

# ASSESSMENT REGULATIONS 2017/18



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<b>Summary:</b> This document collates the strategies, regulations and guidelines relating to assessments and applies to all taught provision at the University and its Collaborative Partners. 2017-18      inclusion of GPA	

# ASSESSMENT REGULATIONS

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## **SECTION A INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT**

### **Section A1 Introduction/Scope**

The assessment regulations set minimum requirements and standards for students and staff. They collate the strategy, regulations and guidelines relating to assessments, including the definition of assessments types and formats, the relationship between programmes and assessments, marking schemes, award calculations and classification methods.

The *Assessment Regulations* apply to all taught provision of the University of Winchester and to all students undertaking that provision whether at the University of Winchester or at a Collaborative Partner, unless specifically exempted by Academic Regulations, Policies and Procedures Committee (eg disallowed under accreditation agreements with Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies).

Alongside the Regulations, the University operates a wide range of institutional policies and procedures. Key aspects of these policies and procedures are incorporated within the Regulations and reference is made there to the full policy or procedures below:

- Academic Appeals Regulations
- Academic Misconduct Policy
- Academic Regulations for Taught Programmes
- Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Research Programmes
- Accessible & Inclusive Learning Policy
- Credit Framework, Award and Classification Rules Summary
- Exam Regulations
- Exam Board Guidelines
- Extenuating Circumstances Policy
- External Examiners of Taught Programmes - Policy and Procedures
- Invigilation Policy
- Learning Agreements Policy
- Learning and Teaching Strategy
- Masters' Dissertation – Presentation Guidelines

### **Section A2 Exemption from and Suspension of the Regulations**

In exceptional circumstances, a programme or subject may seek an exemption from one or more of the Regulations, normally at the time of validation or revalidation. Application to do so shall follow appropriate consultation with other programmes and subjects as required, and must be made explicit at the time of validation or review and shall be explicitly approved by the Academic Regulations, Policies and Procedures Committee. Where approval is secured, this shall be made explicit in the Programme Specification.

In exceptional circumstances, and following appropriate consultation, a programme or subject may seek to obtain formal approval through the Academic Regulations, Policies and Procedures Committee to suspend one or more of the Regulations temporarily. Where this approval is secured, students shall be explicitly notified before implementation. (An example of this might occur where a programme is running out or an external event prevents the normal procedures to apply.)

## **SECTION B DEFINING ASSESSMENTS AND SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

### **Section B1 Defining Assessments**

All assessments shall be defined in the Module Descriptions, which accompany the Programme Specification approved at (re)validation or via the Programme Amendment process, defined by Senate Academic Development Committee.

The content and structure of the programme and its assessment strategy provide students with the opportunities for learning and assessment they need to enable them to demonstrate that they have achieved the programme learning outcomes at the requisite level.

When setting assessments, programmes shall take into account the educational aims and intended learning outcomes of a particular programme and module, as well as what can reasonably be expected of students at a given 'level', the purpose of the assessment (including whether it is for formative or summative purposes) and practical considerations such as group size, space and resources.

The language of learning, teaching and assessment shall be English except in the case of Collaborative Partners, who have obtained a specific exemption within their Memorandum of Agreement.

Students shall not submit the same assessment for two or more modules. Where students wish to reuse some work from one assessment in another, they shall self-reference, as appropriate.

## **Section B2            Assessment types and forms**

Assessment types and forms, including formative and summative forms, are designed and proposed by Programme Teams and approved via (Re)Validation. Programmes are encouraged to consider both traditional and innovative assessment types when determining their overall assessment strategy.

The Programme shall describe each assessment in their Programme Specification briefly, especially any which are distinctive, and indicate the appropriate KIS category for each one. KIS categories are defined in the *Key Information Set: Briefing Document for Programmes* on the [KIS Intranet page](#).

## **Section B3            Assessment Load for Modules**

The maximum word counts for written coursework submissions for modules at level 4 – 7 inclusive are as follows:

Level 4	normally no more than 235 words per credit.
Level 5	normally no more than 300 words per credit
Level 6	normally no more than 300 words per credit
Level 7	normally no more than 200 words per credit

## **Section B4            Word Counts for Individual Assessments**

Word counts for assessments are normally defined by programmes in the individual Module Descriptions contained in the Programme's Definitive Document. A word count is a guide to students and staff about what is expected for each assessment.

