**Outside Regulations Cases to Quality and Standards Committee (QSC)**

The Quality Manual provides the regulatory framework governing teaching and learning at the University of Nottingham and its provisions have regulatory force. This means that Faculties, Schools, Departments and students across all campuses are required to comply with the policy as stated. The Quality Manual sets out the University’s policies and procedures relevant to both teaching and supervision of undergraduate and postgraduate students (both taught and research).

When considering whether a proposed action may be outside of the Quality Manual regulations, Schools or Registry and Academic Affairs teams (or equivalent) seeking advice should contact the Quality and Student Management System team based in Registry and Academic Affairs \* (or equivalent unit on the overseas campuses).

The Quality and Student Management Systems Team (or equivalent) has responsibility for interpreting the Quality Manual and therefore advising whether the action of a School or Registry and Academic Affairs teams (or equivalent) is in accordance with the Quality Manual and whether approval at the University level is required. If a School or Registry and Academic Affairs team (or equivalent) is informed that an action is outside the provisions of the Quality Manual but nevertheless wishes to pursue that action, then the School or Registry and Academic Affairs team (or equivalent) will be asked for a case to be prepared and once complete this should be forwarded to the Quality and Student Management System Team (or equivalent) who will arrange for the request to be considered by Quality and Standards Committee. Cases from the overseas campuses will normally be forwarded to the Quality and Student Management Systems Team in the UK for consideration by a member of QSC to ensure parity of treatment across campuses.

Depending on the nature of the case, this may be by referral to an individual member of the Committee for consideration, to more than one member of the Committee, or to the full Committee.

**Preparing a Case to QSC**

A case to QSC is a formal request for consideration by or on behalf of the Committee as to whether the relevant regulation(s) can be set aside in circumstances relating to an individual student or group of students. The case as presented to Registry and Academic Affairs must contain as much information and supporting evidence as might be required in order for a decision to be made.

A case forwarded to, or prepared by Registry and Academic Affairs will be checked (see below) by a Manager or Senior Manager prior to being sent to Quality and Student Management Systems Team Cases should not be presented as e.g. a chain of emails between colleagues where the member of QSC has to read and extract information from a number of e-mails to understand the case being presented.

The case made, and any documentation or e-mail accompanying it, should represent the facts underlying the request. Subjective comments on e.g. the attitude of the student or behaviour of others should not be made unless these have a factual base and are material to the request.

**Who should put the case forward?**

Normally, a case to QSC can be put forward by either a Manager or Senior Manager based within Registry and Academic Affairs. In urgent scenarios a case can be put forward directly to the Quality and Student Management Systems Team by a relevant member of School staff e.g. Director of Operations, Exams Officer, Director of Programme. It is expected that relevant Registry and Academic Affairs staff will advise School colleagues on how a case should be presented and if cases are being passed to Registry and Academic Affairs staff for onward transition, that staff will have ensured that basic checks are undertaken to ensure that the case is presented as required. This checking process should ensure that the information is accurate and complete. Managers should also check that that all regulatory implications of the proposed action have been considered (e.g. would a retrospective interruption of student if approved mean that the student would be unable to compete the stage or programme within the prescribed time limits).

**Can I send my case direct to a member of QSC?**

Cases to QSC must be forwarded to the Quality and Student Management Systems Team (or equivalent) and cannot be sent direct to either a member of the Committee or the Chair. This is to ensure that all relevant information is presented and that the member or members of the Committee who will consider the case have full information and are aware of e.g. precedents.

**My School doesn’t want to support a student’s case, can the student put the case direct to QSC?**

Cases to QSC must be forwarded to the Quality and Student Management Systems team (or equivalent) by a relevant member of School or Registry and Academic Affairs. Where a School does not want to put a case forward, the student would need to use the Complaints or Appeals procedure if relevant.

**What is required in a case?**

A case to QSC requires completion of the Consideration by Quality and Standards Committee form together with any supporting evidence and additional information which will enable a decision to be made.

**Example 1: Termination of Programme of Study for Research Student from PhD to MPhil following Annual Review**

Required:

1. A completed Consideration by Quality and Standards Form;
2. Annual Review Form and outcome;
3. Resubmission of Annual Review Form and outcome (if relevant);
4. Copies of Supervisor Reports for relevant academic period.

**Example 2: Request to terminate a Programme of Study (or withdraw temporarily) a student for non-attendance**

Required:

1. Consideration of the timing in the academic year i.e. a student cannot be terminated or temporarily withdrawn just before the start of an exam period;
2. Consideration of the maximum duration from first registration (in cases of requiring a student to withdraw temporarily) and whether this also needs to form part of the case;
3. A completed Consideration by Quality and Standards Form;
4. Evidence that the Attendance and Engagement Policy has been followed correctly;
5. Copies of any relevant correspondence.

The request for consideration should include:

* What QSC is being asked to consider e.g. This request is to allow the above student to progress to the next year of their programme of study notwithstanding Regulation 20 of the UG regulations;
* Why QSC is being asked to consider the request e.g. Owing to an administrative error the student was not entered for all reassessments in August and so while they have passed reassessments taken, they still have 30 credits of fail. They meet the criteria for a second reassessment but can’t progress as the failed modules are non-compensable;
* Actions which will be taken if the request is approved e.g. The School would intend to allow the student to take these reassessments in October as special papers to ensure that they are not additionally disadvantaged by having additional credit to take throughout the whole of the Autumn Semester. Additional tutorial support will be given;
* Where relevant, measures being taken by the School and/or Registry and Academic Affairs to ensure that the situation doesn’t arise again e.g. Additional checks are being introduced into relevant procedures [stating what these are] to ensure that before reassessment information is released to students recommendations are checked.

Cases to QSC should not normally be retrospective. If a retrospective request is being made, this should be clearly stated together with the circumstances which have caused this.

**Do I need to wait for the Committee to meet for a case to be considered?**

Cases are normally sent electronically to a sub set of members of the Committee to consider. This happens regularly throughout the year and does not necessarily need to wait for the next meeting full Committee to be considered.

**When will I get a response?**

If a complete case is submitted to Quality and Student Management Systems Team, then you will normally receive a response with an outcome within 1-2 working days following the sub group meeting.

**How will I get a response?**

Outcomes on cases considered will be passed to Registry and Academic Affairs and those colleagues will ensure that the relevant School is aware of the outcome that the student record is updated appropriately and that the student has been informed. In some cases additional information will be required before a decision can be made and this will be requested through this route.

**Do I have to wait for a response before proceeding?**

Yes – if the case you are presenting is to allow an action to be taken which is outside of the normal University regulations then you must wait for formal approval to be given before any action is taken. Even if the request being made is one that any reasonable person would accept, Schools and Registry and Academic Affairs staff are not permitted to approve or action a request without it having been considered by QSC and a formal response given. Actions which have been undertaken without formal approval may be over-turned if the request is not approved.

**The case I want to put forward is urgent, can I speed up the process?**

If there is a reason why a response is needed by a particular time/date this should be stated at the time of submission and the request flagged as urgent so that where possible a quick response can be requested. It is recommended that you also speak to the Quality and Student Management Systems Teams (or equivalent), so they are aware of the urgent nature of a request.

**QSC has rejected the case, can the School ‘appeal’?**

In the first instance, the School should request that the case is reviewed by QSC. This may be by another member of QSC who has not previously looked at the case, the Chair or Deputy Chair of QSC, or by the full Committee. Where a case is rejected on review, a student may, subject to meeting the relevant criteria, pursue the case as an Appeal or Complaint.