



University for the Common Good

## **Terms of Reference and Standard Operations of Progression & Award Boards and associated activities**

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|----------------------------|---|
| Prepared By                | Registry  |
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| Other documents referenced |   |
| Related documents          | University Assessment Regulations   |

| Version Number | Date issued | Author                            | Update information   |
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| V1.0           | 05.08.2014  | Registry                          | First Published version  |
| V2.0           | 30.09.2015  | Registry                          | Section 9, paragraph 9.3.2 iii referring to extraordinary third attempts allowed under MITs is removed.  |
| V2.1           | 27.10.2015  | Governance                        | Departmental Titles/Role titles updated  |
| V3.0           | 15.09.2016  | Academic Quality and Development  | Section 4.3 and 4.4 added for security of Assessment Board mark sheets and notification of conflict of interest.<br>Section 6.4, arrangements for External Examiner attendance, absence and endorsement of marks.<br>Departmental Titles/Role titles updated |
| V3.1           | 20.12.2016  | Academic Quality and Development  | Update to Section 3, paragraph 3.11; reports of non-quorate assessment boards must now be submitted to the school's dean.  |
| V3.2           | 01/09/2017  | Academic Quality and Development  | Additional Agenda Item 6.1 (x), to remind AB members about the potential for a deferred decision impact on a student's ability to graduate   |
| V3.2           | 01/09/2017  | Academic Quality and Development  | New Section 7 added – additional guidance to AB Chairs in terms of carrying an additional 40 credits (undergraduate students).   |
| V3.3           |             | Academic Registrar                | Introduction of Mid-Year Progression Reviews.<br>Change of title from Assessment Board to Progression & Awards Board & membership updates<br>Various other minor amendments.   |
| V3.4           | 25.08.2022  | Academic Quality and Development  | References to MITs replaced by Fit to Sit.   |
| V3.5           | 01.09.2023  | Quality Assurance and Enhancement | Minor revisions to reflect new MIS terminology and post-PAB processing, removal of references to printed materials, minor revisions to PAB agenda order  |

| <b>Version Number</b> | <b>Date issued</b> | <b>Author</b> | <b>Update information</b>                                  |
|-----------------------|--------------------|---------------|--|
|                       |                    |               | and updates to statement for the Confidentiality Appendix. |

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. This document outlines the Terms of Reference and Standard Operating Procedures of the Progression & Award Boards (PAB), to which Senate delegates its authority and responsibility for the consideration of student performance and decision making in terms of taught University Awards.
- 1.2. This document also outlines other associated meetings and activities, to both assist in the smooth operation of PABs but to enhance the quality assurance and enhancement activities in relation to the review of academic performance.
- 1.3. The expectation is that each Academic Department will have one Progression & Award Board (PAB), which will consider the performance of students on programmes of study that they are responsible for administering.
- 1.4. Due to timings, scale or other complexities, other Progression & Award Boards not encompassing the whole department may be required. In such cases, the School Board will approve the exception and its membership.
- 1.5. As the University for the Common Good which has a variety of outreach and transnational activities, it is not always possible for all scenarios to fit into a single set of procedures. Where deviation is required, guidance should be sought from the Academic Registrar in the first instance and, once agreed, noted within the Programme/Partnership agreement as necessary.
- 1.6. All students should be considered at a Pre- Board, where the performance of each student is scrutinised and recommendations to the PAB are made. The Pre- Board also allows an opportunity to ensure that all submitted assessments have been graded and marks made available. Students who have a pass/proceed recommendation via a quorate pre-board can be tabled at a main board rather than have names and results presented individually.
- 1.7. These procedures assume that all necessary activities relating to the marking, moderation, marks data entry and confirmation sign off by the module leader has taken place.
- 1.8. For modules that are under the remit of External Examiners, module results must be agreed by externals prior to formal confirmation & release to students at the end of each trimester.

## **Section A - Mid-Year Student Progression Reviews**

### **2. Progression Review Meetings (PRM)**

- 2.1. At the end of each Trimester where no Progression and Awards board is meeting to make recommendations and awards, a Progression Review Meeting will be held to review the academic performance of each student during that trimester.
- 2.2. Terms of Reference

#### **2.2.1. Remit**

- 1) To review the academic performance and progression of each student undertaking the programme.
- 2) To identify at risk students and inform relevant GCU support teams (i.e. LDC, Personal Tutor) as necessary with respect to support interventions that may assist towards the success of the student.
- 3) To provide feedback to the Programme Board and others as necessary on mid-year performance and progression of students.

