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**ACADEMIC BOARD**

**ANNUAL REPORT ON EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES 2014-15**

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**Executive summary**

This paper provides a brief overview of the use of extenuating circumstances procedures by students in the academic year 2014-15. An evaluation of claims by demographical characteristic was conducted in line with equality and diversity monitoring.

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1. **Introduction**
   1. This report covers the operation of extenuating circumstances procedures for the academic year 2014-15. All the data shown is for this institution only, as collaborative partners manage their own extenuation claims.
   2. There were some changes in the way in which extenuating circumstances claim forms were processed and the way the results were published in 2014/15. As of January 2015 students submitted their forms to Student Hubs and not School Helpdesks as was previously the case. As a result of the staff re-structure and the introduction of a centralised Academic Registry in January, the decisions spreadsheets are now sent to the Assessment Unit for the Delta codes to be input and not to School Registrars
   3. The process for managing students who submit evidence that is returned as not genuine has also changed. Previously students that submitted fraudulent evidence would be processed through the academic misconduct procedures. However from 2014/15 students are subject to a student disciplinary if their evidence submitted is returned as not genuine.
   4. The Chair of the Extenuation Panel also changed in March 2015. Gayle Stocken, Director of Student Support, left UEL and Carol Jones was acting Chair of the Panel for the remainder of the 2014/15 academic year. Carol Jones left UEL on 18th September and Nicole Redman, Director of Student Support, has been considering all late re-sit claims, PG Semester C claims and all other Chair’s Actions since 2nd September 2015.
2. **Summary of Claims**

2.1 Students must make a separate claim for each component of assessment for which they seek to have their extenuating circumstances considered. Table 1 below provides a short summary of extenuation claims by component, received over Terms’ 1 and 2 and Semesters’ A and B and the reassessment period in 2014-15. There were four component claims that did not proceed to a Panel as the evidence submitted was returned as not genuine.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | **ACE** | **ADI** | **Bus & Law** | **Cass** | **HSB** | **PSY** | **Soc Sci** | **Total** |
| **Term 1/Sem A** |  | 39 | 26 | 89 | 56 | 94 | 75 | 52 | 431 |
| Accept |  | 15 | 14 | 50 | 22 | 46 | 44 | 30 | 221 |
| Reject |  | 24 | 12 | 39 | 34 | 48 | 31 | 22 | 210 |
| **Term 2/Sem B** |  | 64 | 150 | 201 | 139 | 283 | 158 | 98 | 1093 |
| Accept |  | 38 | 80 | 137 | 85 | 172 | 112 | 79 | 703 |
| Reject |  | 26 | 70 | 64 | 54 | 111 | 46 | 19 | 390 |
| **Resit** |  | 2 | 16 | 25 | 39 | 21 | 31 | 16 | 150 |
| Accept |  | 1 | 3 | 12 | 9 | 3 | 6 | 8 | 42 |
| Reject |  | 1 | 13 | 13 | 30 | 18 | 25 | 8 | 108 |
| **Total** |  | **105** | **192** | **315** | **234** | **398** | **264** | **166** | **1674\*** |

\*This figure does not include the four component claims that did not proceed to panel because the evidence that students submitted was returned as not being genuine.

**Table 1: Number of component claims by school and semester 2014-15**

2.2 The number of claims rose sharply in 2009/10 but has since reduced steadily. The number of claims in 2014/15 was just over 200 fewer than that of the preceding year (Chart 1a).

