

Academic Regulations for Students' Undergraduate Programmes, Section 3: Academic Assessment

2013-2014 Academic Session

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3.1 Entry to Undergraduate Summative Assessment for Students Registering for 12 and 16 course-unit degree programmes

For the purposes of these regulations, 'Assessment' refers to the summative assessment of any course unit whether by written examination and/or by coursework, or other means of assessment such as on-line tests, project and laboratory work, exhibitions, oral presentations or oral examinations, etc.

Forms of Academic Assessment

- i) Assessment is a general term used to describe the mechanism to measure student achievement. A variety of assessment methods may be applied to reflect an integrated curriculum design. At UCL there is an expectation that a mixture of formative and summative assessment methodologies will be applied to test different skills and to enable students to achieve the intended learning outcomes. Formative assessment can also provide experience of a programme's summative assessment.
- ii) Summative assessment provides a clear statement of achievement that can be made in respect of an individual student's performance. The outcome of summative assessment is used to classify a degree award and is recorded on student transcripts.
- iii) Formative assessment provides feedback to individual students about their progress towards achieving the intended learning objectives for specified course units and modules. In addition, innovative formative assessment methodologies make an important contribution to the overall development of student skills and transferable knowledge.
- iv) Permitted forms of summative academic assessment are set out in UCL's Assessment Strategy. (See link at the end of this section.)
- vi) Permitted forms of summative e-assessment are set out in UCL's e-assessment regulations. (See link at the end of this section.)

Further guidance on forms of academic assessment

These regulations should be read together with the following documents and programme specific regulations:

- i) UCL Learning and Teaching Strategy
- ii) UK Quality Assurance Agency Benchmark Statements

Academic Services Department

iii) The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (FHEQ)

(See relevant links at the end of this section.)

3.1.1 Submission of Summative Assessed Work and Anonymity

- i) Unseen summative written examinations must be assessed anonymously against candidate number.
- ii) A summative coursework component that constitutes more than 40% of a module must be submitted and assessed on an anonymous basis where possible.
- iii) Once marks have been finalised for a component of summative coursework, for example by agreement between first and second markers, anonymity may be lifted to facilitate feedback to students.
- iv) Anonymity may not be practical when assessing laboratory work, oral examinations, exhibitions, marking clinical work with patients, portfolios of work, dissertations and group work etc.
- v) Anonymity is required when a coursework assessment constitutes more than 40% of the total assessment of a module.
- vi) Consideration by Boards of Examiners of all summative assessed marks, progression decisions and awards must be conducted anonymously.

Further guidance on submitting summative assessed work and anonymity

- i) Each module has one or more assessment components such as examination and coursework, and a component may have one or more element such as essay one and essay two. For example, if a module is assessed entirely by coursework consisting of two equally weighted essays, then each essay must be assessed anonymously. However if a module is assessed by 60% examination and 40% coursework consisting of two equally weighted elements then those elements need not be assessed anonymously. Similarly, 10 individual weekly problem sheets constituting the 40% coursework component of a module would not be assessed anonymously.
- ii) Reports listing names and candidate numbers will be available via Portico to designated departmental/divisional staff in the first term.
- iii) The student record number (SRN) may be used as an anonymous identifier when departments/divisions wish to reserve use of candidate numbers for unseen written examinations.

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- iv) Since students benefit from feedback on their coursework, anonymity is not required when the coursework element constitutes 40% or less of the assessment for a module.
- v) Anonymity is required when a coursework element constitutes more than 40% of a module and SRN or candidate numbers may be used as appropriate. However, anonymity may be relaxed once marks have been agreed to facilitate feedback to students. (See 3.1.1.)
- vi) Candidate numbers should be used for all unseen written examinations and at meetings of Boards of Examiners.

3.1.2 Attendance Requirements and the Eligibility for Summative Assessment Criteria, Learning Agreements, Barring Students from Assessment, and Suspensions and Terminations of Studies on Grounds of Academic Insufficiency or Non-Attendance at Mandatory Faculty Interviews

- i) UCL's minimum attendance requirement is 70%. Departments may stipulate a higher percentage and additional requirements where appropriate. Students whose attendance falls below the attendance requirement are ineligible for summative assessment.
- ii) minimum attendance requirements, are set out in the Policy and Procedures for Learning Agreements, Barring Students from Assessment, and Suspensions and Terminations of Studies on Grounds of Academic Insufficiency or Non-Attendance at Mandatory Faculty Interviews. (See link at the end of this section.)

