

## LSHTM Academic Manual 2024-25

### Chapter 7: General Academic Regulations

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#### Annual Review of the Academic Manual

The LSHTM Academic Manual was introduced in 2019-20 and bringing together all the academic regulations and procedures which constitute LSHTM's framework for quality and standards for credit-bearing taught provision, research degrees and special programmes. The Academic Manual consists of 11 Chapters all of which are reviewed annually and published as separate documents on [LSHTM website](#) together with a summary of amendments. With the exception of most minor editorial changes (e.g. typos, formatting and spelling or grammatical corrections), all revisions and amendments are noted and approved by Senate before the start of each academic year.

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## **7.1 Introduction**

- 7.1.1 These regulations generally apply to all current students registered for professional diplomas and on Level 7 and 8 degrees of the [Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-awarding Bodies](#) (FHEQ) at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM), including students registered for intensive and distance learning programmes. Exceptions are noted at the beginning of each section below.

## **7.2 Academic Integrity (Assessment Irregularities) Policy**

<b>Related Policies &amp; Procedures</b>	<a href="#">Academic Regulations</a> <a href="#">Academic Writing Handbook</a> <a href="#">Assessment Handbook and Board of Examiner Guidance</a>
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### **7.2.1 SCOPE**

- 7.2.1.1 The term assessment irregularity applies to any suspected instance of plagiarism, cheating, fraud, collusion, personation or other dishonest practices identified in connection with an assessment (including essays or other coursework assessments) or formal examination. The term 'irregularity' does not necessarily imply misconduct on the part of a student; judgement as to whether a specific offence has occurred will only be made following investigation of the case under this procedure.
- 7.2.1.2 This procedure is intended to be fair, consistent and transparent, whilst forming part of a framework that promotes good academic practice in teaching, learning and assessment. Any dispute as to the interpretation of these procedures shall be referred to the Pro-Director - Education.
- 7.2.1.3 This procedure applies in respect of any alleged assessment irregularity connected with LSHTM students, programmes and modules. In particular, they will apply for all aspects of the assessment of LSHTM taught

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programmes, Short Courses and Research Degrees. Where Research degree students are taking taught modules, any suspected assessment irregularity must be referred to Module Organiser (MO).

- 7.2.1.4 For distance learning (DL) students, [the University of London Worldwide Regulations and Procedures](#) will take precedence should there be any conflict or overlap with LSHTM procedures.
- 7.2.1.5 For students registered with other institutions but undertaking study at LSHTM, any alleged irregularities may first be investigated under LSHTM procedures. For any LSHTM students undertaking study at other institutions, the relevant Taught Programme Director (TPD)/Faculty Research Degree Director (FRDD) should follow up on any allegations reported.

#### **7.2.2 STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 7.2.2.1 By submitting work for assessment, the student is confirming that they have familiarised themselves with LSHTM's regulations on assessment irregularities and that the work they have submitted is their own.

#### **7.2.3 STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 7.2.3.1 All staff should be aware of their responsibilities under these procedures including markers and invigilators; MOs; Programme Directors (PDs); TPDs; Supervisors, Chairs of PhD Upgrading or DrPH Review panels, Department Research Degree Coordinators (DRDCs) and FRDDs.
- 7.2.3.2 In the case of the temporary absence or incapacity of any officer named in these procedures, responsibility devolves to their deputy (or nominee). If no deputy has been appointed, the manager responsible for the absent staff member will appoint a nominee.
- 7.2.3.3 The Pro-Director (Education) may delegate any of their duties assigned under this policy to an Associate Dean or to the Head of the Doctoral College.

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**7.2.4 DEFINITIONS OF ASSESSMENT IRREGULARITIES**

**7.2.4.1 Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is the copying or use of the work of others, whether intentionally or unintentionally, as if it were your own. Such work may come from any source whether published or unpublished, in print or online including words, images, audio recordings, diagrams, formulae, computer code, performances, ideas, judgements, discoveries and results. To avoid plagiarism:

- Any reference to the work of others must be acknowledged.
- A recognised citation system should be used.
- Quotations must accurately refer to and acknowledge the originator(s) of the work.
- Direct quotations, whether extended or short, must always be clearly identified.
- Paraphrasing must be clearly acknowledged.
- Work done in collaboration with others must appropriately refer to their involvement and input.
- Use of your own past work should be referenced as clearly as the work of others.

**7.2.4.2 Cheating**

Cheating is a deliberate attempt to deceive in order to gain advantage in an assessed piece of work, including coursework, in-module assessments and examinations. This covers a range of offences, from significant instances of plagiarism to exam misconduct.

**7.2.4.3 Fraud**

Fraud is the submission of any work which may cause others to regard as true that which is not true. This covers work which has been fabricated (e.g. with invented data or cases), falsified (e.g. with wilfully distorted data), omits significant items (e.g. ignoring outliers, not admitting that some data are missing, not admitting other relevant post-hoc analyses, omitting data on side effects in a clinical trial, non-disclosure of a conflict of interest, etc.), or in any way misrepresents the work or research carried out. Fraud may be by intention, by disregard of possible consequences (e.g. in failing to adequately describe the input of others or the use of AI text generators), or by negligence (e.g. submission of work based on distorted data due to poor data

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handling practice). Assessment or research fraud may cross over with a range of other offences, from plagiarism (e.g. unattributed copying of the research data of others) to cheating, collusion or personation.

All students when undertaking their research projects are expected to comply with the LSHTM Good Research Practice policy. The policy provides a comprehensive definition of research misconduct, of which fraud is one component. Research misconduct takes on a variety of guises, from fraud through breaches of ethics approvals. Breaches of ethics approval include non-compliance with the terms and conditions of ethics approval, collection and analysis of data prior to obtaining ethics approval, and not exercising due care with research participants. Students should review the Good Research Practice policy when developing their project.

**7.2.4.4 Collusion**

Collusion is any form of collaboration with another person, including another student, which has not been clearly acknowledged or permitted for assessment purposes (either in coursework or an examination). Different forms of collusion may be regarded as either plagiarism or cheating.

**7.2.4.5 Personation**

Personation is the deliberate submission of work completed by another person, system or technology (e.g. another student, a friend, a relative, a peer, a tutor, and essay mill, AI text generators or anyone else) as if it were the student's own. Another person's work may cover any source whether published or unpublished, including words, images, audio recordings, diagrams, formulae, computer codes, ideas, judgements, discoveries and results. This may cross over with a range of other offences; submission of another person's work with their knowledge is likely to constitute collusion; doing so without their knowledge may constitute plagiarism; representing a piece of joint or group work as the student's own is likely to constitute fraud; and deliberately procuring work from sources or commercial entities such as essay mills would be very likely considered cheating. Arranging for another person to falsely identify themselves as the student and take an exam on their behalf would be seen as a particularly severe form of personation and cheating.

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**7.2.4.6 Self Plagiarism**

Students should take care in re-using their own previous work. Presenting work for assessment which was originally completed for other purposes, whether at LSHTM or elsewhere, may be treated as self-plagiarism (or even cheating) under these procedures, unless this work is properly identified or unless instructed otherwise, e.g. if students have been asked to resubmit the work. Students who have previously submitted an original piece of work for assessment at LSHTM or for any other University of London award may not re-submit it, in whole or in part, for consideration towards an LSHTM qualification (i.e. credit can only be given once for a particular piece of assessed work.) It may be possible to build on work done previously, e.g. to take a topic initiated in a module assignment and develop it fully as part of a project report (personal tutors or involved academic staff should be able to advise on what is acceptable); but in such cases students should identify and reference their own previous work as carefully as any other source.

**7.2.4.7 Examination Offences**

Conduct in examination rooms or halls is also subject to specific restrictions. This covers written exams, practicals, oral or similar examinations, and assessments taken online. Examination offences include:

- To introduce, handle or consult unauthorised materials, aids, instruments or equipment in the examination, which might be used to the student's advantage, including the use of inappropriate (i.e. programmable) calculators, or other inappropriate devices including mobile phones, Personal Digital Assistants or any wireless devices.
- To annotate books, statutes or other materials permitted in the examination.
- To make unauthorised use of material stored in or communicated to a device such as a calculator, computer or mobile phone, or to make unauthorised use of software or other functions or information stored electronically on such a device. Even if the device itself has been permitted, the use of inappropriate material will not be.
- To communicate (in written, verbal, gestural, electronic or any other form, except where expressly permitted), collude or engage in any other unauthorised activity with any other persons during the examination. This includes copying or reading from the work of another candidate or from another student's books, notes, instruments, computer files or any other materials or aids.

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- To offer an inducement of any kind to an invigilator, examiner or other person connected with the assessment.
- Failure to comply with the reasonable request of an invigilator.
- Any conduct of which the result would be an advantage for the student obtained by subterfuge or action contrary to published rules or guidance.
- To remove from the examination room, without prior authorisation, stationery or other materials supplied for examination purposes by LSHTM, University or examination centre.
- Being party to any arrangement whereby a person other than the student fraudulently represents or intends to represent, the student at an examination.

### **7.2.5 PENALTIES**

7.2.5.1 Decisions concerning assessment irregularities should take account of all relevant factors before a penalty is determined. These may include:

- The extent of any academic misconduct or poor practice
- The motivation and intention of the student in respect of the irregularity
- The effect of the intended penalty on the student's progression or overall award
- The relation of the assessment(s) in question to the structure of the award
- The effect that the cancellation of the paper(s) or test(s) would have on the student
- The arrangements for re-entry to the examination(s) or assessment(s) in question
- The comparable position of a student who had simply failed assessment(s)
- Whether the student had been found guilty of a previous assessment irregularity at LSHTM
- The stage the student is at in their programme of study and/or their prior academic experience
- If a student's disability or medical condition appears to have a bearing on an assessment irregularity, this may potentially mitigate the severity of the irregularity but should not result in de facto differential treatment. Adjustments for disabilities/medical conditions cannot be made retrospectively.

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- 7.2.5.2 The most significant penalties, which have ramifications beyond the marking of an individual piece of work, may be discussed at any part of the investigations. However, these can only be levied by an Assessment Irregularities Committee (AIC) or Senate.
- 7.2.5.3 LSHTM reserves the right to inform appropriate external bodies in any upheld cases of assessment irregularities, especially any cases of fraud.
- 7.2.5.4 Penalties for assessment irregularities should take account of the severity of the offence, and be applied in a consistent way across LSHTM. Penalties may cover any combination of the following:



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<b>Penalty</b>	<b>Taught Programme</b>	<b>Research Degree</b>	<b>Penalty only to be given by an Assessment Irregularities Committee (AIC)</b>
a) No further action.	✓	✓	n/a
b) Verbal or written reprimand by the TPD/FRDD with a note to this effect added to their student file.	✓	✓	n/a
c) In addition to other penalties, the student be required to attend a training session on good referencing practice and avoiding plagiarism.	✓	✓	n/a
d) The plagiarised or fraudulent section of the work is ignored or revised for re-submission and the remaining portion of the work marked as normal. With regards fraudulent work, the penalty may specify any further restrictions on potential future publication (or requirements for revision prior to such publication) if the work is to be associated with LSHTM.	✓	✓	n/a
e) That the result for the piece of work be reduced which may include being marked down to the minimum pass mark or lower. Where this penalty is a reduction to a fail grade, standard resit procedures apply but the penalty may specify any maximum pass grade achievable in the resit.	✓	✓	n/a

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<b>Penalty</b>	<b>Taught Programme</b>	<b>Research Degree</b>	<b>Penalty only to be given by an Assessment Irregularities Committee (AIC)</b>
f) That the result for the piece of work be reduced to zero. The student may be permitted to resit under standard procedures (i.e. if the irregularity was a first attempt).	✓		n/a
g) That for serious offences in relation to module assessment only, the result for the piece of work be reduced by a set number of grade points or to grade 0, with a requirement that this piece of work and associated module result must contribute to the outcome of the student's final award. The student may not be permitted to undertake a resit to be counted towards their final award; although standard resit procedures may allow a resit to be taken to demonstrate academic capability, e.g. if the student's award outcome is a borderline case and the Exam Board is required to consider a portfolio of work.	✓	n/a	n/a

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<b>Penalty</b>	<b>Taught Programme</b>	<b>Research Degree</b>	<b>Penalty only to be given by an Assessment Irregularities Committee (AIC)</b>
h) That for irregularities identified in formative or draft work prior to formal submission, the candidate be reprimanded in writing, and required to revise the work before submission to the Assessors. At the discretion of the FRDD, the Assessors may also be informed that an irregularity had been identified in previous draft work and given relevant documentation pertaining to it.	n/a	✓	n/a
i) That the students be permitted to continue their studies or proceed to examination, subject to corrections/revisions being specified and approved by Assessors (e.g. PhD Upgrading Panel, DrPH Review Panel, thesis/viva Examiners) who shall be informed of the details of the irregularity and given relevant documentation relating to it. The Assessors may determine how corrections/revisions are to be approved, including the possibility of a second examination of the student.	n/a	✓	n/a

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<b>Penalty</b>	<b>Taught Programme</b>	<b>Research Degree</b>	<b>Penalty only to be given by an Assessment Irregularities Committee (AIC)</b>
j) Where a serious assessment irregularity has occurred in summative assessments, the work can be judged inadequate for the assessment requirements and withdrawn from consideration. This should count as one attempt at submission; any further revisions and re-submissions may only be permitted in line with the regulations.	n/a	✓	✓
k) The student be required to commence a new project with none of the previous studies taken into account or recognised.	n/a	✓	✓
l) The student not be permitted to re-enter for any or all assessments before the expiry of a stated period.	✓	✓	✓
m) The student be permitted to re-enter for those assessments on the next normal occasion, but that no award be made to the student before the expiry of a stated period.	✓	✓	✓
n) The student be excluded from future assessments for awards of LSHTM.	✓	✓	✓
o) The student be excluded from the award for which they have been registered.	✓	✓	✓
p) That termination of studies proceedings be initiated against the student.	✓	✓	✓

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<b>Penalty</b>	<b>Taught Programme</b>	<b>Research Degree</b>	<b>Penalty only to be given by an Assessment Irregularities Committee (AIC)</b>
q) That a recommendation be made to Senate for the student's award to be revoked.	✓	✓	✓

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**7.2.6 INITIAL PROCEEDINGS (STAGE 1)**

**Initiation of Proceedings**

- 7.2.6.1 Online examination scripts will be subject to scrutiny for assessment irregularities using Turnitin software. All scripts with evidence of assessment irregularities will be subject to further review as outlined throughout section 7.2 of this chapter.
- 7.2.6.2 Cases of suspected assessment irregularity must be reported in the first instance to the appropriate MO, PD or DRDC. They will then inform the appropriate TPD or FRDD who will make an initial investigation of the alleged irregularity and establish whether there is a case to answer.

Assessment	Report to:	Report to:
Module assessment	MO	TPD
MSc Project	MSc PD	TPD
Research degrees	DRDC	FRDDs
Examinations	Associate Dean (Quality, Academic Standards and Collaborative Provision)	TPD

- 7.2.6.3 Where an irregularity is alleged, no assessment result should be confirmed until a verdict is reached on the allegation.

**Taught Programmes:** If a case is not resolved before the final Board of Examiners, then the student and the relevant Exam Board Chair should be informed and consideration of these results deferred to a subsequent special meeting of the relevant Board of Examiners.

**Research Degrees:** In the event that a case is not resolved before the work is due to be considered by appointed Examiners for the award of a research degree (i.e. following thesis submission and oral examination), then their decision will need to be deferred pending the outcome of the case.

