THE GLASGOW SCHOOL OF ART

Examination Board Policy

POLICY DETAILS

Purpose of this policy	This policy defines the authority, role and operating principles of Examination Boards at the Glasgow School of Art (GSA). It establishes a clear and consistent framework for how academic decisions relating to student progression, awards and classifications are made, ratified and recorded.
Date of approval	September 2026
Approving body	Academic Council
Supersedes	Examination Board (2017)
Date of EIA	September 2026
Date of next review	September 2031
Author	Head of Academic Registry
Responsible Executive Group area	Secretary and Registrar
Related policies and documents	GSA Code of Assessment External Examiners Policy Assessment Calendar (annual) Guidance on Provisional Grades Release
Benchmarking	QAA's UK Quality Code for Higher Education 2024 University of Glasgow (including QAA's Targeted Peer Review Report Recommendations, October 2025) Current sector practice

Examination Board Policy

1. Purpose

1.1 This policy defines the authority, role and operating principles of Examination Boards at the Glasgow School of Art (GSA). It establishes a clear and consistent framework for how academic decisions relating to student progression, awards and classifications are made, ratified and recorded.

1.2 The policy ensures that Examination Board processes:

a) Uphold the academic standards of GSA's Code of Assessment and Degree Regulations
b) Operate with transparency, consistency and fairness across all programmes
c) Provide an auditable and accountable basis for academic decision-making

1.3 This policy sets out the governance arrangements for Examination Boards, including their membership, responsibilities, and relationship to other academic processes. It should be read in conjunction with the GSA Code of Assessment, Degree Regulations, and the External Examiners Policy. In the event of any uncertainty, the Degree Regulations and Code of Assessment take precedence in defining academic rules, while this policy defines how those rules are applied through formal Examination Board processes.

1.4 GSA aligns its Examination Board practice with the expectations of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (2024).

2. Scope

This policy applies to all taught credit-bearing courses and programmes delivered by GSA.

3. Definitions

Academic Council: the senior academic governance body responsible for oversight of academic standards and academic regulations at GSA. Academic Council delegates authority to Examination Boards to ratify student assessment outcomes.

School: the academic department responsible for the management and delivery of a portfolio of programmes.

Academic Registry: the central administration department responsible for the administration of GSA Examination Boards, publication of ratified grades and awards and oversight of regulatory compliance.

Programme Leader: the academic member of staff responsible for the oversight and delivery of a specific programme of study and for presenting programme-level regulations, grades and outcomes to the Examination Board.

GSA Examination Board: the formally constituted group responsible for ratifying course grades, progression, reassessment and award outcomes in accordance with assessment and degree regulations.

Preliminary Examination Board: a preparatory meeting held prior to the formal Examination Board. Preliminary Boards do not ratify grades or outcomes.

Convenor: a senior academic (normally Head of School) responsible for ensuring the Examination Board operates in accordance with regulations and that decisions are reached collectively and recorded appropriately.

Ratification: the formal confirmation by the GSA Examination Board that assessment outcomes, progression decisions, reassessment requirements and awards are accurate and comply with regulations.

Progression: the decision that a student has met the requirements to advance to the next level of a programme of study.

Award: a qualification granted to a student following successful completion of a programme of study, including certificates, diplomas and degrees.

Good Cause: extenuating circumstances that have a significant impact on a student's ability to undertake or complete assessment. Good Cause outcomes are ratified at the GSA Examination Board.

Conflict of interest: a situation where a member of the Examination Board has a personal, professional, or financial interest that could influence, or be perceived to influence, their judgement in relation to a student.

4. Policy

4.1 All summative assessment and subsequent outcomes relating to progression and final awards must be ratified by a GSA Examination Board prior to publication of results by Academic Registry.

4.2 GSA Examination Boards are established under the authority of Academic Council. The University of Glasgow is GSA's validating partner. Under these arrangements, GSA manages its academic provision within the agreed validation framework, while the University of Glasgow retains responsibility for validating and conferring GSA's final awards.

