be withheld by the University pending the outcome of alleged breaches of Examinations Regulations and Procedures.

10.2.15 On receipt of a finding, where a student believes that they have been treated unfairly by Breach of Examination Regulation and Procedure, that student has a right of appeal. Such appeals are dealt with through the standard UCC Examination Appeals process.

11 Delivery and Receipt of Examination Scripts

11.2 Scripts are checked and packaged in examination halls immediately after the completion of the examination. Those students present or absent from written examinations will be noted on a list which is retained in the SREO. This list of registered students, identified by their unique, randomly generated, examination number [green mark sheet]), is included with each batch of examination scripts. Scripts are packed in the same order as the list. In the case of students absent from written examinations a coloured sheet (detailing the examination number of the absent student) is included in sequence in the batch of scripts.

11.3 All scripts must be collected from the examination centre and signed for by the relevant examiner or authorised person.

11.4 When collected, scripts/absentee sheets **must** be checked by an official representative of the relevant School/Department against the list examination numbers provided. Any discrepancies must be reported to the Examination Centre **not more than 48 hours after the scripts have been collected.**

11.5 Where the individual needs of a student has been accommodated in an auxiliary venue, – the examination script may be integrated with, or packed separately to, the main batch of scripts for that examination. The relevant examiner or authorised person must check all scripts received against the green mark sheet to ensure scripts from all students who have taken the examination have been received.

12 Deliberation on Marks

12.1 Ratification of marks

All marks are provisional until ratified by a University Examination Board and approved by Academic Board. Provisional marks are considered initially by an *internal* or *pre-examination* (School/Department or Board of Studies) board at the end of each semester.

12.2 Examiners

12.2.1 External Examiners may attend Semester 1 internal or pre-examination board meetings, but their attendance does not alter the provisional nature of the marks. Provisional marks and recommendations are then referred to the relevant Summer University Examination Board at the end of Semester 2 for decision and ratification prior to submission to the next Academic Board for approval. Spring University Examination Boards may take place, at the sole discretion of the Registrar, for limited programmes such as those with early placements or for Erasmus+ students and visiting EU and non-EU students taking Semester 1 modules only.

12.2.2 All examiners involved in marking must consult the relevant current Marks and Standards for the programme (<http://www.ucc.ie/admin/registrar/marksandstandards/>) and NUI grade descriptors (see Appendix 1).

12.2.3 Examiners check that all parts of every question on an examination paper are marked and that all other components of assessments are included. They **must initial** examination papers to indicate same.

12.2.4 Particular care should be taken in the case of students repeating the year where provision has been made for any element of marks from the previous year(s) to be carried forward.

12.3 Communication with External Examiners in Relation to Marks

12.3.1 All examination scripts and other course work that contributes to final assessment are to be made available to External Examiners.

12.3.2 Appropriate scripts and other course work are to be made available to External Examiners in advance of the meeting of the Board of Examiners. Schools/ Departments must agree in advance with External Examiners what constitutes '*appropriate scripts and other course work*', in accordance with the guiding principle that External Examiners should receive sufficient evidence to enable them to determine that internal marking has been appropriate and consistent.

12.3.3 External Examiners may request to see any script, and should, at a minimum, see a sample of scripts drawn from the top, middle and bottom of the mark range, including scripts of borderline students.

12.3.4 External Examiners may be invited to participate with Internal Examiners in oral examinations.

12.4 Practical and Clinical Examinations

12.4.1 External Examiners, where possible, should have an involvement in practical or clinical examinations.

12.5 Determination of marks

12.5.1 All examination marks should be considered at a School/Departmental Examination Board Meeting or Interdisciplinary Board of Studies Examination Board Meeting involving the relevant examiners. The attention of the External Examiner should be directed to any mitigating circumstances or other information of relevance during deliberations on marks. Mitigating circumstances include those situations outlined in 18.3.1 and also, as in the case of Quercus Scholars or other members of the student body, the demands associated with representation of the University at national or international academic, sporting or cultural events. These mitigating circumstances should be subsequently reported to the University Examination Board, together with the recommendation of the examiners.

12.5.2 Particular attention should be given to assessments which give rise to overall marks which are close to critical levels such as, compensation, pass or class of honours.