- 7.2.6.4 Where an irregularity is alleged for an assessment task that forms the basis for a subsequent assessment, then the submission/assessment of the

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subsequent assessment should be deferred, until an outcome has been reached on the original assessment task.

- 7.2.6.5 All staff who suspect an assessment irregularity has occurred must report them immediately. Failure to do so may be grounds for any future case to be dismissed. In the rare event that a case is brought subsequent to an award being made or a student having graduated, these procedures will still apply. Such a situation may require that the Board of Examiners reconsider their previous decision, and that Senate amend or rescind grades or awards previously made.

#### Initial investigations

- 7.2.6.6 All investigations shall be carried out as soon as possible. After being notified about the alleged irregularity, the TPD/FRDD should complete their initial investigation within 10 working days.
- 7.2.6.7 The TPD/FRDD should obtain details from the Registry to confirm whether any prior allegations have been made/taken forward regarding the student in question.
- 7.2.6.8 If there is evidence that a student's disability/medical condition may have had a bearing on the case, the TPD/FRDD should check with the Student Adviser. However, the Student Adviser will not be in a position to inform the TPD/FRDD if a disability has been declared but permission to inform other staff withheld by the student.
- 7.2.6.9 If the TPD/FRDD determines that there is no case to answer, they need not record a report on the allegation. If there is evidence of poor practice (e.g. in referencing or citing), the TPD/FRDD may contact the student to remind them of best practice and the need to observe assessment requirements.
- 7.2.6.10 If the TPD/FRDD determines that there is a case to answer, then the following will apply:
- Taught Programmes:** The TPD must determine whether the case progresses directly to an AIC. If not, it will be appropriate to progress to an Irregularity Investigation Panel (IIP).

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**Research Degrees:** The FRDD must determine whether it is possible to schedule an IIP or AIC to consider the matter prior to the Upgrading/Review or Thesis Examination meeting taking place. If not, then the Upgrading/Review or Thesis Examination should be deferred until after an IIP or AIC can be scheduled.

- Upgrading/Review work: If it is not feasible to schedule this beforehand, then the IIP may take place as an embedded part of the Upgrading/Review meeting. The FRDD should advise the Student, the Chair of the Upgrading/Review Panel and the relevant DRDC of the details of the case beforehand.
- Thesis: If an IIP or AIC is required then this must take place before the Thesis Examination and thus may require deferral of the viva. However, the Thesis Examiners have discretion to address and discuss any issues of poor academic practice (e.g. problems with referencing) as part of the viva, and may recommend related amendments, provided that these issues are not so serious as to constitute assessment irregularities requiring an IIP or AIC. If issues potentially requiring an IIP or AIC are not identified until the Thesis Examination is in progress, the Examiners must defer their decision until the matter can be reviewed by the FRDD, and if necessary an IIP or AIC held.

7.2.6.11 Initiation of proceedings by the TPD/FRDD will normally result in an invitation for the student to meet with an IIP to discuss the allegations or respond with a written response or any other evidence. The purpose of the IIP is to consider details of the alleged irregularity and the student's response, with the authority to make a final recommendation if the student is prepared to accept this.

7.2.6.12 If the student does not wish the case to be considered through an IIP then it should progress directly to an AIC.

7.2.6.13 Where an IIP or AIC is required, the TPD/FRDD should [contact the student](#):

- Describing the alleged irregularity in writing
- Enclosing a copy of this Procedure
- Requesting the student to explain their conduct and provide any other evidence to the relevant Panel or Committee.

It should be made clear that the explanation and evidence from the student may be given either in person at a meeting or in writing. The student should



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also be encouraged to disclose any disability or medical condition to the Panel that may have a bearing on the alleged irregularity.

- 7.2.6.14 If an initial investigation indicates that there is a case to answer arising from a previous assessment, but the student is at a crucial point in their overall programme of study (e.g. about to take exams or other assessments), then the TPD/FRDD may at their discretion put the case on hold. The student would not be contacted until this immediate juncture had passed to avoid affecting the student's performance in other assessments. However, this may not be appropriate in every case, and decisions may be informed by the type and apparent severity of the irregularity being investigated.

**Contact with students and timescales**

- 7.2.6.15 Contact with students should be via email in the first instance. If no response is received, the Registry can forward the information on to the student's current address.
- 7.2.6.16 Students are required to respond promptly on receipt of all communications about possible assessment irregularities, and to comply with all indicated timescales. Where their circumstances may prevent them from meeting obligations under these procedures, students should notify the relevant staff as soon as possible. In such cases, staff should attempt to make alternative arrangements if reasonable (e.g. adjusting deadlines).
- 7.2.6.17 Students or staff may request extension of any timescales or deadlines given in the procedure, which will be granted at the discretion of the TPD/FRDD, the AIC Chair if one has been convened, or the Appeals Committee Chair if one has been convened.
- 7.2.6.18 There is no expectation that students who are normally based away from London (especially DL students) should be able to attend meetings in London. In these cases, input may be given via email or alternative participation arrangements such as teleconferencing or videoconferencing may be arranged at the discretion of the TPD/FRDD.

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7.2.6.19 In the event that a student has indicated their intention to participate in a meeting, but then cannot do so for good reason, an adjournment should be considered.

7.2.6.20 Where reasonable efforts have been made to contact a student but no response has been received, proceedings may take place in their absence.

## **7.2.7 IRREGULARITY INVESTIGATION PANEL (STAGE 2)**

### **Composition of Irregularity Investigation Panel (IIP)**

7.2.7.1 The composition of an IIP will generally consist of the relevant TPD/FRDD and a relevant member of staff, such as Module Organiser, Programme Director, Exam Board Chair or Supervisor, depending on the type of assessment under investigation.

### **Informal Hearing of the IIP**

7.2.7.2 The meeting may be kept relatively informal. The Panel shall meet within 10 working days from the student being sent notification that there is a case to answer. In exceptional circumstances, this may not be feasible, and the TPD/FRDD may set dates as appropriate.

7.2.7.3 The student may choose to either meet with the Panel to present a further statement in mitigation or choose not to meet with them, having provided relevant information beforehand. If the student is unable or does not wish to attend in person the Panel may reach a decision without a formal meeting (e.g. by email contact) at the discretion of the TPD/FRDD.

7.2.7.4 A friend or representative may accompany the student at the meeting if desired. This can be a fellow-student representative, or an Officer of the Students' Representative Council (SRC). Such an individual should not be a formal legal counsel, and should not actively participate in the Panel meeting.

7.2.7.5 The Panel may have private discussions and request that the student and any other attendees leave the room.

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- 7.2.7.6 The Panel should retire for private discussion before deciding any provisional penalty.
- 7.2.7.7 Discussion at the meeting should aim for consensus between the Panel members and the student as to what has occurred, whether it constitutes an assessment irregularity, how severe it is, and what penalty is likely to be most appropriate. The potential impact of this penalty on the student's final award should also be made clear. In the event that the student is absent, or is present but cannot reach agreement with the Panel members, then the Panel must reach a decision and should aim to do so without adjourning to a later date.
- 7.2.7.8 Research Degrees: Where an IIP is to be held as an embedded part of an Upgrading/Review meeting, students should be notified in advance that an allegation has been made and provided with the evidence of the assessment irregularity. They can then choose to either proceed with the investigation as part of the Upgrading/Review meeting or request a postponement of the Upgrading/Review meeting until the matter has been investigated by a separate IIP. For cases where an IIP is to be held as an embedded part of an Upgrading/Review meeting.
- The main meeting should go ahead as normal, focusing on the academic/scientific content of the work.
  - Consideration of the element(s) for which an irregularity has been alleged should be deferred to later in the meeting, if possible. The student should be asked to explain their conduct or give any other evidence about the alleged irregularity. It should be made clear that the Panel has authority to act as an IIP and make a decision on this matter, which may affect the Upgrading/Review outcome.
  - The Panel should retire for private discussion before deciding any provisional penalty, as well as the Upgrading/Review outcome. They should then return to discuss these outcomes with the student.

**Outcome of the IIP**

- 7.2.7.9 At the end of the Panel meeting, the TPD/FRDD should offer the student the option of accepting the Panel's decision, and have the TPD/FRDD make a

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subsequent decision on the penalty in line with what has been discussed with the Panel. If the student does not accept this option, then the case will be escalated to a formal AIC.

- 7.2.7.10 Research Degrees: Where an IIP has been held as an embedded part of an Upgrading/Review meeting, decisions may be made about both the alleged irregularity and the assessment overall. This may include requirements for revision and re-submission of work, in which case appropriate deadlines should be given and responsibilities assigned for approving the revised or re-submitted work.
- 7.2.7.11 If the student accepts the decision, the TPD/FRDD should then take any advice required to reach a final decision on the case and any penalty. Such advice may include consultation with the Pro-Director of Education or Head of Registry to determine that the penalty is appropriate and in line with LSHTM precedents. This final penalty should usually be as provisionally recommended by the IIP.
- 7.2.7.12 The TPD/FRDD must prepare a brief report detailing the allegation, the evidence considered, and the outcome. This should be done within 5 working days from the date of the IIP. The report should include a standard statement for the student to sign, to say "I agree with this statement of facts concerning my work as indicated above, and agree to the penalty or penalties indicated".
- 7.2.7.13 If no response has been received from the student within 15 working days of their being contacted regarding the Panel's decision, proceedings should be completed without the student's input and the final penalty applied.
- 7.2.7.14 The TPD/FRDD will arrange for signed copies of this report to be sent to (i) the student; and (ii) the Head of Registry for inclusion in the Assessment Irregularities file. No further escalation to a formal AIC should be required.

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**7.2.8 ASSESSMENT IRREGULARITIES COMMITTEE (STAGE 3)**

**Composition of Assessment Irregularities Committee (AIC)**

- 7.2.8.1 For information on the membership and terms of reference of the AIC, please see [Chapter 10 of the LSHTM Academic Manual](#).
- 7.2.8.2 An AIC shall be established in the following circumstances (either following an IIP, or directly if a need for a formal AIC can be determined at an earlier stage):
- i. If the student requests a formal hearing by an AIC.
  - ii. If the student admits to only part of the allegation.
  - iii. If the student admits the allegation but contests the penalty.
  - iv. If the student admits the allegation but the TPD/FRDD feels it appropriate to refer the matter to an AIC.
  - v. If the TPD/FRDD considers the allegations sufficiently serious to warrant a level of penalty that can only be levied by an AIC.
  - vi. All repeat cases of assessment irregularity must be referred to an AIC.
- 7.2.8.3 The AIC should arrange to meet within **15 working days** of the need for an AIC being identified or requested by the student.

**Notification to the Student**

- 7.2.8.4 If the case has progressed directly to an AIC without an IIP, the Secretary shall contact the student within 5 working days of being notified of the need for an AIC, to request that they provide a written explanation of their conduct with respect to the allegations, and any further evidence for consideration.
- 7.2.8.5 The Secretary shall send the students a copy of all documents to be presented to the AIC student. Such documents shall include any written statement(s) made by the student and the report of the IIP (if this met) or else report from the initial investigations of the TPD/FRDD. Notice must be given of the purpose of the meeting and details of the time and place at which it will be held. The details of the hearing and documents should be emailed to the student at least 7 working days before the date of the AIC.

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**AIC Hearing**

- 7.2.8.6 The AIC shall only be attended by the people involved in the hearing. The student shall have the right to be present at all proceedings of the AIC apart from the provision for the AIC to consider its findings in private. Witnesses may be called.
- 7.2.8.7 The AIC shall not be invalidated through the student being absent from the meeting if documents and notice have been sent to the student within the timeframe outlined in this procedure.
- 7.2.8.8 A friend or representative may accompany the student at the hearing if desired. This can be a fellow-student representative, or an Officer of the SRC. Such an individual should not be a formal legal counsel, and should not actively participate in the Panel meeting.
- 7.2.8.9 Before reaching any decision, the AIC shall consider any written statements submitted to the Committee by the TPD/FRDD or the student.
- 7.2.8.10 The TPD/FRDD shall present their evidence to the AIC. The AIC should not ask the TPD/FRDD to recommend a specific penalty but the TPD/ FRDD can provide contextual information on past precedents.
- 7.2.8.11 First, the responsible TPD/FRDD and then the student may call witnesses who may be examined, or may present documentary material. A witness who is an LSHTM student may, with the Chair's permission, be accompanied by any person while giving evidence. Evidence may be admitted which is relevant and fair.
- 7.2.8.12 The student shall have the right to examine any documents, reports or written statements that have been used in the case. However, the Chair may anonymise the identity of persons who have provided evidence (e.g. other students reporting an incident).

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- 7.2.8.13 The AIC shall have the right to examine any documents, reports or written statements that have been introduced by the student.
- 7.2.8.14 The student may give evidence to the Committee and the TPD/FRDD and members of the AIC may ask the student questions.
- 7.2.8.15 After the evidence has been concluded, the TPD/FRDD and then the student may address the Committee.
- 7.2.8.16 Where the AIC finds that the allegation has been established, then firstly the responsible TPD/FRDD, and secondly the student or their representative, shall have a further opportunity to address the Committee regarding the order to be made.
- 7.2.8.17 The findings and decision of the AIC shall be announced by the Chair at the close of the meeting.
- 7.2.8.18 The Committee may at any time, ask the student, TPD/FRDD and any other attendees to leave the room so that the Committee members can hold private discussions. The Committee shall consider its findings and decision in private and shall if possible reach its finding and decision without adjournment.
- 7.2.8.19 Decisions made by the AIC on a point of procedure will be binding. Any such decisions may be the subject of appeal before the Appeals Committee, subject to the grounds detailed in the appeals procedure.

**Decisions of the AIC**

- 7.2.8.20 The decision of the AIC shall be reached by a majority vote of the members of the Committee present. The votes of individual AIC members shall always be confidential.
- 7.2.8.21 If the votes of the AIC are evenly divided then its decision shall always be in favour of the less serious finding or penalty.

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- 7.2.8.22 The AIC shall determine whether an offence has been committed and give reasons for its decision.
- 7.2.8.23 The Secretary shall provide the AIC with all relevant information relating to the student's position in LSHTM and their programme of study, including their stage of progress within the structure of that programme, and other components completed or graded which will affect their final qualification and award classification.
- 7.2.8.24 When reaching the decision on the penalty the AIC shall consider all factors determining severity of irregularity, as per the section on applicable penalties.
- 7.2.8.25 The AIC will then agree a penalty (or penalties) in line with the list of applicable penalties. Variations or other appropriate penalties not detailed in these procedures may be ordered, although giving due consideration to the importance of fairness and consistency with policy and precedent.
- 7.2.8.26 The Chair of the AIC shall prepare a report form and report detailing the allegation, the evidence that was considered, and the outcome. This should be sent by email within five working days from the date of the meeting to the student, TPD/FRDD and the Pro-Director of Education. The Head of Registry and the TPD/FRDD shall arrange for the relevant penalty (or penalties) to be applied. Details of the case should be held in the Registry Assessment Irregularities file.
- 7.2.8.27 If the AIC decides that no irregularity has been committed or that there was a genuine mistake with no intention of committing an irregularity, that decision shall also be communicated to any other persons in the case whether as witnesses or otherwise.

**Research Degree students taking modules**

- 7.2.8.28 In the event of an assessment irregularity allegation concerning a Research Degree student taking an assessed module or Short Course, then the allegation should be raised with the appropriate MO, PD or Short Course Organiser, who will then inform the relevant TPD. The TPD should then



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investigate the alleged irregularity and initiate an IIP if there is a case to answer. The relevant FRDD may be invited to join the IIP.