4.3 The schedule of GSA Examination Board meetings is determined by Academic Registry and confirmed in the annual assessment calendar which is published on the staff and student intranet at the start of each academic session. Examination Boards are normally held after each assessment period and prior to grade publication deadlines.

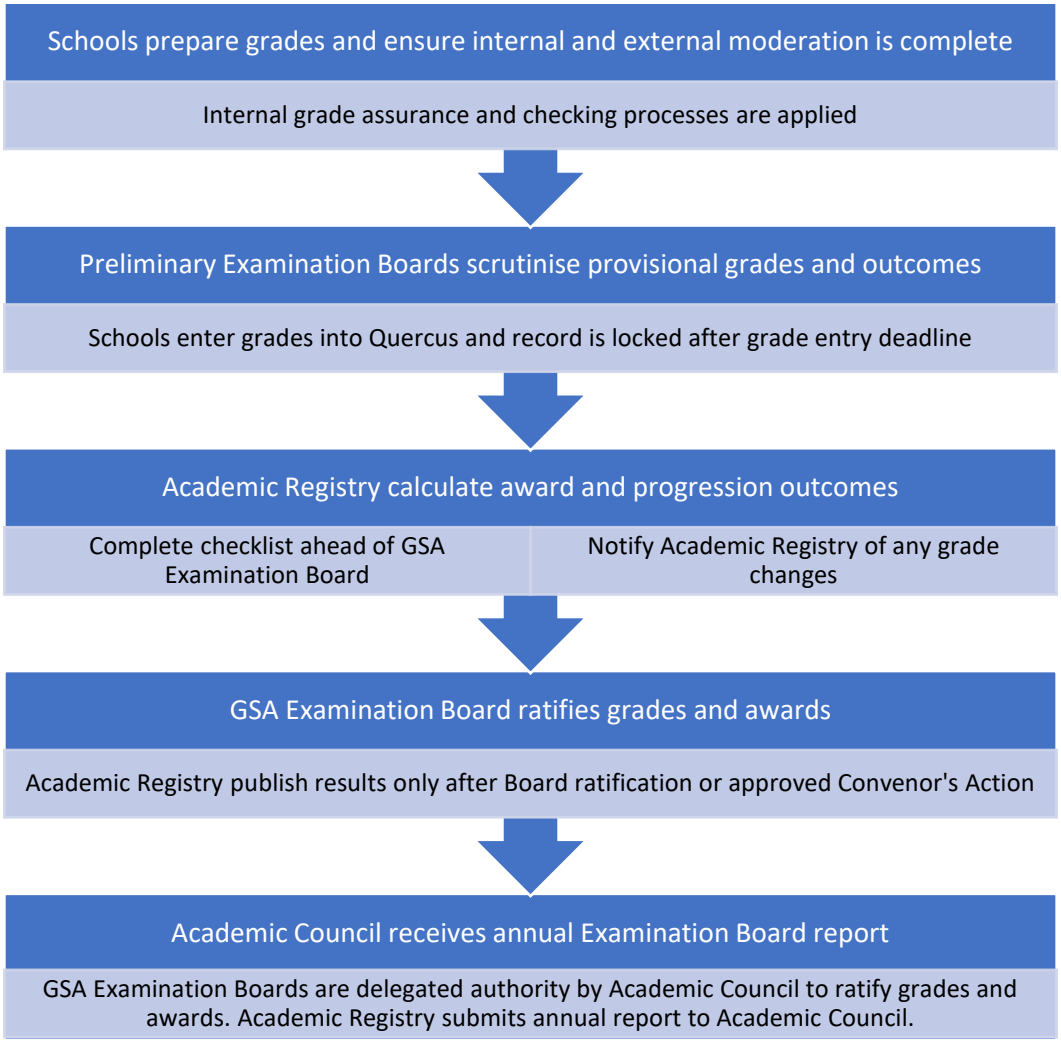
4.4 Preliminary Examination Boards do not ratify grades or outcomes. They provide a quality assurance mechanism for checking the calculation and recording of student grades and ensuring sufficient scrutiny of assessment outcomes prior to their formal consideration and ratification by the GSA Examination Board.

