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**London
South Bank
University**

What does no detriment mean at LSBU?

No Detriment Policy

Worked Examples

To help you understand the practical application of our No Detriment Policy, we've described the two main scenarios which all students will be facing.

Please note that these worked examples have been developed to help understand the way Exam Boards will be operating for the remainder of the 19/20 Academic Year. This information should be read in conjunction with all existing regulations, policies and procedures, as well as the COVID-19 Pandemic Regulations Addendum and COVID-19 Pandemic Regulations Addendum and the COVID-19 Exceptional condonement, compensation and non-progression regulation addendum.

Scenario 1: I have submitted all of my assessments this year. I'm worried that the current situation might have negatively impacted on my marks, so how will the Exam Board take this into account?

As you have submitted all of your work, your Exam Board will first look at whether you have passed everything.

If you have failed any assessments, your Exam Board will decide whether you can be compensated on these modules, which means you are deemed to have passed the module without having to submit further work.

Assuming you can be compensated, you will then be treated the same as a student who has passed everything.

If the Exam Board is unable to apply compensation for any reason, they may also consider something called a condonement, or they may offer a further attempt to submit your outstanding work during the resit period. Please see below ("When would I not be eligible for Compensation or Condonement?") for an explanation of the reasons why a compensation or condonement might not be allowed.

At this stage, your Exam Board will look at your marks for any evidence of detriment. This means that we will compare your overall Semester 1 marks with your overall Semester 2 marks, to see if your Semester 2 marks are lower. If your Semester 2 marks are lower, your Exam Board will then decide whether there is a case to amend your marks.

In order to decide whether your marks need to be amended, your Exam Board will look at the historic data for your course. The reason your Exam Board will consult this data is to avoid amending marks if, in fact, it is perfectly normal for Semester 1 marks to be higher on your particular course. Based on this analysis of previous year's data, any student with marks which are significantly worse in Semester 2, compared with previous year's performance, will have their marks amended for Semester 2.

Depending on whether you are a continuing student, or are expecting to graduate this year, the marks agreed at the end of this process will then be used to make award and progression decisions using our normal regulations.

Please note that if you are on a course which is not organised by semesters, then the Exam Board will take this in to consideration and will ensure that marks are compared for the period before and after the lockdown period began.

Worked Example 1

Student A submitted all of their work and they passed everything.

Their average mark for Semester 2 (52%) is quite a lot lower than their overall average mark for Semester 1 (75%). Their Exam Board take a look at the historic data for this course, and they can see that it is very unusual for a student on this course to have such a big drop in marks between semesters.

Therefore, using the exceptional regulations, the Exam Board decide to increase the student's Semester 2 marks on all modules, so that the difference between Semester 1 and Semester 2 marks sits within the boundary of what is usually expected.

These amended marks are then used as the basis for making an award or progression decision for this student.

Worked Example 2

Student B submitted all of their work.

Unfortunately, they have failed a couple of pieces of work on two different modules. Their Exam Board first consider whether they can compensate/condone these modules, under the normal regulations.

Fortunately, they are able to compensate both modules. The student is now deemed to have passed these modules.

Their Exam Board then conducts the same analysis as they did for Student A to determine if they are eligible for any adjustment to their marks, and applies this if appropriate.

An award or progression decision is then made using the normal regulations for this student.

Worked Example 3

Student C submitted all of their work and they passed everything.

Their average mark for Semester 2 (62%) is lower than their overall average mark for Semester 1 (72%). Their Exam Board take a look at the historic data for this course, and they can see that it is not uncommon for students on this particular course to get higher marks in Semester 1 compared to Semester 2.

Therefore, their Exam Board decide that there is no justification for amending any of the student's marks, and a decision to award or progress the student is made using the normal regulations.

Worked Example 4

Student D submitted all of their work.

Unfortunately, they have failed a couple of pieces of work on two different modules. Their Exam Board first consider whether they can compensate/condone these modules, under the normal regulations.

