

Communication from Education Committee: Assessment support package

This circular provides information on the assessment support package agreed at Taught Degrees Panel at its meeting of week 3 Hilary term 2020.

Action required

All divisions, departments/faculties, and colleges are asked to **note** the introduction of a new Annex to the *Examinations and Assessments Framework* (EAF) which replaces the existing *Annex E: Consideration of mitigating circumstances by examiners*.

This will be in effect for University Examinations in Hilary and Trinity terms 2021 only.

Exam boards are particularly asked **to note and understand** their responsibilities as outlined in the new Annex, including the revised deadline for submission of MCE notices.

N.B. Some further minor changes to the main body of the *EAF* will be circulated later this term and this new Annex will be incorporated at that point.

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

Further information

1. This annex replaces and subsumes *Annex E: Consideration of mitigating circumstances by examiners* and is to be used by final exam boards considering results in Hilary and Trinity term 2021. It contains a package of measures that are designed to take into account the impact of the pandemic on student performance in assessment (as well as incorporating existing processes to take into account individual circumstances).

Applicability

2. This annex applies to First and Second Public Examinations (including formal parts with the Second Public Examination), Postgraduate Taught University Examinations (including qualifying examinations) and undergraduate summative assessment that contributes to an award-bearing course in the Department for Continuing Education taken in Hilary and Trinity terms 2021 only.

Content

3. The package of measures is as follows:
 - Statements for submitted work
 - Process to account for disruption affecting a group or cohort of candidates
 - A marks safeguard
 - An outcomes safeguard
 - Enhanced individual mitigating circumstances notice to examiners (MCE) process
4. The core of the individual MCE process remains unchanged for HT21 and TT21. However there are a number of enhancements in place:

- Candidates will be able to initiate and submit an MCE directly, although colleges can still submit on behalf of a student if necessary (to be in place from early TT21)
 - A 'candidate impact statement' template to support candidates completing their MCE
 - A revised deadline for candidate submission (within three days of the last exam/submission deadline)
 - Reintroduction (in comparison with TT20) of the banding process, although amended to not require the panel to consider strength of evidence.
 - Reorganisation of the guidance on actions that can be taken as a result of individual MCEs (no new content)
 - Enhanced guidance for exam boards on how to consider disruption to a group or cohort and what actions can be taken
 - Guidance on the consideration of MCEs in relation to exam responses uploaded late
5. Exam boards should **note the revised deadline for submission of MCEs**. This has been put in place to ensure a consistent deadline for students across papers and courses. If this final exam board meeting falls prior to or on this deadline then wherever possible it should be rearranged.