4.5 Where a course or programme is not formally assigned to a specific School, the Course or Programme Leader must agree in advance, normally as part of the course or programme specification approval, with Academic Registry and relevant Head of School which

Preliminary Examination Board the course or programme will report to. This will be published in the annual assessment calendar.

4.6 All relevant GSA Examination Board members, including External Examiners and supporting staff, must be familiar with and comply with the Examination Board Policy. Any variations to standard operating procedures set out within this policy must be approved in writing in advance of the Examination Board by the Deputy Director and Vice Principal (Academic).

5. Grade Ratification & Assurance Process



6. Preliminary Examination Boards Responsibilities

6.1 Preliminary Examination Boards are held at School level in advance of the GSA Examination Board. Their purpose is to provide detailed scrutiny and assurance of grades and outcomes before they are presented for formal ratification.

6.2 Preliminary Examination Boards are responsible for assuring the accuracy of grades and outcomes, confirming that the relevant academic regulations and policies have been applied correctly and consistently, and agreeing the outcomes to be recommended to the GSA Examination Board. Preliminary Boards have no authority to ratify grades, reassessment outcomes or awards.

6.3 In more detail, Preliminary Examination Boards are responsible for:

a) Receiving and reviewing the provisional grades and results for all taught courses and programmes delivered by the School;
b) Considering reports on any irregularities in assessment processes, relating to either potential academic misconduct or the conduct of the assessment process;
c) Ensuring the Code of Assessment, Degree Regulations and requirements within programme specifications have been applied correctly and consistently;
d) Reviewing assessment component grades and confirming that these have been accurately recorded and appropriately moderated prior to submission to the GSA Examination Board;
e) Specifically reviewing fails and non-standard outcomes, for example, repeating a year;
f) Reviewing the distribution of grades and outcomes across a course and programme;
g) Resolving any issues or outstanding outcomes, wherever possible, before the GSA Examination Boards;
h) Agreeing specific outcomes to highlight at the GSA Examination Board, for example, Leave of Absence or credit refused;
i) Ensuring that the correct number of credits have been taken for each programme or level. Any discrepancy must be highlighted to the Head of Academic Registry at the earliest opportunity.

6.4 Following the Preliminary Examination Board, the School must submit the approved GSA Examination Board Readiness Checklist to Academic Registry confirming provisions set out in 6.3 have been completed.

6.5 Academic Registry may determine that a programme is not ready for presentation to the GSA Examination Board where required checks have not been completed or material information remains outstanding.

The checklist will confirm:

a) All grades have been entered and locked;
b) Sampling and moderation requirements have been completed;
c) External Examiner input has been received where required;
d) Any Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) requirements have been checked;
e) Partner-delivered results have been incorporated;
f) All exceptional or unresolved cases are listed for specific noting at the GSA

Examination Board;

g) All relevant staff attending the Examination Board have completed the regulation and Examination Board training.

7. Preliminary Examination Board Membership

7.1 The Preliminary Examination Board is convened by the relevant Head of School (or appropriate senior academic) and comprises Programme Leaders; Head of Departments or Stage Leaders; and Academic Support Managers or professional services delegate.

7.2 Members of Academic Registry will be invited to attend Preliminary Examination Boards to advise on specific progression, award, or classification outcomes.

8. GSA Examination Board Authority & Responsibilities

8.1 The GSA Examination Board applies the GSA Code of Assessment, Degree Regulations and approved programme requirements to confirm and ratify assessment, progression and award outcomes. The GSA Examination Board achieves this through collective review and scrutiny.

8.2 Where the application or interpretation of a regulation is unclear, the matter must be referred to the Head of Academic Registry and, where necessary, escalated to the Academic Registrar and Deputy Director and Vice Principal (Academic) who shall make the final decision. The Examination Board cannot establish local precedent or approve an exception to regulation.