- 7.2.8.29 If the student does not accept the recommendation, or the decision of the Panel would normally require an AIC to be initiated, then the case would be referred to an AIC.

**Students registered with other institutions**

- 7.2.8.30 In the event of an assessment irregularity allegation concerning a student who is registered for a standalone module (or modules), then the above procedures will apply. However, at the initial investigation stage, the TPD should check with the Registry to determine whether the student is taking the module(s) on a standalone basis, or has been registered to undertake the modules as part of a qualification at another institution.
- 7.2.8.31 If initial investigation by the TPD identifies that there is a case to answer, then an IIP should be constituted. A member of staff from the student's home institution may also be invited to join the IIP.
- 7.2.8.32 The report and recommendation from the IIP as prepared by the TPD should always be forwarded to the student's home institution by the Registry.
- 7.2.8.33 If the student accepts the recommendation of this Panel, that decision will be applied insofar as it affects the grade given to the student by LSHTM. If the IIP recommends a penalty outside the remit of LSHTM to apply to a student registered elsewhere, the student's home institution should be informed of this. If the student's home institution takes further action against the student, they should report any outcome back to LSHTM.
- 7.2.8.34 If the student's home institution asks that LSHTM determine the outcome or penalty, this should be done as per the LSHTM procedures, with any additional details (e.g. any previous irregularity offences by the student) to be supplied by the home institution. If the student's home institution makes a request for a specific penalty to be given, this may be implemented if practical and reasonably consistent with LSHTM procedures. However, if this conflicts with LSHTM procedures or deviates significantly from the

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recommendation of the IIP, any decision on the matter should be taken by the responsible LSHTM Exam Board Chair in consultation with the relevant TPD and Head of Registry.

**LSHTM students taking modules at other institutions**

7.2.8.35 In the event of an assessment irregularity allegation concerning an LSHTM student who is taking a module/programme at another institution, then the relevant institution should be asked to make a report on the case for consideration by the relevant TPD/FRDD at LSHTM. The TPD/FRDD should follow up to determine whether there is a case for the student to answer under LSHTM procedures, further to any procedures or penalty already applied by that institution.

**7.2.9 APPEALS PROCEDURE (STAGE 4)**

**Grounds for Appeal**

- 7.2.9.1 An appeal may be made on the following grounds:
- i. That the proceedings of the AIC were not carried out in accordance with these Procedures.
  - ii. That there is new evidence, which could not reasonably have been, made available to the AIC.
  - iii. That the decision of the AIC was perverse in light of the evidence.
  - iv. That the penalty imposed by the AIC was out of proportion to the offence committed.

**Notice of Intention to Appeal**

- 7.2.9.2 The appeal must be submitted by the student in writing to the Secretary to the AIC within 10 working days of the date of notification of the AIC outcome. The notice shall include the grounds for appeal. Where the appeal is on the grounds of new evidence, the student must submit a summary of the evidence to the Secretary to the AIC with the notice of appeal.

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- 7.2.9.3 The Secretary will forward the appeal along with the report from the AIC to the Pro-Director Education for consideration of whether the grounds for appeal are justified under the procedures.
- 7.2.9.4 If the appeal is rejected then reasons will be given.
- 7.2.9.5 If the grounds for appeal are allowed, an Appeals Committee will be organised by the Head of Registry (or nominee). The student shall be notified by the Secretary to the Appeals Committee of the date of the hearing within 15 working days before the date of the Appeals Committee.
- 7.2.9.6 The students may prepare a written submission to the Appeals Committee, which must be submitted to the Secretary to the Appeals Committee within 7 working days before the date of the Appeals Committee.

**Constitution of the Appeals Committee**

- 7.2.9.7 For information on the membership and terms of reference of the (Assessment Irregularities) Appeals Committee, please see [Chapter 10 of the LSHTM Academic Manual](#).

**Proceedings of the Appeals Committee**

- 7.2.9.8 The meeting of the Appeals Committee shall be held in private.
- 7.2.9.9 Proceedings of the Appeals Committee shall not be invalidated through the absence of the student provided they have been given adequate notice of the meeting as outlined in this procedure.
- 7.2.9.10 An appeal shall consider the documentation previously received by the Pro-Director (Education) in determining that there are adequate grounds for appeal. This documentation should be supplied in full to the Appeals Committee by the Secretary.
- 7.2.9.11 The appeal shall not take the form of a re-hearing of the case.

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- 7.2.9.12 An Appeals Committee may, at its discretion, hear and take into account new evidence called into account by either side, which could not reasonably have been made available at the hearing of the AIC.
- 7.2.9.13 The student (or their representative) shall address the Appeals Committee. The TPD/FRDD may then address the Committee if they wish.
- 7.2.9.14 An Appeals Committee may, at its discretion, at any time during the hearing of an appeal, request that room be vacated for private discussions.

**Decisions of the Appeals Committee**

- 7.2.9.15 The decision of an Appeals Committee shall be reached by a majority vote of the members of the Committee present at the meeting. The Chair shall have a second or casting vote. The votes of the individual Committee members shall always be treated as confidential.
- 7.2.9.16 The Appeals Committee shall reach its decision, whether to allow or dismiss the appeal, without adjournment. The Committee shall give reasons for its decision.
- 7.2.9.17 The Appeals Committee shall have power to reverse or modify the decision or penalty appealed against in any way, including cases where the judgement of irregularity has been accepted but the severity of penalty appealed. However, the Committee shall not have the power to impose a more severe measure than the original one.
- 7.2.9.18 If an appeal has been allowed, in part or completely, the Appeals Committee may hear further submissions on the question of the appropriate outcome to be made, but no further witnesses shall be heard at this stage.
- 7.2.9.19 The decisions of the Appeals Committee shall be final.
- 7.2.9.20 If the Appeals Committee finds that no irregularity has been committed or that there was a genuine mistake with no intention of committing an

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irregularity, that decision shall also be communicated to any other persons in the case whether as witnesses or otherwise.

- 7.2.9.21 The Secretary to the Appeals Committee shall submit a report of the hearing to the Pro-Director of Education copied to the TPD/FRDD. A copy of this report shall be emailed to the student within five working days from the date of the Appeals Committee meeting. A copy will be included in the Registry Assessment Irregularities file.

**Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education**

- 7.2.9.22 Right of review: At the end of LSHTM's Appeal procedure the Student has the right to submit a request for LSHTM's decision to be reviewed by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA). The OIA provides an independent scheme for the review of student grievances under the Higher Education Act 2004.
- 7.2.9.23 Completion of Procedures Letter: Once LSHTM's Appeal procedure has been completed LSHTM will issue a Completion of Procedures letter (CoP) informing the student that the internal procedures of LSHTM have been exhausted and of their right to submit a complaint to the OIA in accordance with the guidance from the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA). Further information can be found on the [OIA website](#).
- 7.2.9.24 Deadline: The OIA Complaint Form must be received by the OIA within twelve months of the date of the Completion of Procedures Letter.

**7.2.10 RECORDING & MONITORING ASSESSMENT IRREGULARITIES**

**Data Protection Responsibilities**

- 7.2.10.1 Information about proven or alleged irregularities constitutes Personal Data under the terms of the Data Protection Act, and all staff involved in cases must take care to ensure safe, secure and appropriate storage and use of this information, including keeping it up-to-date. Data relating to a named individual may need to be released to that individual if they make a formal Subject Access Request.

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- 7.2.10.2 LSHTM will endeavour to limit the disclosure of information as is consistent with conducting an investigation and the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998, the Data Protection Act 1998, the Freedom of Information Act 2002, and any other relevant legislation.
- 7.2.10.3 The Registry will act as the main repository of all files in relation to assessment irregularity cases, across both Intensive and DL programmes. All staff seeking further information in relation to a case should contact the Registry who will retain master copies of all documentation in the Assessment Irregularities file (stored by academic year and destroyed five years after the end of each year in question or within five years of a student's completing their programme.)
- 7.2.10.4 Staff may maintain their own personal files relating to cases but should destroy these when the case is concluded or at the end of the student's programme of study, whichever is later. Definitive records and documents should be maintained only by the Registry. Staff who may have data storage responsibilities under these procedures include:
- TPDs / FRDDs
  - Chairs of Assessment Irregularity Committees
  - Other involved staff (including the Pro-Director of Education and members of Assessment Irregularity Committees)
  - The University of London Worldwide (UoLW)

#### **Reporting and Recording of Irregularities**

- 7.2.10.5 The key stages at which information about an assessment irregularity case must be recorded are as follows:

##### **Irregularity Investigation Panel**

- TPD/FRDD completes form plus report including judgement of IIP and subsequent penalty. Report required even if no case to answer.
- If outcome and penalty accepted, TPD/FRDD sends form plus report to: (i) the student and (ii) Registry.

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- If outcome and penalty not accepted, case proceeds to AIC and TPD/FRDD sends form plus report to Registry for inclusion in AIC papers.

**Assessment Irregularities Committee**

- AIC Chair prepares form plus report detailing allegation, evidence and outcome and sends this to Registry.
- Registry send copies of the form and report to: (i) the student, (ii) the TPD/FRDD and (iii) the Pro-Director (Education).
- Registry file all paperwork/evidence and minutes from the AIC.

**Appeals**

- Secretary to Appeals Committee prepares report on the outcome; sends report to: (i) the student; (ii) the Pro-Director of Education and (iii) the TPD/FRDD.
- Secretary to Appeals Committee also passes all paperwork and evident connected with the appeal to Registry, for inclusion in the Assessments Irregularity file.

7.2.10.6 The [Assessment Irregularity Record Form](#) should be used for recording case details. Full details about the case, established through investigation, should be attached with this form. The responsible TPD/FRDD should record all appropriate details in the full details of case section. However, it would not be appropriate to record the name of another student who has made an allegation.

**Monitoring of Irregularities**

7.2.10.7 Towards the end of each academic year, ahead of final Exam Boards, Registry shall check the Assessment Irregularities file for that year and supply all TPDs/FRDDs with a list of names of students for whom an assessment irregularity has been suggested. No further details of allegations or cases need be provided; but the list should be crosschecked to identify any students against whom concerns have been raised in more than one Faculty.

7.2.10.8 Registry shall produce an annual report on assessment irregularities for the Senate Education Committee (SEC) and Senate Research Degrees Committee

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(SRDC). This should be based on information in the Assessment Irregularities file for the complete preceding academic year (including allegations for which there was found to be no case to answer). Information should include:

- A summary of the number of cases reported, with breakdowns according to Programme/Faculty, type of assessment, and outcome/penalty invoked; and trend data to compare against previous years where possible.
- A full set of anonymised details from all cases should also be provided: detailing Faculty, Programme of study, Module(s) involved (where applicable), type of assessment, type of irregularity suggested, summary of case, and action taken. SEC and SRDC are expected to scrutinise this data annually, to monitor the level and type of irregularities being identified, and identify any differences between programmes or Faculties.

## **7.3 Special Assessment Arrangements Policy**

### **7.3.1 SCOPE**

7.3.1.1 This policy applies to:

- Students registered on Intensive credit-bearing programmes/modules and Professional Diplomas (e.g. Professional Diploma in Tropical Nursing, Professional Diploma in Tropical Medicine & Hygiene)
- Research degree students who are taking summative assessments (e.g. Taught Modules, PhD Upgrading, DrPH Review, or their viva examination)

7.3.1.2 This policy does not apply to distance learning (DL) students. Special Assessment Arrangements for DL students are arranged by University of London Worldwide (UoLW). Please see their [Inclusive Practice / Access Arrangements webpage](#) for more information.

7.3.1.3 Special assessment arrangements apply to all forms of summative assessment (which count towards awards). It does not apply to formative assessments (which do not count towards awards).



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7.3.1.4 This policy does not apply to Research Degree submission deadlines, which are handled under the [Research Degrees Extensions Policy & Procedure](#).

7.3.1.5 Students who are eligible for special assessment arrangements include:

- Disabled students (as defined by the Equality Act 2010)

A person has a disability if they i) have a physical or mental impairment and ii) the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on the person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities

- Students with a temporary medical condition or injury
- Students who are pregnant
- Students who are breastfeeding

### **7.3.2 PURPOSE AND OVERVIEW**

7.3.2.1 Special assessment arrangements are defined as either Standard or Non-Standard.

7.3.2.2 The Equality Act 2010 requires higher education institutions to make reasonable adjustments and to avoid as far as possible by reasonable means the disadvantage which a disabled student experiences because of their impairment. Similarly, the Equality Act (2010) provides protection against discrimination for persons with one or more protected characteristic, which includes pregnancy and maternity.

7.3.2.3 LSHTM is committed to supporting students so that they can participate fully in academic life at LSHTM. This includes taking account of the impact of disability, significant short-term illness or injury, pregnancy or maternity by making reasonable adjustments to assessments so that they are not put at a disadvantage by their impairment/circumstances.

### **7.3.3 POLICY**

7.3.3.1 Special assessment arrangements are agreed via a Learning Support Agreement (LSA), which will be in place for either:

- i. the duration of the programme of study (disabilities or long-term health conditions)

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- ii. for a defined time-period (short-term conditions including pregnancy and breastfeeding young babies); such LSAs will be denoted as 'temporary'

It is possible for a student to have both types of LSA in place. Please see [section 7.3.4 of this policy](#) for information of how to request special assessment arrangements.

- 7.3.3.2 LSHTM publishes a deadline prior to each assessment period, by which students should submit a request for any special assessment arrangements. Students will receive email notifications from Student Support Services with a reminder of the official deadline at the beginning of each term/module block. Students are expected to take responsibility for their own learning experience and to request special arrangements by the deadline. Further details, including an indication of when the deadlines are likely to fall, are available in the [Student Disability Handbook](#).
- 7.3.3.3 Requests for special assessment arrangements submitted after the deadline will be considered on a case-by-case basis by a Student Advisor, but arrangements will only be considered if there was good reason for the request not being made by the deadline.
- 7.3.3.4 Even if late requests for special assessment arrangements are agreed in principle, LSHTM cannot guarantee that such arrangements will be put in place in time for the affected assessment(s), as this depends on logistical and practical considerations.
- 7.3.3.5 Students who face unforeseen circumstances (including illness) immediately before or during an assessment should follow the procedure for extenuating circumstances set out in [section 7.4 of this chapter](#). This includes students who may already have special assessment arrangements, who experience a change in condition or other new circumstances which are not reflected in their LSA.
- 7.3.3.6 Students who obtain evidence after an assessment, which shows that at the time of the assessment the student had a condition which may have affected their performance may choose to pursue an Extenuating Circumstances Claim (please see [section 7.4 of this chapter](#)) or an Academic Appeal ([section 7.7 of this chapter](#)) depending on the specifics.

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- 7.3.3.7 Requests for special assessment arrangements must be accompanied by appropriate supporting evidence (see paragraph 7.3.4.8 below).

**7.3.4 PROCEDURE FOR REQUESTING SPECIAL ASSESSMENT ARRANGEMENTS**

- 7.3.4.1 Applications for special assessment arrangements should be made in discussion with the Student Support Services team within the [Student Support Service](#). Students will be notified of deadlines in advance.
- 7.3.4.2 Research Degree students requiring special assessment arrangements for formal submission deadlines should request this via the [Research Degrees Extensions Policy & Procedure](#).