#### **2.2.2. Membership Composition**

- Head of Department or Nominee (Chair)
- Programme Leaders
- Programme Level Tutors
- Representative from each Academic department that provides modules for the programme
- Programme Coordinator

### 2.2.3. Agenda

- i) Apologies
- ii) Review of student performance, highlighting at risk students
- iii) Confirmation of any follow up actions required with respect to at risk students.

### 2.2.4. Notes

Notes of the meeting must be taken to include:

- Date/time of meeting
- Attendees
- Actions

These notes are for information only and do not need to be presented to other committees.

## Section B– Progression & Award Boards - Pre Meetings

### 3. PAB Pre-Meetings

- 3.1. Students already considered at a Pre-Board who are being recommended for a pass/proceed decision code (C class PIT) can be presented to a Progression & Awards Board in bulk, without the need to present each individual student.
- 3.2. All other cases, including Awards (A), Resits/Deferrals (R) and withdrawals (L) must be presented student by student, where their Pre-Board recommended outcome is confirmed on an individual basis. Students eligible for compensation, automatic or otherwise, must be presented to the main board on an individual basis.
- 3.3. All students who have failed a module, but have submitted a Fit to Sit declaration which has been accepted, must be presented on an individual basis to the main board, to allow the Progression & Award Board to make a judgement on the appropriate action and outcome (See Section 4 of the Fit to Sit Policy).
- 3.4. All students, irrespective of their recommended decision, must have been considered on an individual basis at a quorate Pre-Board. The Programme Leader must confirm to the Progression & Award Board that this has taken place. Where a student has not been considered in this manner at a pre-board then they must be presented in an individual manner at the main board meeting.

### 3.5. TOR of Pre-PAB Meetings

#### 3.5.1. Remit

- 1) To ensure that all marks are correct, and none are accidentally omitted, liaising with others as necessary to confirm that missing marks are indeed due to non-submissions/attendance.
- 2) To review module performance of students and raise any concerns/issues with relevant parties, including Registry and/or Quality Assurance and Enhancement prior to the main board taking place.
- 3) To review the performance of all students within the area(s) of responsibility and ensure that the correct recommended decision code is processed for consideration and formal approval at the main board.
- 4) To ensure that the Progression & Award Board Chair and External Examiners are fully briefed prior to the main board on any complex issues that will require discussion.

#### 3.5.2. Membership Composition

- Head of Department or Nominee (Chair)
- Programme Leader for each programme
- Programme Level Tutors
- Named Academic for each module being considered<sup>(i)</sup>
- Programme Coordinator

- If the Chair of the main PAB is not at the pre-board, then they must be briefed by the chair of the Pre-Board on any issues.
  - External Examiners may attend should they wish<sup>(ii)</sup> but will not be included in the quoracy calculation<sup>(ii)</sup>
- i For each module taken by students being reviewed, there must be a named academic present at the Pre-Board with knowledge of the module and take responsibility for any module related actions from the Pre-Board. An academic may have responsibility for more than one module.
- ii No additional travel/accommodation arrangements will be made for EE to attend Pre-Boards out with normal arrangements to attend main boards. The use of telephone/Videoconference should be considered where necessary.

### 3.5.3. Quoracy

- i) 70% of membership, which must include the Programme Leader for each programme being considered.
- ii) Where the meeting is not quorate, student results can still be reviewed, however ALL students will have to be presented on an individual basis at the main Progression & Award Board.

### 3.5.4. Agenda

- i) Apologies
- ii) Statements of confidentiality and consequences of deferral of decisions at main board.
- iii) Review of module performance.
- iv) Confirmation of the Award Classification and Profiling Schemes in operation.
- v) Review of individual student performance with recommendations to be made to main PAB.

### 3.5.5. Notes

Notes of the meeting must be taken and include:

- Date/time of meeting
- Attendees
- Confirmation of Quoracy
- Summary of considerations (e.g. number of recommendations being made by PIT code).
- Details of any issues or rationale for recommendation, noted by the Pre-Board Chair on their student profile set. These must be kept until after the appeal period of the main Progression & Award board has passed and then destroyed.