8.3 The GSA Examination Board is responsible, on behalf of and to Academic Council, for:

a) Receiving and ratifying grades and results for all taught courses and programmes;

b) Considering and confirming, in accordance with relevant degree regulations and programme specifications, progression outcomes, awards and classification of all students enrolled on the programmes for which the GSA Examination Board is responsible. If the programmes under the Examination Board's authority include courses managed by another Examination Board, the Board will receive the confirmed grades for those courses;

c) Ratifying the Good Cause outcomes recorded by the Good Cause Panel;

d) Considering reports on any irregularities in assessment processes, relating to either potential academic misconduct or the conduct of the assessment process.

9. GSA Examination Board Membership & Quoracy

9.1 The GSA Examination Board comprises Convenor (chair), Head of School or Deputy Head of School, Programme Leaders, External Examiners, Head of Academic Registry (Secretary), administrative and assessment support (Academic Registry).

9.2 The Head of School is accountable for ensuring that assessment processes within their School have been conducted in accordance with the GSA Code of Assessment, Degree

Regulations, programme requirements and this Policy, and that the information presented to the GSA Examination Board is complete and accurate.

9.3 In the case of joint programmes with another institution, or where a partner institution delivers a course for a GSA-owned programme, the contract or Memorandum of Understanding should specify arrangements for the Examination Board and External Examiners. Academic Registry shall advise on any cases where this is not specified.

9.4 Attendance at a GSA Examination Board by anyone not listed in 9.1 must be pre-approved by the Deputy Director and Vice Principal (Academic), or their nominee.

9.5 External Examiners may provide written comments or confirmation electronically where attendance at a particular Board is not required. External Examiners are expected to attend at least one GSA Examination Board during each academic year in accordance with the External Examiners Policy.

9.6 A minimum of one External Examiner per programme is expected to attend GSA Examination Boards where final awards are being ratified. If an External Examiner is unavoidably and exceptionally absent from an Examination Board where their presence is formally required, written comments should be provided for consideration at the meeting. The Programme Leader has responsibility for ensuring that the Convenor of the Examination Board is appropriately informed in advance of the meeting, and ensuring that the written comments are submitted to the Examination Board.

9.7 The GSA Examination Board is quorate where the Convenor, Programme Leader (or approved delegate) for each programme under consideration, Academic Registry representation and the required External Examiner(s) are present. Where the required quorum is not met, the Board must not ratify outcomes relating to the affected programme(s). The Board must defer the affected outcomes to a reconvened meeting. Approved substitutions are permitted in accordance with 9.8 but do not constitute a waiver of quoracy requirements.

9.8 If a Programme Leader is unable to attend the GSA Examination Board, a substitute may be nominated, with the agreement of the Deputy Director and Vice Principle (Academic), or their nominee, provided that the substitute has completed the required training and has been briefed on all results being presented to the Examination Board.

10. External Examiner Remit & Responsibilities

10.1 The External Examiner's role at the GSA Examination Board is to:

a) Provide independent assurance of standards and processes;
b) Comment briefly on the degree programme as a whole;
c) Comment briefly on the assessment outcomes, procedures and quality assurance;
d) Offer comparison of academic standards at GSA with those in other institutions;
e) Endorse the decisions of the Examination Board.

10.2 In the event that the External Examiner is unwilling to endorse the assessment processes and results, this is recorded by the Secretary to the GSA Examination Board and the External Examiner will be asked to submit a written report outlining their reasons for the immediate consideration of the Deputy Director and Vice Principle (Academic).

Students are informed by Academic Registry as soon as possible if there is any delay in finalising and communicating their results.

11. Conduct of GSA Examination Boards

11.1 All GSA Examination Boards will follow the template agenda which is reviewed and approved annually by Head of Academic Registry and GSA Examination Board Convenors. Any substantive changes will be approved by Education Committee.

11.2 All members of the Preliminary and GSA Examination Board must complete annual mandatory training which covers GSA Code of Assessment, Degree Regulations, conflicts of interest, handling of exceptional cases and responsibilities of the Board. Academic Registry will maintain the institutional record of training completion. Members who have not completed the required training will not normally be permitted to participate in decision-making at a GSA Examination Board. Training completion rates and any exceptions will be reported through the annual Examination Board assurance report to Academic Council.

