Standing Committee on Assessment

Minutes of the meeting held on Friday 17th October 2025 at 10.00am in BS/104 and via Zoom online video conferencing.

Attendance and apologies for absence:

Members:

Prof. Steve King	CS (Sciences) (Chair)
Dr Jasper Heinzen	History (Arts & Humanities)
Prof. Jill Webb	AD Social Sciences
Dr Jeremy Airey	Education (Social Sciences)
Sanjit Samaddar	ACT (Arts & Humanities)
Prof. Ruth Penfold-Mounce	Sociology (Social Sciences)
Dr Nigel Lowe	Chemistry (Sciences)
Dr Mathilde Péron	Economics (Social Sciences)
Dr Sue Faulds	Health Sciences (Sciences)

In attendance :	Dr Adrian Lee	Policy Manager, Academic Quality
	Aimée Yeoman	SCA Secretary & Policy Officer
	Tom Richens	Deputy Head of Student Administration
	Aya Haidar	YorkSU, Academic Officer
	Tom O'Neill	PGR student representative
	Dr Zara Burford	Online Programmes
	Jess Penn	Deputy Head of Inclusive Education
	Daisy Bowen	Special Cases
	Sarah Finch	Head of Faculty Operations - History, History of Art, Archaeology & Centre for Medieval Studies
	Prof. Paul Wakeling	Dean of YGRS
	Assoc. Prof. Anna Sotiriadou	CITY College

Apologies:	Dr Juliet James	YGRS
	Jan Ball-Smith	Head of Student Success
	Claire Wilkinson	Disability Services Manager
	Richard Andrew	YorkSU, Advice & Support Manager
	Dr Alet Roux	Maths (Sciences) (Deputy Chair)
	Dr Daniel Morgan	Philosophy (Arts & Humanities)
	Diane Atkinson	Student Services Manager, School for Business & Society

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m25-26/17 Welcome and apologies for absence
Committee members, and those in attendance, were welcomed and apologies noted.

New committee member, Tom O'Neill (PGR Student Representative) was welcomed to the committee.

m25-26/18 Declarations of interest

N/A

m25-26/19 Minutes of previous meeting

Minutes of the previous meeting held on Friday 12th September were confirmed as correct.

m25-26/20 Matters arising from the previous minutes
Members noted items listed on the Matters arising log

> **ONGOING ACTION: SK to review IDA log actions with AY to determine which 24/25 actions to carry forward or not.**

CLOSED

ONGOING

m25-26/4 Chair's Report - Members to let SCA Chair know if they are interested in joining the CITY Operations Group next semester.

m25-26/5 Report from Students - SK and AH to find out as much information as they can about why coursework is handed in on the same day across first, second and third years and to work on it together.

A recent meeting of the Assessment & Feedback project board had a discussion about hand-ins and assessment timetabling. SCA Chair raised that no student representative was present, and therefore they would welcome student voice in this conversation.

m25-26/9 Assessment & Feedback project - significant policy changes for 25-26 - JP noted that the reasonable adjustments policy has changed its name and therefore needs updating

AH to make sure the student guide to A&F policies that she is drafting is updated. AH to compile a mini presentation for reps to use.

ZB to use PGT guide as a template and write a student guide for online students. ZB & SK to discuss further.

m25-26/11 Any Other Business - SK to follow up with Eytan Zweig re. previous pilot project where presentations were marked by a single marker

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ACTION: SCA Chair to discuss this with AL outside of the meeting.

SCA Chair to change policy to include False Authorship (in particular GenAI use) under probationary offences

m25-26/21 Chair's Report
SCA **considered** the Chair's report.

- The mini-conference 'Education in a world with Generative AI' took place on Wednesday 15th October. The conference featured a presentation by SBS colleagues on their AI integration framework. All sessions were recorded and will be made available for wider sharing.
- Top-level pages dedicated to AI have also been launched on the University website.

m25-26/22 Report from Students
York SU **noted** that:

- Students had recently reported concerns in two main areas: assessment processes and clarity/consistency of information.
- In LLS (UG), the primary concern related to the downward scaling of marks after students had initially received them. Students want a clearer, proper explanation of why their marks were scaled, which caused some to drop a grade boundary. There is confusion about whether this occurred before or after marks were officially confirmed and scaling only applied to students with a mark of 50 or above.
- SCA discussed that there is a need for clearer communication to students that all marks are unconfirmed until signed off by BoEs.
- In Law, students find the language in mark schemes vague and suggested that a session/video is introduced to teach students how to understand the mark scheme, perhaps by replicating the training academics receive.
- Law students who take a mixture of 2nd and 3rd year modules in their second year face issues with overlapping or bunched assessments.
- Law students raised whether marks can be awarded on the basis of contribution/participation, with SCA highlighting that under current policy, marks cannot be awarded for attendance but only for participation/engagement. SCA members considered the importance of inclusivity in this.

m25-26/23 PGR Policies ([SCA 25-26/8](#))
The Committee **considered** and **approved** the PGR policies on Reasonable Adjustment and Exceptional Circumstances.

