

Communication from Education Committee:

This circular provides information on the decisions made by Taught Degrees Panel at its meeting week 8 of Trinity term 2021:

Action required

Divisions, departments and faculties are asked to:

- **Note** the permanent changes to the *Examinations and assessments framework* (EAF) and the continuation of section 8.2 (self-certification for extensions and late submissions) for 2021-22 only, pending further review.
- **Note** the intention to review the policy around the late submission of exam responses for handwritten and mixed mode exams in early MT21.
- **Note** the revised guidance to markers for assessment of work by students with specific learning difficulties (SpLDs) and clarification that the impact of an SpLD should be taken into account when marking.
- **Note** the review of the educational recordings policy
- **Note** the continuation of the current educational recordings captioning service for 2021-22

Further Information

Permanent policy changes to the EAF for 2021-22

1. A wide range of provisions have been introduced since TT20 to accommodate the changes to assessment made as a result of the pandemic. Some of these were adopted permanently (mainly in relation to online open-book exams) in MT20.
1. The panel also agreed at its meeting in week 3 of Trinity term 2021 to retain the current process for late exam response consideration and provisions for technical time for 2021-22.
2. At its week 8 of Trinity term 2021 The Panel has approved that a number of other areas of policy change are incorporated on a permanent basis into the 2021-22 edition of the [Examinations and Assessment Framework](#) as detailed in the table below. These will be published in the EAF at the start of MT21.
3. The panel discussed the operation of the late exam response penalty framework and the difficulties experienced in TT21. Following the consideration of feedback from students and examiners a revised framework would be brought for consideration by TDP in MT21.

Section	Action
4.3 Meetings at which marks are considered	Remote attendance provisions are made permanent but Exam boards are encouraged to support physical attendance of external examiners on at least an annual basis to support working relationships and allow the external to meet with

	students in-person as appropriate. This is likely to be particularly beneficial in the first year of an external examiner's appointment
4.3.1 Problems with attendance	Provision for exam board minimal quoracy and attendance by confidential correspondence of external examiners provision is made permanent but is caveated that this should only be undertaken in 'unexpected and exceptional circumstances'.
9.1. Presence of examiners	That there is no paper corrections process for online exams and the permanent provisions are that students are asked to note any error/ambiguity on their exam response. This could be revisited if a means of communicating with candidates is put in place.
9.4.2 Remote invigilation for whole cohorts	Provisions for the remote invigilation of whole cohorts are made permanent for the occasions when remote invigilation is considered appropriate.
10 Use of vivas	Permanent removal of the provision disallowing remote attendance at UG and PGT vivas
11.8.3 Consideration of mitigating circumstances by examiners and Annex E: Assessment support package	This annex will need to be substantially edited for 2021-22 to reflect the removal of the elements of the assessment support package that were only authorised for HT21 and TT21 – submission statements, marks safeguard and outcomes safeguard. Other enhancements to the process will be retained including direct application for MCEs.

Policy extensions to the EAF for 2021-22

4. The panel agreed that section 8.2 could be extended for the next academic year but would need to be reviewed during 2021-22 before consideration could be given to making any permanent change.

Section	Action
8.2 Extensions and late submission (and Annex J)	Provision for self-certification in support of an application for late submission or extension: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 days for acute illness • 14 days for exacerbation of a chronic fluctuating condition

5. Attention is also drawn to the existing areas of policy extension communicated in [Circular 9](#) – relating to technical time and late response MCE process.

'Inclusive marking guidelines' coversheet for students with a Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD)