11.3 All discussions at GSA Examination Boards are confidential. Academic Registry will circulate and retain all papers securely before and after the meeting. Board papers are confidential and retained in accordance with records management requirements. Students will be referred to by student number only to preserve anonymity during discussion and in the minutes.

11.4 Any discussions should be restricted to issues of assessment and progression and should not stray into matters not directly relevant to the Board's responsibilities.

11.5 All members of the GSA Examination Board shall declare any conflicts of interest, involvement or relationship with a student being presented to the Board to the Convenor in advance of the meeting and again at the start of the meeting. The Convenor shall determine any appropriate mitigating actions, which may include withdrawal from the discussion during the relevant item. All declarations and mitigating actions must be formally recorded in the minutes of the GSA Examination Board.

11.6 Individual members of the GSA Examination Boards cannot change grades unless rectifying a transcription or communication error (please see section 15).

12. Administration of Examination Boards

12.1 Schools are responsible for the administration of Preliminary Examination Boards. This includes the scheduling of the Boards and recording the results and outcomes from each Board. Schools will keep a record of all relevant outcomes and actions. Formal minutes are not recorded.

12.2 Academic Registry is responsible for the administration of the GSA Examination Boards. This includes the scheduling of the GSA Examination Boards, preparing and circulating agendas, results to be ratified, minutes, accurately recording decisions, and ensuring membership and attendance meet quoracy requirements.

Academic Registry will share the GSA Examination Board documentation with those

expected to attend at least one working day in advance. This will include:

a) Grade and result spreadsheets
b) Agenda
c) Relevant sections of the Code of Assessment and Degree Regulations

12.3 Academic Registry is responsible for publishing, via the staff and student intranet, the annual assessment calendar which confirms deadlines for grade entry and the publication date. After the grade entry deadline, results are locked within the student record system.

12.4 Schools are responsible for entering course grades to the student records system prior to the stated deadlines within the assessment calendar. Guidance and training will be provided by Academic Registry to Schools ahead of each results period.

12.5 Academic Registry is responsible for calculating award outcomes and progression outcomes.

12.6 Once outcomes have been calculated, Academic Registry will undertake quality assurance of all results with Schools to ensure accuracy against School records and grade sheets. Schools are responsible for highlighting any discrepancies to Academic Registry with sufficient time for amendments before the GSA Examination Board. Discrepancies should normally be reported no later than the working day prior to the Board. Academic Registry will unlock a record to allow for an approved grade change prior to ratification at the GSA Examination Board. Please see section 15 for the process following the publication of grades.

12.7 All GSA Examination Boards are minuted using the agreed template (Appendix A) which is reviewed annually by the Head of Academic Registry and GSA Examination Board Convenors. Any substantive changes must be approved by Education Committee.

13. Convenor's Action on behalf of the GSA Examination Board

13.1 Convenor's action refers to a decision which is confirmed outside of the GSA Examination Board. It should only be used exceptionally and when the next GSA Examination Board is more than six weeks away.

Convenor's action can be used to:

a) Fulfil an explicit and minuted GSA Examination Board decision, following completion of an action in respect of an individual student (for example, student conduct case);
b) Fulfil an outcome of an academic appeal;
c) Confirm an individual student's grade for an assessment or course which was not available in time for the Examination Board;
d) Correct an error or delay caused by administration processes;
e) Confirm an exit award following a withdrawal from a programme for medical or other serious adverse circumstances.

13.2 Convenor's Action should not normally be taken to make changes to ratified grades, progression or award decisions for a cohort of students; this includes consideration of resubmissions. These should be ratified at the next scheduled GSA Examination Board.

13.3 The minutes of the Examination Board should record where it has granted authority to the Convenor to act on its behalf. Actions taken by the Convenor must be reported to the next meeting of the Examination Board by means of an update to the previous meeting's minute. All Convenor's Actions will be recorded in the annual report to the Academic Council.