- The Dean of YGRS presented that these policy changes replicate the rules that have recently been implemented for UKRI funded students, to cover all PGR students. Changes are also partly in response to the Abrahart case and efforts to align PGR policies with taught student policies.
- Notification of urgent or severe circumstances triggers a duty for the university to make reasonable adjustments under the Equalities Act.

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- Category 1 suggestions for viva process adjustments will be brought to an upcoming SCA meeting for approval, including measures such as releasing viva themes in advance, pre-meets with examiners etc.
- The Committee noted that website links within these policies needed to be updated.

ACTION: AL to update website links with JJ.

- The Committee discussed policy point 3.13 in the EC policy, concerning compromised performance in oral examination. The Committee agreed that the wording 'typically if' should be changed to 'only if'.
- The Committee discussed that under policy point 3.16 in the EC policy, it needs to be explicitly stated that a case is sent onto the SCA Chair and that the decision that SCA is asked to make is whether this is acceptable as an exceptional circumstance
- The Committee considered the Reasonable Adjustments policy, specifically for extreme reasonable adjustment cases where a robust case assessment process is proposed. This process escalates the case to the Graduate Chair, then to SCA Chair and Dean of YGRS (in consultation with the disability lead) for consideration.
- The Committee discussed how urgent cases for reasonable adjustments do not require evidence, whereas the EC process does require this.
- The Committee discussed that StAMP investigatory panels and PGR AMIPs should be added to the list of people who are able to have a student's SSP shared with them, under policy point 4.6 in the Reasonable Adjustments policy.
- The Committee discussed how under the flowchart (policy point 5.10), the process makes reference to the student's supervisor deciding what their reasonable adjustment should be. However, in the taught student policy, it is the Student Services Manager from the relevant department who makes this decision. This leads to consistency for student cases across the department and therefore, SCA may need to review this being implemented for the PGR policy also.

ACTION: Dean of YGRS to take this feedback back to JJ and incorporate it into policies.

- The Committee acknowledged the input from colleagues from different services across the University in developing these policies and especially acknowledged the work of Juliet James on these policies.

m25-26/24 SCA Priorities 25-26 (SCA 25-26/9)

The Committee **approved** the finalised SCA Priorities for 25-26. Added to the SCA Priorities list for 25-26 are:

- The Committee discussed the inclusion of an 'Assessment Scheduling & Award Rules Review' into SCA priorities. UoY colleagues are planning to review award rules in the sector, identifying any gaps in UoY's own rules, particularly concerning the impact on students from disadvantaged groups who are currently achieving lower degree classifications. The Inclusive Education team is already tracking sector trends in this area.
- The Committee also discussed the inclusion of 'Condonement Clarification' into SCA priorities. UoY's compensation rules seem to be equivalent to what other universities refer to as condonement. Alignment with PSRB accreditation was raised as an issue, which can

be resolved by offering a degree title without the profession attached if necessary.
- The Committee discussed the urgent need to prepare for an inspection of the proposed Mumbai Campus provision by the Indian University Grants Commission, to be preceded by a separate UoY inspection early next year.
- The Committee discussed that **'Progression at Risk'** needs looking at, with the suggestion that professional services staff could bring a paper to SCA in the future regarding this.

ACTION: SCA Chair to identify people for different groups w/c 27th October

m25-26/25 Comparable adjustments arising from Student Wellbeing Officers evidence
The Committee **noted:**

