

# City University of Hong Kong

## Academic Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Degrees

(Applicable to students admitted in Semester A 2022/23 & thereafter, except students in the Postgraduate Certificate in Laws programme, for whom the set of Academic Regulations applicable to students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 will continue to be followed)

(Effective from Semester A 2022/23)

### Glossary

<b>Academic Transcript</b>	The official academic record of a student's studies at the University, including grades assigned for courses.
<b>Academic Unit</b>	An academic unit refers to an academic department, college or school. A student's home academic unit is the department/college/school offering the programme in which the student is enrolled.
<b>Academic Year/Semester/Term</b>	The academic year is a period of twelve months starting normally in September of each year. The academic year is divided into two Semesters and a Summer Term.
<b>Assessment</b>	The tests, coursework, examinations and other activities used to assess students' progress through courses and to assign final grades.
<b>Assessment Panels</b>	University bodies responsible for assigning grades to students for their courses.
<b>Course</b>	The basic units of instruction into which students are registered and for which grades may be assigned. Each course is identified by a unique course code which is composed of a letter code and a numeric code. The first digit of the numeric code indicates the course's level of academic difficulty. University courses are approved for inclusion in the course catalogue.
<b>Course Catalogue</b>	The official record of University courses maintained by the University.
<b>Course Exemption</b>	Students may be granted an exemption from specific courses based on prior studies. Credit units are not earned for an exempted course.
<b>Course Leader</b>	A Course Leader is appointed by the Head or Dean of an academic unit for each course offered by the academic unit with responsibility for the delivery and assessment of the course.
<b>Credit Transfer</b>	The assignment of credit units toward the credit unit requirements of a programme on the basis of work done outside that programme. Credit units for transfer are normally assigned based on specific courses that are equivalent in content and standard.

<b>Credit Unit</b>	Each course is assigned a number of credit units. A credit unit is earned by approximately forty-to-fifty hours of student work.
<b>Dean</b>	Dean refers to the head of a college/school.
<b>Enrolment</b>	The completion of specified procedures to attain student status at the University.
<b>Equivalent Course</b>	Equivalent courses are those where there is sufficient overlap in content that students may, with approval, register in to meet a programme requirement, to recover a failure or to improve a course grade.
<b>Exclusive Course</b>	Exclusive courses are those where there is sufficient overlap in their content to make it inappropriate for students to earn credit units for more than one of the courses. Students will be restricted from registration in a course when they have earned credit units for an exclusive course.
<b>Grade Point Average (GPA)</b>	<p>The GPA is obtained by adding all the quality points (i.e. grade points multiplied by the number of credit units) for all courses taken by the student during a specified period of time, and then dividing the result by the total number of credit units taken. All course grades, unless excluded as approved by Senate, are included in the calculation. The GPA calculation shall not be rounded. Any digits after the second digit to the right of a decimal point shall be truncated.</p> <p>When calculating the GPA for all courses taken at the time of calculation, it is known as the Cumulative GPA (CGPA). When calculating the GPA for a given semester/term, it is known as the Semester GPA (SGPA).</p>
<b>Graduation Date</b>	Each academic year has three graduation dates as set by Senate for the graduation of students who have completed requirements for awards as determined by the College/School Dean.
<b>Mode of Study</b>	Students are enrolled in a full-time, part-time or combined mode of study. Students' modes of study govern their maximum and minimum study loads.
<b>Operational Grade</b>	A course grade assigned for administrative purposes to assist in the management of student records. Operational grades of IP, I, S, TR, Z, AU, X and WD do not count in the calculation of students' GPAs.
<b>Prerequisite</b>	A requirement that must be fulfilled before a student can register in a particular course. <b>Precursors</b> are set for some courses. Precursors are not compulsory requirements, but students are advised to complete precursors before registering in these courses.