13.4 In the event of a final award, when considering the input of the External Examiner, the following should be noted:

a) If an External Examiner attended an Examination Board where a student was considered, and Convenor's Action was agreed for a later date, the view of the External Examiner need not be sought again unless the decision has changed substantially;
b) Appropriate email correspondence from the External Examiner will be accepted as supporting evidence;
c) The student's mark profile should be provided to the external examiner(s) where they have been asked to confirm an award.

14. Publication & Communication of Results

14.1 Responsibility for publishing the ratified results on behalf of GSA shall rest solely with the Head of Academic Registry who will determine and administer, subject to the approval of Academic Council, appropriate procedures for processing the overall assessment results and outcomes on the student record system. Grades and results are considered provisional until they have been ratified and published on the student record system.

14.2 In the case of programmes taught jointly with the University of Glasgow, agreement will be reached between the institutions regarding responsibility for releasing results.

14.3 Academic Registry is responsible for publishing results by 5pm on the date confirmed in the annual assessment calendar. If there is a delay to the publishing of results, Academic Registry will notify affected students.

14.4 Academic Registry will communicate to all students when results are published. This communication will contain information relating to progression, reassessment, award or classification outcome.

14.5 The communication will also include guidance on academic appeals and signposting to Student Support Services. Results and this communication will always be published within working hours to ensure students have access to support.

14.6 Programme Leaders, or their delegates, are responsible for ensuring that students with complex outcomes—including those with limited or no reassessment opportunities, those who are not permitted to progress, or those who may be required to repeat a year—are offered timely individual communication to explain the outcome, its implications, and the options available to them.

15. Correction of Errors

15.1 Where an error is identified following publication of a result, Academic Registry will establish the nature, cause and academic consequences of the error and determine, as necessary, the appropriate approval route.

15.2 Where correction would improve a student's academic outcome, the correction may be approved by the Head of Academic Registry in accordance with the approved erroneous grade procedure.

15.3 Where correction would adversely affect a student's published outcome, the case must be considered by the Deputy Director and Vice Principal (Academic), Head of School and Head of Academic Registry before any amendment is made. The review must consider the applicable academic regulations, the nature and cause of the error, the student's circumstances and the principle of fairness. The rationale and decision must be formally recorded.

15.4 The student will be notified in writing, by Academic Registry, of any correction and its consequences, together with information about any applicable right of appeal.

15.5 Any amendments to grades following publication will be recorded and reported in the Annual Examination Board Report.

16. Annual Examination Board Report to Academic Council

Academic Registry will prepare an annual report for submission to Academic Council (Appendix B).

This will include:

a) Number of School and GSA Examination Boards held and confirmation that these were held in accordance with policy and regulations;
b) Any Boards postponed due to missing information, instances where quoracy was at risk or cases requiring reconvened Boards;
c) Summary of External Examiner assurance;
d) Award distribution by programme;
e) Overview of reassessment outcomes, including any significant trends or areas of concern;
f) Number of academic appeals;
g) Any emerging areas of risk, including data quality, student records systems or inconsistencies in regulations;
h) Progress against any actions identified through the previous annual Examination Board report, including completed, outstanding and escalated actions.

THE GLASGOW SCHOOL OF ART

APPENDIX A- TEMPLATE GSA EXAMINATION BOARD MINUTES

Glasgow School of Art Examination Board Minutes

Full Title of Examination Board	
Date & Time	
Convenor	
Secretary	
External Examiner(s)	Where an examiner is not present at the Board, the minute should acknowledge receipt of any written comments.
List of Other Attendees	
List of Apologies	

List of Programmes and/or courses being ratified	

Members of the Examination Board are reminded to:

- observe confidentiality in relation to matters discussed at the Board;
- refer to individual students by student number only to preserve anonymity during discussion and in the minutes;
- avoid including personal information other than as detailed in the template below;
- ensure that the minutes attribute all decisions to the Board, rather than referring to individual examiners;

1. **Declaration of any conflict of interest**

2. **Preliminary Board- update & confirmation of grade checking/ assurance**

Academic Registry will provide a verbal update on the Preliminary Boards held and the grade processing and checks that were completed.