These notes are for information only and do not need to be presented to other committees.

## Section C – Main Progression & Award Boards

### 4. Remit, Responsibilities and Duties

- 4.1. To ensure that the Glasgow Caledonian University Assessment Regulations are applied, including any programme specific regulations.
- 4.2. To take into consideration any declaration by a student that they were not fit to sit/submit, in line with Section 4.1 of the Fit to Sit Policy.
- 4.3. To confirm the pass/proceed recommendations tabled following confirmation of full consideration at a quorate pre- board, with all other recommendations presented on an individual student basis.
- 4.4. To determine candidates' assessment results and to decide, when appropriate, if candidates have satisfied the conditions for progression to the next level of the programme as set out in the regulations.
- 4.5. To determine if candidates have fulfilled the conditions for the attainment of awards (including the award of merit, distinction and the classification of Honours awards) and to make appropriate recommendations for the granting of awards, such recommendations being subject to the approval of External Examiners.
- 4.6. To make recommendations as appropriate on the withdrawal of students.
- 4.7. To consider applications for the award of aegrotat degrees

### 5. Membership composition and other Attendees

- 5.1. Composition of each Progression & Award Board shall be as follows:

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| Chair   | Head of Department. The Dean may approve an appropriate depute when a HoD is not available due to exceptional circumstances.  |
| Programme Leader(s)                             | All Programme Leaders are required to attend to present students (for large programmes each Level tutor may present as required)  |
| External Examiners                              | The expectation is that Externals attend meetings, which can be via telephone or video conference where necessary in line with the Academic Quality & Practice Handbook   |
| Departmental Academic Staff                     | All academic staff within the Department are members of the PAB, excluding academics with a research only contract.   |
| Representatives from other Academic Departments | Where a programme has modules supplied by other Academic Departments, then a representative from each supplying department must be present as a member of the PAB.  |
| Academic Registrar's Representative             | A nominated member of Professional Services Staff, nominated by the Academic Registrar shall normally be present at the meetings of SCQF 9, 10 and 11 where award decisions are being made. This is to ensure that there is consistency across the Institution with regards to the interpretation of Assessment Regulations. They must be independent of the assessment process and have undertaken appropriate training. |
| Clerk   | Normally the associated Programme Coordinator   |

- 5.2. In the case of collaborative programmes, the composition of Progression & Award Boards will be defined during the approval process.
- 5.3. In cases where due to size, timing or other legitimate reasons, it may not be practical to run a single Departmental Progression & Award Board. In such cases, the composition of each must be defined and approved by the School Board.
- 5.4. The Chair of Senate (or nominee from the University Executive) has the right to attend all Progression & Award Boards.

- 5.5. Academic Departments contributing modules to a programme must be represented at Progression & Award Boards.
- 5.6. Programme Leaders will be required to advise on the interpretation of Progression & Award Regulations (general and programme specific) and previous practice.
- 5.7. Academic Departments will confirm the membership of its associated Progression & Award Board(s) at the first School Board meeting of the academic year.
- 5.8. School Boards will approve the mechanism for confirming the membership of composite boards.
- 5.9. The quoracy of a Progression & Award Board will be 70% of members.
- 5.10. Where a board fails to be quorate, then the meeting can still proceed if the Chair, Programme Leader for each programme being considered and at least 1 other member is present.
- 5.11. A non-quorate meeting must defer decisions if a fully informed decision cannot be made.
- 5.12. A report on non-quorate Progression & Award board meetings must be submitted to the School's Dean and Associate Dean LT&Q, Academic Registrar and Head of Quality Assurance and Enhancement. This report should also be submitted to the School Board and the next Progression & Award Board for information.