**Chart 1a: Total number of extenuation claims since 2005**

2.3 Table 2a below highlights the percentage of students from each school who made at least one component claim for extenuation in 2014-15.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **School** | **Number of students who applied** | **Enrolments** | **% Students who applied** |
| **ACE** | 64 | 1785 | 4% |
| **ADI** | 79 | 2237 | 4% |
| **CASS** | 102 | 2309 | 4% |
| **HSB** | 173 | 2356 | 7% |
| **Soc Sci** | 69 | 844 | 8% |
| **PSY** | 121 | 1585 | 8% |
| **Bus & Law** | 142 | 2301 | 6% |

**Table 2a: Extenuation activity by academic School**

2.4 In 2014-15 the overall percentage of successful claims was 57.57%, which is comparable to success rates in recent years.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **% Accept** |
| **Sem A** | 51.28% |
| **Sem B** | 64.32% |
| **Resit** | 28.00% |
| Total | 57.57% |

**Table 2b: % Accepted claims by semester/term**

Success rates in previous academic years are shown in Chart 2c below:

**Chart 2c: % claims accepted annual comparison**

1. **Feedback for Rejected Claims**

3.1 In 2011/12 a mechanism was introduced which gave students a generic feedback code for rejected claims. Prior to 2011/12, students did not receive any official feedback on their claims, although students could seek feedback from UELSU on their individual claims.

Of the claims which were rejected, the breakdown of feedback codes was as stated in Table 3a overleaf.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Feedback Code** | **Sem A** | **Sem B** | **Sem R** | **Total** |
| **R1 - module capped** | 3 | 15 | 3 | **21** |
| **R2 - fourth attempt** | 0 | 0 | 0 | **0** |
| **R3 - coursework on time** | 26 | 20 | 4 | **47** |
| **R4 - failed another component** | 2 | 0 | 0 | **2** |
| **RC - did not meet criteria** | 18 | 16 | 14 | **48** |
| **RE - evidence insufficient** | 121 | 284 | 82 | **487** |
| **RL - late without good reason** | 7 | 5 | 0 | **12** |
| **RM - multiple** | 4 | 18 | 0 | **22** |
| **RN - not extenuation** | 26 | 30 | 5 | **61** |
| **B - failed evidence check** | 0 | 3 | 1 | **4** |

**Table 3a: Reasons for rejection**

The largest category of rejected claims occurred where students had failed to supply adequate evidence for their claim/s. The number of technical rejects (codes R1 – R4), substantially reduced (some to zero) due to the changes in the UG regulations, which from September 2014 allows students to claim for components that are capped and also applies the capping to the component and not the module.

There were 4 component claims across the 2014-15 Academic Year where the evidence submitted was deemed not to be genuine.

A more detailed explanation of the feedback codes can be found on the extenuation website, <http://www.uel.ac.uk/qa/extenuation.htm>

1. **Mode of Study**

4.1 Since 2010-11 claims have been analysed by undergraduate and postgraduate status, and the number of claims from home, international and European students have also been noted. From 2014-15 the number of claims from part time and full time students has also been included in the analysis.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Component claims** | **Accept** | **Reject** | **% Accepted** | **No. Students who applied** | **No. Enrolments** | **% Students who applied** |  |
| **Home** | 1502 | 857 | 641 | 57.06% | 669 | 11884 | 5.63% |  |
| **International** | 76 | 44 | 32 | 57.89% | 38 | 988 | 3.85% |  |
| **European** | 98 | 65 | 33 | 57.06% | 42 | 408 | 10.29% |  |
| **Unknown** | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0.00% | 1 | 137 | 0.73% |  |
| **Total** | **1678** | **966** | **708** | 57.57% | **708** | **13009** | **10.21%** |  |

**Table 4a: Number of claims accepted for Home, International & European students 2014-15**

4.2 Table 4a above highlights that the success rate between home, European and international students is consistent.

4.3 Table 4b below illustrates that postgraduate students are much less likely to apply for extenuation than undergraduate students. However postgraduate student claims have just over a 4% higher acceptance rate than undergraduate claims.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Component claims** | **Accept** | **Reject** | **% Accepted** | **No. Students who applied** | **No. Enrolments** | **% Students who applied** |  |
| **Postgraduate** | 100 | 62 | 38 | 62.00% | 71 | 2,346 | 3.03% |  |
| **Undergraduate** | 1578 | 904 | 670 | 57.29% | 679 | 11081 | 6.13% |  |
| **Total** | **1678** | **966** | **708** | **57.57%** | **750** | **13,427** | **5.59%** |  |