**Standard Arrangements**

- 7.3.4.3 The following standard special assessment arrangements may be made at the discretion of the Student Adviser:
- Additional time (up to 25%)
  - Up to 50% additional time for a visual impairment (where this is specifically recommended in the medical evidence)
  - Rest breaks in exam (up to 10 minutes extra time per hour)
  - Extra time for taught module written assignments (up to one week)
  - Use of a laptop or PC (provided by LSHTM) to complete a timed assessment
  - Special seating arrangements (for example, being seated near an exit)
  - Exam in accessible location
  - Specialist furniture
  - Permission to take food/drink and/or medication into an assessment
  - The provision of Braille/enlarged papers
  - Provision of BSL interpreter (for viva examinations or similar)
- 7.3.4.4 Combinations of the arrangements listed above can be approved as standard up to a total additional time of 25% extra (for example if rest breaks and

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additional time are requested). Where additional time equates to more than 25% the special arrangement is deemed to be a non-standard arrangement.

#### **Non-standard Arrangements**

7.3.4.5 Non-standard special assessment arrangements include (but are not restricted to) the following:

- Use of an amanuensis (scribe) or speech-to-text software
- Use of a reader or text-to-speech software
- Additional time in a timed assessment beyond 25% (except for visual impairments)
- Rest breaks over 10 minutes per hour
- Combination of additional time and rest breaks where the total extra time is more than 25%
- Separate room alone

7.3.4.6 Requests for non-standard arrangements will be co-ordinated by the Senior Student Adviser and agreed by the Special Assessment Arrangements Panel (SAAP).

7.3.4.7 For information on the membership and terms of reference of the SAAP, please see [Chapter 10 of the LSHTM Academic Manual](#).

#### **Acceptable Evidence**

7.3.4.8 Supporting evidence for special assessment arrangements requests should come from an appropriate healthcare professional who is qualified to comment on the student's condition(s), including:

- General Practitioner (GP) / Physician
- Occupational Physician
- Consultant
- Psychiatrist
- Clinical Nurse Specialist
- Occupational Therapist

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- Educational Psychologist
- Clinical Psychologist

7.3.4.9 Supporting evidence from the following will not be considered satisfactory:

- Physiotherapist
- Psychotherapist
- Counsellor
- Osteopath
- Other complementary / alternative health practitioners
- Previous institution's paperwork relating to adjustments

7.3.4.10 The supporting evidence should:

- Be recent (ordinarily no older than two years; more recent evidence may be requested for fluctuating conditions)
- Be printed on headed paper, signed and dated (scanned PDF copies are acceptable)
- Provide confirmation of the diagnosis or impairment
- Indicate whether the condition is long-term or temporary (if the latter, then indicate likely duration)
- Describe the impact of the condition on the student and their studies
- Where possible, provide specific recommendations for reasonable adjustments to assessments

7.3.4.11 The evidence must be in English or a certified translation of the original.

7.3.4.12 Multiple conditions requiring special assessment arrangements will require supporting evidence for each condition.

7.3.4.13 Evidence of a specific learning disability (SpLD) must be a full diagnostic assessment report from an Educational Psychologist or a suitably qualified specialist teacher.

7.3.4.14 Medical evidence will be used for guidance only and LSHTM will make an assessment of what it considers to be a reasonable adjustment.

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### **7.3.5 REVIEWS AND COMPLAINTS**

- 7.3.5.1 Standard arrangements: Students can request that standard arrangement decisions made by the Student Adviser are reviewed, by submitting a request to [studentadvice@lshtm.ac.uk](mailto:studentadvice@lshtm.ac.uk) within 5 working days of the decision being notified. The request should outline the reason for requesting a review, and include additional evidence, if available and where appropriate. Decisions will be reviewed within the [Student Support Service](#).
- 7.3.5.2 Non-standard arrangements: Students can request that non-standard arrangement decisions made by the SAAP are reviewed, by submitting a request to [studentadvice@lshtm.ac.uk](mailto:studentadvice@lshtm.ac.uk) within 5 working days of the decision being notified. The request should outline the reason for requesting a review, and include additional evidence, if available and where appropriate. Decisions will be reviewed by the SAAP.
- 7.3.5.3 Students who are not satisfied with the outcome of a review should follow LSHTM's [Student Complaints Procedure](#).

### **7.3.6 RECORDING AND APPLYING ARRANGEMENTS**

- 7.3.6.1 Subject to the student's consent the LSA will be shared with (in addition to the [Student Support Services](#)):

<b>MSc students</b>	<b>Short courses students</b>	<b>Individual module students</b>	<b>Research Degree (RD) students</b>	<b>DrPH students</b>
Personal Tutor, Programme Director(s), Taught Programme Director	Course Director	Module Organiser(s)	RD Supervisor, Department Research Degree Coordinator.	DrPH supervisor and Programme Director for DrPH

- 7.3.6.2 The special assessment arrangement details will be shared with:

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<b>MSc students</b>	<b>Short courses students</b>	<b>Individual module students</b>	<b>Research Degree (RD) students</b>	<b>DrPH students</b>
Programme Administration Office and Registry	Programme Administration Office and Registry	Programme Administration Office and Registry	Programme Administration Office and Registry for taught module assessments. Relevant RD staff and Examiners for viva assessments and PhD upgrade	Programme Administration Office and Registry for taught module assessments. Relevant staff in the DrPH Programme and Examiners for DrPH review / viva

**NOTE:** On rare occasions it may be necessary to share a student's LSA or special assessment arrangements details with other parties if there are any risk management concerns; the student's consent will be sought before information is shared in this way.

7.3.6.3 Once approved, LSHTM will ensure that a student's special assessment arrangements are implemented appropriately.

7.3.6.4 Approved special assessment arrangements will be implemented by:

- Programme Administration Office for module assessments, MSc summer project and short course assessments
- Registry for the main MSc examinations and short course assessments
- Relevant staff in the research degree department for PhD upgrading/viva examination and DrPH review/viva examination

## **7.4 Extenuating Circumstances Policy**

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<b>Related Policies &amp; Procedures</b>	<a href="#">Intensive Postgraduate Taught Degree Regulations</a> <a href="#">DL Postgraduate Taught Degree Regulations</a> <a href="#">Postgraduate Research Degree Regulations</a> <a href="#">Research Degrees Extensions Policy &amp; Procedure</a> <a href="#">Academic Appeals Policy &amp; Procedure</a>
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#### **7.4.1 SCOPE**

- 7.4.1.1 LSHTM recognises that students may have their ability to take or perform in assessments affected by extenuating circumstances. LSHTM operates an evidence-based approach to extenuating circumstances, to ensure that all claims are dealt with fairly, consistently and transparently so that no student is advantaged or disadvantaged by this process.
- 7.4.1.2 Extenuating circumstances are defined as unforeseen, exceptional, short-term events, which are outside of a student's control and have a negative impact on their ability to prepare for or take an assessment. These events will normally occur shortly before a deadline or during an assessment.
- 7.4.1.3 Extenuating circumstances cannot be claimed for circumstances that are not deemed exceptional and which could have been prevented or foreseen by the student.
- 7.4.1.4 The process allows for sufficient flexibility to address the breadth and complexity of circumstances which may arise.
- 7.4.1.5 The process allows for sufficient flexibility to address the breadth and complexity of circumstances which may arise (Note: the Submission of Claims section can be found at 7.4.4. below).
- **Students** enrolled on Intensive credit-bearing or award-bearing courses or modules or Professional Diplomas (e.g. Professional Diploma in Tropical Nursing, Professional Diploma in Tropical Medicine & Hygiene).
  - **Distance learning (DL) postgraduate students** enrolled on credit-bearing or award-bearing courses or modules (as permitted by the [University of London Worldwide regulations](#))



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- **Research Degree students** who are taking summative assessments (e.g. Taught Modules, Upgrade, DrPH Review, and Viva.) **Note:** It does not cover extensions for Research Degree students. This is covered by the [Research Degrees Extensions Policy & Procedure](#).

7.4.1.6 Extenuating circumstances apply to all forms of summative assessment (those that count toward awards) and do not apply to formative assessments (as they do not count towards awards).

7.4.1.7 Extenuating circumstances provide a framework for students to submit claims where they believe their ability to take an assessment has been seriously impaired by mitigating circumstances. This can result in:

- An assessment being taken but the performance being affected
- A request to defer an assessment to the next opportunity\*
- A request for an extension to the submission deadline (for coursework/projects only)\*

\*Research Degree Students should refer to the [Research Degree Extensions Policy & Procedure](#)

7.4.1.8 Extenuating circumstances requests will apply to individual students. However, where the same problem affects a group of students, e.g. a problem in the exam room, this will be raised by the relevant member of staff with the Extenuating Circumstances Committee (ECC)—the committee that makes decisions on extenuating circumstances claims—who will take appropriate action.

7.4.1.9 Decisions about extenuating circumstances and extensions can only be made by the ECC. As a minimum, this will involve the Chair plus one other member of the ECC. **No other staff can make such decisions.**

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**7.4.2 PURPOSE AND OVERVIEW**

7.4.2.1 The same principles apply across all types of provision, although practice will differ slightly between Intensive and DL programmes where assessment processes vary. For example:

- **Missed assessment:** students on Intensive programmes who miss an assessment deadline without extenuating circumstances will fail it, whereas DL students may choose whether to submit an assessment or not.
- **Assessment types:** For DL students, extenuating circumstances will most commonly apply for exams and projects. It will be rare for extenuating circumstances to apply for DL assessed assignments, for which it would normally be possible for the student to have foreseen problems and/or chosen not to submit, which entails no penalty.

7.4.2.2 The potential impact on assessment can be:

- **Attempted but performance has been affected:** Student attempts the assessment but believes that their performance has been affected due to extenuating circumstances. However, note that this does not generally apply to timed assessments, as outlined in section 7.4.3.22
- **Deferral of assessment to the next opportunity\*:** Student misses the assessment deadline or requests to defer the assessment to the next opportunity., which will normally be at the next scheduled resit assessment deadline or opportunity. Deferral can happen in advance of or on the day of an assessment. The Assessments team within the Registry can be consulted on when the next resit opportunity will occur. Please note that the ECC cannot grant deferrals that go beyond the student's maximum registration period (see 8a.4.3 (Intensive MScs) or 8b.9.11.13 (DL MScs)). Similarly, assessment irregularity decisions take precedence over extenuating circumstances decisions.
- **Extension\*:** This applies to coursework and projects only. Students who experience extenuating circumstances in the lead up to an assessment deadline may apply for an extension. The maximum extension permitted is **3 calendar weeks** for coursework or projects. No extensions are permitted for timed assessments.

\*Research Degree Students should refer to the [Research Degree Extensions Policy & Procedure](#)

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**7.4.3 Extenuating Circumstances/Extensions**

- 7.4.3.1 It is each student's responsibility to submit extenuating circumstances promptly in accordance with the deadlines in paragraph 7.4.3.2. It is recommended that students submit an extenuating circumstances claim for any cases where they took an assessment but feel that extenuating circumstances have put them at a disadvantage. For information about how to submit an extenuating circumstances claim, please see [section 7.4.4 of this policy below](#).
- 7.4.3.2 Extenuating circumstances requests must be submitted by the following deadlines:
- **Extensions:** Must be requested prior to the deadline for submitting the coursework or project
  - **Extenuating circumstances:** Within **3 calendar weeks** following the affected exam or assessment deadline
  - **Deferrals:** Must be requested prior to the deadline for submitting the coursework or project or before the timed assessment starts.
- 7.4.3.3 Extenuating circumstances requests received after these deadlines will be rejected. Students who believe they have a valid reason for not submitting an extenuating circumstances claim at the time the circumstances occurred, must follow LSHTM's Academic Appeals Procedure in [section 7.7 of this chapter](#).
- 7.4.3.4 Where students are granted a new attempt or a resit, this will normally be at the next scheduled opportunity, the date of which students will be informed.
- 7.4.3.5 Extenuating circumstances will apply to individual sub-components of assessment even if the module/exam component is passed overall due to the other grades awarded (e.g. where the assessment is one of two that contributes to a module grade or one exam paper of two). The student will be entitled to a further attempt at the assessment sub-component affected by extenuating circumstances (if it has been missed or failed).
- 7.4.3.6 Students will have the right to a new attempt at any missed or failed assessment for which they had acceptable extenuating circumstances. Even

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if this result can be compensated, they may choose to make a new attempt. Students need to notify Assessments in Registry if they wish to do this. The outcome of any new attempt will differ depending on whether the assessment was a first sit or a resit:

- **First sit:** The mark for the re-attempt will not be capped.
- **Resit:** The mark for the re-attempt will be capped.

- 7.4.3.7 Where students have taken an assessment more than once, the best result achieved for this assessment will be counted. The exception will be where a specific requirement for a particular result to be counted has been applied, e.g. due to an assessment irregularity.
- 7.4.3.8 An extension is the opportunity to hand in a coursework assessment or project slightly after the standard deadline. The amount of extra time granted for an extension will generally correspond to the amount of time the student was unable to work on the assessment; e.g. if a student is ill for two days then the extension would normally be for two days. If the student missed a period of key learning or teaching before the assessment task had been issued but which would affect their ability to complete the task, then an extension may be granted depending on the scope for catch-up and the relevance of the missed sessions to the assessment, but a deferral may be more appropriate.
- 7.4.3.9 If accepted extenuating circumstances results in a student taking an assessment after their registration has expired, LSHTM (and where relevant, the University of London Worldwide [UoLW] Office) would normally waive any re-registration fee in respect of this. Final authority to waive re-registration or other fees shall rest for students on Intensive programmes with LSHTM's Chief Operating Officer, and for DL students with the UoLW Office.
- 7.4.3.10 If extension requests are submitted close to an assessment deadline, it may not be possible for the ECC to make a decision prior to the assessment deadline. Students should be assured that **if extenuating circumstances are submitted and meet the requirements outlined in this policy, then they will be accepted**. Students should therefore not submit an affected assessment 'just in case' as they will not be permitted to resubmit it once they receive the outcome of the application.

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- 7.4.3.11 Students should be able to start planning for their next assessment attempt once they know their results and the outcome of their extenuating circumstances request. Definitive requirements will be communicated to students after the Boards of Examiners has met.

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**Disabilities/Long-term Conditions/Pregnancy**

- 7.4.3.12 Any disability, long-term health condition, or other personal circumstances such as pregnancy are not in themselves considered a basis for extenuating circumstances. Such students should make staff aware at the earliest possible opportunity if they require special arrangements. Please see [section 7.3 of this chapter](#) for more information about special assessment arrangements.
- 7.4.3.13 Such students may become eligible to submit extenuating circumstances if they experience a serious unforeseen change to their condition or if they experience extenuating circumstances based on factors not connected with their condition, as documented in paragraph 7.4.3.19.
- 7.4.3.14 Where a Learning Support Agreement or a Special Arrangements Agreement is in place, the same underlying cause cannot be claimed as extenuating circumstances unless there is a serious, unforeseen change to the condition.

**Circumstances Affecting Groups of Students**

- 7.4.3.15 Group extenuating circumstances may be considered (e.g. significant disruption in an exam hall, DL materials are dispatched late etc.). Students who have a shared concern should raise this with the member of staff responsible for the assessment (e.g. the Module Organiser (MO) responsible for a coursework task or the UoLW Office for DL exams).
- 7.4.3.16 When staff become aware of such problems, they should ask the Chair of the ECC to investigate the issue. Alternatively, students may nominate a representative to raise this with the ECC by submitting a collective Extenuating Circumstances Form (students do not need to submit individual requests in such cases).
- 7.4.3.17 The ECC Chair will liaise with appropriate staff to establish details of the case and the students affected. The evidence will be reviewed by the ECC. If the circumstances are accepted, the ECC should recommend what course of action to take. It may be more appropriate to provide guidance on how

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marking should operate for affected students rather than recommend that the students make new attempts.