## **6. Confidentiality of Board Deliberations**

- 6.1. The proceedings of Progression & Award Boards are strictly confidential. Discussions regarding individual candidates must not be divulged to candidates. Additionally, marks may not be divulged to persons other than the candidate without the express authority of the Board.
- 6.2. Marks will be made available to each candidate as soon as practicable after the Progression & Award Board has met. Candidates must not be informed of the decisions of Boards prior to their formal publication.
- 6.3. Student profiles or Progression & Award Board marks sheets **MUST NOT** be retained by members of the Progression and Award Board following the meeting, with the exception of the Chair, Clerk and Academic Registrar's Representative.
- 6.4. Any Board member or attendee with a conflict of interest in respect to any student being considered must declare this to the Chair prior to commencement of the consideration of student results. In such cases, the fact will be noted in the minutes and that individual will not engage in discussion or voting regarding the student(s) concerned.
- 6.5. Paragraphs 6.1 to 6.4 **MUST** be read out at each Progression & Award Board meeting as per the agenda (see 8.1 ix)

## **7. Frequency and Timings of Progression & Award Boards Meetings**

- 7.1. Progression & Award Boards must meet at appropriate progression and award points as necessary, e.g after completion of 120 credit points, PG exit point or after the resit diet.
- 7.2. Progression Review meetings must take place (as per Section B) at the end of a trimester if no formal Progression & Award Board is due to meet, to identify students who may require pastoral care as well as additional academic development support.
- 7.3. Meetings of Progression & Award Boards may be arranged at other times as required.
- 7.4. For operational and preparatory reasons, Progression and Award Boards must not meet less than 8 calendar days from the date of the last day of the examination diet.
- 7.5. Progression & Award Boards should ensure that a pre meeting is held prior to the main board.
- 7.6. Schools are responsible for scheduling their Progression & Award Boards in good time, as per the Registry Calendar of dates and deadlines.
- 7.7. Schools are responsible for maintaining and entering details of all scheduled Progression & Award Boards on the Registry Progression & Award Boards schedule, available via Sharepoint.

## 8. Progression & Award Board Agenda, Recording & Confirmation of Decisions

8.1. All Progression & Award Boards must have the following Agenda items:

- i) Apologies
- ii) Confirmation that the Board is quorate and therefore able to take decisions
- iii) Confirmation of the Minutes of the Previous meeting
- iv) Matters Arising from the minutes of the previous meeting
- v) Details of any Chair's Actions taken since last meeting
- vi) Details of any Academic Appeals submitted and their outcome
- vii) Confirmation that students have taken modules that lead to the qualifications under the jurisdiction of the Progression and Award Board and confirmation that all internal processes have taken place
- viii) Confirmation from the External Examiners that the standard of any awards to be made is comparable with that of similar awards elsewhere
- ix) Reminder that discussions and decisions taken at the Progression and Award Board are confidential (*see section 6 above*)
- x) Reminder that any decisions deferred may impact upon the student's ability to graduate at the forthcoming set of Graduation Ceremonies and that any enquires regarding a student's entitlement and ability to graduate should be referred to Registry (*See Section 11*)
- xi) Confirmation that a Quorate Pre-Board has taken place and that all Pass/Proceed recommendations can be tabled (see section C)
- xii) Presentation of marks and recommendations
- xiii) A record, where appropriate, of the principles or criteria upon which individual decisions were made
- xiv) Comments from External Examiners
- xv) Comments from Programme and Module Leaders
- xvi) Any other competent business
- xvii) The proposed date and time of the next meeting

8.2. The Clerk is required to record decisions with regard to student achievement and ensure the accurate recording of the minutes of the meeting.

8.3. Where a quorate Pre- Board has met, Pass/Proceed recommendations can be tabled.

8.4. All student profiles being presented at a Progression & Award Board, whether tabled or for individual consideration must be made available at the meeting. Any member of the Progression & Award Board may request that a student, whose decision is due to be presented as tabled, to be considered on an individual basis, where they believe there are valid reasons.

8.5. The Chair, External Examiner and Academic Registrar's Representative will be provided with a full set of printed profiles for ALL students.

8.6. The Clerk will ensure that the External Examiner Endorsement form (available from the Registry Exams Sharepoint Site) is completed and signed by all necessary parties at the end of the meeting.

8.7. If, in exceptional circumstances, the External Examiner is unable to be present at the Board either in person or via the use of tele/video conference, the following actions must be undertaken:

- The External Examiner must be consulted and agree the decisions of the Board
- The External Examiner must, in the case of final awards, confirm in writing and complete the External Examiner endorsement of Board outcomes form
- Results should not be notified to students until the External Examiner has provided confirmation.