Because the student's course is accredited by a Professional Body who explicitly prohibit the use of any type of compensation or condonement, their Exam Board is not able to apply this to the failed modules, and instead offers the student a further attempt to pass the modules during the relevant resit period.

Fortunately, after submitting their resit assessments, the student passes all of their modules.

Their Exam Board then conducts the same analysis as they did for Student A to determine if they are eligible for any adjustment to their marks, and applies this if appropriate.

An award or progression decision is then made using the normal regulations for this student.

Scenario 2: I didn't manage to submit all of my work due to the COVID-19 pandemic. I failed some assignments and/or my Exam Board could not apply compensation, what will happen now?

As you have not submitted all of your work, or if you have failed but were not eligible for compensation, your Exam Board still has several options at its disposal.

Your Exam Board is able to apply something called a condonement, which means that you are able to progress /graduate, without having to attempt the failed module(s) again. However, your Exam Board can only condone a module if you have made sufficient progress at this stage of your study, and are satisfied that you are prepared to move to the next stage of your studies.

If your Exam Board are able to condone your failed module(s), this would then enable you to progress or graduate under our normal regulations. Please see below ("When would I not be eligible for Compensation or Condonement?") for an explanation of the reasons why a condonement might not be allowed.

If your Exam Board are unable to condone your failed modules, then you may be offered further attempts to resubmit any work which you need to pass. These resits will take place during the August resit period.

Once you have resubmitted any failed work, there will be a further Exam Board in the summer who would then look at your overall results and the same regulations and processes described above would be used to make a decision about your award, or progression to the next stage of your course.

Worked Example 5

Student E was unable to submit one of their assignments due to COVID-19.

Their Exam Board is not able to compensate the module they have failed, so it then considers applying a condonement.

Their Course Director makes a recommendation that, because across the board the student has made satisfactory progress in their assessments and is prepared to progress to their next level of study or be awarded, this failed module can be condoned.

The Exam Board therefore consider this student to have passed all modules.

The student's marks are then subjected to the same analysis used for Students A, B, and C to determine if there is a justification for adjusting their marks.

An award or progression decision is then made using the normal regulations for this student.

Worked Example 6

Student F was unable to submit work for two of their Semester 2 modules, and missed the deadline for one of their Semester 1 resits, due to COVID-19. Therefore, they have failed 3 of their 6 modules this year.

Due to the number of modules that have been failed, their Exam Board cannot apply any form of compensation or condonement, and therefore cannot safely make a decision to award a qualification or allow the student to progress to the next stage of their course.

However, the student is then offered the opportunity to resit their two failed Semester 2 modules in August, and is also allowed an exceptional third attempt at submitting the outstanding work for their Semester 1 module.

After the resit period, the student has successfully managed to pass all of their outstanding assessments. They are then treated in the same way as Student C in Worked Example 3, with their marks being analysed for any potential detriment, before a final award or progression decision is made.

What is Compensation?

If you have made an attempt at all components of a module, but you have failed one or more components, provided your average mark is still above the pass mark for the module the module is 'compensated'. When a module is compensated, your marks remain unchanged, but you are not required to resubmit any more assessments and you are considered to have passed the module.

Under our normal regulations, compensation is only applied after having been allowed four attempts at a module (i.e. taking the module over two separate academic years, with a main and resit in each year). To support students during the current situation, we have allowed Exam Boards to apply compensation to modules at an earlier stage, after your first attempt.

When we compensate your module, you are considered to have passed, and do not need to resubmit any work – your mark for the module remains unchanged.

What is Condonement?

If you have failed to attempt a module in its entirety, or have failed any individual component with a mark below 20% (30% for Level 7 courses), Exam Boards are allowed to consider condonement instead of compensation. In order to condone a module, the Exam Board need to be satisfied that, without you submitting any further work, you have made satisfactory progress in assessed work at your current stage of study, and are prepared for your next stage of study.