Summary of discussion:

Action points:

Description	Owner	Due Date	Status

3. **Good Cause Claims**

Overview and summary of Good Cause claims and outcomes awarded. The overview will be presented by programme and level of study.

Summary of discussion:

Action points:

Description	Owner	Due Date	Status

4. **Calculations and Results**

Explanation of calculations used in determining results or awards.

Summary of Discussion:

Action points

Description	Owner	Due Date	Status

5. **List of Results**

The list of final outcomes for all students will be retained in separate marksheets. In addition to completing the boxes below, minutes should also include details of all fail grades where a student is required to retake an assessment.

Any decisions approved by or to be referred to Academic Registry e.g., cases of irregular curriculum.	
Agreed arrangements for contacting any non-completing students to discuss their options (who is responsible and relevant timelines).	

6. **Arrangement for the Notification of Results**

Academic Registry will provide an update on the publication process for results and how students will be notified.

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Summary of Discussion:

Action points

Description	Owner	Due Date	Status

7. **Minutes of an Examination Board must be signed off by both the Convenor and Secretary.**

Convenor (name and date of sign-off)	
Secretary) (name(s) and date(s) of sign-off)	

8. **Convenor's Action**

This section will be updated after the minutes have been approved, however, should be recorded in the minutes for completeness.

Individual student details will not be included.

Description	Number of students	Convenor	Outcome

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APPENDIX B- TEMPLATE EXAMINATION BOARD REPORT TO ACADEMIC COUNCIL

GSA Examination Board Report to Academic Council- Academic Session <insert>

1. Executive Summary

Highlight any changes to Examination Board governance or grade assurance and publication processes.

Highlight any significant exceptions, concerns or regulatory matters.

Comparison with previous academic sessions and identification of significant changes.

2. Examination Board Overview

	Name of Examination Board	Name of Examination Board	Name of Examination Board	Name of Examination Board
Date of Examination Board				
Preliminary Board (date)				
Programmes presented				
Awards ratified (total)				
Progression outcomes Ratified (total)				
Reassessment outcomes ratified (total)				
Convenor's Actions (number and brief explanation)				
Deferred/ postponed (number and reason)				
Minutes formally signed-off				

3. Board Constitution, Membership and Quoracy

Highlight any Boards where alternative/ deputy arrangements were required; where conflicts of interest were declared and managed and any departures from the requirements outlined in the Examination Board Policy.

For example:

All GSA Examination Boards were appropriately constituted and quorate in accordance with the Examination Board Policy, except where specifically identified below:

4. **Awards and Classification**

This section will provide a programme-level breakdown of all exit and final awards including:

- Award classification
- Exit awards
- Any amended outcomes

5. **Good Cause Overview**

This section will provide an institutional overview rather than individual case details. This section will highlight:

- Programme-level breakdown of students with approved Good Cause claims
- Significant trends

6. **External Examiner Engagement**

This section will highlight any significant comments, recommendations or concerns raised by External Examiners during the Examination Boards**.**

7. **Errors identified after Examination Boards**

This section will provide an overview of the number of erroneous grades which required correction after publication. A brief explanation will be included.

8. **Overview of Appeals**

The section will provide an overview of the number of academic appeals received in the academic session. This section will highlight any trends and any changes to procedures or policies as a result of appeals.

9. **Issues, Risks and Areas for Improvement**

This section will include any institutional-level risks or issues associated with regulations, academic standards, governance, systems, data, processes or training.

10. **Good Practice and Enhancement**

This section will provide examples of improvements, positive External Examiner feedback and particularly effective Board practice.

11. **Academic Council Considerations and Actions**

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Academic Council is invited to:

1. Note the assurance provided regarding the operation of GSA Examination Boards during <year>;
2. Note the areas of good practice and improvements identified;
3. Note the issues and risks and endorse the proposed actions arising from the annual review of Examination Board operation.