8.8. Progression & Award Board minutes comprise 2 components, a public section which can be requested under FOI and a confidential annex which is exempt from FOI requests.

8.9. No students should be identifiable from the public section of the minutes. "Student A, B...Z" etc should be used when minuting specific student circumstances or decisions. Within the confidential annex an index should be provided which identifies students as necessary.

8.10. The Student marks/profile reports generated by the Student Management Information System and which are being considered at a Progression & Award Board form part of the formal confidential minute of the meeting. Therefore minutes are required to be noted only for students where a discussion has taken place, which includes instances where a module mark has been amended by the Progression and Award Board.

8.11. The confidential annex must contain the following heading:

***“Confidential Appendix***

***The following information refers to the decisions made at the above board and should be read in conjunction with the minutes of that board. The information provided is exempt from disclosure under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 by virtue of Section 38. In addition, unauthorised disclosure of the information would be a breach of the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.”***

8.12. It is the responsibility of the Clerk and Chair to ensure that all agreed outcomes and any mark/attempt amendments are recorded on the Student Management Information System following the meeting of the Progression and Award Board, in a timely fashion to ensure the publication of results within the specified timescales.

8.13. The Programme Leader presenting the awards will confirm that all other students have passed and are progressing as normal.

**9. Guidance specific to the consideration of allowing 40 credits to be carried (See Section 16, University Assessment Regulations (Taught Programmes)):**

9.1. When considering allowing a student to carry 40 credits, the following should be taken into consideration:

- That the carrying of 40 credits is at the **discretion** of the board.
- Consideration must be taken as to the trimester(s) that the module(s) run in and the potential impact that this may have on the student’s ability to successfully complete their next level of study and the outstanding modules.
- That all students who are permitted to carry 40 credits, should be strongly encouraged to engage with the Learning Development Centre and their Personal Tutor.
- All discussions and decisions must be fully minuted.

**10. Fit to Sit**

10.1. The University has a Fit to Sit Policy and associated procedure which must be followed.

10.2. Individual student circumstances must not be discussed at a Progression & Award Board or Pre-Board.

10.3. Progression & Award Board members will be informed whether a student’s Fit to Sit declaration has been accepted or rejected, normally by way of the student profile. The role of the Board is then to make appropriate provision for any such student under the Fit to Sit Policy.

**11. Deferred Decisions**

11.1. Progression & Award Boards should make every attempt to ensure that all students presented are processed with an appropriate decision, which includes ensuring that the appropriate Board officials consider any complex cases at a Pre-Board meeting in order for additional advice to be provided by Registry or Quality Assurance and Enhancement.

11.2. It is recognised however that there are some circumstances when a Board is unable to make a decision, and on these occasions a deferred decision should be recorded.

11.3. Deferred decisions should only used in the following circumstances:

- i) The Board wishes to consult with Registry and/or Quality Assurance and Enhancement around a particular situation in order to make an appropriate informed decision.
- ii) Where the student has been given a short extension to their assignment submission date and it is expected to be received, marked and processed within the 10 working day limit as per 11.5.
- iii) Where the Board cannot publish a final decision due to a disciplinary investigation.
- iv) Any other circumstance where the Board needs to seek further advice and/or information before finalising their decision.

11.4. Where a decision is being deferred then the reason must be fully minuted.

11.5. Deferred decisions must be resolved within 10 working days of the date of the Board. If no decision can be made by that time then an appropriate decision code must be processed based on the information available at that point.

11.6. For Boards that meet at the end of Trimester B, deferring a students' decision will result in them not being eligible to graduate at the summer ceremonies, even if their final decision is that of an award. In these circumstances they will graduate at the winter ceremonies.

11.7. A Chair's Action must be completed to amend a decision previously deferred.

## 12. Chair's Actions

12.1. The Chairs Actions process allows the processing of a PAB decision outwith a meeting of the board.

12.2. There are 2 types of Chairs Action Forms: recording new decisions and amending an existing decision of a Progression & Award Board.

12.3. New Decision

12.3.1. A Chairs Action form for a New Results is used to facilitate the exceptional recording and publication of a Result for a student where the next scheduled meeting of the Board is not for 2 – 3 months.