3.1.3 Withdrawal from Summative Assessment on Academic Grounds

- i) Students may withdraw their entry to an examination or other format of assessment on academic grounds with the approval of the departmental/ divisional and faculty tutors, provided the application is made before the deadline of the end of the first week of the term in which they will be assessed, or before the assessment when the assessment is held in the first week of term.
- ii) Students absenting themselves from an unseen written examination or other form of assessment without prior approval will be marked as absent and deemed to have made an attempt at the examination.

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Further guidance on withdrawal from summative assessment on academic grounds

- i) Students should complete the Notification of Withdrawal from Examination form and submit it, to their departmental/divisional tutor for onward transmission to the Examinations Office, via the Faculty Tutor. (See link at the end of this section.)
- ii) Faculty approval should be obtained and submitted to the Examinations Office by the end of the first week of the term in which they will be examined. Once approval has been granted, the student will not be regarded as having made an entry or re-entry.
- iii) Academic grounds are grounds which are considered by the department/division and faculty to affect significantly the coherence of the student's programme of study or likely to affect significantly the student's academic performance, for example, where a student is registered on a course for which they are completely unsuited, or where the student is clearly overburdened.
- iv) The criterion for assessing whether grounds are acceptable should be that such withdrawal would not advantage the student concerned over other students on the programme. It should also be considered whether to refuse such withdrawal would disadvantage the student in comparison with other students on the programme.
- v) Any student wishing to withdraw from the examination(s) after the deadline may only do so in exceptional circumstances (see 3.1.4 below).
 vi) Re-entry to an examination, part of an examination or other form of academic assessment, must be made at the next normal occasion.
- vii) Permission to re-enter an examination, or part of an examination later than the next following examination for which the student is eligible is at the discretion of UCL. Applications to suspend this regulation should be made in writing to the Examinations Office, Students and Registry Services by the student's departmental/divisional programme tutor via the faculty office and accompanied with appropriate documentary evidence such as medical certification (if relevant).
- viii) Students are advised to seek guidance on any visa implications that may affect eligibility to stay in the UK before requesting withdrawal from assessment.
- ix) Withdrawal from Examination forms are available at the current students website. (See link at the end of this section.)

3.1.4 Withdrawal from Summative Assessment on Exceptional Grounds

Students wishing to withdraw from examinations or any other form of academic assessment after the end of the first week of the term in which they will be assessed can only do so on the grounds of serious ill health or following bereavement on the death of a near relative. However, students cannot withdraw from an assessment after it has taken place.

Further guidance on withdrawing from summative assessment on exceptional grounds

- i) Students should complete the Exceptional Withdrawal from Examinations Form and submit it, along with documentary evidence such as a letter or certificate from a medical practitioner, to their departmental/divisional tutor for onward transmission to the Examinations Office. (See links at the end of this section.)
- ii) Entry to an examination, part of an examination or other form of assessment, must be made at the next normal occasion.
- iii) Permission to re-enter an examination, or part of an examination later than the next following examination for which the student is eligible is at the discretion of UCL. Applications to suspend this regulation should be made in writing to the Examinations Office by the programme tutor, via the faculty office, accompanied with appropriate documentary evidence such as a medical certificate (if relevant). (See link at the end of this section.)

3.1.5 Unauthorised Absence from Assessment

- i) If a student is absent from an examination or other form of assessment without permission, or, although present at an examination, either does not attempt the paper or attempts so little that it cannot be assessed, and provides no evidence of extenuating circumstance, then the normal procedure is that the student is awarded a mark of zero for the missed/non-attempted examination.
- ii) In such cases students will not be deemed to have completed the module.

Further guidance on unauthorised absence from assessment

A mark of zero would be counted in any average and it would be treated as an attempt; the overall result for the course unit would be recorded on Portico as absent or incomplete, as appropriate.

