Assessment, Progression and Awarding Committees

# Summary of APAC Meeting Structure

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| **Meeting** | **Purpose** | **Membership** | **Inputs** | **Outputs** |
| Programme/Discipline APAC | * To be responsible for finalising and approving module marks for all students on modules overseen by the APAC, applying scaling where appropriate * To be responsible for confirming and approving progression decisions for all students on programmes overseen by the APAC * To be responsible for confirming and approving awards for finalist students on programmes overseen by the APAC * To error check (including condonement, degree titles, classifications, core modules, level of credits) * To receive Mitigation Committee outcomes or confirmation that mitigation decisions have been applied to the results under consideration. * To determine consequences of failure in line with University regulations * To consider External Examiner(s) reports * To consider assessment processes e.g. moderation and any assessment changes * To identify student exceptions that require further scrutiny or advice from College APAC, including:   + Individual student adjustments (in exceptional year)   + Dean’s exceptions to be requested e.g. repeat study, Aegrotat awards   + Irregular occurrences or instances where University regulations were difficult to adhere to in relation to consequences of failure | Core membership:   * Chair of Programme/Discipline APAC (HoD or equivalent for CMH / DoE or equivalent for CMH / nominated representative with Academic Dean’s approval) * Academic with responsibility for oversight of assessment and exams (Assessment Officer / Assessment Lead / Programme Director)   Where this person is also the DoE an alternative academic should be present as agreed by the Chair   * Education Support Team member (secretary) * Additional Education Support Team member (normally Education Support Manager) * External Examiner(s)   Optional membership (at the instruction of the Chair):   * All relevant module conveners for the Department * Other relevant Professional Services and academic staff   Quoracy: Minimum of 5 individuals (as per core above). | Module data reports  Confirmation that Mitigation Committee outcomes have been applied  Progression and awarding rules from TQA (chapters 7-9)  Programme specifications  Student outcome reports  External examiner reports | Clear record of discussions and outcomes agreed  (template provided)  Chair’s action would be required in any cases where scaling is agreed and individual student outcome reports need to be re-run and reconsidered |
| College APAC  To normally take place *before* the release of results | * To receive reports on scaling exceptions * To consider student exceptions that require further scrutiny or advice (as identified by Programme/Discipline APAC) to include:   + Individual student adjustments   + Dean’s exceptions to be requested e.g. repeat study, Aegrotat awards   + Irregular occurrences or instances where University regulations were difficult to adhere to in relation to consequences of failure * To ensure regulations are applied consistently and equitably across disciplines * To identify and share good practice from Programme/Discipline APACs * To identify areas where policy clarifications or enhancements are required   *Note - the intention is not to amend decisions made by Programme/Discipline APACs (except in cases of actual errors in the application of procedure or policy), but rather to offer additional experience and advice on request and to review consistency across Programme/Discipline APACs* | Core membership:   * Chair of College APAC (ADE or nominated representative with Academic Dean’s approval). Normally the Chair will not have attended the previous programme/discipline APAC meetings. * One academic representative per discipline to represent the programme/discipline APAC (Programme/Discipline APAC Chair or representative who had attended that meeting). * Education Support Manager (secretary) or nominee * EBP or nominee   Optional membership:   * Other relevant Professional Services and academic staff as agreed by the Chair   Quoracy: Minimum of 4 individuals (as per core above) | Programme/Discipline APAC outcomes including:   * Rationale for scaling approved * Student outcome reports for those identified as exceptions (plus additional notes where needed) | Clear record of discussions and outcomes agreed (template provided)  Recommendation and rationale for each Dean’s exception |
| University APAC  To normally take place *after* the release of results | * To receive reports on Dean’s exceptions * To ensure consistent application of academic regulations across Colleges * To receive College APAC minutes * To receive a report on Dean’s exceptions * To identify areas where future policy clarifications or enhancements are required * To make institution-wide recommendations on quality assurance matters relating to APACs | Core membership:   * Academic Dean for Students (Chair) * Associate Academic Dean for Students * Quality and Standards Manager * Faculty Policy Advisor (secretary)   Optional membership:   * Other relevant Professional Services and academic staff as agreed by the Chair * Student representatives   Quoracy: Minimum of 3 individuals from the core group above | College APAC minutes  Report on Dean’s exceptions | Clear record of discussions and outcomes agreed (template provided)  Taught Faculty Board annual report to include:   * University APAC decisions * Update on policy clarifications or enhancements * Data and strategic recommendations on patterns of degree outcomes and academic standards including:   + Academic governance   + Institutional grade profile   + Classification algorithms   + Marking practices   + Equalities assessments |

# Further notes on Programme and Discipline APACs

Two key actions form the main business of the Programme/Discipline APAC (or its constituent meetings):

1. Review the data reports for all modules (under the jurisdiction of that APAC) and approve the application of scaling to module marks where appropriate
2. Consider the outcome reports for all individual students (on programmes under the jurisdiction of that APAC) and agree awards, classification, progression, failures. In addition, in an exceptional year (e.g. industrial action) this may include recommending individual adjustments to borderline cases.

**Non-quorate meetings**

Where quoracy cannot be met (typically because the external examiner cannot attend), approval must be sought from the Academic Dean for the meeting to proceed (this can be granted retrospectively if unexpected circumstances make it impossible to seek approval in advance). However, please note that certain decisions must be approved by an external examiner.