<b>Programme</b>	The structured academic programme leading to a named award of the University into which students are enrolled.
<b>Registration</b>	The inclusion of a student in the class list of a course.
<b>Required Course</b>	A course that must be passed to complete programme requirements.
<b>Senate</b>	The University Senate of City University of Hong Kong.
<b>Stream</b>	Streams are sub-divisions under a programme that designate the specialties of the subject discipline.
<b>Substitute Course</b>	Under exceptional circumstances where a required course cannot be completed, a “substitute” course may be approved for a student by the Dean of the college/school offering the programme, replacing the required course.
<b>Taught Postgraduate</b>	A student enrolled for a Postgraduate Certificate, Postgraduate Diploma, or Master’s Degree.
<b>University</b>	City University of Hong Kong
<b>University Award</b>	An award of the University approved by Senate on completion of specified programme requirements.
<b>University Requirement</b>	A requirement set by Senate, irrespective of programme.
<b>Working Days</b>	Mondays to Fridays, excluding Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays and excluding a day throughout or for part of which a black rainstorm warning or Typhoon Signal Number 8 or above is issued by the Hong Kong Observatory.

## **Academic Regulations**

These Academic Regulations are made by Senate to govern student progress leading to taught postgraduate awards approved by Senate. Regulations concerning courses and related arrangements also apply to exchange and visiting students. Regulations for studies leading to awards of bachelor's degrees and associate degrees, MPhil, PhD, and Professional Doctorates are published separately.

Only Senate can amend the Regulations, or permit exceptions, exemptions, or variations from them. Any variation from the Regulations approved by Senate for a particular programme is set out in the requirements for the programme on the University website.

The Regulations are supplemented by information on administrative procedures and about particular programmes to be found on the University website.

### **1. Language of Instruction and Assessment**

Unless otherwise determined by Senate for a specific course or programme, the medium of instruction and assessment at the University is English.

### **2. Admission**

2.1 Admission is based on academic performance and other relevant criteria. The University does not discriminate on the grounds of age, gender, sexual orientation, nationality, race, social or ethnic origin, family status, or disability.

2.2 To be eligible for admission, the applicant must satisfy the general entrance requirements as specified by Senate and the academic unit's requirements, if any, and be able to demonstrate aptitude and suitability for studies at the University.

2.3 Meeting the entrance requirements does not guarantee admission. The University's decisions on the admission of applicants are final.

2.4 Former taught postgraduate students of the University whose studies were discontinued either due to withdrawal or termination of studies and who wish to apply for readmission to the University must follow the normal admission procedures and other conditions specified by the University. Students who have reached the maximum period of study are not allowed readmission to the same programme.

2.5 If a student is readmitted to the same programme after withdrawal, termination of studies, or completion of an intermediate award, his/her previous period of study will be counted in the calculation of his/her maximum period of study. The student's credit units and grades previously earned from the same programme are normally counted in the GPA calculation. The final decision on acceptance of credit units and grades rests with the respective academic unit.

### **3. Enrolment**

3.1 On entry to the University, students are enrolled in a specific programme of study, and in the full-time, part-time or combined mode of study.

3.2 Students are not permitted to enrol simultaneously in more than one CityU programme or government-funded programme/place.

3.3 Students may apply for changing their programme of study according to the procedures stipulated by the University. If approved, the change will take effect from the following semester.

3.4 To maintain their enrolment, students must conform to the University's rules and regulations.

#### **4. Leave of Absence**

Students may take a leave of absence from their studies for an approved period. Periods of approved leave of absence may not be less than one full semester, and may not accumulate to more than four semesters. Applications for leave of absence should be submitted for approval by the Head of the home academic unit. Under exceptional circumstances where a student needs to take a leave of absence accumulating to more than four semesters, such a request will require approval by the Dean of the college/school offering the programme.

#### **5. Credit Transfer**

5.1 The University may allow previous educational or vocational experience to be counted toward the credit units required to earn an award of the University and appear on students' transcripts.

5.2 Credit units for transfer are normally assigned with respect to specific courses for work equivalent in content and standard.

5.3 Transferred credit units must have been earned no earlier than eight years before enrolment at the University. Individual academic units may stipulate a more stringent requirement for transferred credit units, as deemed appropriate.

5.4 At least 70% of the credit units required for an award of the University must be earned by the successful completion of courses required by the programme concerned.<sup>1</sup>

5.5 Transferred credit units do not count in the calculation of a student's GPA, except where special arrangements have been made such as credit transfer arrangements under joint programmes with other institutions.

