Procedure for Systems Failure in Relation to Online Submission

Overview

This document outlines the RVC procedure when there is a system failure that impacts on submission of online assessments. The procedure covers all RVC online submissions via Online Coursework Management (OCM) or TurnItIn, as well as any other appropriate submission portal.

This procedure was introduced to ensure that an appropriate communications plan was in place in the event of system failure. The plan will:

- help with clarity of the action that is required from staff and where responsibilities lie.
- ensure that regulations are able to be adhered to in a fair way.
- be transparent and consistent in approach across the College.
- alleviate the stress to students when there is a system failure that impacts on the submission of an assessment.
- allow staff to disseminate an agreed message in a timely fashion.

What signals an interruption to service?

An interruption to service will be identified by students alerting programme staff or the Examinations Office, Learn and/or IT Helpdesk or possibly via academic staff. Systems failures may also be reported by staff in LISD or in the E-Media Unit.

However the interruption to service is identified, the Examinations Office should be informed as quickly as possible to enable the communications plan to be put into action.

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1. The Examinations Office is made aware of the interruption in service.

2. After consultation with LISD staff regarding the duration of the interruption in service, the Examinations Office will decide on the appropriate action. This action will be dependent on the specifics and nature of each situation (duration of interruption, imminence of deadline, potential effect on students, etc). The action taken could be any of the following (although not an exhaustive list):

    *   **No Action Required** – the submission deadline is not imminent or the duration of the interruption is deemed not to be significant.

    *   **Partial Communication Plan Implemented** - inform key staff (as set out in **3.a.** below) that there has been a systems failure but students will **NOT** be informed as the impact is minimal and the submission deadline is not imminent. **Staff, if questioned, should inform students to wait and try to submit again in due course.**

    *   **Full Communication Plan Implemented** - inform key staff (as set out in **3.a.** below) that there has been a systems failure. The students **WILL** be informed that there is a problem with the submission process and the deadline for submission has been suspended. **Students are then responsible for regularly checking their emails and RVC Learn for updates, to establish the revised submission deadline. Any such notification will be conveyed and sent by the Examinations Office.**

3. The Examinations Office will initiate the following Communications Plan:

    a. An email containing as much information as possible to be sent to the following key members of staff informing them of a loss of service:
        *   Head of Examinations
        *   Exams Office (Hawkshead)
        *   Exams Office (Camden)
        *   Sciences Course Support Manager
        *   Veterinary Vocational Course Support Manager
        *   Placements Support Manager
        *   Programme Support Coordinator
        *   Postgraduate Course Support Manager
        *   Customer Services Manager (LISD)
        *   VLE Manager
        *   Learning Technologist
        *   Senior Tutor (Hawkshead)
        *   Senior Tutor (Camden)
        *   Senior Tutor (Post Grad Taught)
        *   Senior Tutor (Nursing)
        *   Associate Dean (Student Experience)
        *   Learning Development Manager

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b. The Examinations Office to contact affected students via email, informing them of the failure of service, that the deadline of submission has been suspended and that they **MUST** continue to check both their email and RVC Learn for the new submission deadline.

c. The same notification as in **3.b.** to be posted on the RVC App (by the LEARN Team), RVC Learn Home page (by the LEARN Team) and the Public Information Screens in the Cafes (Customer Services Manager (LISD)). The Examinations Office will convey this message to the key members of staff listed in **3.a**.

d. The revised submission deadlines to be set once the duration of the interruption is known or the issue is resolved. This should be in conjunction with the appropriate members of the course team considering the impact on students and the practicalities of submission. In exceptional circumstances, when the interruption in service is severe, the students will be informed to submit via an alternative method (for example, in hard copy or by email) with a revised submission deadline. The new submission deadline and method, if applicable, should be disseminated to students as per **3.b.** and **3.c.**

e. The LISD to send to the Examinations Office a log of the interruptions (for records purposes). The log should include:

- Date and time that the interruption to service commenced.
- Date and time that the full service resumed.
- What specific system(s) were affected (in relation to online submission).