Masters Independent Study    as specified in the relevant Programme Specification but normally between 15 – 20k for a module of 60 credits.

Extended Independent Study    as specified in the relevant Programme Specification but normally between 8 - 10k for a module of 30 credits.

Where the word count for an assessment is not already defined in the Module Description, Programme/Module Leaders shall set the word count in the Programme and/or Module Handbook taking into account:

- a) the assessment criteria;
- b) the range of issues expected in an answer;
- c) the expected depth/breadth of the answer;
- d) the need to encourage students to write succinctly and clearly;
- e) the need to ensure equity for all the students completing the assessment.

Word counts are not intended to be used as word limits and, therefore, there is no University-wide policy for penalising students who undershoot or exceed word counts. If programmes wish to set a word limit, then they shall follow the Guidelines in Appendix 4 for *Setting Word Limits and Penalties*.

## **Section B5            Assessment Pattern in Module Description**

A student's achievement in each module shall be assessed so that a student may be awarded a final mark and/or grade for each module. (For example, some module assessment patterns may be graded Pass/Fail only). If an assessment covers more than one module a separate final mark shall be awarded for each module.

**The Module Description shall define:**

- a) name of assessment type;
- b) word count for written assessments and duration for exams/practical assessments;
- c) weight of the total mark for each assessment as a percentage or whether one or more elements are graded Pass/Fail only;
- d) whether any element graded Pass/Fail only must be passed in order to pass the module overall.
- e) whether a minimum pass mark is required for each assessment or whether the module may be passed on aggregate;
- f) whether any formative assessment is required to be submitted/completed in order to pass the module. (Formative assessments shall not contribute a grade or mark to the final module result.)

## **Section B6            Timing of assessments**

Assessment shall normally take place during the semester in which the module is offered although some semester 1 modules may be assessed early in semester 2 and where a semester 1 module is linked with a semester 2 module, a common or joint assessment may be held anytime during semester 2, up to week 15.

Submission deadlines shall normally be set within semester weeks, ie Weeks 1 - 12 in semester 1 and Weeks 1 - 15 in semester 2. This is to allow the appropriate support for the students to be in place. However, if programmes would like to set a deadline during the Christmas or Spring vacation period, they may seek explicit approval for each assessment from their Programme Committee at a timetabled meeting during the previous academic year. Where an explicit request is agreed unanimously, the date shall be included in the appropriate Module/Programme Handbook.

Exceptions to the above may be approved for students who are granted an extension due to extenuating circumstances or where the programme has an exemption from the Regulations to teach outside the semester or extend the module across two academic years. (See also section B10 Second Attempts at Assessments, below)

The Independent Study (for Masters Programmes) shall be submitted as follows:

- a) For full-time students starting in October, the normal deadline shall be last working day of September;
- b) For full-time students starting in January, the normal deadline shall be first working day of February of the following academic year ;
- c) For part-time students, the normal deadline shall be 13 months after starting the module.

The date of submission and return of work shall be recorded in the Module/Programme Handbook (as appropriate). The date for second attempts and return of work shall also be recorded.

Where a PSRB requires a programme to hold exams for modules run in semester 1, these shall be scheduled by Registry during week 12. Formal exams held at the Winchester campus for other programmes are normally centrally timetabled and arranged by Registry during the Assessment Period of semester 2. Collaborative Partners and programmes which decide to make local arrangements are required to follow the procedures detailed in the *Exam Regulations* and the *Invigilation Policy*.

These Regulations also include details about the arrangements for students with temporary, permanent or chronic disabilities (see section B13 below).

## **Section B7           Late Submission Rule**

All assessments including the Independent Study and the Extended Independent Study submitted up to 5 working days after the deadline (ie 1 week late) shall be accepted as a first attempt but the substantive mark shall be capped at the minimum pass mark. Any work submitted after the 1 week late submission deadline and before the deadline for permitted second attempts shall be accepted as a second attempt, capped at the minimum pass and there shall be no further opportunities for submission.

Second attempts submitted after the deadline, without approved extenuating circumstances, shall be deemed a fail and given a mark of 1% only, to indicate submission.