12.5.3 Normally issues regarding borderline judgements are resolved at School/Departmental level, in consultation with the External Examiner, so that marks close to a critical level are not returned to an Examination Board without due deliberation.

12.5.4 Decisions of the Examination Board should reflect a considered academic judgement, taking account of any mitigating factors and not solely the passive outcome of arithmetic.

12.6 Communication with students during marking of scripts

12.6.1 Communication between students and Schools/Departments in the period between examinations and posting of official results should be through the Programme Coordinator **only** and these communications should pertain only to medical or personal issues. It is inappropriate for students to communicate directly with individual examiners in relation to examinations.

13 Returning of Marks to the Student Records and Examinations Office

13.1 The Head of School/Department, or a member of staff identified to the SREO or in the case of Interdisciplinary Programmes the Director, will be responsible for the checking and submission of marks to the SREO **by the specified deadline** for both Semester 1 and Semester 2.

13.2 Marks are transmitted electronically *via* DMIS in the format laid down by the SREO. In addition, Schools/Departments hold a hard copy of marks for a period of at least 5 years. Each set of marks, with the breakdown as specified in the appropriate Marks and Standards must be signed by the Head of School/Department or Director of Interdisciplinary Programme and the appropriate responsible Examiner.

13.3 A cover sheet listing all modules/units/subjects for the School/Department with their marks as submitted must be signed by the External Examiner(s) and the Head of School/Department or Director of Interdisciplinary Programme.

13.4 Prior to the University Examination Board Meeting, a copy of the relevant broadsheets will be made available to the Head of School/Department, or the member of staff identified by the Head, who will be responsible for checking the accuracy of the marks recorded on the broadsheets for the School/Department. In the case of interdisciplinary programmes, copies will be made available to the Director of the Programme who will be responsible for checking the accuracy of the marks recorded on the broadsheets.

14 The Constitution and Conduct of Examination Boards

14.1 Internal/Pre-Examination Boards

14.1.1 Internal or pre-Examination Boards (i.e., School/Department/Board of Studies meetings) are held to finalise marks for submission to each level of a taught degree/diploma/certificate programme University Examination Boards. Adherence to deadlines for the entry of final, considered, marks to the institutional Student Administrative Systems, is crucial to the conduct of Examination Boards.

14.1.2 External Examiners are members of School/Department/pre-Examination Boards and may be members of relevant University Examination Boards.

14.1.3 Each School/Department has a School/Departmental Examination Committee, chaired by the Head of School/Department, comprising all members of the School/Department who are Internal Examiners. There is provision for sub-committees chaired by nominees of the Head, where appropriate. The School/Departmental Examination Committee meet for each examination session e.g. spring, summer, autumn, winter. One of the meetings in Spring/Summer should be held in conjunction with the annual visit of the External Examiner(s). The School/Departmental Examination Committee is responsible for the review of the examination paper for each module, ensuring that the assessment provided fully interrogates the defined learning outcomes for that particular module.

14.1.4 The School/Departmental/Examination Committee reviews and agrees the marks in each module for each student, including breakdown by written and continuous assessment, in accordance with the Book of Modules. The Committee should have due regard to Marks and Standards in considering the overall result for a student. Due notice of School/Departmental Examination Committee meetings should be given and attendance recorded.

14.1.5 A hard copy of the agreed mark sheets is signed by the Head of School/Department and, when present, by the External Examiner(s). Any dissent from a mark should be recorded with the examiner's signature on the hard copy. Such Examiners should attend the formal University Examination Board meeting to which the mark will be reported.

14.2 Boards of Studies Examination Meetings

14.2.1 Where with the approval of a College, an interdisciplinary programme has a dedicated External Examiner, members of the Interdisciplinary Board of Studies who are Internal Examiners correspond to the School/Departmental Examination Committee and the Director of the programme fulfils the role of Head of School/Department.

14.3 Constitution of University Examination Boards

14.3.1 A University Examination Board makes recommendations to the Academic Board for the ratification of the results for each level of a degree, diploma or certificate, including the final award.

