



**Senate**

<b>Paper Title</b>	Industrial Action Strategic Contingency Group
<b>Outcome requested</b>	Senate is asked <b>to note</b> the work undertaken by the Industrial Action Strategic Contingency Group during the current industrial action.
<b>Points for Senate members to note and further information</b>	<p>The Industrial Action Strategic Contingency Group is a standing group of Senate that convenes as required to monitor the effects of industrial action and take steps where possible to mitigate the impact on students. The terms of reference and membership of the Group are attached to this paper.</p> <p>The Group has issued guidance for staff (attached) and a number of communications for students, the content of which is summarised in the form of FAQs at:</p> <p><a href="http://www.arcs.qmul.ac.uk/students/sec/industrial-strike-action-2018">www.arcs.qmul.ac.uk/students/sec/industrial-strike-action-2018</a></p>
<b>Questions for Senate to consider</b>	Senate is asked to note and discuss the work undertaken by the Industrial Action Strategic Contingency Group. The issue of the industrial action itself will be raised under the President and Principal's Report (Senate paper SE2017.41).
<b>Regulatory/statutory reference points</b>	Academic Regulations Terms and conditions for students
<b>Strategy and risk</b>	Not applicable
<b>Reporting/consideration route for the paper</b>	For Senate only
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## **Guidance for staff on ensuring that students are not disadvantaged in relation to assessment as a result of current strike action**

We have reassured students that they will not be disadvantaged in relation to their assessment as a result of the current strike action. The purpose of this document is to provide some examples of the steps available to ensure this is the case.

The following guidance relates to both undergraduate and taught postgraduate students and concerns assessment that is due to be undertaken between now and June, including both examinations and coursework. Please note that this is general guidance and that detailed practice may differ according to the type of assessment and subject area.

### *1 - Assessments scheduled during the period of industrial action*

- a. Wherever possible, assessments scheduled to take place during the period of industrial action should go ahead as planned.
- b. Assessments such as in-class tests may go ahead using alternative invigilators, if the person(s) who would normally have invigilated the session will be absent.
- c. Where an assessment involves a practical or presentation/performance-based element, the assessment may be recorded using QReview for marking at a later point. This is dependent upon QReview facilities being available in the room, and may not be suitable for all such assessments – the Subject Examination Board (SEB) should use its judgement in this matter.
- d. In cases where an assessment cannot go ahead, the SEB may request that it be discounted from the calculation of the module mark. This is only permitted where the assessment is valued at 20 per cent or less of the module (see Section 9.36 of the [Assessment Handbook](#)). A Chair's action request detailing the case should be sent to ARCS. When considering this, SEBs should bear in mind that discounting elements at this stage may reduce the options available if there are issues with the delivery of other assessments later on.
- e. Assessments with submission deadlines during the affected period should be submitted as usual. If delays to marking mean that feedback will not be given within the usual timeframe then students should be informed.

### *2 - Assessments affected by the non-delivery of parts of the curriculum*

- f. Where elements of the curriculum are not delivered and it is not possible to provide students with the missed content in other suitable forms, SEBs should make adjustments to the assessment so as not to disadvantage students, consistent with academic standards and the requirements of professional bodies. For continuing students, it may be appropriate to carry forward material into modules that are taught in the next academic year so that students are suitably prepared.
- g. Wherever possible, SEBs should amend assessments so that they do not require students to answer on content that has not been delivered. This may include (for example) changes to questions or the rubric on examination papers, in-class tests, and essay titles. All approval processes (including approval of exam papers by external examiners) must occur as usual.
- h. Where an assessment has already been set and/or it is not possible to amend the assessment design, schools and institutes should ensure that markers are fully aware of what content was missed. Markers should use their academic judgement to take this information into account, so that students are not disadvantaged. Note that this does not extend to awarding marks in compensation (see below).

- i. There shall be no automatic compensation of marks for missed content. In order to maintain academic standards, marks shall only be given for attainment.
- j. SEBs should conduct benchmarking of module results where the delivery has been affected. This should include reference to the performance of previous cohorts on the same module, and of the current cohort on comparable unaffected modules. If there has been a serious impact on the performance of the cohort as a whole that cannot be attributed to other factors, the SEB may consider a degree of mark scaling. This should be used as a last resort, and a clear rationale for the scaling and for the exact nature of the scaling must be provided. All scaling is subject to approval by the Degree Examination Board (DEB), and scaling is only permitted where an SEB has an approved scaling policy that has been considered by the DEB. SEBs should ensure that records of the original, unscaled, marks are retained in case the scaling request is rejected or amended by the DEB. This is in accordance with guidance supplied in section 5.36 of the [Assessment Handbook](#).

*Other cases*

- k. If situations arise that are not covered by this guidance, schools and institutes should contact ARCS. Supplementary guidance will be provided as required.

2 March 2018

## Industrial Action Strategic Contingency Group

### Membership

Professor Rebecca Lingwood, Vice-Principal (Student Experience, Teaching & Learning) (**Chair**)  
Dr Colleen Cotter, Dean for Taught Programmes (Humanities & Social Sciences)  
Simon Hayter, Assistant Academic Registrar (Assessment Governance)  
Alastair Kelly Deputy Director of Human Resources  
Trudy Mason, Deputy Academic Registrar  
Jonathan Morgan, Academic Registrar & Council Secretary  
Professor Julia Shelton, Dean for Taught Programmes (Science & Engineering)  
Rosalind Stannard, Head of Internal Engagement  
Professor Anthony Warrens, Dean for Education (Medicine & Dentistry)

All members will attend in an *ex officio* capacity, and may nominate a deputy or invitee to attend in their place. Where the industrial action involves Unison and/or Unite other members may be invited to attend e.g. Estates or Information Services.

The Group will report to QMSE as required, and keep Senate informed with regard to mitigating effects on academic progression.

### Terms of reference

The Industrial Action Strategic Contingency Group shall monitor, and take steps to mitigate the effects of all industrial action that affects Queen Mary University of London. The Group will liaise with other contingency planning groups as required.

In the event of a potential marking boycott the Group has delegated authority to consider and approve measures to address possible scenarios in which assessment marks and processes are missing or incomplete, with the following aims:

- Protection of academic standards;
- Protection of the student experience.

Specific items for consideration shall include but not be limited to:

- Communication to students and staff;
- Examination and assessment delivery;
- Marking processes;
- Extenuating circumstances;
- Examination board processes;
- Progression;
- Eligibility for award;
- Eligibility for resits;
- Mark entry;
- Award confirmation, transcripts and certificates;
- Graduation.