5.6 The following applies to credit transfer (i) between different taught postgraduate programmes at the University and (ii) between different streams of study at the same award level within the same programme:

- a) Credit transfer should be limited to a maximum of 30% of the total credit units for the award being pursued.
- b) Grades from the transferred credit units may be counted in the calculation of a student's GPA for the award being pursued.

5.7 Applications for credit transfer should be made in writing for approval by the University. Applications for credit transfer for work completed prior to entry to the University must be made before the start of the first semester according to the deadline set by the University. Applications for credit transfer for outside work completed after admission to the University must be made immediately in the semester following attainment of the additional qualification.

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<sup>1</sup> The 70% requirement will not apply to students enrolled in joint programmes with other institutions.

## **6. Course Registration**

- 6.1 Students registering for courses must follow the instructions issued by the University. Students may also need to fulfil conditions stipulated by the University before they can proceed to register for courses.
- 6.2 Registration for some courses is restricted to students holding the necessary prerequisites.
- 6.3 The University reserves the right to restrict registration in courses, or permit registration only on a priority basis.
- 6.4 Students can add or drop a course during the add/drop period prescribed by the University. After the add/drop deadline, requests for late drop of courses will only be approved under exceptional circumstances, and such late requests must be submitted no later than the end of the teaching period for the relevant semester/term for approval by the Heads of both the course-offering academic unit and the home academic unit.
- 6.5 If students remain registered for a course after the last date for dropping the course, as determined by the University, they will be assigned a course grade. For approved late drop cases, students will be assigned an X grade representing the late drop of the course.
- 6.6 Students intending not to register in any courses in a semester but who will subsequently continue their studies should apply for a leave of absence no later than the end of the course add/drop period.
- 6.7 Students will be restricted from registration in a course when they have earned credit units for an exclusive course.
- 6.8 Students who have met all the requirements to graduate from a programme or have reached their maximum period of study cannot register for further courses in subsequent semesters/terms.

## **7. Maximum and Minimum Study Load**

- 7.1 In each semester, full-time students must register for at least twelve but not more than eighteen credit units; part-time students must register for not more than eleven credit units; and combined mode students must register for not more than eighteen credit units.
- 7.2 In the Summer Term, students may register for courses but the total load must not exceed seven credit units.
- 7.3 Except where special arrangements are made, students seeking an exception to the credit unit load limit stated in AR7.1 or AR7.2 should apply in writing for approval by the Head of the home academic unit.

## **8. Maximum Period of Study**

- 8.1 Students shall complete all programme requirements within the stipulated maximum period of study<sup>2</sup>, inclusive of programme transfer and any periods of leave of absence and suspension of studies.
- 8.2 If a student applies for change of study mode or programme transfer involving a change of study mode, the new maximum period of study will be calculated on a pro-rata basis as determined by the University.
- 8.3 Students who cannot complete all programme requirements for graduation within the maximum study period will be required to discontinue their studies.
- 8.4 Requests for extension of studies beyond the maximum study period will not be granted.

## 9. Grading of Courses

- 9.1 Courses are graded according to the following schedule:

Grade	Grade Point	Grade Definitions
A+	4.3	Excellent
A	4.0	
A-	3.7	
B+	3.3	Good
B	3.0	
B-	2.7	Marginal
C+	2.3	
C	2.0	
F	0.0	Failure
P (Pass-fail course only)		Pass
<b>Operational Grades</b>		
IP	In Progress	An IP grade is shown where students will register for the same course in the subsequent semester/term to complete the assessment of the course.
I	Incomplete	A grade of incomplete may be granted (i) where there are extenuating circumstances that have prevented a student from completing required work, or attending the examination; (ii) at the discretion of the Assessment Panel. Where an “I” grade is assigned, the Assessment Panel may approve a schedule for the completion of work, or a supplementary examination. An alternative grade should be assigned no later than four weeks

<sup>2</sup> The respective programme document on the maximum study period stipulated for individual programmes shall be referred to.

after the “I” grade is first reported or as soon as practicable thereafter.