*Refer to Appendix 5 - Submission Processes Flowchart for further details.*

## **Section B8           Deferrals and extensions for assessments**

Deadlines for all assessments may only be extended by a previously agreed extension: no substantive mark may be awarded for late work for which no extension has been agreed.

Students may apply for a deferral (for exams and practical assessments) and/or an extension (for coursework) using the approved form and submit it together with written evidence of extenuating circumstances, supported by a disinterested person of demonstrable professional standing in relation to the type of evidence, in accordance with the *Extenuating Circumstances Policy*.

Extensions shall not be granted for situations arising from personal/computer/printer problems, except in the case of University technical difficulties of an ephemeral nature, eg such as an unscheduled disruption unusual to the University's intranet provision.

Where an extension request for the Independent Study would result in missing the deadline for marks to be considered at the Exam Board, the extension shall normally be extended to the next scheduled submission date for Independent Studies, ie either the first working day of February or the last working day of September.

Where an original assessment cannot be replicated, for example in the case of group work, the programme has discretion to set an alternative exercise subject to the maintenance of the purposes of the original assessment and module learning outcomes.

*Refer to the University's Extenuating Circumstances Policy for further details.*

## **Section B9           First Attempts at Assessments**

All students are expected to submit their assessments and sit exams and practical assessments as set by the programme. Marks awarded for first attempts that are submitted on time shall be a substantive mark between 0 – 100% or graded Pass/Fail only.

Students may apply for an extension or deferral for a first attempt as detailed above.

## **Section B10        Second Attempts at Assessments (formerly called Redemptions)**

Students shall normally be permitted an automatic second attempt for all failed first attempts. Deadlines for second attempts are normally determined by the programme. Deadlines for second attempts for semester 2 modules and the Extended Independent Study (for Honours degree students) are normally scheduled during the summer vacation period. Resits for semester 2 exams are normally held in mid-July.

Where a student fails an element of assessment they shall normally be permitted a second attempt, on condition that they have satisfied any other specified requirement(s) for the module. The second attempt shall normally be capped at the minimum pass mark for that level, eg 40% for levels 3 – 6 and 50% for level 7.

The better mark of the two attempts shall be included in the calculation for the overall module mark.

Where a student fails an element of assessment and has not satisfied any specified requirement(s) for the module, the student shall not have the automatic right to a second attempt. However, the Exam Board has discretion to permit a second attempt.



For a second attempt at written coursework, a student shall normally be required to resubmit the original assignment. A resit for an exam or a practical assessment may be based on a new exam or practical assessment. However, if repeating the original assessment is not feasible or practicable, the programme may opt to set an alternative assignment, subject to the maintenance of the purposes of the original assignment and module aims. This may include setting one alternative assignment to meet the learning outcomes of two or more of the original failed elements of assessment.

Where a module only requires students to achieve an overall aggregate pass, a student who has achieved the overall pass but has failed an element shall not normally be required to pass that element, via a second attempt. However, the student may ask the Exam Board for permission to submit a second attempt for a failed element, if an opportunity has not already been offered. The deadline for such requests shall be within 15 working days of the date of the letter confirming the decision of the Exam Board.

### **Section B11      Submission of Assessment**

Students may not submit the same assessment for two or more modules, even if they are repeating the module.

It is the responsibility of the student to submit all work for assessment and all attend practical assessments/exams in accordance with the requirements for each module or programme, as defined in the Programme/Module Handbook. The format of the Dissertation for a Masters' Independent Study is defined in the *Masters' Dissertation – Presentation Guidelines*.

If a student wishes to retract a submission in order to make changes, additions or corrections, they may only do so before the submission deadline.

Students are responsible for keeping a copy of all submitted work including copies of all research data and materials prepared for the assessment in question even if they are not required to be submitted.

Unless specified otherwise, students shall submit two copies of the Extended Independent Study (for Honours degrees) and the Independent Study (for Masters Programmes).

Programmes shall specify whether students submit work in hard copy, electronically or both and the format of the submission. Where students are required to submit both in hard copy and electronically, the time and date set shall be same for both and shall normally be set between 9.30 am and 3.30 pm.

The University is in the process of piloting an e-Submission process for assessments with a view to making this a requirement for all programmes in the future.

*Refer to Appendix 6: eSubmission Procedures for Coursework Via a VLE for further details.*

Where students are required to submit work in hard-copy to a Faculty Office, a receipt shall normally be issued. Where a receipt is issued, the student is responsible for retaining this as proof of submission.