12.3.2. Examples of when this process can be used include:

- i) A student on a programme with Professional Body Registration only has one (Re)sit module to complete and this is taken during Trimester A. If he/she passes the module, then the Progression and Award Board may decide to take a Chairs Action to release the result to the student before its next scheduled meeting, i.e. 2 – 3 months away. This allows the student to begin practice rather than having to wait until the Board formally meets in May.
- ii) Where programmes have a module delivered in Trimester C and the scheduled re-sit takes place 1 – 3 weeks after the September board meeting, generating a new mark. This is classed as new work and must generate a New Progression and Award Board Decision code, i.e. we do not class this as an amendment to the original decision of the board which stands in its own right. The Chairs Action (New Result) Pro forma must be used to record that this is a subsequent decision by the Board.

12.4. Amendment to Existing Decision:

12.4.1. Chair Actions to amend a decision should be used to facilitate the recording and publication of an amendment to a decision (i.e. an already published PIT code) previously published to the student by a Progression and Award Board.

12.4.2. This is used when either a Progression and Award Board has published a deferred decision (R1) and is now able to make and process an actual decision, or when a decision has been amended following the upholding of an academic appeal or of Extreme and Extenuating Circumstances (Section 2, Fit to Sit Policy).

12.5. Chair's Actions MUST NOT be used to circumvent the decision making authority of Progression and Award Boards.

12.6. Where a Board has required a student to submit/re-submit a piece of assessment, a Chairs Action Form cannot be used to process a resit mark/decision.

- 12.7. Chair's Action forms must be fully completed, including a full rationale for its use. Incomplete forms will not be processed.
- 12.8. Chair Action forms must be signed by the appropriate Progression and Award Board Chair.
- 12.9. The accompanying notice board report must be signed by the Clerk and Chair and submitted to the Registry Sharepoint site.
- 12.10. For Chairs Actions taken in relation to students at SCQF levels 9 and above, the updated notice board report that accompanies the chairs action must be signed either by the Schools Associate Academic Registrar/equivalent or Academic Registrar
- 12.11. Where the Progression and Award Board Chair or Programme Leader is not available then the Associate Dean LT&Q/appropriate Director or equivalent or Vice Dean may sign in their place.
- 12.12. Details of all Chair's Actions must be tabled for information at the next available meeting of the Board.
- 12.13. Guidance notes and forms are available on the Assessment & Exams area of the Registry Sharepoint site

### **13. Post Progression & Award Board Processing**

- 13.1. Following a Progression & Award Board, all decisions and any mark amendments must be updated on the University's Student Management Information System.
- 13.2. A Student Results Notice Board Report should then be checked and submitted by the Clerk for approval by the Chair and, where appropriate, the Academic Registrar's Representative.
- 13.3. Only when the report in 13.2 above has been approved should Progression and Award Board results be confirmed and published via the Student Management Information System.

### **14. Notification of Results to Students**

- 14.1. The aim must always be for student results to be published within two working days of the meeting of the Progression and Award Board. Results are published to students via their Student Portal. In all cases, the Registry will be responsible for issuing award parchments to students.
- 14.2. Schools are responsible for issuing transcripts to students who are receiving their final award.

### **15. Consideration of Board Minutes**

- 15.1. Draft Minutes must be produced within 3 weeks of each meeting.
- 15.2. Minutes must be confirmed and approved at each subsequent meeting of the PAB.
- 15.3. Each Programme Leader will present a report to their Programme Board on the outcome of a Progression & Award Board, including summary statistics, external comments and any issues raised.
- 15.4. The non-confidential portion of minutes of meetings of Progression & Award Boards (Confirmed or draft) must be sent to the appropriate Programme Board(s) each year.
- 15.5. The Programme Board will consider these minutes and the Programme Leader report and pass on any issues or concerns to other School Boards or Committees as appropriate.
- 15.6. Following consideration by the Programme Board, relevant comments by the Progression & Award Board shall be considered by the School Board in December of each year.
- 15.7. The School shall, where appropriate, draw to the attention of the Learning Enhancement Subcommittee any matters arising which require attention at a university wide level.

### **16. Data Protection**

16.1. Current Data Protection legislation stipulates that any comments made on examination scripts or (comments made about a student) in the minutes of any Board may be accessed by the student.