Under our normal regulations, condonement requires a student to have supported Extenuating Circumstances for the relevant module, and like compensation, can only be applied after four attempts have passed. As in the case of compensation, we have amended our regulations to allow Exam Boards to consider applying condonement after your first attempt at a module, and for COVID-19 affected modules, we do not require a specific Extenuating Circumstances claim to be in place in order to apply condonement.

When we condone your module, your marks remain unchanged, but you are allowed to progress or graduate without having to submit any further work

When would I not be eligible for Compensation or Condonement?

There are a number of requirements for Compensation and Condonement which are detailed in our Academic Regulations, including a limit on the number of credits on your course which can be compensated, across your whole course, and in any given year.

However, in some cases where courses are accredited by an external Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB), we may be prohibited from offering any compensation or condonement – either for specific modules, or even across entire courses. In these cases, the requirements of the relevant PSRB will take precedence over our standard or exceptional regulations. This is important because, if we do not abide by these requirements, students would be at risk of graduating with a qualification which is not recognised by their PSRB.

How exactly do you work out if my marks should be adjusted, and how do you make this adjustment?

First of all, we identify all students who have an average mark in their second semester which is lower than in their first semester for the current stage of their studies.

For every course, we have also calculated what the average historical difference is between the first and second semester of the course, for each year of the course. This is

to help us determine whether or not it is normal to see students getting higher or lower marks between semesters on each course.

Using this historic average difference between the first and second semester, we add two standard deviations to this figure, and this value is then used as the benchmark against which we decide if an individual student should have their marks adjusted.

Worked Example 7

So, for example, let's say that for a particular course, the average difference between the first and second semester, over the last three years, is 10%. This means that students, on average, get a mark for the second semester which is 10% lower than they get for their first semester.

Assuming the standard deviation for this difference is 2.5%, when we add two standard deviations to the average difference, we end up with a value of 15%.

(If you are unfamiliar with the idea of a standard deviation, you can think of it as being a measure of the range of differences in this example. So, if on this course the average difference is 10%, obviously that doesn't mean that every single student gets exactly a 10% difference – there will be a range of differences. So the standard deviation is used as a measure of how wide or narrow the differences are for all of the students in previous years).

This means, when we look at individual student marks, any student with an average difference between their first and second semester which is greater than 15% will have their marks adjusted. Any student with a difference of less than 15% would not have their marks adjusted.

To decide what this adjustment should be, let's say a particular student had a difference of 25% between their first and second semester. We then subtract 15% from 25%, giving us 10%. We then add 10% to the overall mark for each of their second semester modules, which means that the overall difference between the first and second semester for this student would now sit within what we consider the normal range.

Follow up questions:

Q: *Why are you not giving all students with lower marks in their second semester the same overall mark for their first semester?*

A: If we did this for a course where it is normal, based on evidence from previous years, for students to get a lower mark in their second semester, this would lead to the overall performance on the course being even higher than it has been in previous years. While this might not seem like a bad thing, it would in fact lead to something called Grade Inflation, which would seriously undermine the value of the degrees which all students are awarded from LSBU.

Grade Inflation essentially means that we would be awarding too many very high marks, and would lead to people seeing your qualifications as being less valuable than those awarded by other universities. So by protecting against Grade Inflation, we are trying to protect the value of the qualifications which you are all working so hard to achieve.

Q: Even if you are not just giving all students the same mark from their first semester, if my marks are identified as needing to be adjusted, why do you not give me the same mark as I got in my first semester?

A: Imagine in the above example, where we are using 15% as the benchmark, and we have two students – one who has a difference between semesters of 14% and one who has a difference of 16%. The student with a 14% difference would not have their marks adjusted as they fall within the benchmark.

So, if we then gave the student with 16% the same mark as they got in their first semester (that is, if we added 16% to each of their second semester modules), this student would essentially be jumping over the student with 14% by a large amount.

This would clearly be unfair to the student with a 14% difference, and so the approach we are using – where we are adjusting marks to sit just within the benchmark – is the approach we consider to be fairest for all students.

This document will be updated later in the academic year to reflect the operation of resit Exam Boards in more detail.

Exceptional Regulations Process