**Table 4b: Number of claims accepted for UG / PG students 2014-15**

4.3 More than seven times as many component claims were received from full time students compared to part time students. The acceptance rate for part time students was just over 7% higher than that of their full time counterparts. However when the number of part time and full time students enrolled for 2014/15 is analysed further there is only 0.5% difference between the percentage of fulltime and part time students submitting a claim.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Component claims** | **Accept** | **Reject** | **% Accept** | **No. Students who applied** | **No. Students enrolled** | **% Students who applied** |  |
| **Full Time** | 1448 | 821 | 624 | 57% | 610 | 11,351 | 5.37% |  |
| **Part Time** | 203 | 131 | 72 | 64.53% | 120 | 2,041 | 5.88% |  |
| **Other** | 27 | 14 | 12 | 52% | 20 | 35 | 57.14% |  |
| **Total** | **1678** | **966** | **708** | **57.57%** | **750** | **13427** | **5.59%** |  |

**Table 4c: Number of claims accepted for full time and part time students 2014-15**

1. **Equality and Diversity Monitoring**

5.1 All equal opportunities monitoring data for this report was obtained from DELTA.

5.2 In order to maintain the fairness of our processes, all claims are considered anonymously by the Extenuation Panel. No data relating to the claimant’s gender, age, ethnicity or disability is included on the form or available to the members of the Extenuation Panel.

5.3 Gender

The annual reports consistently demonstrate that female students are more likely to apply for extenuating circumstances than male students, and are also more likely to have their claims accepted and 2014-15 follows that trend.

Table 5a below displays information about the number of assessment components applied for by gender in 2014-15 and the percentage of the UEL population that made a claim.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Component claims** | **Accepted** | **Rejected** | **%Accept** | **No. students who applied** | **No. students enrolled** | **%Students who applied** |  |
| **Female** | 1217 | 728 | 486 | 59.82% | 524 | 8161 | 6.42% |  |
| **Male** | 458 | 237 | 220 | 51.75% | 224 | 5264 | 4.26% |  |
| **Unknown** | 3 | 1 | 2 | 33.33% | 2 | 2 | 2 |  |
| **Total** | **1678** | **966** | **708** | **57.57%** | **750** | **13,427** | **5.59%** |  |

**Table 5a: Extenuation statistics for 2014-15 by gender**

Female students accounted for 1217 out of 1678 claims and just under 60% of these claims were successful (728 out of 1217). Almost three times as many females (1217) submitted claims in comparison to their male counterparts (458). That equates to just over 2% more of the female than male UEL population. Female component claims were just over 8% more successful than males.

5.4 Ethnicity

Table 5b below provides a breakdown by ethnicity of the number of extenuation claims received during 2014-15, and the number of students who submitted these claims.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Component claims** | **Accepted** | **Rejected** | **% Accept** | **No. students who applied** | **No. students enrolled** | **% Students who applied** |  |
| **Asian** | 326 | 183 | 143 | 56.13% | 147 | **2,886** | 5.09% |  |
| **Black** | 770 | 436 | 330 | 56.62% | 342 | **4,621** | 7.40% |  |
| **White** | 305 | 182 | 123 | 59.67% | 139 | **4,119** | 3.37% |  |
| **Mixed** | 115 | 65 | 50 | 56.52% | 57 | **885** | 6.44% |  |
| **Other** | 119 | 86 | 33 | 72.27% | 45 | **726** | 6.20% |  |
| **Unknown** | 43 | 14 | 29 | 32.56% | 20 | **190** | 10.53% |  |
| **Total** | **1678** | **966** | **708** | **57.57%** | **750** | **13,427** | **5.59%** |  |

**Table 5b: Extenuation claims by ethnicity 2014-15**

When all ethnic groups are analysed just under 6% of the total UEL population submitted an extenuating circumstances claim. Further analysis of the data highlights that just over 7% of black students made a claim. However the fairly consistent success rate for all groups attested to the equity of our system.