6. Under 12.6 of the Regulations for the Conduct of University Examinations: Part 12 Candidates with Special Examination Needs, provision is made for the chair of examiners of the relevant University Examination to be made aware of candidates who have been diagnosed with a SpLD.
7. This currently relies on a student, who has permission to do so in their Student Support Plan, attaching a guidance sheet (known as the 2D form) to the front of their summative assessments and/or examination scripts.
8. The [Examinations and Assessment Framework](#) (EAF) states that where a 2D form is present, *"The scripts are to be marked as normal, but the marks-sheet should show when a candidate has a SpLD, so that this information can be considered by examiners in adjudicating on the candidate's performance."* Unlike the consideration of MCEs there is no mechanism for exam boards to consider SpLDs at their meetings and so it appears that Exam Boards do not in fact give candidates any further consideration. Instead, by default, it is assumed allowances for SpLDs have been made at the marking stage.
9. The current 2D form also contains contradictory guidance that the impact of an SpLD should not be taken into account in marking (*'please mark the script or submitted work as it stands'*) and yet markers should *'discount errors'*.
10. As part of the work arising out of the Alternative Arrangements Working Group a review of the 2D form was identified.
11. An initial update to the form and surrounding policy has been undertaken by the Disability Advisory Service and Education Policy Support which includes clearer guidance to examiners and **clarification that the impact of an SpLD should be taken into account when marking**. The form has also been renamed the 'Inclusive marking guidance' coversheet or 'IMG' for short (Annex A) to reflect its purpose.
12. The panel agreed to the introduction of the revised guidance, its change in name and associated changes to the EAF and Examination regulations from the start of Michaelmas term 2021.

Educational recordings policy

13. The University does not have a standalone educational recordings policy. While there is a clear formal [policy statement on student recording of lectures and other formal teaching sessions](#), the policy on the recording of lectures by staff is contained in the [Replay Information for Departments](#) (updated July 2020) and the [Presenter release and legal documents pack](#) (updated November 2020). Common questions about permissions, licences, copyright, distribution and accessibility are answered in the [Replay FAQs](#).
14. At its week 8 HT21 meeting the Panel agreed to establish a working group to review the University's educational recordings policy, drawing on local usage data, feedback and other evaluative data as well as sector guidance and educational research in order to consider the role of lecture capture in meeting the University's obligations under the Equality Act, supporting strategic targets to reduce awarding gaps and to

consider the impact of the digital accessibility regulations for the Replay service, along with producing guidance to students on making the most of Replay records.

15. The expected output is a single policy framework covering all uses of educational recordings and that applies to all students, staff and academics including visitors, and will replace existing documentation. It is anticipated that the final recommendations of the working group will be presented to the Panel in HT22 for implementation in 2022-23. In the interim, the Panel has approved the extension of the existing policy decisions in (13) above for the period that lectures continue to be online, or until the review has made its final recommendations, whichever is the sooner.

16. The following policy on reuse of educational recordings has also been confirmed:

Noting the underlying principles that 'recordings are not intended to be a replacement for attending lectures or other teaching events' and 'recordings are created as additional learning resources to supplement the teaching provided' there are occasions where it will be appropriate for recordings to be reused between cohorts of students. This may be the case particularly for pre-recorded content created for the purpose of teaching and feedback but also on some occasions for recordings of live lectures or other types of teaching sessions. Reuse always require the permission of creator(s) and can be facilitated by staff re-signing the presenter release license for the upcoming year. All student contributions must removed from recordings before reuse.

Educational recordings captioning service

17. The Disability Advisory Service (DAS) caption editing service was set up in early Hilary term 2021 as a direct response to the University's educational planning requirements, driven by the constraints of the covid pandemic, with particular reference the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations. Central funding was approved to support this.
18. The service supports individual students in the organisation of manual editing of captions, as a reasonable adjustment for disability, ensuring the University meets its legal obligations in providing accessible recorded materials. As a short-term measure, this centrally supported service has also been assisting departments reduce the workload of staff in subjects where the automated machine captioning is ineffective because of the specialist nature of their content.
19. Additional funds have been agreed for the 2021-22 financial year to maintain current provision whilst further work is done to assess the longer-term demand and a financially sustainable model for delivery.
20. If there are particularly widespread caption errors which have a disproportionate impact on meaning and intelligibility, departments can contact the Disability Advisory Service (nmh@admin.ox.ac.uk) who can advise/arrange access to manual caption editing/transcription services subject to demand. The Replay team (replay@it.ox.ac.uk) can also advise on third-party captioning services.

If you have queries about this circular please contact Rachel Dearlove, Head of Taught Degrees and Student Casework (rachel.dearlove@admin.ox.ac.uk)

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