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3.1.6 Late Submission of Coursework

Where coursework is not submitted by a published deadline, the following penalties will apply:

- i) A penalty of 5 percentage marks should be applied to coursework submitted the calendar day after the deadline (calendar day 1).
- ii) A penalty of 15 percentage marks should be applied to coursework submitted on calendar day 2 after the deadline through to calendar day 7.
- iii) A mark of zero should be recorded for coursework submitted on calendar day 8 after the deadline through to the end of the second week of third term. Nevertheless, the assessment will be considered to be complete provided the coursework contains material than can be assessed.
- iv) Coursework submitted after the end of the second week of third term will not be marked and the assessment will be incomplete.
- v) Coursework submitted after solutions have been released will receive a mark of zero, and may not be formally marked, even when the coursework was submitted within seven calendar days of the deadline. Nevertheless, the assessment will be considered to be complete provided the coursework contains material that can be assessed.
- vi) In the case of dissertations and project reports submitted more than seven calendar days after the deadline, the mark will be recorded as zero but the assessment would be considered to be complete.
- vii) Where there are extenuating circumstances that have been recognised by the Board of Examiners or its representative, these penalties will not apply until the agreed extension period has been exceeded.
- viii) In the case of coursework that is submitted late and is also over length, then the greater of the two penalties shall apply.

Further guidance on late submission of coursework

Students should formally notify tutors of any extenuating circumstances which may have affected their performance in examinations or other form academic assessment. In some circumstances tutors may formally notify the Board of Examiners of extenuating circumstances when the task cannot be carried out by the student. (See link at the end of this section.)

i) The form for student notification of extenuating circumstances. (See link at the end of this section.)

Academic Services Department

ii) The form for tutor notification of extenuating circumstances is available from the Student and Registry Services website. (See link at the end of this section.) NB Students are primarily responsible for notifying extenuating circumstances and tutors are no obligated to do so.

3.1.7 Penalties for Over-length Coursework

For submitted coursework, where a maximum length has been specified, the following procedure will apply:

- i) The length of coursework will be specified in terms of a word count or number of pages.
- ii) Assessed work should not exceed the prescribed length.
- iii) For work that exceeds the specified maximum length by less than 10% the mark will be reduced by ten percentage marks; but the penalised mark will not be reduced below the pass mark, assuming the work merited a pass.
- iv) For work that exceeds the specified maximum length by 10% or more, a mark of zero will be recorded.
- v) The method of measuring the length of coursework should be specified to students in writing. For example, a word count will depend on the software application and a page count on the margins, font and point size.
- vi) For discipline specific practices such as bibliographies, tables, pictures and graphs, departments/divisions should specify in writing to students whether these are recorded as part of the maximum length and how this will be determined.
- vii) In the case of coursework that is submitted late and is also over length, then the greater of the two penalties shall apply.

3.1.8 No Attempt or Minimal Attempt of a Paper or other Form of Summative Assessment

Students who do not attempt a paper or other form of academic assessment, or who make an attempt that is un-assessable, will be awarded a mark of zero, will be deemed to have made an attempt but will not be deemed to have completed the module.

3.1.9 Late Assessment of a Course Unit

A student who, through illness, or other cause acceptable to UCL, is prevented from attending any examination may apply to UCL for late assessment under the following conditions:

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- i) The student must have been prevented from taking the assessment for the course unit in question in a year other than the final year of their degree programme (for these purposes students pursuing an intercalated BSc degree are regarded as final year students).
- ii) The application must be made within one week of the end of the examination period in question.
- iii) The late assessment should be in the same format as the one missed. However, where it would not be possible to assess the student in question in the same format as the missed assessment, a request for an alternative method of assessment must be made and shall be accompanied by a statement of the reason for the request together with faculty support.
- iv) A maximum of three course units may be assessed by late assessment in any one academic session.
- v) For a 12 course-unit programme, a maximum of four course units may be assessed by late assessment over the length of the programme.
- vi) For a 16 course-unit programme that does not include a language requirement or a year abroad, a maximum of six course units may be assessed by late assessment over the length of the programme.
- vii) Final year students, including students registered on an intercalated BSc degree programme, are not eligible for late assessment.

Further guidance on late assessment of a course unit

- i) Applications for late assessment of a course unit examination must be made to the departmental/divisional programme tutor and approved by the faculty tutor before being forwarded to the Examinations Office. (See link at the end of this section.)
- ii) Applications on non-medical grounds will be referred by the Examinations Office, to the Dean of Students (Academic) for consideration. In exceptional circumstances requests for a different form of late assessment to that which was missed can be made to the Dean of Students (Academic) via the Examinations Office.