S	Dissertation Submitted	In a dissertation-type course, an S grade is assigned by the Course Leader when a student’s dissertation has been submitted for assessment.
TR	Credit Transfer	Assigned when a student is granted transferred credit units for the course.
Z	Exemption	Assigned when a student is exempted from the course.
AU	Audit	An audited grade is assigned when an auditing student has completed the conditions established at registration as an auditor. No assessment is made or grade awarded for auditing.
X	Late Drop	Assigned when a student is permitted to drop the course after the add/drop deadline.
WD	Withdrawn	Assigned when a student has registered for the course in a semester/term and subsequently submitted a notification of withdrawal from the University.

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9.2 Unless otherwise specified, the minimum grade to progress without repeating the course is C. Failure to achieve the minimum grade is regarded as failing the course.

9.3 Students assigned a grade of C or better, or a Pass grade in a pass-fail course, earn credit units for the course. Grades of F, IP, I, S, Z, AU, X and WD do not earn credit units.

9.4 Grades of P, IP, I, S, TR, Z, AU, X and WD are not counted in the calculation of a student’s CGPA. Grades of F are counted, unless the fail is recovered under AR12.5.

9.5 Grades of P, IP, I, S, TR, Z, AU, X and WD are not counted in the calculation of a student’s SGPA.

## **10. Illness or other Circumstances Related to Assessment**

10.1 A student who reasonably believes that his/her ability to attend an examination, or in-course assessment with a weighting of 20% or above, has been adversely affected by circumstances beyond his/her control must submit the case, with documentary evidence, to his/her home academic unit following the procedures stated on the University website, as soon as possible but no later than 5 working days of the scheduled date for completing the affected examination or assessment.

10.2 The home academic unit of the student will investigate the case, in consultation with the course-offering academic unit. Only compelling reasons such as illness, hospitalization, accident, family bereavement or other unforeseeable serious personal or emotional circumstances will be considered. The decision of the home academic unit is final and will be conveyed to the student in writing as soon as possible but no later than 10 working days following receipt of the case.

- 10.3 If the case is justified and substantiated, the decision will be conveyed to the Assessment Panel which will determine whether to offer the student a make-up examination or coursework or other alternative assessment. Where assessments for more than one course are affected, it is the responsibility of the home academic unit to inform all relevant Assessment Panels. The Assessment Panel may also adjust the grade of the student if deemed appropriate. The course-offering academic unit will convey the Assessment Panel's decision on the make-up arrangements to the student in writing as soon as possible.

## **11. Review of Course Grades**

- 11.1 Requests for review of course grades are governed by AR11.

### Informal Resolution

- 11.2 For review of course grades via informal resolution, the Course Leader will consider requests on grounds of administrative error in recording or calculating the mark or result, or other circumstances that impact the course grade awarded.
- 11.3 A student should contact the Course Leader within 5 working days of the announcement of grades by the University with a view to resolving the matter informally.
- 11.4 If a revision to the student's course grade is considered necessary, the Course Leader should make a recommendation to amend the grade and seek the endorsement of the Chair of the Assessment Panel. Any grades thus amended will be reported to the Assessment Panel at its next meeting.
- 11.5 The decision on the informal review will be communicated to the student by the Course Leader no later than 13 working days following the announcement of grades by the University.
- 11.6 Other than disagreement with the academic judgement of Course Leaders which does not constitute valid grounds for formal review by virtue of AR 11.7, if the student's concerns regarding course grades as stipulated in AR 11.2 cannot be resolved by informal means, the student may seek resolution via the formal procedures outlined below. However, informal review is not a prerequisite for the formal procedure.

### Formal Procedures for Review

- 11.7 Disagreement with the academic judgement of Course Leaders does not constitute valid grounds for formal review. For formal review of course grades, only requests with the following grounds will be considered:
- (i) there has been a procedural irregularity in the assessment process; for example, the assessment was not conducted in accordance with the Academic Regulations or with the arrangement prescribed for the course;
  - (ii) there exist circumstances that impact the course grade awarded that the student was unable to bring them to the attention of the Course Leader prior to the assessment for valid reasons.
- 11.8 Any request for review of course grades must be made in writing to the Dean of the College/School offering the course within 22 working days of the announcement of grades by the University. The written application must:
- (i) state the grounds on which the request for review is made;

- (ii) include a description of the relevant facts; and
- (iii) provide supporting evidence.