7.4.3.18 All affected students should be informed of the outcome and any action being taken.

7.4.3.19 Students may submit an individual self-certified claim for an extension of up to 7 calendar days for an assessment if they have valid extenuating circumstances. This excludes students taking in-module or other examinations. Evidence should still be provided where possible.

**Acceptable/Unacceptable Circumstances**

7.4.3.20 The following is a non-exhaustive list of extenuating circumstances that are **likely to be accepted** along with acceptable forms of evidence required.

A1	<p><b>Illness or hospitalisation</b></p> <p>Circumstances entailing acute illness, physical trauma or extended medical care. Note that any long-term illnesses should have been notified ahead of time (see paragraphs 7.4.3.12 – 7.4.3.14)</p> <p><u>Evidence</u></p> <p>Original dated medical certificate or letter from an appropriate medical professional. This should confirm the nature and timing of the illness and its impact on the student's ability to undertake the assessment.</p>
A2	<p><b>Illness of a family member/dependant</b></p> <p>Acute illness in a close family member or dependant.</p> <p><u>Evidence</u></p> <p>Original dated medical certificate or letter from an appropriate medical professional confirming the nature and timing of the illness.</p>

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A3	<p><b>Bereavement</b></p> <p>The recent death of a partner, family member or close friend (i.e. someone to whom the student has a demonstrably close relationship).</p> <p><u>Evidence</u></p> <p>Appropriate documentary evidence should be provided; this need not be a death certificate, but could be a signed statement from an involved professional</p>
A4	<p><b>Acute emotional or psychological distress</b></p> <p>This can include a range of issues including separation from a spouse/partner, conflict with others etc. The statement must verify what impact this had upon assessment. Where this applies, students are encouraged to speak to an appropriate medical practitioner or mental health professional (this can include the LSHTM Student Counsellors and Student Advisers for students on Intensive programmes.)</p> <p><u>Evidence</u></p> <p>A dated medical certificate or counsellor's letter, confirming the nature of the illness and/or circumstances and the likely impact it has had on the student's ability to undertake the assessment, should be provided. Students may also, or alternatively, wish to request special examination arrangements if such circumstances arise prior to an assessment and are likely to affect it.</p>
A5	<p><b>Victim of crime</b></p> <p><u>Evidence</u></p> <p>A written statement of events plus a crime reference number, or other official evidence from the police. LSHTM acknowledges that in certain circumstances, victims of crime may not want to contact the police. In such situations, dated evidence from a counsellor, victim support agency or medical practitioner will be acceptable.</p>
A6	<p><b>Maternity or paternity (where a birth has occurred earlier or later than expected)</b> If the predicted due date coincides with an assessment deadline then a deferral should be requested in advance. A6 only refers to where a birth has occurred earlier or later than expected, such that it coincides with an assessment date unexpectedly.</p> <p><u>Evidence</u></p> <p>A confirmatory note from an appropriate medical professional should be obtained.</p>



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A7	<p><b>Delays/problems caused by staff</b></p> <p>This covers circumstances where the ability to complete an assessment has been negatively affected by delays/problems caused by staff.</p> <p><u>Evidence</u></p> <p>A statement from the member of staff (or the Programme Director) outlining the circumstances and the impact they have had.</p>
A8	<p><b>Problems with overseas fieldwork</b></p> <p>Difficulties can arise when students are conducting project fieldwork overseas that are beyond their control.</p> <p><u>Evidence</u></p> <p>Confirmation from the supervisor that the delays have occurred and were beyond the control of the student. The supervisor should also confirm how much time impact the extenuating circumstances have had.</p>
A9	<p><b>Court attendance</b></p> <p>This can include jury service, attendance at tribunals and the requirement to attend court as a witness, defendant or plaintiff. It is normally possible to apply for deferral of jury service if it clashes with an examination</p> <p><u>Evidence</u></p> <p>Documentary evidence from the relevant Court official must be produced to show that the clash cannot be avoided.</p>
A10	<p><b>Change to employment (Part-time students only)</b></p> <p>LSHTM appreciates that many students work to help finance their studies, however fulltime students are not eligible to claim for work-related extenuating circumstances. Part-time students may submit an extenuating circumstances claim based on work commitments if the work requirement is unexpected and/or non-negotiable (e.g. redundancy, redeployment etc.)</p> <p><u>Evidence</u></p> <p>Signed and dated letter from employer confirming the change to employment and its duration.</p>
A11	<p><b>Accommodation issues</b></p> <p>Students must ensure that they have access to suitable accommodation during any period of assessment. However, acute circumstances beyond the student's control may be accepted if it can be demonstrated that they were unforeseeable.</p> <p><u>Evidence</u></p>

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	Signed and dated letter from landlord or housing support agencies.
A12	<p><b>Technical Issues</b></p> <p>Internet/Wi-Fi access problems will be considered an Extenuating Circumstance on a case by case basis but only IF they can be documented.</p> <p><u>Evidence</u></p> <p>Appropriate evidence, for example time- and date-stamped evidence of IT issues or WiFi interruptions, such as screenshots, should be provided .</p>
A13	<p><b>Other personal circumstances</b></p> <p>The list above is not exhaustive. All extenuating circumstances requests will be considered individually on their own merits and on a case-by-case basis. However, they must meet the definition in 7.4.1.2.</p> <p><u>Evidence</u></p> <p>Appropriate original documentary evidence in line with the standards set down in paragraph 7.4.4.4.</p>

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7.4.3.21 The following is a non-exhaustive list of extenuating circumstance submissions that are **likely to be rejected**.

B1	<b>IT and/or computer failure</b> Loss or corruption of files is not an acceptable extenuating circumstance. It is each student's responsibility to ensure that all electronically generated, stored and/or submitted work is reliably backed up. IT failure may be accepted but only where there is a failure of LSHTM systems that occurs immediately prior to submission, and is documented by IT Services.
B2	<b>Misreading the timetable/submission date</b> It is each student's responsibility to be familiar with the timezone, timetable, deadline, location and duration of all formal assessments.
B3	<b>Paid employment or voluntary work</b> Students are expected to ensure that any paid employment or voluntary work does not interfere with their ability to engage with their studies or assessments. Part-time students may be able to submit an extenuating circumstances claim under A10.
B4	<b>Holidays (including weddings)</b> It is each student's responsibility to be available for all assessments. All holidays should take place at a time that will not affect the student's ability to undertake or prepare for assessments. Alternatively, coursework assessments should be completed and submitted before such events occur.
B5	<b>Religious observance</b> This would be classed under foreseeable circumstances. If an assessment clashes with religious holidays or other activities, including fasting, this will be known about in advance and assessments completed beforehand. Extensions will not be approved for these reasons but deferrals may be requested.
B6	<b>Transport problems</b> Students are expected to arrive on time for in-person assessments, irrespective of the form of transport used. However, an inability to travel because of circumstances beyond the student's control may be accepted if it can be documented.

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**Fit to Sit**

- 7.4.3.22 LSHTM operates a “fit to sit” policy, which means that by attempting an examination – e.g. by entering the exam room or downloading the exam paper online – the student is declaring themselves fit to take that examination. Claims for extenuating circumstances will not normally be accepted because of this.
- 7.4.3.23 If a student feels that due to the nature of their circumstances they were unable to determine whether they were fit to be assessed when deciding to submit or present for an examination, then an extenuating circumstances claim may be submitted. However, it is only likely to be accepted where this can be supported by independent documentary evidence.
- 7.4.3.24 Such claims must demonstrate that not only was the student unfit to undertake the assessment, but also that the student was unfit to appreciate that fact at the time.
- 7.4.3.25 LSHTM will not uphold an extenuating circumstance claim of this nature without independent documentary evidence.
- 7.4.3.26 This fit-to-sit policy does not apply to coursework and other long-term assessments. Groupwork and individual presentations remain under the Extenuating Circumstances arrangements detailed in this policy.

**Possible outcomes**

- 7.4.3.27 Possible outcomes from the extenuating circumstances process will affect students differently depending on:
- a) Whether the extenuating circumstances have been accepted, rejected or deferred (pending further information).
  - b) Whether the student had taken and passed the assessment, missed the assessment, failed the assessment or requested an extension.
- 7.4.3.28 Possible outcomes for assessments (Intensive programmes)

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<b>Assessment Circumstances</b>	<b>Assessment Outcome</b>	<b>Extenuating circumstances accepted</b>	<b>Extenuating circumstances rejected</b>
<b>Attempted but performance affected</b>	Pass	No action.	No action.
<b>Attempted but performance affected</b>	Fail	Take the assessment at the next available opportunity as a first attempt without grade capping (unless this is already a resit then grade capping will apply.) If the failed attempt can be compensated, the student may choose not to make a new attempt.	<p><b>First attempt:</b> Take the assessment at the next available opportunity as a resit with grade capped.</p> <p><b>Resit:</b> Fail assessment. No further attempts. This may mean failure of the overall award.</p>
<b>Not attempted</b>	N/A	Take the assessment at the next available opportunity as a first attempt without grade capping (unless this is already a resit then grade capping will apply.)	<p><b>First attempt:</b> Take the assessment at the next available opportunity as a resit with grade capped.</p> <p><b>Resit:</b> Fail assessment. No further attempts. This may mean failure of the overall award.</p>
<b>Coursework / Project submitted late (No approved extension)</b>	Pass	Assessment marked <u>without</u> late penalties applied.	<p><b>First attempt:</b> Assessment marked <u>with</u> late penalty applied. If the final grade is a fail, re-attempt the assessment at the next available opportunity as a resit.</p>

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			<b>Resit:</b> Assessment marked <u>with</u> late penalty applied. If the final grade is a fail, no further attempts. This may mean failure of the overall award.
<b>Coursework / Project submitted late (No approved extension)</b>	Fail	Assessment marked as normal, <u>without</u> late penalty. Re-attempt the assessment at the next available opportunity as a first attempt without grade capping (unless this is already a resit then grade capping will apply.) If the failed attempt can be compensated, the student may choose not to make a new attempt.	Assessment marked <u>with</u> late penalty applied. If final grade is a fail, student should re-attempt the assessment at the next available opportunity as a resit. (If this is a resit and the final grade is a fail, no further attempts allowed. This may mean failure of the overall award.)
<b>Extension requested*</b>	N/A	Assessment marked <u>without</u> late penalty applied.	Assessment marked <u>with</u> late penalty applied.

\* Research Degree Students should refer to the [Research Degree Extensions Policy & Procedure](#)

#### 7.4.3.29 Possible outcomes for DL assessments

<b>Assessment Circumstances</b>	<b>Assessment Outcome</b>	<b>Extenuating circumstances accepted</b>	<b>Extenuating circumstances rejected</b>
<b>Attempted but performance affected</b>	Pass	No action.	No action.

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<b>Attempted but performance affected</b>	Fail	Take the assessment at the next available opportunity as a first attempt without grade capping (if this is already a resit then grade capping will apply.) If the failed attempt can be compensated, the student may choose not to make a new attempt.	<p><b>First attempt:</b> Take the assessment at the next available opportunity as a resit with grade capped.</p> <p><b>Resit:</b> Fail assessment. No further attempts. This may mean failure of the overall award.</p>
<b>Not attempted</b>	N/A	<p>Student should attempt the assessment at the next available opportunity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First attempt: The new attempt will be a first sit.</li> <li>• Resit: The new attempt will be a resit.</li> </ul>	
<b>Extension requested</b>	N/A	Assessment marked <u>without</u> late penalty applied.	Assessment marked <u>with</u> late penalty applied.

### Validity of Claims

7.4.3.30 By submitting an extenuating circumstances claim, students are declaring these an accurate and complete description of their circumstances and a true reflection of how this affected their assessment. **Any alteration or falsification of evidence would be treated as a serious disciplinary offence, in addition to invalidating the extenuating circumstances claim.**

7.4.3.31 LSHTM or UoLW, may seek to verify any evidence submitted, and claims may be rejected if they are unable to authenticate material to their satisfaction.

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#### Confidentiality of Cases

- 7.4.3.32 LSHTM expects all staff to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality, sympathy and understanding towards students disclosing extenuating circumstances.
- 7.4.3.33 The only staff with visibility of personal case details should normally be relevant professional staff in the LSHTM Registry, the UoLW Office and/or the LSHTM Programme Administration Office (PAO) Distance Learning Team and members of the Extenuating Circumstances Committee (ECC).
- 7.4.3.34 Students may wish to discuss their circumstances with members of staff prior to submitting an extenuating circumstances claim. Once an extenuating circumstances claim has been submitted staff will not be informed of the details of cases, but may be informed if a request has been accepted. **Please note that discussing extenuating circumstances with staff does not constitute a formal submission of extenuating circumstances . Only extenuating circumstances that have been submitted by the appropriate means (7.4.4.2) will be considered.**
- 7.4.3.35 Students who disclose personal information to staff such as the Student Counsellors or Student Advisers will need to give them permission to disclose this information in support of any extenuating circumstances claim. The [Student Support Services](#) will not need to pass on the details of the case, but just to confirm to the ECC that the student has presented extenuating circumstances that would be acceptable under.
- 7.4.3.36 Boards of Examiners will only be informed if the extenuating circumstances have been accepted or rejected. Boards of Examiners will not be informed of the details of the circumstances and all assessment results are considered anonymously.

#### Appeals

- 7.4.3.37 Students cannot appeal against a decision by the Extenuating Circumstances Committee that has been reached through due process, where it is based on academic or professional judgement. However, they may be able to appeal



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via the LSHTM Appeals Policy & Procedure (section 7.7 of this chapter), and consideration will be given to whether LSHTM applied its Regulations and Procedures correctly and whether the decision was reasonable, proportionate and considered accepted grounds for extenuation.

7.4.3.38 If an application for extenuating circumstances was rejected because it was not submitted by the published deadline (see section 7.4.3.2), these circumstances can only be raised via the relevant Appeals Procedure (section 7.7 of this chapter). Students will need to demonstrate a valid and overriding reason why they were unable to submit their extenuating circumstances by the deadline.

#### 7.4.4 Submission of claims

7.4.4.1 Students who want to make a claim for extenuating circumstances or request an extension must complete the Extenuating Circumstances Form (ECF), and provide relevant documentary evidence to support the claim. This must be submitted by the deadlines in paragraph 7.4.3.2. The form for Intensive programmes can be found on the eVision student portal. The [form for Distance Learning programmes](#) can be found on the LSHTM website.

7.4.4.2 Extenuating circumstances claims must be submitted electronically to the following email addresses:

- **Intensive programmes:** via eVision student portal
- **DL programmes (Exams):** The LSHTM PAO DL Team, via [distance@lshtm.ac.uk](mailto:distance@lshtm.ac.uk)
- **DL programmes (Coursework):** The LSHTM PAO DL Team, via [distance@lshtm.ac.uk](mailto:distance@lshtm.ac.uk)

7.4.4.3 The email header should contain the following information (select the appropriate option):

- **EXTENSION\_firstname\_surname**
- **ECs\_firstname\_surname**

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**Standard of Evidence**

7.4.4.4 The burden of proof to support a request for extenuating circumstances rests with the student and must meet the following requirements:

- **Written by appropriately qualified professionals**, without a personal conflict of interest with the student (e.g. if a student's spouse were also their doctor this would constitute a conflict of interest).
- **On headed paper, signed and dated by the author**. Email evidence may be acceptable if the email has been sent directly by the author from the official domain name of the author's organisation, and should include the author's formal email signature.
- **An unaltered scanned copy of the original document**. Students should retain the original document, and send LSHTM a complete and unaltered scanned copy as an email attachment (preferably in PDF format). If the evidence is an email, full 'header' details should be included, i.e. the senders' name and email address, date sent, address sent to, and subject line. Redaction of sensitive information is permitted as long as the document still provides sufficient verifiable evidence.
- **Written in English or a certified translation**. If a translation is submitted, the original must also be provided.
- **Provide a factual statement of the circumstances**, which the author knows or understands to have affected the student.
- **Provide the dates and times** when the circumstances affected the student.