Links for Section 3.1

All links go to the UCL website, unless stated otherwise:

UCL Assessment Strategy

Regulations and guidelines for summative e-assessment (PDF)

Academic Services Department

UCL Learning and Teaching Strategy

UK QAA Benchmark Statements – on the Quality Assurance Agency website

<u>Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland</u>

UCL Policy and Procedures for Suspensions and Terminations of Studies

UCL Notification of Withdrawal from examinations

UCL Examinations Office

UCL Appendix 6, Extenuating Circumstances Policy (PDF)

UCL Appendix 7, Student notification of extenuating circumstances form (Word doc)

UCL Appendix 8, Tutor notification of extenuating circumstances form (Word doc)

UCL Deferred Assessments (undergraduates)

3.2 Re-entry to examinations or other method of summative assessment

3.2.1 Re-entry to Examinations or Other Method of Summative Assessment

- i) Students who fail summative assessment at a first attempt are expected to re-enter the examination at the next available occasion, unless they have graduated, been interrupted or have been suspended or withdrawn.
- ii) If a continuing student opts to retain a failed mark rather than re-enter for an examination or other assessment, this will be treated as a fail.
- iii) Students who were absent or have an incomplete status for an assessment must re-sit the assessment at the next normal occasion.

Further guidance on re-entry to examinations or other method of summative assessment

- i) Students can only fail up to two half course units or one whole course unit in total in order not to jeopardise their final classification, except for students on the MSci/ MEng degrees who can fail up the three half course units in total.
- ii) Students on their year abroad who are required to re-enter examinations must do so at the next available opportunity i.e. during their year abroad.

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iii) If a continuing student opts not to re-enter but retains an absent, withdrawn or incomplete status for an assessment, graduation with a classified award will not be possible.

3.2.2 Number of Permitted Attempts

A student who, at their first entry, does not successfully complete summative assessment and who is not eligible for referred-assessment may re-enter for assessment (see 3.2.3 below) on one, and only one, more occasion unless they have been awarded a degree, are eligible for the award of a degree or have been excluded from UCL on the grounds of academic insufficiency, or as a result of misconduct.

3.2.3 Re-sit Marks

- i) The higher of the marks achieved at the first attempt or the re-sit attempt, whether of the original course unit or of substitute course unit(s), will apply.
- ii) Marks of re-taken or substitute course units will be included in the calculation for the average mark for the year in which the course unit(s) were originally taken rather than in the year that they were re-taken.

Further guidance on re-sit marks

- i) Students are not obligated to re-sit failed course units, but are advised to seek academic advice before making a decision. Students who opt not to re-sit should ensure that they inform the examination section so that their records are amended accordingly.
- ii) Students who were absent or incomplete at their first attempt must re-sit in order to be eligible for a classified degree, unless they have extenuating circumstances that could be considered under the Special and Aegrotat Provisions Procedures for Undergraduate Degree Examinations. (See link at the end of this section.)
- iii) If the higher mark is in the referral band, students may be offered referred assessment provided they satisfy all other requirements for referral, including not being a finalist.
- iv) For students on an intercalated BSc programme, the marks gained at the first attempt are those that count towards the classification of the award.

3.2.4 Referred-assessment

i) Students in their final year, including those registered on Intercalated BSc programmes, are not eligible for referred-assessment even when the possible referral is associated with a course unit originally taken in an earlier year.

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- ii) The referral range of marks is 35% to 39% except for some course units in the Faculty of Mathematical and Physical Sciences where the referral range is 30%-39%.
- iii) Referred-assessment will not be offered to students who would not progress even if they passed the referred-assessment.
- iv) Students who obtain a mark in the referral range for the course unit as a whole will be offered referred-assessment of the assessment components that have been failed by the relevant teaching department/division. Students who are successful in all such referred-assessments will be given the pass mark of 40 the course overall irrespective of the marks actually obtained in the referral.
- vi) The referred-assessment will take place over the summer in order to give the Board of Examiners the information needed to make a pass/fail judgement on the student's overall performance in that course unit before the start of the next academic session.
- vii) The method of referred-assessment can either be oral, formal written examination or essay.
- viii) Students who subsequently fail the referred-assessment, retain the original mark and may re-enter that examination at the next normal occasion, unless all re-sit attempts have been exhausted.
- ix) Students may elect not to take up the offer of referred-assessment but to re-enter at the next normal occasion instead, unless all re-sit attempts have been exhausted.
- x) Referred-assessment can be made available to students making their second attempt at a module if the mark achieved is within the specified referral range.