- 11.9 Upon receipt of the formal request for review, the Dean of the College/School will determine whether or not a *prima facie* case for review has been established. If, in the view of the Dean of the College/School, there is no *prima facie* case, then the request will be dismissed and the decision conveyed to the student no later than 32 working days following the announcement of grades by the University. The decision of the Dean of the College/School to dismiss the request is final.
- 11.10 If, in the view of the Dean of the College/School, there is a *prima facie* case, then he/she will refer the matter to the College/School Grade Review Committee for consideration. The Committee may interview the student and staff members concerned. If the student does not show up for the interview, the Committee will consider the student's request for formal review of course grade on the basis of the information and documents provided by the student and other information available to the Committee. The Committee will record its proceedings and resolutions.
- 11.11 If the Committee determines that the case is substantiated, the decision will be conveyed to the Assessment Panel to decide the action to be taken. The Assessment Panel will report back to the College/School Grade Review Committee any decisions taken on cases referred via this procedure.
- 11.12 The decision on the formal review will be communicated in writing to the student by the Dean of the College/School with a brief statement of the reasons for the decision. The decision should be conveyed to the student no later than 54 working days following the announcement of grades by the University.

#### Appeal Procedures

- 11.13 Formal requests for review of course grades should normally be resolved at the College/School level. A student may only appeal against the decision of the College/School Grade Review Committee on the basis of procedural irregularity in the review process within 10 working days following receipt of the decision on the formal review. Students may submit an appeal in writing to the Dean of Graduate Studies. Appellants should clearly indicate the grounds for appeal, and provide evidence in support of the appeal. The Dean of Graduate Studies will determine whether or not a *prima facie* case for appeal has been established. If, in the view of the Dean of Graduate Studies, there is no *prima facie* case, then the appeal will be dismissed and the decision conveyed to the student normally no later than 10 working days following receipt of the appeal. The decision of the Dean of Graduate Studies to dismiss an appeal is final.
- 11.14 If, in the view of the Dean of Graduate Studies, there is a *prima facie* case, he/she will refer the matter to the Academic Review Committee for consideration.
- 11.15 If the Academic Review Committee determines that the case is substantiated, the decision will be conveyed to the Assessment Panel to decide the actions to be taken. The Assessment Panel will report back to the Academic Review Committee any decisions taken on cases referred via this procedure.

- 11.16 The Academic Review Committee should record its proceedings and resolutions. The decision on the appeal will be conveyed to the student in writing normally no later than 27 working days following receipt of the appeal case by the Dean of Graduate Studies and is final.
- 11.17 The College/School Grade Review Committees will submit a report of formal requests for review of course grades considered to Senate via the Quality Assurance Committee annually. The Academic Review Committee will submit an annual report to Senate via the Quality Assurance Committee on all appeal cases received by the Academic Review Committee.

## 12. Students' Academic Standing

### Academic Standing

- 12.1 Academic standing provides an indicator of students in academic difficulty needing academic advising and extra help. The three levels of academic standing are defined as follows:

<b>Standing</b>	<b>Definitions</b>
Academic Warning	Students' academic performance has been unsatisfactory, or their overall academic average is below minimum requirements. Students on warning should seek advice from their academic advisor.
Academic Probation	Students' academic performance has been extremely unsatisfactory, or their overall academic average has continued to be below the minimum requirements for graduation. Students on Academic Probation may be required to take a reduced study load and/or to fulfil specific conditions such as GPA attainments in the following semester/term.
Academic Suspension	Students who cannot benefit from course registration in the next semester/term may be suspended for an approved period of not less than one semester. Academic Suspension is designed to provide students with an opportunity to resolve the problems that are preventing them from making academic progress.

- 12.2 The following standing is used for operational purposes:

Review	A temporary status indicating that a student's performance is unsatisfactory and has been referred to the student's home academic unit for determining if a decision on academic standing needs to be made.
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- 12.3 The decision of an academic standing will be determined at the end of a semester/term for students who are in academic difficulty and have taken courses to a total of more than three credit units on the basis of their last academic standing (if any) and the GPAs attained at the time when the decision is made. Detailed rules are as follows:

<b>Last Academic Standing</b>	<b>CGPA</b>	<b>Academic/ Operational Standing</b>
Nil	2.00 to 2.84 0 to 1.99	Academic Warning Review
Academic Warning	0 to 2.84	Review
Academic Probation/ Academic Suspension	0 to 2.84	Review

- 12.4 In making decisions on students' academic standing, the Dean has the right, upon the recommendation of the students' home academic unit, to make exceptions from the above rules.