7.4.4.5 If the evidence provided does not meet all of these criteria, students must explain why this is the case on the ECF.

7.4.4.6 LSHTM will not obtain evidence on behalf of the student. Students must also cover all costs for any documentary evidence provided.

**Consideration of Requests**

7.4.4.7 ECFs will be logged by the appropriate administration office. Extenuating circumstances requests and supporting evidence will be passed to the ECC for a decision. If an urgent decision is required, this can be taken by the ECC as long as a minimum of two members of the ECC are involved.

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- 7.4.4.8 For information on the membership and terms of reference of the ECC, please see [Chapter 10 of the LSHTM Academic Manual](#).
- 7.4.4.9 If supporting evidence cannot be obtained at the time the circumstances occur, this should not delay the submission of the ECF. Students can indicate on the form that the evidence is to follow. A decision can be taken pending receipt of the evidence. If the evidence is not forthcoming within 3 weeks of the submission, the extenuating circumstances decision will be overturned by the ECC.
- 7.4.4.10 The ECC will endeavour to make decisions on extension and deferral requests in a timely manner, and wherever possible, prior to the assessment deadline.
- 7.4.4.11 [The](#) ECC will consider each request plus supporting evidence to determine whether to accept or reject the extenuating circumstances claim. Consideration will not be anonymous. However, all decisions will be made on a fair, impartial and consistent basis. No reference will be made to the assessment grades achieved. The ECC will record one of the following decisions:
- Extenuating circumstances accepted (may be only accepted in part)
  - Extenuating circumstances rejected (and the reasons why)
  - Decision deferred (more details required)

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## **7.5 Interruption of Studies and Withdrawal Policy**

<b>Related Policies &amp; Procedures</b>	<a href="#">Academic Appeals Policy &amp; Procedure</a> <a href="#">Extenuating Circumstances Policy</a> <a href="#">Research Degree Regulations</a> <a href="#">Research Degree Extensions Policy &amp; Procedure</a> <a href="#">Student Engagement Policy</a> <a href="#">Student Cause for Concern Policy</a> <a href="#">Student Tuition Fees Policy</a> <a href="#">Taught Postgraduate Regulations</a> <a href="#">Termination of Studies Policy</a>
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### **7.5.1 SCOPE**

- 7.5.1.1 This policy applies to all students on Intensive taught and research degree programmes at the LSHTM. This includes research degree students who are no longer in attendance but still have to submit their thesis for examination. DL students who wish to interrupt their studies or withdraw should contact the [Distance Learning Office](#).
- 7.5.1.2 This policy covers voluntary Interruptions of Studies and Withdrawals that are initiated by the student. If LSHTM wishes to terminate a student's registration due to good cause, the Termination of Studies procedure in [section 7.6 of this chapter](#) should be followed.

### **7.5.2 PURPOSE AND OVERVIEW**

#### **General**

- 7.5.2.1 There may be occasions when students feel unable to continue with their programme of studies. This can be due to a variety of reasons including financial problems, personal issues, family issues, academic problems, ill health (physical and/or mental), pregnancy, caring responsibilities or simply because the course they have chosen is not right for them. There are two options available to students in these circumstances:

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**Interruption of Studies:** This is a temporary withdrawal from the programme for an agreed period. This suspends a student's enrolment at LSHTM.

**Withdrawal:** This is a voluntary permanent withdrawal from the programme of studies. This ends the student's enrolment at LSHTM.

7.5.2.2 Taught Master's students on an interruption of studies are not entitled to continue working towards their degree, i.e. by taking assessments or conducting project work. Research Degree Supervisors will not be expected to provide contact, support or advice to Research Degree Students during a period of interruption. However, where it is deemed important that a degree of contact is maintained with the student, this can be agreed on a case-by-case basis.

7.5.2.3 During a period of interruption, a student's registration with LSHTM is suspended and students are not liable to pay tuition fees during the period of interruption. Access to LSHTM services, such as email, Moodle and the Library, will be maintained. However, these privileges will be removed if the student does not return after their period of interruption ends. Research degree students should not collect data whilst on interruption of studies and should not enter laboratories. Research Degree students will not usually be entitled to the use of an allocated desk whilst on interruption.

7.5.2.4 Taught Students who interrupt their studies will change cohort when they return to LSHTM. Students who interrupt will normally register under the regulations in place at the time of their re-registration. Any changes to regulations will be highlighted at the start of each academic year.

7.5.2.5 Research Degree students who wish to extend their deadlines to upgrading and/or submission for valid reasons, but do not wish to interrupt their studies, should refer to the [Research Degrees Extensions Policy and Procedure](#) and not this Interruption of Studies and Withdrawal Procedure.

7.5.2.6 If a student withdraws from their programme of studies, they cannot return without reapplying to LSHTM and being accepted onto a programme of study via the standard admissions procedures.

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**Support for Students**

- 7.5.2.7 Students who want to interrupt or withdraw from their studies, should discuss this with a member of LSHTM staff at the earliest opportunity, to ascertain what this will entail and whether there are other options available to them.
- 7.5.2.8 Talking to someone else can help to clarify whether interruption or withdrawal is the right option or whether, with some help from LSHTM, it would be best to continue with the programme. Students are advised to discuss their reasons for interrupting/withdrawing with a member of staff such as:

**Taught Students:** Programme Director (PD), Faculty Taught Programme Director (TPD), Personal Tutor, [Student Support Services](#).

**Research Degree Students:** Research Degree Supervisor, Departmental Research Degree Coordinator (DRDC), Faculty Research Degrees Managers or the [Student Support Services](#).

- 7.5.2.9 Staff should consider whether the difficulties a student may be experiencing should be reviewed under a different procedure such as the [Student Cause for Concern Policy](#).

**Financial Issues**

- 7.5.2.10 Students should be aware that interrupting or withdrawing from their studies could have financial implications. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that they understand the consequences of this and can contact LSHTM's [Student Support Services](#) for further information.
- 7.5.2.11 Students in receipt of funds from the Student Loan Company will need to inform them of their interruption / withdrawal. Funding from a government body or funding agency is likely to be suspended during a period of interruption.

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- 7.5.2.12 Where students are being funded by external bodies, they must consult the funder to ascertain what the consequences of interrupting or withdrawing from their studies might be. In some circumstances, interruption of studies may not be permitted by the external funder. The external funder may have different regulations to LSHTM. Where there is conflict between LSHTM policy and the external funder's policy, the terms and conditions of the external funder will take precedence. Students must agree the interruption/withdrawal with the funder in writing and submit this in support of their application to interrupt/withdraw from their programme.
- 7.5.2.13 Students should check with their local Council to ascertain if they are eligible for Council Tax exemptions during their period of interruption.

**Visas**

- 7.5.2.14 International students should be aware that interrupting or withdrawing from their studies could have serious consequence for their immigration status. LSHTM may be required to report this to the Home Office, which may lead to the curtailment of their visa. Tier 4 students may be required to leave the UK, even if their interruption is due to extenuating circumstances. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that they understand the consequences of interrupting or withdrawing from their studies and can contact LSHTM's [Immigration Advisory Service](#) for further information. Students must read the guidance on [Tier 4 Responsibilities](#).

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**7.5.3 POLICY**

**Periods of Interruption**

7.5.3.1 Periods of interruption of studies do not count towards the minimum or maximum periods of registration as outlined in [Chapter 8a, Intensive Postgraduate Taught Degree Academic Regulations](#) and [Chapter 9, Research Degree Academic Regulations](#) of the LSHTM Academic Manual.

7.5.3.2 The following periods of Interruption are permitted:

**Taught Master's Students**

- may apply for one year of interruption at a time. Students who interrupt partway through an academic year are expected to return a calendar year after the date of interruption;
- may interrupt for a maximum of two years in total.

**Research Degree Students**

- prior to submission: May interrupt for a minimum of one month and a maximum of one year at a time. The total maximum allowed interruption is normally two years in total;
- post viva whilst resubmitting amendments: To be determined on a case-by-case basis.

7.5.3.3 Applications that exceed the maximum total period of interruption will only be granted with the approval of the Pro-Director (Education) or Head of the Doctoral College.

7.5.3.4 Retrospective interruptions will not be approved unless there are valid and overriding reasons that prevented the student from applying for interruption at the time. Where such an application is made, the Faculty TPD or Faculty Research Degrees Director (FRDD) should consult with the Head of Registry, who will in turn consult the Pro Director (Education) for taught programmes or the Head of the Doctoral College for Research Degrees and a Suspension of Regulations may be granted.



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**Reasons for Agreeing to Interruptions**

7.5.3.5 LSHTM will consider the following when making its decision on requests to interrupt studies:

- a) The reasons cited by the student demonstrate that it would be in their best academic, financial and personal interest to interrupt their studies.
- b) For research students, the logistics and sustainability of the research programme and the availability of the Supervisory Team when the student returns from interruption.

7.5.3.6 Where students have interrupted their studies on health grounds, they will be required to provide confirmation from a medical professional, that they are fit and well enough to return to studies

**Timing of Interruptions**

7.5.3.7 An interruption of studies will normally begin as follows:

**Taught Master's Students:** At the end of a teaching slot (AB1, C1-C2, D1-D2, E)

**Research Degree Students:** At the beginning of the following month

7.5.3.8 LSHTM recognises that in exceptional circumstances it may be necessary for a student to interrupt their studies immediately. This will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

**Appeals**

7.5.3.9 Students have the right to make an appeal against decisions made under the Interruption of Studies and Withdrawal Procedure. They should follow the requirements set out in LSHTM's Academic Appeals Policy & Procedure in [section 7.7 of this chapter](#) and ensure they submit their appeal by the deadline.

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**7.5.4 PROCEDURE**

**Application for Interruption or Withdrawal**

- 7.5.4.1 If, after seeking advice and support, a student feels that the best option is to interrupt or withdraw from their studies at the LSHTM, they will need to complete the Interruption of Studies or Withdrawal form, further information is available [here](#).

The student must obtain all appropriate approvals as outlined on the form and then submit/return this to the Registry by the effective date of interruption or withdrawal. If the form is submitted later than this, the effective date of interruption or withdrawal will be the date the form is received by the Registry, not the date stated on the form.

The student must return all library books and pay any outstanding library fines.

Students wishing to withdraw should transfer any emails they wish to retain from their LSHTM email account to a personal email account.

- 7.5.4.2 Once the form has been received and processed, Registry will do the following within seven working days of the effective date on the form:
- confirm to the student that their request has been approved. They will also notify Research Degree students of their revised deadlines;
  - notify the Programme Director/Research Degree Supervisor and Faculty Research Degree Manager;
  - where applicable, notify the intercollegiate hall of residence, Transport for London, Student Loans Company, US Federal Loans and the Home Office of the change of circumstances.

In addition to the above, the following will also be completed upon withdrawal only:

- notify Reception to cancel the ID card;
- notify IT Services to suspend/close LSHTM email account and access to IT services.

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- 7.5.4.3 Tuition fee refunds are processed by Registry in accordance with the Student [Tuition Fees Policy](#) (London-based).

#### Resumption of studies after a period of interruption

- 7.5.4.4 Students who are returning to LSHTM after a period of interruption must notify the [Registry](#) at least one month prior to their expected date of return. This will enable the Registry to reinstate the student's record and access to facilities at LSHTM. The Registry will inform the appropriate people as follows:
- **Taught Master's Students:** Programme Administration Manager, Programme Director and Taught Programme Director
  - **Research Degree Students:** Supervisor, Departmental Research Degree Coordinator, Faculty Research Degree Manager and Faculty Research Degree Director.
- 7.5.4.5 Before they can re-register, students must have paid the appropriate fees, or provided evidence of sponsorship, to the Registry. Students re-registering must provide evidence of the appropriate visa to continue studying in the UK.
- 7.5.4.6 Students must re-register within two weeks of their expected date of return.
- 7.5.4.7 If a student requires an extension to an interruption of studies, they must submit a new Interruption of Studies form and supporting evidence at least a month before the period of interruption is due to expire.
- 7.5.4.8 Students who wish to return earlier than the expected date specified on their Interruption of Studies form should contact the [Registry](#) who will contact the appropriate staff for approval.

#### Failure to return from a period of interruption

- 7.5.4.9 Where the student fails to return to the programme of study at the end of their period of interruption, they will be contacted by the Registry to:

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- a) submit a new Interruption of Studies form if they can demonstrate a valid and overriding reason for not submitting this prior to their return (the students must not have exceeded the maximum criteria for periods of interruption as outlined in paragraph 7.5.3.2);
- b) submit a Withdrawal form.

If neither (a) or (b) are received within 2 weeks of the planned return, the Registry will follow the procedure outlined in the Termination of Studies Policy.

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## **7.6 Termination of Studies Policy**

<b>Related Policies &amp; Procedures</b>	<a href="#">Academic Appeals Policy &amp; Procedure</a> <a href="#">Research Degree Handbook</a> <a href="#">Research Degree Regulations</a> <a href="#">Student Engagement Policy</a> <a href="#">Student Cause for Concern Policy</a> <a href="#">Student Disciplinary Procedure</a> <a href="#">Taught Postgraduate Regulations</a>
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### **7.6.1 SCOPE**

- 7.6.1.1 This policy applies to students on intensive taught and research degree programmes. This includes research degree students who are no longer in attendance but still have to submit their thesis for examination. The School's DL students are registered with the University of London Worldwide and should therefore refer to Statutes, Ordinances and Regulations of University of London.
- 7.6.1.2 **This policy does not apply to students whose studies are terminated due to academic failure.** This will include decisions taken by Boards of Examiners, PhD Upgrade/DrPH Review Panels and Research Degree Viva Voce examinations.
- 7.6.1.3 This policy covers LSHTM-initiated termination of studies, if a student wishes to initiate withdrawal from their studies, they should follow the Interruption of Studies and Withdrawal Policy in [section 7.5 of this chapter](#).

### **7.6.2 PURPOSE AND OVERVIEW**

- 7.6.2.1 This policy outlines the procedure that must be followed in order to terminate a student's registration at LSHTM. Termination of registration can be initiated on academic grounds or non-academic grounds:
- Academic grounds: Unsatisfactory attendance and/or academic progress.
  - Non-academic grounds: Non-payment of tuition fees or failure to complete (re-)registration).

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- 7.6.2.2 Termination of Studies may also be enacted as the result of a decision reached through the application of the Assessment Irregularities Policy or Student Disciplinary Policy. The Assessment Irregularities Policy permits an Assessments Irregularity Committee to apply a sanction of termination of studies (Section 7.2.5.4p). The Student Disciplinary Policy permits a Student Disciplinary Committee to apply a sanction of termination of studies for gross misconduct (Section 6.11c). Termination of study under these policies will be enacted by Registry under the relevant policy following the notification of the Committee decision or at the conclusion of any subsequent appeal, whichever is later.
- 7.6.2.3 It is important that staff follow up on any concerns that may result in a student's registration being terminated, as early as possible. This will ensure that sufficient opportunity is provided for the student to address the concerns raised.
- 7.6.2.4 Any post holder named in this procedure may appoint a nominee to act in their absence.
- 7.6.2.5 Staff should consider whether the difficulties a student may be experiencing should be reviewed under a different procedure such as the [Student Cause for Concern Policy](#).