14.3.2 Examination Board membership (except boards devolved to Adult Continuing Education)

- i. Registrar/Nominee
- ii. Chair - Member of Academic Council nominated by the Deputy President and Registrar.
- iii. Head of College
- iv. Head of School/Department/Discipline or nominee and Professors of Schools/Departments
- v. Director/nominee on behalf of Board of Studies
- vi. External Examiners relevant to the School/Department or programme
- vii. Internal Examiners contributing marks to the Board
- viii. Assistant Examiner contributing marks to the Board and approved by College
- ix. Examination Officer or nominee

QUORUM: The quorum for a Board consists of the Chair, the Secretary and Examiners representing the Schools/Departments of the programme, all of whom must sign the Table of Results (Broadsheet), which is presented to Academic Board for ratification.

14.4 Examination Boards Devolved to Adult Continuing Education

14.4.1 Results for all programmes administered by Adult Continuing Education (ACE) are presented to the ACE Examination Board except where an exemption has been agreed by ACE Academic Standards Board for a programme to be considered by the University Examination Board. Where a programme is considered at another category of Examination Board, the External Examiner's report for that specific programme is forwarded for consideration by the relevant Programme Committee and noting by the ACE Academic Standards Board.

14.4.2 Membership of ACE Examination Boards

- i. Deputy President and Registrar/Nominee
- ii. Chair – Member of Academic Council nominated by the Deputy President and Registrar
- iii. External Examiner(s)
- iv. Academic Director of the Programme
- v. Head of the lead academic School/Department or Nominee
- vi. Director of ACE or Nominee
- vii. Coordinator responsible for each of the Centres' being examined by the Board
- viii. Examiners and officially appointed Assistant Examiners who make a significant contribution to the teaching and assessment of students on the programme
- ix. Secretary appointed by the Director of ACE

QUORUM: The quorum for a Board should normally consist of the Chair, the Director of Adult Continuing Education or nominee, the Secretary and Examiners representing the academic elements of the programme, all of whom must sign the Table of Results (Broadsheet), which is forwarded to the Deputy President and Registrar for transmission to Academic Board.

14.5 Remit

14.5.1 The number and remit of Examination Boards is ultimately defined by Academic Council.

14.6 Examination Board Chairs

14.6.1 A panel of Examination Board Chairs is drawn up and approved by Academic Board. The Chair of each Examination Board is to be appointed, from this approved panel, by the Deputy President and Registrar or nominee and shall be:

- i. a member of Academic Council
- ii. independent of the programmes for which the marks are being approved by the Board

14.6.2 Examination Board Chairs are requested to attend a briefing session at which guidelines will be provided and discussed in an effort to standardise responses to situations which arise at Examination Boards requiring decision.

14.7 Attendance at Examination Boards

14.7.1 Heads of Schools/Departments **must ensure** that the School/Department is represented on relevant University Examination Boards by the relevant Internal Examiner/s nominated by Schools/Departments and approved by Colleges annually. These representatives will have the decision-making responsibility on behalf of the academic unit at the University Examination Board and therefore only **staff with the requisite information to assist the Examination Board in the mark approval process** should be nominated. Where such representation is not provided, the Examination Board will be rescheduled.

14.8 Conduct of University Examination Boards

14.8.1 The responsibility of an Examination Board is to review the marks before the Board and make recommendations as to the overall result for each student in accordance with the published Marks and Standards. In discharging this responsibility, the Board may exercise discretion in marginal cases by minor modification of marks.

14.8.2 Such modification are normally limited to an increase of five percentage points in any module in situations such as the following:

- i. The marks involve modules from more than one School or Department and cognisance is being taken by a School/Department of marks from other Schools/Departments.
- ii. The recognition that, taking all modules into account, the student's result is borderline in terms of pass/progression or class of honours, especially where results are based on aggregate marks.
- iii. Certification of illness, trauma (such as bereavement) or disability, pregnancy, or other, extenuating circumstance, if not already considered by the School/Departmental Examination Board meeting or Interdisciplinary Board of Studies Examination Board meeting.

14.8.3 Where the Examination Board is in possession of sufficient information related to individual mitigating circumstances of a student, the Examination Board has the authority to take this into account in relation to finalising its judgement and to waive the cap for supplementary examinations where appropriate.

14.8.4 Changes to marks by a University Examination Board otherwise should only be permitted if:

- i. A clerical or administrative error in transmission of marks has occurred
- ii. A late change to a mark is recommended by an External Examiner

In both instances the change should be submitted **with an explanation in writing** to the Examination Board. The resulting adjustment of marks should be made before the results are considered by the Board.