#### Repeating Courses to Improve Grades

- 12.5 Except for circumstances specified in AR6.8, AR8.3, or unless otherwise specified, students may repeat a course, or an equivalent course, to recover a failure or to improve a course grade of B- or below, subject to the concerned academic unit's course offering schedule and availability. Only two repeat attempts may be permitted. Course grades for all attempts will appear on the student's academic transcript, but only the final grade earned will be included in the calculation of the student's CGPA.
- 12.6 Courses may be designated "dissertation-type" courses in the course catalogue. For dissertation-type courses, the catalogue will specify the normal duration for course registration and the maximum duration for course registration. Students are not permitted to repeat a dissertation-type course.

### **13. Conferment and Classification of Awards**

#### Requirements for University Awards

- 13.1 To be granted an award of the University, students must successfully complete a programme of the University, including specific requirements of the named award for which they are registered, general University requirements, and college/school requirements, if any. The requirements for awards are set out on the University website.
- 13.2 Credit units earned for courses at a level below the postgraduate programme level are not normally counted toward requirements for an award.
- 13.3 Under exceptional circumstances where a required course cannot be completed, a "substitute" course may be approved for a student by the Dean of the college/school offering the programme, replacing the required course. The approved substitute course can be used to recover a failure for the required course.
- 13.4 The University may allow exemption from courses required for an award of the University. Credit units toward the award are not given when an exemption is granted.
- 13.5 Students may be granted a taught postgraduate award only if they have achieved a CGPA of 2.85 or above.

- 13.6 Where a programme is designed to enable students to gain an intermediate award, students who meet the requirements for the intermediate award and who withdraw from the full programme may apply in writing to the University for conferment of the award. Such applications must be received within one calendar year of the student's withdrawal from the programme.
- 13.7 Students completing the requirements for an award graduate on the following graduation date.

Classification of Awards

- 13.8 The University grants Master's Degree/Postgraduate Diploma/Postgraduate Certificate awards with the following classifications:
- (i) Distinction
  - (ii) Credit
  - (iii) Pass
- 13.9 University awards are classified by the relevant College/School Dean, who makes a recommendation to Senate for the conferment of awards.
- 13.10 The various classifications are based on the CGPAs. The general guidelines are as follows:

<b>Classification of Award</b>	<b>CGPA</b>
Distinction	3.65 or above
Credit	3.30 – 3.64
Pass	2.85 – 3.29

- 13.11 In all cases of classification of awards, the CGPAs cited above are indicative. The Dean has the right, upon the recommendation of the respective academic unit, to make exceptions in the application of the indicative GPAs.
- 13.12 College/School Deans classify awards with regard to, but not necessarily in strict conformity with, a student's CGPA.

**14. Withdrawal of Studies**

Students who wish to withdraw from studies should submit a withdrawal notification to the University. Withdrawal will normally take effect from the date of submission of the notification. However, notification submitted during or after the examination period will take effect only from the following semester/term.

**15. Termination of Studies**

- 15.1 The University has the right to terminate a student's studies for failure to maintain satisfactory academic progress, as determined by the Dean, or to comply with the policies and procedures of the University.
- 15.2 The Dean may terminate the studies of a student under the following circumstances:
- (i) the student's SGPA is below 2.00 for two consecutive enrolled semesters; or

- (ii) the student's academic progress is unsatisfactory and is unable to meet the conditions stipulated by the home academic unit after being put on Academic Probation for two consecutive semesters.
- 15.3 Irrespective of AR15.2, the Dean may prescribe any other criteria for terminating a student's studies.
- 15.4 Notwithstanding AR15.2 and AR15.3 above, students' studies will be terminated if they fail to pass a required course, or its equivalent/substitute course, after three attempts.
- 15.5 For termination of studies due to academic reasons, students may apply for readmission to the University, with admission to any programme occurring no earlier than one academic year after the termination. Upon readmission to the same programme after termination of studies, students may be given one additional opportunity to pass each required course they have failed in their three previous attempts.