## **Exception reporting and preparatory meetings**

Although the APAC is responsible for ensuring there has been a review of all modules results and the performance of all students on the programme, this does not necessarily need to be achieved by having all the relevant data reports scrutinised in the main APAC meeting. It is acceptable for the main APAC meeting to consider exceptional cases provided that a preparatory meeting has taken place to scrutinise all reports. Decisions must be minuted on whether or not to scale any module outliers. Minutes would be received by the Programme/Discipline APAC.

Exceptional cases are those including where:

* A student is unable to progress or will receive an award other than the one they were expecting
* The case is likely to be referred to the CAPAC
* A module is proposed to be scaled (module reports)
* Some noteworthy occurrence means that the membership of the APAC would reasonably expect that it be brought to their attention.

Where a preparatory meeting has scrutinised the appropriate paperwork and made recommendations it is expected that these decisions will be accepted by the Programme/Discipline APAC, provided that they have been approved by the Chair of the APAC and the External examiner (when involving actions requiring External Examiner approval). When a preparatory meeting has recommended scaling of a module, the module convener should be consulted.

**Subsequent meetings and Chair’s action**

It is also recognised that it is not always possible to complete the work of the APAC in a single meeting. This may be due, for example, to late arrival of results or amendments required to paperwork due to APAC decisions (e.g. scaling). In these circumstances the APAC may delegate responsibilities (typically related to error checking) to a subsequentmeeting. This meeting should follow the quoracy/membership rules for preparatory meetings. However, certain decisions must be explicitly approved by the External Examiner and Chair.

Should decisions be required that fall out of the usual timescale of APAC meetings, and that cannot wait until the next APAC takes place, then these should be made by the Chair of the APAC under ‘Chair’s action’. If the powers of ‘Chair’s action’ are to be delegated to someone other than the Chair, this must be agreed in the meeting, or if decided subsequent to the meeting, should be approved by the Academic Dean.

**Membership of preparatory or subsequent APAC meetings**

Core membership of a preparatory or subsequent meeting should be agreed by the APAC Chair and include:

* Academic with responsibility for oversight of assessment and examinations (Assessment Officer / Assessment Lead / Programme Director)
* Education Support Team member (secretary)

**External Examiner Approval of Decisions**

The following decisions must be approved by the external examiner, whether taken in the main APAC, in a preparatory or subsequent meeting, or by Chair’s action.

* Any scaling of module marks.
* Any changes to an individual’s module marks, progression or award (except when done as error correction).

## **Exceptional years**

Certain powers of Programme/Discipline APACs are only able to be exercised in exceptional years. These powers include:

* Ability to make individual adjustments to student module marks
* Ability to make individual adjustments to student degree classifications

It is at the discretion of the Academic Dean for Students to determine if a year is exceptional. A year would normally only be judged to be ‘exceptional’ when circumstances have had a significant impact on student academic performance, or it has not been possible to assess student academic performance in the usual manner. Reasons that a year may be judged to be exceptional include (but are not limited to):

* Natural disaster
* War
* Disease outbreak
* Industrial action
* Widespread/significant IT failure

# Roles, Responsibilities and Powers of Individuals in the APAC Process

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| **Role** | **Meetings attending** | **Powers/responsibilities** |
| Module convener | Optional member of Programme/Discipline APAC  Optional member of Programme/Discipline APAC Preparatory meeting | Should be consulted if module to be scaled |
| External Examiner | Programme/Discipline APAC | Must explicitly approve any scaling of modules  Must approve any changes to an individual’s module marks, progression or award (except when done as error correction). |
| Programme/Discipline APAC Chair  One of:   * HoD or equivalent for CMH * DoE or equivalent for CMH * nominated representative with Academic Dean’s approval) | Programme/Discipline APAC  Optional member of Programme/Discipline APAC Preparatory meeting  Normally represents Programme/Discipline APAC at College APAC. | Chair of Programme/Discipline APAC  Decides on optional membership of Programme/Discipline APAC  Establishes (if required) a Programme/Discipline APAC Preparatory or Subsequent meeting  Takes decisions under ‘Chair’s action’ |
| Academic with responsibility for oversight of assessment and exams  Usually:   * Assessment Officer * Assessment Lead * Programme Director | Programme/Discipline APAC  May represent Programme/Discipline APAC at College APAC. |  |
| Education Support Team member | Programme/Discipline APAC | Secretary to Programme/Discipline APAC |
| Education Support Manager | Normally attends Programme/Discipline APAC  College APAC | Secretary to College APAC |
| Education Business Partner | Optional member of Programme/Discipline APAC  College APAC |  |
| Chair of College APAC  One of:   * Associate Dean for Education * nominated representative with Academic Dean’s approval) | College APAC | Chair of College APAC  Takes decisions under ‘Chair’s action’ |
| Academic Dean for Students | University APAC | Normally Chair of University APAC  Decides if a year is 'exceptional'  Gives approval to Chair of Programme/Discipline APAC if not HOD or DOE  Gives approval to Chair of College APAC if not College ADE.  Gives approval for APAC to proceed despite not meeting quoracy requirements  Gives approval for students to have a repeat year  Gives approval for aegrotat awards  Gives approval for awards despite not meeting requirements of Credit & Qualifications Framework or programme specification. |
| Associate Academic Dean for Students | University APAC | Will Chair University APAC in the absence of Academic Dean for Students |
| Quality and Standards Manager | University APAC |  |
| Faculty Policy Advisor | University APAC | Secretary to University APAC |
| Student representatives | Optional members of University APAC |  |