14.8.5 Where, in special circumstances, an Examination Board recommends a change in marks outside its normal discretion, the original marks should stand pending a decision of Academic Board. The same should apply where more generally a departure from Marks or Standards is recommended by an Examination Board.

14.8.6 In the event of a query arising, relating to a mark submitted by a School/Department whose nominee is not present at the University Examination Board, either

- i. the Examination Board proceedings will be suspended temporarily pending attendance by a School/Departmental representative or rescheduled

or

- ii. the Examination Board will take a decision in the best interest of the student.

14.8.7 In cases of any difference of opinion among the members present at an Examination Board, the result shall be decided by majority vote of eligible members.

- i. Every member of the Examination Board, as defined, has a voting right
- ii. The Examination Board should act as an integrated board and majority decisions are binding
- iii. The Chair has a casting vote
- iv. In circumstances where the Chair is unable to ratify a decision within the approved University Regulations the Chair can defer the decision and, if necessary, refer the issue(s) to the Deputy President and Registrar and/or Academic Board as appropriate
- v. However, the dissent of an External Examiner present at an Examination Board shall be referred to Academic Board and the opinion of an External Examiner when so recorded should not be overturned by the Academic Board except on the recommendation of two thirds of the membership of the Academic Board present at the relevant meeting of Academic Board.

15 Communication of Examination Results

15.1 Dates of issue of results for all programmes are found on the SREO web page <http://www.ucc.ie/en/exams/>

15.2 Provisional Semester 1 module marks are released centrally by SREO on specified, advertised, dates. These marks are subject to approval by the External Examiners, University Examination Boards and Academic Board and remain provisional until ratified at the end of the academic year.

15.3 Results are made available online at <http://www.ucc.ie/en/sit/>; students require their Student ID number and UCC password to access their results online.

15.4 Examination results are confidential to the individual student and **will not be released to, or discussed, with any third party**. Results will only be discussed in person or through written correspondence with the student.

15.5 If a student achieves an overall fail result in a module, the written examination paper **must be repeated**, regardless of whether it has been passed at the first sitting. The requirement for repeating continuous assessment is specified in the specific module description; Schools/Departments are responsible for setting and communicating the requirements for repeating continuous assessment(s).

15.6 Where a distribution of marks is provided for in Marks and Standards and/or in the module description, a student, on request to a School/Department, should be provided with details of the corresponding breakdown of his/her aggregate marks. A student, on request, should also be given a breakdown of marks for individual questions.

15.7 Where no distribution of marks is provided for in Marks and Standards and/or in the module description, a student, on request to a School/Department, should be provided with a qualitative indication of the relative strengths and weaknesses of his/her performance.

16 Access to Examination Scripts

16.1 Viewing of scripts is available to all students.

16.2 Colleges set and advertise (<http://www.ucc.ie/en/exams/results/>) dates, after the Examination Boards have been held, for students to view their Examination Scripts. These meetings are normally on the same dates as feedback meetings are held (Section 17).

16.3 Scripts are available for viewing in the relevant School/Department **only**; Schools/Departments will be responsible for care of scripts and for appropriate storage for the requisite period (currently 13 months).

16.4 Schools/Departments must make administrative arrangements for students to be supervised while viewing scripts. The person supervising script viewing should not be an examiner in the module(s) in which the script(s) is/are being viewed.

16.5 Details of the conditions under which scripts can be accessed in the School/Department should accompany the application forms issued to students. These should also indicate the times scripts may be viewed.

16.6 Application forms to view scripts may be obtained from the School/Department and should be returned to the relevant School/Department. Students will not be allowed to view their scripts without prior notice to the relevant School/Department.

16.7 Students are not permitted to write on, photograph, photocopy, or in any other manner record scripts, nor will they be permitted to remove these scripts for any reason. Scripts may not be viewed by a third party. Scripts may not be sent electronically.

16.8 A Student who is dissatisfied with the information provided in the School/ Department should be referred to the Examination Appeals procedure (see: Section 19). .

17 Guidelines for Discussion of Examination Results and Provision of Feedback to Students

17.1 Feedback

17.1.1 Feedback on performance in continuous assessment and written examinations is available to all students.

17.2 General Principles on Feedback for Modules Examined in Semester 1

17.2.1 Schools/Departments are required to provide feedback to individual students on performance in continuous assessment.