## **16. Review of Dean's Decisions on Academic Standing or Awards**

- 16.1 Requests for review of a Dean's decision on academic standing or final award are governed by AR16. The academic judgement of the Dean shall not be subject to review.

### Informal Resolution

- 16.2 For review of a Dean's decision via informal means, the University will only consider requests on grounds of administrative error in recording, transcribing, or reporting of the result.
- 16.3 A student should attempt to resolve the matter informally by contacting the Programme Leader within 5 working days of the publication of the academic standing or final award by the University through the University administrative information system. However, informal review is not a prerequisite for the formal procedure.
- 16.4 If an amendment to the decision on academic standing or award classification is considered necessary, the Programme Leader should make a recommendation via the Head of the academic unit to this effect and seek the endorsement of the Dean. Any Dean's decision thus amended will be reported to the College/School Board at its next meeting.
- 16.5 The decision on the informal review will be communicated to the student by the Programme Leader no later than 8 working days following receipt of the formal request for review.

### Formal Procedures for Review

- 16.6 For formal review of a Dean's decision, only requests with the following grounds will be considered:
- (i) there has been a procedural irregularity affecting the Dean's decision;
  - (ii) there exist circumstances that impact the Dean's decision that the student was unable to bring them to the attention of the Dean prior to its deliberations for valid reasons.
- 16.7 Students may submit a formal request in writing to the Dean of Graduate Studies within 22 working days of the publication of the Dean's decision by the University. The application must:
- (i) state the grounds on which the request for review is made;
  - (ii) include a description of the relevant facts; and

- (iii) provide supporting evidence.
- 16.8 The Dean of Graduate Studies will determine whether or not a *prima facie* case for review has been established. If, in the view of the Dean of Graduate Studies, there is no *prima facie* case, then the request will be dismissed and the decision conveyed to the student no later than 10 working days following receipt of the request. The decision of the Dean of Graduate Studies to dismiss the request for review is final.
- 16.9 If, in the view of the Dean of Graduate Studies, there is a *prima facie* case, he/she will refer the matter to the Academic Review Committee for consideration. The Committee may interview the student and staff members concerned. If the student does not show up for the interview, the Committee will consider the student's request for formal review of Dean's decision on the basis of the information and documents provided by the student and other information available to the Committee. The Committee will record its proceedings and resolutions.
- 16.10 Where the case involves a request for an appeal against the decision of the College/School Grade Review Committee lodged by the same student within the same semester/term, a nominee of the Dean of Graduate Studies will be appointed to handle the case to avoid allegation of bias.
- 16.11 If the Academic Review Committee determines that the case is substantiated, the decision will be conveyed to the Dean. The Dean will review the case and decide whether changes to the student's academic standing or award classification are required. The Dean will report back to the Academic Review Committee any decisions taken on cases referred via this procedure.
- 16.12 The decision on the formal review will be conveyed to the student in writing no later than 22 working days following receipt of the formal request for review.

#### Appeal Procedures

- 16.13 Formal requests for review of the Dean's decisions should normally be resolved by the Academic Review Committee. A student may only appeal against the decision of the Committee on the basis of procedural irregularity in the review process. Students may submit an appeal in writing to the Provost within 10 working days following receipt of the decision regarding the formal review. Appellants should clearly indicate the grounds for appeal and provide evidence in support of the appeal.
- 16.14 If the Provost determines that the case is substantiated, the decision will be conveyed to the Dean. The Dean will review the case and decide whether changes to the student's academic standing or award classification are required. The Dean will report back to the Provost any decisions taken on cases referred via this procedure.
- 16.15 The Office of the Provost should record its proceedings and resolutions. The decision on the appeal will be conveyed to the student in writing within 22 working days following receipt of the appeal and is final.
- 16.16 The Academic Review Committee will submit a report of formal requests for review of Dean's decisions and of appeal cases received to Senate via the Quality Assurance Committee annually. The Provost will submit an annual report to Senate via the Quality Assurance Committee on all appeal cases received by him/her.