**7.6.3 POLICY - General**

- 7.6.3.1 The termination of a student's registration is a serious matter and LSHTM will only ever seek to do so as a last resort or where, through the Assessment Irregularities Policy or Student Disciplinary Policy, an appropriate body has determined that a student is guilty of an offence which warrants their removal.
- 7.6.3.2 The decision to terminate a student's registration may be taken at any time during a student's programme of study. A student may also choose to withdraw from the School voluntarily, at any stage during the formal

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termination of studies procedure, by following the Interruption of Studies and Withdrawal Policy.

- 7.6.3.3 If there are concerns about a student that may result in termination of studies on Academic grounds, the Programme Director or Research Degree Supervisor should seek to speak to the student about the concerns within 2 weeks of the concern being raised. They should signpost to the student any relevant support or services and clearly highlight to the student that if the concern is not addressed, termination of study is a possible outcome. This should be followed up in writing. Any correspondence from the Faculty must be copied to the Registry so that this can be stored on the student's record.
- 7.6.3.4 If a student is subject to action under the Assessment Irregularities Policy or Student Disciplinary Policy they will be informed of the possible sanctions they may face as set out within the Policy.
- 7.6.3.5 If a student believes that their engagement with their studies has been affected by extenuating circumstances, they must raise this with their Programme Director / Research Degree Supervisor at the earliest opportunity. The Programme Director / Research Degree Supervisor will then be able to guide them to the appropriate process and/or signpost them to available support.

### **Reasons for Terminating Studies**

- 7.6.3.6 Unsatisfactory Academic Progress/Attendance
- **Taught postgraduate students.** Unsatisfactory progress is usually identified when a student fails to attend classes/teaching activities or does not submit or take assessments without having been granted an extension, deferral or other extenuating circumstances.
  - **Research degree students.** Unsatisfactory progress is usually identified when the student has not met the requirements as set out in the [Research Degrees Handbook](#). This may include, but is not limited to, repeated failures to provide draft work to their supervisory committee as agreed, repeated

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failure to act on advice and guidance from the supervisory committee or on-going failure to maintain regular contact with the supervisory committee.

**7.6.3.7 Tuition Fee Debts**

Failure to pay tuition fees or other financial debts to the School as outlined in the School's [Tuition Fees Policy](#).

**7.6.3.8 Failure to complete (re-)registration**

A student who fails to produce the required documentary evidence to verify admission and registration requirements of the School or who secures admission or registration on the basis of documents, statements or alleged qualifications which are subsequently found to be false or fraudulent will have their registration at LSHTM terminated.

Any returning student who fails to re-enrol within 28 days of the start of each academic year will have their registration at LSHTM terminated.

**7.6.3.9 Found to have committed an assessment offence**

In accordance with the Assessment Irregularities Policy, where the Assessment Irregularities Committee concludes that an assessment offence has taken place and, after considering all of the factors (such as severity and whether it constitutes a repeat offence), the Committee may direct the termination of the student's studies as a sanction.

**7.6.3.10 Found to have committed gross misconduct**

In accordance with the Student Disciplinary Procedure, where gross misconduct is proven to have taken place by the School Disciplinary Committee, the Committee may direct the termination of the student's studies as a sanction.

**7.6.3.11 Failure to complete studies within the maximum time period from initial registration.**

In accordance with the Academic Regulations, where maximum time period from initial registration is exceeded, and an exit award is not applicable, Head of Registry will direct that the student's studies be terminated.



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#### Appeals

- 7.6.3.12 Students have the right to make an appeal against the decision to terminate their studies. They should follow the requirements set out in LSHTM's Academic Appeals Policy & Procedure in [section 7.7 of this chapter](#) and ensure they submit their appeal by the deadline.
- 7.6.3.13 The Assessment Irregularities Policy and Student Disciplinary Policy include an appeal process which students should utilise should they be dissatisfied with the decision or sanction applied. A sanction of termination of studies appealed against under the Assessment Irregularity Policy or the Student Discipline Policy may not be appealed further under the Termination of Studies Policy.

#### 7.6.4 PROCEDURE

##### Unsatisfactory Academic Progress/Attendance

- 7.6.4.1 If a Faculty wishes to invoke termination of studies, they must set a realistic target that the student must meet and give a clear deadline. For taught postgraduate students, this target must be agreed by the student's Programme Director and relevant Faculty Taught Programme Director (TPD). For research degree students, this target should be agreed by the student's Supervisory Team, Departmental Research Degree Coordinator (DRDC) and Faculty Research Degree Director (FRDD).
- 7.6.4.2 The target should provide evidence of a student's ability to meet a sufficient quality threshold in a timely fashion, demonstrate satisfactory academic progress or that they are now actively engaging with their studies. This may consist of a deadline to submit outstanding work, a target for regular attendance (taught programmes) or contact with their supervisory committee (research students), a test under examination conditions, a piece of written work suitable for publication (more suitable for Research Degree students) or another form of assessment.
- 7.6.4.3 The timescale for meeting this target should be **at least 4 weeks for taught postgraduate** and **a minimum of 3 months for full-time research degree**

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**students** (including full-time students who have yet to pass an MPhil/PhD upgrading or DrPH review). Part-time students should have the minimum timescale adjusted accordingly on a pro-rata basis.

- 7.6.4.4 Notice of this target and timescale will be given to the student **in person** by their Programme Director (taught postgraduate students) or the Supervisory Team (research degree students). The Programme Director / Supervisory Team will then inform Registry who will confirm the decision to the student in writing.
- 7.6.4.5 Reasonable effort should be made to contact the student to arrange a meeting in person to discuss the target and timescale. This will normally include multiple efforts (4 or more attempts) through at least two mechanism (email, phone, text, letter etc.) over a period of four weeks. Should a student not respond to any of these contact attempts, then it may be concluded that the student has ceased to study. The Programme Director or Supervisor may then, with approval from the relevant Taught Programme Director or Faculty Research Degree Director, request for Registry to terminate the student's studies.
- 7.6.4.6 When the timescale for this target has elapsed, a Termination of Studies Panel will be convened to determine whether the student has met the required target and the appropriate course of action to take. The student will be offered the opportunity to meet with the Panel, at which they have the right to be accompanied by a supporter which may be another student, a staff member family member, a friend or member of the Student Representatives' Council (SRC). The student should be given **at least 7 working days' notice of the Panel meeting**. The panel may consult with other colleagues, as necessary. The panel can be convened in person but members will be allowed to join the panel by Skype if they are unable to attend in person. The Panel will be minuted by a member of Registry staff and will be comprised as follows:

**Taught postgraduate students:** relevant Programme Director and Faculty Taught Programme Director;

**Research degree students:** one member of the Supervisory Team and Faculty Research Degree Director.

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- 7.6.4.7 If the panel determines that the student has not met the agreed target, the student's registration will be terminated and they will be required to leave LSHTM. If the panel determines that the student has met the agreed target, they may be permitted to continue their studies at LSHTM.

#### Failure to complete (re-)registration / Tuition Fee Debts

- 7.6.4.8 The relevant section of Registry will contact the student in writing to inform them of their failure to enrol, re-enrol or of an outstanding tuition fee debt. The student will be provided with a deadline of at least two weeks by which they need to act to resolve the issue.
- 7.6.4.9 Students experiencing difficulties are strongly encouraged to inform their Programme Director or Supervisor or to contact Student Support Services for advice.
- 7.6.4.10 If the student does not resolve said issue prior to the deadline set, then the Head of Student Records will inform the Head of Registry who will normally direct that the student's studies be terminated. The student will be informed in writing that their studies have been terminated.

## 7.7 Academic Appeals Procedure

<b>Related Policies &amp; Procedures</b>	<a href="#">Assessment Handbook and Board of Examiner Guidance</a> <a href="#">Extenuating Circumstances Policy</a> <a href="#">Termination of Studies Policy</a> <a href="#">Student Complaints Procedure</a> Academic Integrity ( <a href="#">Assessment Irregularities</a> ) Policy <a href="#">Research Degree Extensions Policy &amp; Procedure</a>
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### 7.7.1 SCOPE

#### 7.7.1.1 Who does this policy apply to?

- a) This policy and associated procedure applies to all current students registered for on-campus programmes or modules at LSHTM, who want to appeal against an assessment, progression or withdrawal decision made by

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an academic body at LSHTM (known as the “decision-making body”). This includes Distance-Learning students who are registered for LSHTM hybrid modules. However, it does not include distance-learning modules that are governed by the [University of London Worldwide General Regulations](#).

- b) A current student includes those registered on programmes or modules, those on an interruption of studies, those on a temporary suspension/exclusion from LSHTM and those who have recently left LSHTM and are within the time limit for making an appeal.
- c) Students who are withdrawn for non-academic reasons, such as not registering on time for not following procedures, cannot use the appeal procedure. They must follow LSHTM's [Student Complaints Procedure](#).

**7.7.1.2 LSHTM decision-making body**

For the purposes of this policy, an LSHTM academic decision-making body is limited to the following:

- LSHTM Board of Examiners
- PhD Upgrade / DrPH Review / Supervision Committee
- PhD / DrPH / MPhil Viva Examination Panel
- Termination of Studies Panel

**7.7.1.3 OIA Guidance on Appeals**

The policy has been produced with reference to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator’s guidance document entitled [The good practice framework: handling complaints and academic appeals](#) published in December 2014 and most recently updated in December 2016.

**7.7.1.4 Deadlines for completing appeals**

LSHTM aims to complete the appeals process in a timely manner. The OIA recommends that the procedure, including the review stage, should be completed within 90 calendar days of the appeal being submitted by the student. This is dependent on the student meeting any LSHTM deadlines for the submission of appeals and/or evidence. There may be occasions where this timeframe may need to be extended with good reason. Where this occurs, LSHTM will aim to keep the student updated on the appeal’s progress.

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**7.7.1.5 Decisions against which an appeal can be submitted**

Students may appeal against one or more of the following decisions:

- a) Examination or assessment result (i.e. module results, degree awards, research degree viva outcome.)
- b) Progression decision (i.e. progress from one year of a degree programme to the next, upgrade from MPhil to PhD, or progression between components of the DrPH).
- c) Termination of registration from a programme of study on academic grounds (i.e. student's registration on the programme of study is terminated due to not meeting progression requirements. If a student's registration is terminated for non-academic reasons, such as failing to register, they must follow LSHTM's [Student Complaints Procedure](#) and not the Academic Appeals Procedure).

**7.7.1.6 Legal representation**

LSHTM's Appeals Procedure is an internal process the purpose of which is to establish the facts in light of evidence and on the balance of probabilities. The procedure is not an adversarial one, therefore legal representation is not required by any of the parties involved and will not be permitted.

**7.7.1.7 Appeals form**

The procedure requires the student to make their case on LSHTM's [Academic Appeals Form](#), outlining their grounds for appeal and providing sufficient and adequate documentary evidence in support of their appeal

**7.7.1.8 Appeals procedure or complaints procedure**

Where a student submits an appeal that would be more appropriately dealt with under LSHTM's [Student Complaints Procedure](#) (or vice versa), LSHTM will transfer the appeal or complaint to the correct procedure and inform the student that this has happened.

**7.7.1.9 Advice**

Students who are considering submitting an appeal may seek advice from the Registry on the procedure involved and the procedures to be followed. Students who are seeking advice and support with making their appeal should contact the Students' Representative Council (SRC).

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**7.7.1.10 Stages of the appeals procedure**

There are three stages to the Appeals Procedure:

- Formal Stage 1: Investigation
- Formal Stage 2: Appeals Panel
- Review Stage: Confirms whether due process has been followed and is not a re-examination of the case

**7.7.2 GROUNDS FOR APPEAL**

**7.7.2.1 Permissible Grounds**

The responsibility is on the student to establish their case. Only appeals based on one or more of the following grounds will be considered:

a) Administrative or procedural irregularity/error

There is evidence that there was a procedural irregularity or administrative error in the conduct of assessment or in the process of reaching a progression, withdrawal or assessment decision.

*Evidence: The student must set out clearly and fully what they consider the irregularity/error to be, how and when this occurred and how it may have or did affect the assessment, progression or withdrawal decision.*

b) The presentation of new evidence of extenuating circumstances where, for good reason, the decision-making body was not made aware of these

The student must explain what the extenuating circumstances were and what their impact was. They must also provide a valid and over-riding reason why this evidence was not made available to the decision-making body via LSHTM's procedures at the time the circumstances occurred.

*Evidence: Taught and research students should follow the guidance in LSHTM's Extenuating Circumstances Policy in [section 7.4 of this chapter](#) for acceptable evidence.*

c) Prejudice or bias (actual or perceived) that can be proven

That there is evidence of prejudice or bias or the perception of prejudice or bias on behalf of the examiners and/or the decision-making body such that the result of the assessment, progression or withdrawal decision should not stand.

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*Evidence: The student must set out clearly and fully the reasons for the claim of bias or perception of bias. This may include comments from a third party that record the comments or remarks made by others.*

**7.7.2.2 Non-permissible grounds**

The following circumstances will not be considered as valid grounds for appeal:

**a) Academic judgement**

Appeals against academic judgement are not permitted. Students cannot appeal against a decision simply because they are unhappy with the outcome. It has to be demonstrated that there are grounds for the appeal as set out in 7.7.2.1. If a student believes that there has been an error in calculating or recording marks, they can request a clerical check of marks via the Programme Administration Office.

**b) Programme management**

Problems that arise during the course of a student's studies, including problems with supervision, tuition or information provided, should be dealt with at the time they occur. Such matters should be raised through LSHTM's [Student Complaints Procedure](#). An appeal can be submitted if it can be demonstrated that LSHTM has not followed its procedures in dealing with the problem or the student had a valid and over-riding reason for not raising the matter at the time it occurred.

**c) Vexatious appeals**

Appeals that are vexatious will be rejected. In line with the [OIA's guidance](#), vexatious appeals include:

- Appeals that are obsessive, harassing or repetitive
- Pursuing appeals that do not meet the grounds for appeal outlined in 2.1 and/or demanding unrealistic, unreasonable outcomes
- Pursuing appeals in an unreasonable manner, even where these may be meritorious
- Appeals that are designed to cause disruption or annoyance
- Demands for redress that lack any purpose or value.

The decision on whether an appeal is deemed to be vexatious will be made by the Head of Registry.

**d) Provisional marks**

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Appeals regarding provisional marks for any assessments will not be considered.

### **7.7.3 PROCEDURE FOR MAKING AN APPEAL**

#### **7.7.3.1 Deadline for submission of appeal**

The student must submit their appeal within 21 calendar days of the formal notification from the Registry of the assessment/progression/withdrawal decision. This will be the date of the formal notification of your results from the Registry either by email or letter. Appeals received after this deadline must include a statement from the student explaining the reason(s) for lateness. Late appeals will only be considered if the reasons are found to be acceptable by the Head of Registry. If not, the student will be written to explaining why their appeal has been rejected and they can request a review of that decision via the review stage ([see section 7.7.6 of this policy](#)).

#### **7.7.3.2 Appeals and third parties**

Appeals must be made by the student and not by third parties unless there are extenuating circumstances that prevent the student from making the appeal. In order to comply with Data Protection legislation, LSHTM will not engage in correspondence with third parties regarding the appeal unless the student has given written permission for them to do so. LSHTM will then communicate with either the student or the third party but not both.

#### **7.7.3.3 Appeals form**

Appeals must be submitted on LSHTM's [Academic Appeals Form](#) and clearly state the grounds for the appeal, a summary of the issues and the preferred outcome from the appeal. Sufficient and adequate documentary evidence must be provided if appropriate. The appeal must also be accompanied by a copy of the official letter/email confirming the outcome that the student is appealing against. Appeals not submitted in accordance with this procedure will be rejected by the Head of Registry.