17.2.2 Feedback of a general nature should be provided to students on the overall performance of the class in the written examinations taken during Semester 1.

17.2.3 The feedback of a general nature may include:

- i. Identification of common mistakes or errors
- ii. Identification of missed opportunities or misunderstanding of key points

17.2.4 Schools/Departments should also consider the feasibility of providing feedback to individual students on their exam scripts.

17.3 Post Examination Board Feedback

17.3.1 Colleges set and advertise (<http://www.ucc.ie/en/exams/results/>), dates after the completion of the Examination Boards, for students to meet with members of the School/Department for examination feedback. These meetings are normally on the same dates that students have access to their scripts (Section 16).

17.3.2 All Schools/Departments are **required** to participate in such post-examination feedback meetings and must arrange for at least one experienced member of academic staff, who has access to examination results, to be available for consultation with students on the relevant dates. Students should check with the relevant School/Department regarding appointment procedures.

17.3.3 The objective is to provide feedback regarding a student's performance at examinations and not to negotiate results which have already been approved.

17.3.4 Information about a student's examination performance is private and confidential to the person concerned and is therefore be made to the student only and not to any third party, in compliance with Data Protection Regulations (personal data).

17.3.5 Information should only be provided by a member of the School/Department concerned and for reasons of confidentiality should not be given over the phone.

17.3.6 Subject to 17.1 above, no information may be disclosed to a student until after the relevant University Examination Board has met.

17.3.7 Where a distribution of marks is provided for in the Marks and Standards and/or the module description (e.g. written papers, year's work), a student, on request, is entitled to be given details of the corresponding breakdown of their aggregate marks.

17.3.8 A student on request is also entitled to be given details of marks for individual questions.

17.3.9 On request, a student may be given an indication of the criteria which determine the different classes of judgement. In that context a student may be given a verbal qualitative indication of their relative strengths and weaknesses in that module.

17.3.10 Students should be informed and advised of the requirements relating to the Supplemental Examinations.

17.4 Role of Academic Staff

17.4.1 Academic Staff **should not**:

- i. Make specific suggestions that might be interpreted by the student as guaranteeing a better result in a subsequent examination
- ii. Agree to a reassessment of the examination script and/or continuous assessment.

18 Mitigation Applications

18.1 The Mitigation Committee

18.1.1 The University has established a Standing Committee of Academic Council to deal with applications for the waiver of the capping of marks in a module at a supplemental, or where applicable, at a repeat year examination. The conditions for mitigation must relate to the **first attempt at the examination** in the first instance.

18.1.2 In addition, Academic Council has granted permission to the Chair of the Mitigation Committee together with the Deputy President and Registrar/nominee to adjudicate rapidly applications prior to examination periods and report their decisions to the full Committee.

18.2 Waiver of capping – Examination Boards

18.2.1 Academic Council has granted permission to University Examination Boards to apply the waiver of capping if there is sufficient supporting documentation available to support the approval.

18.3 Applications considered by the Mitigation Committee

18.3.1 An application for waiver will be considered by the Mitigation Committee if the applicant satisfies at least one of the following conditions:

- a) Circumstances outside the control of the applicant, which make it legally or physically impossible for the student to attend the examination in a particular module
- b) If as a result of travel restrictions, return travel has been delayed by at least 5 days and where the examination falls within at least 10 days of their actual return
- c) The Mitigation Committee will also deal with the following circumstances where the University Examination Board has not or is unable to deal with them:
 - Death of a parent/guardian, sibling, spouse, child (or person to whom the student is *in loco parentis*), if within sufficient proximity to the examination to have substantial and material effect
 - Death of a mother-in-law, father-in-law, grandparent/grandchild or any person who was habitually resident in the home of the applicant, if within sufficient proximity to the examination to have substantial and material effect
 - Pregnancy, if within sufficient proximity to the examination to have substantial and material effect
 - Debilitating illness/condition, if within sufficient proximity to the examination to have substantial and material effect
- d) The Mitigation Committee will also consider other circumstance to be analogous to any of the above.

18.4 Process

18.4.1 Applications will be considered only after the final programme year results are released.

18.4.2 An application form must be completed and returned to the SREO **within two weeks of the date of issue of final examination results**. In **exceptional circumstances**, the Chair of the Mitigation Committee may waive the two week deadline for submission of the mitigation application.

