

University of Glasgow

Academic Standards Committee – Friday 23 April 2010

Removal of Schedule C and Transition to 22 Grade Point Scale:
Implementation of the New GPA Calculation from 2011-12

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It has been agreed by ASC that, from session 2011/12, the grade points per credit currently in Schedule C should be replaced by what is currently called aggregation score in Schedule A of the Code of Assessment.

The Calendar will have to be updated to reflect the revaluation of grade points and grade point averages (GPA). Table 1 below shows the current Schedule C grade point values along with the translated values using the new grade point scale. If, for example, a current Calendar regulation says “a student must get a GPA of 10”, the new regulations will say “a student must get a GPA of 9”. It should be understood that there is no intention to lower standards. The desire is merely to reflect the revaluation of grade points; the grade itself remains unchanged, so although D3 moves from being represented by a value of 10 to a value of 9, students are still required to achieve the same level of competence (D3 on average). The issue of standards is discussed further at the end of this paper.

Current Grade Points/GPA	New Grade Points/GPA
[16]	18
14	15
13	14
12	12
11	11
10	9
9	8
8.5	7
[8]	6
[6]	3
[2]	1
[0]	0

Table 1

Notes to accompany Table 1

- i. ASC agreed that where direct translation suggested new GPAs that were not whole numbers, these should be rounded up. Thus, old GPA 9 gives new GPA of 7.5, so round to 8. Also, old GPA 8.5 should be rounded to 7.
- ii. Current Grade Points/GPAs in square brackets are not referred to in any regulation in the University Calendar.

- iii. Current Grade Points/GPAs in bold are those that did not appear in the table that was previously submitted to ASC. The new GPAs suggested for these are based on the same principle of rounding as accepted by ASC in i) above.

Use of Table 1 above will allow the SLP team to enter all the regulations into Campus Solutions (in the form of advisement rules). This will be straightforward for all new students.

Transition of Current Students to the New Grade Point Values

A question to be addressed is how to deal with students who are part way through their degree programmes in September 2011. It would be a tremendous amount of extra work to enter all advisement rules for pre September 2011 regulations. The **proposal** is to recalculate (based on the new Grade Point Scale) all historical results for students who are part way through their programmes of study. This should be done at the same time as uploading data from the current system (WebSurf) to the new system (Campus Solutions).

In line with current practice that no current student should be disadvantaged due to regulation changes while on-course, measures must be introduced to ensure that the recalculation of GPA values does not disadvantage students.

Table 2 highlights the grade point variations where the new GP value is lower than the old, and it could therefore appear that a student is disadvantaged. It should be noted that this is only an apparent disadvantage, since the regulations will have been redrafted to reflect the revaluation of grade points.

1 Grades	2 Schedule C GPs	3 New GPs	4 NEW GPA looks	5 Possible Interim Import Grade Points
A1	16	22	better	22
A2	16	21	better	21
A3	16	20	better	20
A4	16	19	better	19
A5	16	18	better	18
B1	14	17	better	17
B2	14	16	better	16
B3	14	15	better	15
C1	12	14	better	14
C2	12	13	better	13
C3	12	12	same	12
D1	10	11	better	11
D2	10	10	same	10
D3	10	9	worse	10
E1	8	8	same	8
E2	8	7	worse	8
E3	8	6	worse	8
F1	6	5	worse	6
F2	6	4	worse	6
F3	6	3	worse	6
G1	2	2	same	2
G2	2	1	worse	2

Three options are offered:

- 1) Old grade points are converted to new grade points, using column 3 of table 2, as they are brought into Campus Solutions. No further action, since no student should be disadvantaged if the regulations have been restated correctly.
- 2) Old grade points are converted to new grade points, using column 3 of table 2, as they are brought into Campus Solutions. Any students who are apparently disadvantaged according to column 4 of table 2 are flagged and each case looked at individually by advisers of studies.
- 3) Old grade points are converted to new grade points, using column 5 of table 2, as they are brought into Campus Solutions. This would ensure that students would definitely not be disadvantaged and that weaker students would probably have an advantage.

Discussion of Options

(1) and (3) are the options which are less staff intensive.

(1) is probably the one which most closely matches "no change".

(2) will be very time consuming.

(3) may be overly generous (students with D3 or E2/3, F2/3 would, in effect, have their original grade value moved up by 1 or 2 secondary bands in the aggregation process).

Recommendation

- 1) That grade points are recalculated for students who are currently part way through programmes in September 2011.
- 2) ASC considers the adoption of either Option 1 or 3 to be applied in this process to ensure that no student is disadvantaged.

Grade Profile Analysis

The effect of the proposed change in grade point values, which expand from a 16 point to 22 point scale and refine the allocation of grade points on the basis of secondary bands, is a wider variation in values at the top end of the scale. Grades A1 and B1 particularly increase (A1 by 6 points and B1 by 3), while around one of the key thresholds D3/E1, the new grade values are lower or the same. This means that higher grades may disproportionately pull up averages in the new system compared to the old.

Grade Profiles of 3rd and 4th year 2008-09 students in the Department of Mechanical Engineering were analysed to compare the grade point averages attained under the current and proposed grade point values.

From a sample of 185 students, it was found that although some students achieved a marginally lower average under the new system, these had no impact on their eligibility for passing a 3 year degree, or achieving merit or distinction. No students would have been disadvantaged by the new system. However there were also cases where the average in the new system was higher, and this did impact on overall results with the following increases in eligibility for awards:

6.5% more were eligible for a designated degree

1% more were eligible for a Merit

7% more were eligible for a Distinction

ASC is invited to consider the above observations in terms of the potential effect the new grade point system could have on attainment thresholds. ASC may consider it useful or necessary for a wider analysis of existing results to be undertaken.