

Date: Thurs, 04 May 2006 01:02:03 +0100  
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Subject: Message to all department exams advisers re examination matters  
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Dear All

The University Examinations Committee (ExComm), which I chair, has asked me to contact you on several important examination-related issues. In the past our policies have, frankly, been a complete mess and ExComm has had the Devil's own job sorting the irregularities out. The following are the key points, some of which have changed from previous years:

- 1) Any student who owes the University money (for fees, rent etc.) should not be allowed to take their exams this summer. You should check with the Fees Office and Accommodation Department whether there are any such students on your courses, as soon as you can. I'll deal personally with any student who gets stropky when they are told they cannot take their exams this term.
- 2) This year we have introduced the American-style Graduate Record Examination (GRE). There were numerous considerations which made GRE especially useful for this University (see ExComm minutes 06/18.5 to 18.9).
- 3) In order to avoid Departments acting unilaterally on each case where a student with dyslexia is claiming extra examination time, we now have a system to deal equitably with this issue (see Annexe N tabled at ExComm 03/03/06).
- 4) Point 3 above is in addition to the usual procedures for doctor's certificates. The usual reason given is stress, which of course is easy to fake. Each case must be dealt with on its own merits following last year's guidelines (<https://glu.ac.uk/admin/exams/05/procs17.doc>) as far as you can. In each department this task should be carried out by the Exams Adviser or Senior Tutor. In previous years there were occasional complaints that we acted like the Gestapo in these matters, so a softly-softly approach should be adopted where feasible.
- 5) On every other contentious exams-related matter, the responsible departmental person ought to contact me, or my Deputy (Dr Eckington), ASAP; forward all relevant documentation when doing so. Data protection legislation means that, when email is used, one must imagine that any person named in the email (header or text) will be able to read it.
- 6) The forms for September resits should be with you forthwith. Re-entering students for these exams is possible only in cases where "unforeseeable circumstances" (for definition, see <https://glu.ac.uk/admin/exams/03/procs9.doc>) prevented the student from taking the exams in May or June. Can I remind you that supporting documentation is obligatory here.
- 7) You will be pleased to hear that the exams office no longer requires you to make a blank return for your department's courses which did not run, or those courses which are not assessed by a written examination.

8) As I said in point 1 above, you must not enter into correspondence with any disgruntled student or parent thereof. I've personally written to the parents of the three students who are claiming post-traumatic stress disorder after taking part in the Psychology department's virtual-reality maze learning experiment. They will be allowed to take their examinations in 2007 without penalty.

9) Final copies of the exam papers are to be photocopied only by the Reprographics Unit. You must ensure they have the final version of all papers by Monday May 8<sup>th</sup> at the latest.

10) You are responsible for providing invigilators for all the examination papers set by your own Department. If your department head agrees, you may use Departmental non-pay budgets to pay postgraduate students to carry out this task; you need to weigh the cost of this against the benefits of freeing senior staff from this low-level burden.

11) Invigilators must do their utmost to prevent cheating (according to a recent survey in the THES, this is endemic in the University sector). All visits to the toilets during an actual exam MUST be accompanied by an invigilator (of the same gender of course!). Invigilators must ensure students turn off their mobiles. Even those annoying fluffy good luck charms on desks must be checked for cribs etc before the start of the exam. Each student must take a valid picture ID into the examination hall so that the invigilator can check that the examination is being taken by the student in question (students paying others to take an exam for them is apparently the latest craze).

12) Rotas for invigilation must be sent to the Examinations Office, also by 8<sup>th</sup> May at the latest.

I have to say that, now we have sorted out most, if not all, the issues, ExComm has breathed a collective sigh of relief. Our procedures should now be robust enough so that they withstand the next round of inspections by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA).

For any other exams queries please contact my administrator (Ms Peta Towcester) in the first instance.

Regards,

George.

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