18.4.3 It is the **responsibility of the applicant** to supply detailed supporting documentation. The Mitigation Committee will be entitled to seek further information/documentation, including additional reports where necessary and appropriate. Application forms are available from the SREO (<http://www.ucc.ie/en/exams/procedures-regulations/>). **Incomplete applications or those submitted without the relevant supporting documentation will be returned without review.**

18.4.4 Having considered the documentary evidence presented to it in each case, and having assured itself that an application before it satisfies at least one of the conditions set out above, the Committee shall make its recommendations. Committee decisions will be conveyed to the student and School(s)/Department(s) *via* the Head of Department and Examination Board Coordinator.

18.4.5 Any recommendation for waiver of capping shall be on a module by module basis.

18.4.6 Applicants who sat a module or modules during any Examination period may apply to the Mitigation Committee to have the mark(s) obtained declared void (forego marks achieved), having regard to the conditions in 18.3 above. Such applicants, if successful, will be entered automatically for the Supplemental Examination in the relevant module(s) or, if in a repeat year, will be registered for the relevant module(s). Where the original examination mark achieved is foregone, the uncapped mark obtained at the Supplemental Examination will be used for aggregation and progression proposes whether that mark is higher or lower than the foregone mark. The original examination mark achieved at the first attempt is the mark that will appear on the Academic Transcript.

18.5 Applications considered by the Chair of the Mitigation Committee and the Deputy President and Registrar/Nominee

18.5.1 The Chair of the Mitigation Committee and the Registrar and Deputy President and Registrar/nominee deal with applications to defer examinations. Such applications will only be considered **no later than two weeks before** the official start date of examinations.

18.5.2 The Chair of the Mitigation Committee and the Deputy President and Registrar/nominee will consider applications in cases where students are seeking a full deferral of examinations. In **exceptional cases only**, they may consider cases for a partial deferral.

18.5.3 Consideration of mitigation applications by Chair of the Mitigation Committee and the Deputy President and Registrar/nominee will only be on grounds (a), (b), or (c), and exceptionally (d) where circumstances are so grave and personal as cannot be divulged to the full committee.

18.5.4 Applicants should note the following: If an application is unsuccessful, the mark obtained in the module at the relevant examination shall be capped and the capped mark used for aggregation and progression purposes.

18.6 Appeals of Mitigation Recommendation

18.6.1 Appeals arising from the Mitigation process will be referred to the Examinations Appeals Committee.

19.1 Recheck of Examination Results

19.1.1 The re-check procedure, which involves confirmation by a second Internal Examiner, ensures that all elements submitted for assessment were considered and assessed and that no errors occurred in the **recording, collating, or combining of marks**. The recheck also confirms that the summary mark, as presented to the University Examination Board, was correct.

19.1.2 **The recheck does not involve reassessment of the examination paper(s) or other submitted material.**

19.2 Process and fees

19.2.1 Students may formally request that the Registrar and Deputy President and Registrar/nominee arrange a recheck of their examination results after the Examination Board. The request must be made within two weeks of the date of issue of final programme year (semester 1 and semester 2) examination results to students and must be submitted in writing. Application forms for this purpose are available from the SREO (<http://www.ucc.ie/en/exams/procedures-regulations/>).

19.2.2 The SREO communicates each request for a recheck to the relevant Head School/Department or his/her nominee, who arranges to have the relevant marks rechecked as expeditiously as practicable. The formal recheck has recourse to the original examination script and such other available assessment materials as may be relevant.

19.2.3 A fee of **€30 per module** is required for a recheck. This fee should be lodged in the SREO. The fee is refundable if, as a consequence of the recheck, there is a change in the mark awarded in any module.

19.2.4 The outcome of the rechecking of the examination result will be communicated in writing by the Head School/Department or nominee, to the SREO who will, if a change in the mark is recommended, make the necessary arrangements to have the mark amended, and inform the student without delay.

19.2.5 If a recheck adversely affects the student's overall award for the examinations in question, this will be referred to a meeting of the Academic Board for decision and the student will be informed accordingly.