- AL presented that the taught student EC policy is under review due to inconsistent interpretation and practice observed by SSMs across departments. The ambiguity stems from EC 3.3.1, which currently suggests a "short extension (e.g., under one week)" is an example of an adjustment based on evidence from Student Wellbeing Officers (SWOs) or comparable staff, not the *only* adjustment.
- The Committee noted that current adjustments based on this evidence are inconsistent, ranging from only short extensions to deferrals of exams or a SAIFFT. The variation in practice is complicated by the wide variety of assessment types within and across departments, which affects what adjustments are appropriate or practicable, leading to equity concerns for students, particularly those on combined programmes.
- The Committee was presented with a solution to this which was developed in consultation with key staff to promote consistency and equity in procedures. The proposed immediate solution is to amend EC 3.3.1 to state that a short extension is the *only* form of adjustment permitted based on SWO/comparable staff evidence.
- Under the new proposal, deferral and SAIFFT would require self-certification or 'higher-level evidence' from alternative sources (e.g., Open Door practitioners, GPs), addressing concerns about the volume of claims SWOs are asked to support and ensuring the evidence is proportionate to the requested adjustment.
- The Committee also noted that a goal of this new proposal is to protect students from the excessive build-up of pressure caused by a high prevalence of deferrals (bunching of assessments), while minimising the risk of increasing staff workload and making evidence harder to obtain.
- The Committee discussed concerns that this change might weaken the perceived value of SWO evidence and also the advice they offer to students, creating a barrier for students with short turnaround needs and potentially shifting pressure to the Open Door Team or other services, services for which students can have difficulty accessing at short notice.
- The Committee discussed the exceptional circumstances officer (ECO) role, which was introduced as part of the removal of the EC Committee. Policy states that this should be an academic but in some instances it seems to be a PSS member of staff who is in sole charge of making decisions. This led to further discussion as to whether the policy point regarding an academic being an ECO is being consistently implemented.
- The Committee considered how the current process could be confusing from a student perspective and also create a barrier for students if SWO evidence is deemed insufficient.
- The Committee discussed how it would be useful to have a Flowchart written from a

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student perspective of the process.

ACTION: CW and JP to look into creating a Flowchart.

- SCA Chair and the Committee agreed that a decision on the proposal should be deferred to the January 2026 SCA meeting, as it needs further development through wider consultation.

ACTION: AL is to consult with SSMs in departments and meet with PGR student rep, TO'N

m25-26/26 Any Other Business

- **Calculator Policy:** SCA Chair shared that there has been considerable concern in departments about the proposal for checking stickers on student-provided calculators. Therefore, the new plan is for Exams & Graduation to resume the provision of calculators to students in the examination hall. Students will not be permitted to bring their own calculator.
- The Committee noted that whilst enough calculators have been secured to implement this, departments are currently being consulted to verify that the models found are still suitable for various courses.
- The Committee noted that a key concern is balancing the expense of replacing all university calculators (estimated at £16k in a September 2019 paper) against the risk of hindering students' performance if they lack sufficient practice opportunities with the provided model. The new plan suggests that a number of calculators will be available in the Library for students to borrow for familiarisation.
- The Committee highlighted that a change to the procedure away from a 'bring your own' calculator necessitates a change in the recently introduced Managing the Delivery of Closed and Open Book Examinations - Policy.
- **Student rankings in references:** SCA Chair shared that recently an Economics lecturer had been asked to include a student's cohort ranking in a reference letter for further study, but this information is currently unavailable and it is unclear whether this means it is not allowed to be shared. This latest request follows similar recent ones from two other schools/departments.
- The Committee discussed that in departments such as Computer Science and Mathematics, distribution of marks are published for each module, with quartiles, median and mean provided.
- The Committee discussed that certain universities within their postgraduate admissions process may ask whether a student is in the top 5% of a cohort and from this, discussed whether there was a University policy against this. The Committee also discussed that within the context of UoY's CITY College and Mumbai provision, there will be different socioeconomic contexts to consider and different student expectations regarding references.

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- The Committee discussed that there is a distinction between publishing marks data for students to see and using ranking data for the purposes of references for further study. The Committee noted that if marks were published, this could be used as the basis for appeals/complaints.
- The Committee is to consider the appropriateness of such practice at an upcoming meeting.

CATEGORY II

The Committee noted the following Cat II papers:

m25-26/27 Academic Misconduct project - briefing note sent out in Sept 25 highlighting new resources ([SCA 25-26/10](#))

m25-26/28 Grade Conversion Tables 26-27 ([SCA 25-26/11](#))

Approved by Chair's action

m25-26/29 Date of the next meeting

The date of the next meeting was **noted** as Friday 21st November 2025 at 10:00am via Zoom online video conferencing, and in person in CL/A/023

RESERVED BUSINESS

To note, all of the following have been approved by Chair's action since the previous meeting.

m25-26/30 Individual Examination Arrangements
It was **noted** that individual examination arrangements for students have been approved on behalf of the Committee since its last meeting.

m25-26/31 Appointment of External Examiners
It was **noted** that various new appointments (or extension to appointments) of external examiners (UG and PGT) have been approved on behalf of the Committee since its last meeting.

m25-26/32 Results Lists
Notification was **received** of recommendations for the award of degrees approved on behalf of the Committee since its last meeting.