Further guidance on referred assessment

- i) Referred-assessment will not, in any circumstances, be made available to a student with a mark that falls below the referral range (students with an 'incomplete' result will be regarded as falling below the referral range).
- ii) The referred-assessment should be assessed and the result communicated to the student and the Examinations Office by the given deadline prior to the start of the next session. (See point v below.)
- iii) Final year students who are not eligible for the award of a degree are not entitled to referred-assessment although they may re-sit failed course units at the next normal occasion.

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- iv) Students are not obligated to take the referred-assessment but are advised to seek academic advice before refusing the referred-assessment.
- v) Students must indicate their acceptance of referred-assessment within two weeks of the offer being made or by a specific deadline decided by the relevant teaching department/division.

3.2.5 Repeating a Passed Course Unit

Students who have passed a course unit assessment cannot re-register for that course unit nor repeat the assessment.

3.2.6 Format of the Reassessment

Students will only re-sit the failed assessment components unless the regulations for their programme require that students must re-take all assessed components of a course unit.

Further guidance on format of the reassessment

Students will be automatically re-entered for assessment components that they have failed to pass or complete, unless they have been granted permission to substitute another module, have interrupted their studies or been excluded from UCL. For example, if a student passes assessed coursework components but fails an examination, the normal expectation is that the student would only re-sit the examination. However, following academic advice, a recommendation may be made by the departmental/divisional programme tutor that a student can re-sit all assessment components of the course unit, including those previously passed.

Evidence of support by the Faculty Tutor should be sent to the Examinations Office. (See link at the end of this section.)

3.2.7 Syllabus for Re-entered Examinations or Other Form of Assessment

Students who re-enter for any part of summative assessment shall be subject to the programme regulations and syllabus in place at their first attempt except where students had already been informed that they would be examined on the current syllabus.

3.2.8 Timing of Re-Entered Formal Written Examinations or Other Form of Assessment (Deferred Assessment)

i) With the exception of students who fail study abroad assessment, re-entry to a formal written examination, part of an examination or any other form of academic assessment, must be made at the next following assessment

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- period for which the student is eligible. This is normally in the following academic session.
- ii) When students fail a study aboard year, either owing to interruption, nonengagement or failure to achieve a pass mark, they must transfer to an equivalent degree where there is no study abroad requirement.

Further guidance on timing of re-entered examinations and assessments

- i) The assessment for a deferred course unit must be completed within two years of attending that course-unit.
- ii) Applications for a suspension of the regulations should be made in writing by the departmental/divisional programme tutor via the faculty office and submitted to the Examinations Office. (See link at the end of this section.)

3.2.9 The Substitution of Failed Course Unit(s)

- i) Subject to faculty approval, course units up to the value of one course unit, can be substituted for the course units that have been failed, or from which the students have withdrawn, provided the student has repeat registration of all or part of a year, or has progressed to the subsequent year of their programme of study.
- ii) Where a course unit is substituted for a course unit previously failed, the assessment for the new course unit shall be treated as second attempt and no further entry will be permitted, if it is subsequently failed.
- iii) Where a course unit is substituted for a course unit not previously examined, i.e. a course unit from which the student has withdrawn, entry to examination for the new course unit shall be treated as a first attempt.

Further guidance on the substitution of failed course units

- i) Only one course unit or course units up to the value of one course unit may be substituted in this way over the entire duration of the programme.
- ii) If students have failed to progress to the following year of study, they can only take failed or substituted course units and cannot take in advance course units from a subsequent year of study.
- iii) All applications for the substitution of new course units are to be made by the faculty to the Examinations Office.