19.3 Appeal of Examination Results

19.3.1 Appeal of Examination Results provides an opportunity for students to appeal Examination Results on specific stated grounds (see: <https://www.ucc.ie/en/media/support/recordsandexaminations/AppealApplicationForm.pdf>).

Throughout this section, the term "examination" is taken to include submitted assessment material, and oral examination as well as formal written examination. In the exceptional event of an appeal of examination results the following procedures will apply:

19.4 Grounds for Appeal

19.4.1 An appeal of an Examination Result will be considered only:

a) if there is evidence of substantive irregularity in the **conduct** of an examination

or

b) if the student, on stated grounds, considers that the mark awarded in an examination is **erroneous, noting that the student's contention that s/he ought to have done better cannot be grounds for an appeal under this heading**

or

c) if there were **circumstances** of which the Examination Board was not aware when its decision was taken.

19.4.2 Students should be aware that appealing an examination result is a serious matter, not to be undertaken lightly. Before considering an appeal under (b) a student is recommended to view the relevant examination scripts and to consult Section 19.1 on *Rechecks of Examination Results* in the first instance.

19.4.3 Students encountering circumstances that may have adversely affected their performance should make every effort to bring these circumstances to the attention of the relevant Head(s) of School/Department and the Examination Board as soon as possible. Students making an appeal under (c) are required to give reasons why the circumstances in question were not brought to the attention of the Examination Board.

19.5 Appeal Procedures

19.5.1 A student who wishes to appeal an examination result must do so in writing to the Student Records and Examinations Officer, setting out, in full, the grounds for the appeal. An application form should be completed and submitted with supporting documentation **within two weeks of the date of issue of the final examination results** for the programme year (semester 1 and semester 2).

19.5.2 In exceptional circumstances, the Examination Appeals Committee, at its sole discretion, may waive the two week deadline for submission of an appeal. Application forms for this purpose are available from the SREO (<http://www.ucc.ie/en/exams/procedures-regulations/>)

19.5.3 A fee of **€70** is required for an appeal. This fee is lodged with the SREO. The fee is refundable only where an appeal is upheld. The value of the fee may be varied following approval by Academic Board.

19.5.4 Upon receipt of a written appeal, the Student Records and Examinations Officer will refer the matter to the Examination Appeals Officer.

19.5.5 A copy of the appeal will be sent by the Examination Appeals Officer to each relevant Head of School/Department or his/her nominee, who will arrange to have the relevant marks rechecked and, **within one week**, provide to the Examination Appeals Officer written responses on the issues raised in the appeal.

If the School/Department chooses not to respond it will be deemed to accept the case made by the student¹. The Examination Appeals Officer may also, as appropriate, send a copy of the appeal to the heads of relevant administrative offices, such as the SREO and the Disability Support Service, who will provide a written response to the issues raised in the appeal within one week.

19.5.6 The Examination Appeals Officer will make available to *both* the appellant *and* the relevant Head(s) of School/Department copies of all correspondence relating to the appeal; therefore, in correspondence academic units and any other Officers/representatives of the University should refrain from making any comments that may be construed as predetermining the outcome of an appeal.

19.5.7 Academic units must also ensure that *all* aspects of an appeal are responded to, irrespective of the perceived merits of an appeal.

19.5.8 Pending the outcome of an appeal, which may not necessarily be upheld, students should avail themselves of any opportunity to re-present for examination (i.e. they should take supplemental examinations unless instructed otherwise), on the understanding that the re-sitting of an examination will not prejudice an appeal in any way.

19.5.9 Should an appeal arise from an autumn supplemental examination, students should speak to their Head of Department to request 'guest access' to Blackboard, attendance at lectures, tutorials, etc. It may not be possible to accommodate these requests, particularly with respect to placements, laboratory partnerships, etc.

19.6 Examination Appeals Committee

19.6.1 The Examination Appeals Committee consists of sixteen members, appointed by the Academic Council, of whom at least four are external members, normally practising lawyers, and with provision for a rolling membership. In addition, the President appoints a member of Academic Council to act as Chair of the Committee. The term of office of the Committee shall be four years and the Committee may regulate its own procedures.

19.6.2 A minimum of four members, of whom at least one is an external member, are involved in deciding each appeal. In the absence of the Chair of the Committee, those members of the Committee present at the meeting shall select one of their number to chair the meeting.