5.4 Disability

Table 5c below provides a breakdown of claims by disability:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Component claims** | **Component claims** | **Reject** | **% Accept** | **No. Students who applied** | **No. Students enrolled** | **% Students who applied** |  |
| **No disability** | 1225 | 706 | 515 | 57.63% | 580 | 12,052 | 4.81% |  |
| **Known disability** | 439 | 255 | 184 | 58.09% | 162 | 1,357 | 11.94% |  |
| **Unknown** | 14 | 5 | 9 | 35.71% | 8 | 18 | 44.44% |  |
| **Total** | **1678** | **966** | **708** | **57.57%** | **750** | **13,427** | **5.59%** |  |

**Table 5c: Extenuation claims by disability 2014-15**

Just under 5% of the total UEL population that declared no disability submitted a claim, compared to almost 12% of students that disclosed a disability. The acceptance rate of both groups is consistent at 57.63% and 58.09% respectively.

Table 5d below provides further information regarding the disability type of the students that submitted claims.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Disability type** | **Component claims** | **Accept** | **Reject** | **% Accept** | **No. Students who applied** | **No. Students enrolled** | **% Students who applied** |
| **Learning difficulty** | 150 | 72 | 78 | 48.00% | 54 | 632 | 8.54% |
| **Mental Health Condition** | 60 | 33 | 27 | 55.00% | 23 | 218 | 10.55% |
| **Long standing health condition** | 33 | 18 | 15 | 54.55% | 16 | 125 | 12.80% |
| **Multiple disabilities** | 77 | 50 | 27 | 64.94% | 26 | 94 | 27.66% |
| **Physical impairment or mobility** | 34 | 24 | 10 | 70.59% | 12 | 59 | 20.34% |
| **Social/communication disorders** | 2 | 2 | 0 | 100.00% | 1 | 50 | 2.00% |
| **Hearing impairment** | 11 | 10 | 1 | 90.91% | 5 | 29 | 17.24% |
| **Visual impairment** | 2 | 1 | 1 | 50.00% | 1 | 15 | 6.67% |
| **Other** | 84 | 50 | 34 | 59.52% | 26 | 135 | 19.26% |
| **Totals** | **453** | **260** | **193** | **57.40%** | **164** | **1357** | **12.09%** |

**Table 5d: Breakdown of claims by disability type**

**6. Conclusions**

6.1 This year’s equal opportunities monitoring data indicates that our processes for extenuating circumstances operated with equity and consistency during the 2014-15 academic year.

6.2 The total number of component claims has decreased by 322 which was not what was originally anticipated with the move to the new academic framework for 2014/15.

6.3 Although the overall number of component claims is fewer that previous years the success rate remained steady.

**7. Response to 2013/14 recommendations**

7.1 The transition modules were monitored and there were insufficient claimed for to skew the figures. As previously stated in 6.2 the number of extenuating claims submitted did not increase significantly so therefore a review was not necessary.

7.2 The impact of the new centralised Student Hubs:  
 i) The students’ completed extenuating circumstances forms have varying degrees of accuracy   
 between the Stratford and Docklands Hubs;  
 ii) The consistency of the completed Extenuating Circumstances spreadsheets have varying degrees of accuracy between the Stratford and Docklands Hubs.

7.3 It was noted in the 2013/14 report that the number of claims may increase due to the introduction of transition modules as a result of the new academic framework. This has not materialised as the number of claims has reduced. However this will continue to be monitored as transition modules are still available and being taken by students that have a credit deficit.  
  
 7.4 It was anticipated in the 2013/14 report that the new Academic Framework may lead to a decrease in extenuation claims in the longer term as going forward students will only have two opportunities at module components and not four as was previously the case. It appears that this trend has already begun for UG claims.

7.5 It should be noted that for 2015/16 there are still two sets of Regulations (UG & PG PGT) governing the Extenuating Circumstances procedures.