Links for Section 3.2

All links go to the UCL website, unless stated otherwise:

Academic Services Department

<u>UCL Special and Aegrotat Provisions Procedures for Undergraduate Degree</u> Examinations

UCL Examinations Office

UCL suspension of the regulations

3.3 Assessment in a language other than English

All assessed work, whether written papers or course unit work or oral examination, shall be assessed in the English language unless:

- i) The purpose of the assessment is to test the ability of students in a language other than English.
- ii) The programme has been specifically designed for academic reasons to include the possibility of completing a major part of the assessment in the language of study, but at least 25% of the whole assessment of the programme must be assessed in the English language.

3.4 The conduct in examinations and other forms of assessment centrally managed by UCL

The regulations for the management of examinations are published annually by UCL in the Examination Guide for Candidates. UCL expects students to follow the protocols set out in this guide.

Further guidance on conduct of assessment managed by UCL

- i) Students should note the guidance provided regarding examination misconduct, including misconduct relating to coursework or other forms of assessment, as well as for formal written examinations.
- ii) The Examination Guide for Candidates. (See link below.)

Link for Section 3.4

UCL Examination Guide (PDF)

3.5 Special examination provision on grounds of specific learning difficulty (such as dyslexia, disability or ill health)

Students with a specific learning difficulty, disability or ill health can apply for special assessment arrangements in their examinations. (See link below.)

UCL special examination arrangements.

3.6 The publication of examination results

- i) Boards of Examiners are permitted to release unconfirmed provisional marks to students, prior to the formal publication of results by UCL.
- ii) Students will be informed of the date when their examination results will be published.
- ii) All graduating students will be sent an official transcript, detailing their marks and award.

Further guidance on the publication of examination results

- i) Students will be informed by email when the notification of their official results will be made. Once the marks have been released students will be able to access their results on the student records database, Portico, using their UCL username and password. (See link at the end of this section.)
- ii) Graduating students will be sent an official transcript with their degree certificate within three months of the date of their award. (Students can request additional copies of their transcripts from the Examinations Office, for which a fee will be charged).
- iii) Students should ensure that their contact addresses are kept up to date, via Portico, as this address will be used for the despatch of transcripts and degree certificates.
- iv) Students first enrolled in September 2011 will receive a Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR). (See link at the end of this section.)

Links for Section 3.6

All links go to the UCL website, unless stated otherwise:

Portico – the UCL Student Information Service

UCL Higher Education Achievement Report

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3.7 Date of a degree award

The date of the award of a degree to successful students is 1 August.

3.8 Provision of a degree certificate

Degree Certificate will be sent to each successful student awarded a degree.

Students are responsible for keeping their address details up to date via Portico.

3.9 Regulations for the award of degrees under the Special and Aegrotat provisions

An application under the Special and Aegrotat Provisions may be made when a candidate has completed their full period of study and (a) is absent through illness or other causes judged sufficient by UCL, such as the death of a near relative, from the whole of part of the assessment during their final year, or (b) though present for the assessment, UCL considers that their performance has been adversely affected by any of the above circumstances.

Further guidance on awarding degrees under the special and aegrotat provisions

- i) The application must be accompanied by a medical certification or other statement of the grounds on which it is made and must be submitted to the Examinations Office no later than four weeks after the end of session. (See link at the end of this section.)
 - ii) The requirements and procedures for the award of degrees are set out in the Special and Aegrotat Provisions for Undergraduate Degree Examinations. (See link at the end of this section.)

Links for Section 3.9

All links go to the UCL website, unless stated otherwise:

UCL Examinations Office

UCL Special and Aegrotat Provisions for Undergraduate Degree Examinations

3.10 Award of degrees

The Education Committee, on behalf of the Academic Committee, is authorised to award UCL degrees.

3.11 Appeal against the decision of a board of examiners

Students cannot contest the decision of a Board of Examiners on academic grounds.

Students can only contest results on specific grounds as set out in the Student Grievance Procedures. (See link at the end of this section.)

Link for Section 3.11

UCL Student Grievance Procedures

3.12 Revocation of degrees

UCL may revoke any degree if the following circumstances discovered at any time and proved to the satisfaction of UCL:

- i) There was an administrative error in the award made under the procedures required by UCL, including an error in calculating the results.
- ii) Subsequent to award, a Board of Examiners, having taken into account information which was unavailable at the time its decision was made determines that a student's or students' classification should be altered.
- iii) The award has been cancelled owing to examination misconduct.