#### **7.7.3.4 How to submit the appeal**

The appeal must be submitted to the Assessments team in the Registry.



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**7.7.3.5 Invalid appeals**

If it is clear that the circumstances claimed by the student do not constitute sufficient grounds for an appeal, the case will be rejected immediately by the Head of Registry. This includes instances where:

- a) The student has provided no substantial, relevant evidence of a procedural irregularity or of prejudice.
- b) The procedural irregularity claimed by the student clearly could not have affected the decision against which the appeal is being made to an extent that would have led to a different decision.
- c) The student has provided no valid reasons for not disclosing the details of their extenuating circumstances at the time of the events.

**7.7.4 FORMAL STAGE: PART 1 (INVESTIGATION)**

**7.7.4.1 Initial evaluation criteria**

Upon receipt of an appeal the Head of Registry (or their nominee) will undertake an initial evaluation to check that the appeal:

- Has been submitted on the [Academic Appeals Form](#) by the deadline
- Falls within the valid grounds of appeal
- Contains sufficient and adequate documentary evidence
- Includes evidence to justify the late submission of the appeal (if appropriate)

**7.7.4.2 Immediate rectifying action**

Where the initial evaluation demonstrates that there is overwhelming evidence in support of the appeal or that a procedural error has occurred, the Head of Registry (or their nominee) can refer the matter directly to the decision-making body with a recommended course of action. If the decision-making body disagrees with that course of action, the appeal should be referred to an Investigating Officer as outlined in 7.7.21.

**7.7.4.3 Appeals not meeting the initial evaluation criteria**

If the appeal does not meet the initial evaluation criteria, the student will be informed within 14 calendar days outlining the reasons for this. The student will be permitted the opportunity of resubmitting the appeal within 7 calendar days if they can provide clear grounds for the appeal, further documentary evidence or a valid and over-riding reason why the appeal was

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not submitted on time. The start of the procedure will begin from the date that an appeal has been resubmitted.

The Head of Registry (or their nominee) will undertake a further initial evaluation check based on the criteria above in 7.7.18. If the appeal does not meet these criteria for a second time, the appeal will be rejected and the Head of Registry (or their nominee) will inform the student within 14 calendar days outlining the reasons for this. The student has the right to request a review of this decision under the Review Stage of this procedure in 7.7.41 – 7.7.46.

**7.7.4.4 Investigating officer**

If the appeal meets the initial evaluation criteria and immediate rectifying action has not been taken then the appeal will be passed to an Investigating Officer. The Investigating Officer will be appointed by the Head of Registry (or their nominee) and will normally be a senior member of academic staff who is outside the student's Faculty (if this is possible) and has no previous involvement in the case.

**7.7.4.5 Investigation process**

The Investigating Officer will review the appeal paperwork and may need to contact the decision-making body or other key staff involved in the case for written feedback if this is deemed necessary (i.e. Exam Board Chair, Chair of Extenuating Circumstances Committee, Module Organiser [MO], PhD Supervisors, PhD Examiners, etc.) If reports are required from External Examiners in relation to vivas, this should be requested via the Assessments team in the Registry.

**7.7.4.6 Timeline for investigation process**

The Head of Registry (or their nominee) will ask the Investigating Officer to respond within an appropriate timeframe so that the Registry can inform the student of the outcome within 30 calendar days or sooner if the appeal requires swift action (i.e. where the student has severe health issues or there are external deadlines such as professional body requirements).

**7.7.4.7 Decisions from the investigation process**

The Investigating Officer will make one of the following decisions and report this back to the Registry:

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- a) Reject the appeal due to insufficient grounds. The reasons will be communicated to the student by the Head of Registry and they will be advised of their right to request a review of the decision via the Review Stage of this procedure (see [section 7.7.6 of this policy](#)).
- b) Make a recommendation on the appeal for the decision-making body to consider. The decision-making body can:
  - i. Uphold the appeal
  - ii. Partially uphold the appeal (possibly offering a revised outcome)
  - iii. Reject the appeal

*Outcome (i):* LSHTM will consider the appeal closed and the student's preferred appeal outcome will be actioned, where appropriate.

*Outcomes (ii) and (iii):* If the student is unhappy with the outcome, they may request a review of the decision via the Review Stage of this procedure (see [section 7.7.6 of this policy](#)).

- c) Refer the appeal to an Appeals Panel. This will happen where the case is complex and/or contains inconclusive and/or contradictory evidence. (See [section 7.7.5 of this policy](#) for the conduct of the Appeals Panel).

**7.7.4.8 Communication of the decision to the student**

The Head of Registry (or their nominee) will communicate the decision to the student along with information about what next steps they can take in the process.

**7.7.5 FORMAL STAGE: PART 2 (APPEALS PANEL)**

- 7.7.5.1 For information on the membership and terms of reference of the Appeals Panel, please see [Chapter 10 of the LSHTM Academic Manual](#).

**7.7.5.2 Student companion at the appeals panel**

The student may be accompanied to the Appeals Panel by a companion who can be a family member, a friend or member of the SRC who is there to provide moral support but is not permitted to address the panel. The student is expected to present their own case and answer the Panel's questions. The name and details of the companion must be sent to the Head of Registry (or

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their nominee) at least 7 calendar days before the meeting of the Appeals Panel.

**7.7.5.3 Dates for the panel**

If there are dates on which it is impossible for a student to attend a meeting, they should inform the Head of Registry (or their nominee) as soon as possible. Every attempt will be made to arrange a date that is convenient to all involved parties, however, if the student is unable to attend the meeting in person it may be possible to arrange for the appeal to be conducted via Skype during LSHTM working hours. If neither option is possible then the appeal will be conducted in the student's absence.

**7.7.5.4 Decision-making body representative(s)**

The Appeals Panel will request the attendance of representatives from the decision-making body to respond to the appeal. This will be a maximum of 2 people and may include External Examiners in the case of appeals against PhD examinations (although the External Examiners are not obliged to attend).

**7.7.5.5 Confirmation of attendance at the appeal panel**

Once the date and time of the appeal hearing has been agreed, formal notification will be sent to the student by the Secretary at least 14 calendar days prior to the appeal hearing and will include the names and roles of the Panel members and the decision-making body representative(s). The student will be asked to confirm their attendance at the hearing and they should inform the Secretary at the earliest opportunity if they believe there is a conflict of interest with any of the Panel members.

If such a conflict of interest exists, an alternative panel member will be found. This may require the appeal hearing to be re-scheduled to a later date.

**7.7.5.6 Right to call witnesses**

The student and the decision-making body representative(s) have the right to call other people to attend the hearing to present evidence only if they have obtained the approval of the Chair of the Appeals Panel in advance. The names and details of any witnesses should be sent to the Head of Registry (or their nominee) at least 7 calendar days before the meeting of the Appeals Panel.

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**7.7.5.7 Documentation**

The same documentation will be sent to all of those involved in the appeal hearing, i.e. the Panel members, the student and the decision-making body representative(s), as follows:

- The written submission from the student (see 5.9)
- The written submission of the decision-making body representative(s) (see 5.9)
- PhD/DrPH Appeals only (not examinations) - The abstract of the thesis or the Upgrading/Review Document (to give the Panel some idea of the subject matter of the thesis)
- PhD/DrPH/MPhil Appeals only (examinations) - The final report(s) and the preliminary independent reports of the examiners
- Any other documentation the Appeals Panel considers relevant to the appeal

**7.7.5.8 Further written evidence**

After receiving the documentation, the student and the decision-making body representative(s) may provide further written evidence in response to the documentation but this must be received by the Panel Secretary at least 7 calendar days before the hearing. The additional paperwork will be sent electronically to all those listed in 7.7.32.

**7.7.5.9 Absence of appeal panel member**

If any member of the Appeals Panel is absent on the day of the hearing due to unforeseen circumstances, the student will be asked if they wish to proceed with the hearing or if they would like to reschedule the hearing to an alternative date.

**7.7.5.10 Absence of student/decision-making body representative(s)**

The absence of the student and/or the decision-making body representative(s) at the appeal hearing will not invalidate the proceedings and the appeal will be heard in their absence.

**7.7.5.11 Panel conducted in the presence of all parties**

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If both the students and the decision-making body representative(s) are present the Appeals Panel will be conducted in the presence of both parties and the student's companion until the Panel retires to consider its findings.

**7.7.5.12 Appeals panel procedure**

The procedure for the meeting is as follows:

- a) The Appeals Panel members will meet for an hour prior to the start of the appeal to agree the questions they would like to put to the student and the decision-making body representative(s).
- b) The Chair explains the purpose of the hearing and asks all those present to introduce themselves (**5 minutes maximum**).
- c) The Chair invites the student to give a brief summary of the main grounds for their appeal (**10 minutes maximum**).
- d) The Chair invites the decision-making body representative(s) to give a brief summary of their position on the appeal (**10 minutes maximum**).
- e) If the student or decision-making body representative(s) have asked to call other people to present evidence, the Chair will decide when and if it is appropriate to call them into the hearing. They will only be permitted to attend the Panel when asked to give evidence and may not stay for the entire proceedings.
- f) The Appeals Panel will put questions to both the student and the decision-making body representative(s) as appropriate (**40 minutes for the student and 40 minutes for the decision-making body representative(s) maximum**).
- g) The Chair may permit either the student or the decision-making body representative(s) to put questions to each other at any stage of the hearing, however, all questions must be put through the Chair.
- h) The Chair will ask the student if they want to make any concluding remarks before the Panel retires to consider its findings (**10 minutes maximum**).
- i) The Chair will draw matters to a close and the panel will retire to make its decision (**5 minutes maximum**).
- j) The Chair has the discretion to vary the procedure in any case where they consider it appropriate and just to do so. Any variation must be recorded in the notes of the meeting and must be in accordance with the Appeals Procedure.
- k) The Chair has the right to adjourn the hearing until a future date or time in exceptional circumstances.

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**7.7.5.13 Appeals panel decisions**

The Appeals Panel can make one of the following decisions:

- a) Uphold the appeal and action the student's preferred outcome, where appropriate
- b) Partially uphold the appeal
- c) Reject the appeal

**7.7.5.14 Communication of the appeal panel's decision**

The outcome of the formal stage of the procedure must be communicated to the student and the decision-making body representative(s) in writing by the Head of Registry (or their nominee) within 7 calendar days. Clear and concise reasons for each decision will be provided along with a copy of the notes from the hearing. The student and/or the decision-making body representative(s) may inform the Secretary of any errors/omissions in the notes and an amended copy of the notes will be provided if the amendments are approved by the Chair.

Outcomes (b) and (c). The Head of Registry (or their nominee) will advise the student of:

- Their right to take the appeal to the review stage (see [section 7.7.6 of this policy](#))
- The grounds on which they can request a review
- The time limit for requesting a review and the procedure to follow

**7.7.5.15 PhD / DrPH / MPhil Viva Examinations**

Where appeals against the viva examination panel are upheld then a new examination should be conducted by examiners who did not take part in the original examination and were not involved in the appeal. The examination will be conducted in accordance with the Regulations in place at the time the student was originally entered for the examination. The examiners may make any of the decisions open to the original examiners. The new examiners will not be given any information about the previous examination except that they are conducting a new examination following an appeal.

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**7.7.6 REVIEW STAGE**

**7.7.6.1 Deadline for submission of the review request**

A student who believes they have grounds for a review as set out in 6.2 may request a review of the formal stage within 14 calendar days of receiving the formal notification of the appeal outcome. They must submit this to the Assessments team in the Registry, outlining the grounds for the review. The Head of Registry will forward the appeal to the Review Stage along with all documentation associated with the appeal.

**7.7.6.2.1 Grounds for review**

The grounds for the review of the appeal are limited to the following:

- a) A review of the procedures followed at the formal stage of the appeal
- b) A consideration of whether the outcome was reasonable
- c) New material evidence that the student was unable to provide, for valid and over-riding reasons, for the original appeal

**7.7.6.3 Aim of the review**

The Review stage will not reconsider the appeal afresh or conduct a further investigation. The aim of the review will be to establish whether LSHTM followed its procedures correctly and the outcome was reasonable under the circumstances.

**7.7.6.4 The Reviewer**

The Reviewer will normally be the Pro-Director of Education, or their nominee, and will not have been involved in the appeal previously.

**7.7.6.5 Review decisions**

The reviewer can make one of the following decisions:

- a) Reject the review due to insufficient grounds.
- b) Refer the matter back to the appropriate formal stage for reconsideration (this will be the stage at which the appeal was rejected or partially upheld).



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**7.7.6.6 Communication of the reviewer's decision**

The outcome of the Review Stage of the procedure must be communicated to the student in writing by the Pro-Director of Education, or their nominee, within 21 calendar days giving the reasons for each decision clearly and concisely. The student will also be advised of:

- Their right to make a complaint to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (see [section 7.7.7 of this policy](#))
- The time limit for submitting the complaint

**7.7.7 OFFICE OF THE INDEPENDENT ADJUDICATOR (OIA)**

**7.7.7.1 Right of review by the OIA**

At the end of LSHTM's Appeal procedure the Student has the right to submit a request for LSHTM's decision to be reviewed by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA). The OIA provides an independent scheme for the review of student grievances under the Higher Education Act 2004.

**7.7.7.2 Completion of Procedures Letter**

Once LSHTM's Appeal procedure has been completed LSHTM will issue a Completion of Procedures letter (CoP) informing the student that the internal procedures of LSHTM have been exhausted and of their right to submit a complaint to the OIA in accordance with the guidance from the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA). Further information can be found on the [OIA website](#).

**7.7.7.3.1 Deadline**

The OIA Complaint Form must be received by the OIA **within twelve months** of the date of the Completion of Procedures Letter.

**7.8 Student Complaints Procedure**

- 7.8.1 LSHTM's [Student Complaints Procedure](#) should be used by students who have a concern relating to academic issues such as teaching or supervision; a service or facility provided by LSHTM; information provided about a course; behaviour of other students or staff (excepting allegations of bullying or

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harassment which are dealt with in accordance with LSHTM's [Anti-bullying and harassment policy](#)); or other deficiencies in the quality of their learning experience.

## **7.9 Student Disciplinary Procedure**

- 7.9.1 LSHTM's [Student Disciplinary Procedure](#) is used by LSHTM to consider allegations of non-academic misconduct by students.

## **7.10 Suspension of Academic Regulation**

- 7.10.1 Suspension of LSHTM academic regulations for taught and research degrees will be approved by the Pro-Director (Education). Suspensions of academic regulations relating to distance learning programmes may require additional consideration and agreement from the University of London.
- 7.10.2 Suspension of the academic regulations will be considered only where:
1. There are exceptional and/or unusual circumstances which could not have been foreseen by the regulations; and
  2. To apply the regulations as they stand in this exceptional/unusual circumstance would unfairly and disproportionately disadvantage students(s) affected.
- 7.10.3 Requests must be made in writing to the Taught Programme Director or the faculty Research Degree Director, using the [Suspension of Academic Regulations](#) form and submitted to Senate via the Quality and Academic Standards Office who will forward the request to the Pro-Director (Education). Requests must state which regulation is to be suspended, the reasons for the request, the case in support of the suspension and the details of the student(s) affected.
- 7.10.4 All requests for suspension of regulations and the decisions of the Pro-Director (Education) shall be recorded by the Quality and Academic Standards Office. All approved suspensions will be reported individually to

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Senate with an annual report of all suspensions being produced at the end of the academic year.