19.6.3 The Examination Appeals Officer acts as a liaison between students, Schools/Departments and the Examination Appeals Committee but is not a member of the Committee.

19.6.4 The Examination Appeals Committee, in accordance with the principles of natural justice, considers the documentary evidence presented to it in each case, consults with Internal Examiner(s) and may, if deemed necessary, consult with the External Examiner(s) or any other appropriate person. The Examination Appeals Committee may, if deemed necessary, also seek additional information or documentation from Head(s) of School/Department, appellants or others.

¹ In the absence of any response from the School/Department the Examination Appeals Committee will still assess the appeal on its merits and may or may not find in favour of the appellant.

19.6.5 The Examination Appeals Committee determines the appeal by giving a decision. The Examination Appeals Officer, acting on behalf of the Committee, informs the appellant and the relevant Head(s) School/Department, in writing, of the outcome of the appeal. The Examination Appeals Officer also informs the Academic Council of the outcome of all appeals on an annual basis. The Examination Appeals Officer communicates the decision to the Deputy President and Registrar who, if a change in the result is recommended, makes the necessary arrangements to have that result amended. The Deputy President and Registrar is not a member of the Examination Appeals Committee.

19.6.6 The decision of the Examination Appeals Committee is final.

20.1.1 Final Year Undergraduate and Postgraduate (Taught Programmes) Degree students who successfully complete their programme of study in spring, summer or autumn will be conferred at the autumn conferring ceremonies (except the College of Medicine and Health who may be conferred at the summer conferring ceremony). Final Year Degree and Postgraduate (Taught Programmes) students (all Colleges) who successfully complete their programme of study in winter will be conferred at the spring conferring ceremonies. PhD and Masters (Research) students can be conferred in spring, summer or autumn.

20.1.2 Subject to capacity, final Year students (apart from the College of Medicine & Health with the exception of BSc (Public Health and Health Promotion), wishing to repeat the entire year with a view to improving their degree result may do so only if they have not been conferred. Students will need to inform the SREO, in writing, of their wish not to be conferred at least four weeks in advance of the published conferring date.

20.1.3 All Certificate/Diploma, Postgraduate Certificate/Diploma and Higher Diploma students are conferred '*in absentia*'.

21 Retention of Scripts and Course Assessments

21.1 Invigilated Examinations

21.1.1 Scripts written in invigilated examinations and course assessments will be retained for at least thirteen months following the date of the corresponding Examination Board. Scripts relating to an examination result which has been the subject of an appeal will be retained pending a decision by the Examinations Appeal Committee and thereafter for at least thirteen months following the date of ratification of results.

21.2 Course Assessment²

21.2.1 Each School/Department has responsibility to record the submission of continuous assessments presented by students. Students must be provided with a dated receipt for work presented as part of continuous assessment. This is not applicable in the case of in-class examinations.

21.2.2 Schools/Departments should require students to submit two copies of written assignments under continuous assessment, one of which is returned to them with feedback from the lecturer(s) while the second clean copy is kept for the External Examiner. In the case of work submitted electronically, the lecturer should make appropriate arrangements for feedback to be given to students.

21.2.3 Results for continuous assessment should be made available to students within three weeks of submission/completion where timely feedback would benefit students preparing for the final examination.

21.2.4 Marks for all assessments are provisional and subject to revision until approved by the institutional Examination Board. It is the responsibility of the relevant School/Department to ensure all students are aware of this.

22 Retention of Breakdown of Marks held in a School/Department

² This section is not intended to cover homework in the Mathematical or Physical Sciences area, including Engineering or laboratory books in subjects outside the Mathematical or Physical Sciences area

22.1 Detailed marks (i.e., marks for examination questions, assignments etc.) which are approved by the Internal and External Examiners, should be held for a period as defined by the national guidelines (GDPR).

2017	Guide to Examinations For Staff and Students - Document Approval and Review
-------------	--

Subject Matter Experts/Committee	Document version	Date Reviewed	Date Approved
Student Records and Examinations Office	October, 2016	August – September, 2017	September 7 th , for review and consideration by ADSC
Academic Development and Standards Committee (ADSC)	DRAFT (2017 – 1.0)	September 13 th , 2017	September 13 th , for review and consideration by AB
Academic Board (AB)	DRAFT (2017 – 1.0)	October 25 th , 2017	October 25 th , 2017