### **Section B12      Notification of assessments to students**

Students are notified of assessments via a Module or Programme Handbook made available to students online via the Programme Intranet pages and/or in hard copy at the beginning of the module. (See *Programme Leader Handbook* for details to be included.)

### **Section B13      Adapting assessments for students transferring in or out of modules mid-year**

Students who transfer mid-year and need to join/leave year-long modules, especially in the case of students involved in the American Exchange and Visiting Programmes and all full-time students, require careful management to ensure that they are not left short of credits at the end of the academic year.

Programme Leaders, for all subjects involved, and the student concerned have a collective responsibility to ensure that they are aware of how the transfer is being managed and that the process will ensure that the student will complete the requisite number of credits for their studies at the University of Winchester for the academic year in question.

*Refer to Appendix 3 for In-Year Transfers and Credit Issues for Year-Long Modules for further details.*

## **Section B14      Adapting assessments for students with protected characteristics**

The interests of students and/or protected characteristics shall be taken into consideration and reasonable adjustments to assessments shall be made provided that these do not compromise academic standards as expressed through the learning outcomes.

## **Section B15      Assessment of students with additional support requirements**

The University encourages students to disclose any disability or additional need at pre-entry, enrolment or during the period of their study. Students, who have formally notified the University of an underlying disability, condition or chronic illness, shall normally have agreed a formal Learning Agreement with Student Services and academic staff to provide additional support for learning and assessment, as required.

Where the student's disability is of a temporary nature or the result of an emergency (eg a broken bone), a Learning Agreement may be approved for a specified time period.

A Learning Agreement shall be arranged on an individual basis as a reasonable adjustment for students who may otherwise be disadvantaged by a temporary or permanent disability or additional need, whether temporary or permanent, provided that this does not compromise the validity of the assessment or assessment methods. Any alternative assessment method that is approved shall be capable of assessing the same learning outcomes by alternative means and capable of being implemented, within the provisions available to the University.

Where students require a deferral or extension for an assessment or simply wish to inform programmes of their extenuating circumstances, they should do so in accordance with the *Extenuating Circumstances Policy*.

Refer to the *Learning Agreements Policy* and *Exams Regulations* for further details.

## **Section B16      Retention of students' assessments**

Students' work shall not normally be retained except in the following circumstances:

- a) the Independent Study (Dissertation) for taught Masters programmes. In all cases, the student shall be required to submit a corrected electronic version only to the University. For further details, please refer to *Masters' Dissertation – Presentation Guidelines*. The Programme Leader has discretion to select some dissertations to be retained in Faculty archives or resource libraries with open access to all staff and students. The Dissertations shall normally be retained for between 3 and 5 years. But the University retains the right to dispose of them if it deems necessary or desirable;
- b) Where Programmes wish to retain any other assessment by an individual student as an exemplar for other students, they shall obtain written permission from the student concerned. Work retained, in this way, shall normally be disposed of after 5 years.

## **SECTION C      MARKING AND MODERATION PROCESSES**

### **Section C1      Marking Scheme**

The University operates separate marking schemes for:

- a) modules at level 3 – 6;
- b) modules at level 7;
- c) modules at level 8

All marks and grades for modules at L3 – 8 inclusive are provisional until confirmed by an Exam Board, usually held at the end of the academic year or 12-month period of study.

Please refer to Appendix 2 for a full range of the marks and grades used by markers when grading work as well as the grades used on transcripts to indicate the status of modules, where the final outcome is pending or the module has not been passed.

## **Section C2            Marking process**

All marking shall be personalised: anonymous marking shall only be permitted with the approval of Academic Regulations, Policies and Procedures Committee and normally only where required by a PSRB. Please refer to Appendix 8 for the University's Personalised Marking Policy for further details.

Markers shall record a substantive mark on all assessments, even if they know that the mark for an assessment shall be capped. This provides feedback to the student and is also required if a student were to successfully appeal against an Exam Board decision to cap a mark and subsequently be awarded a substantive mark.

## **Section C3            Moderation: Internal and External**

Internal moderation is a process separate from that of marking and provides assurance that assessment criteria have been applied appropriately, reflecting the shared understanding of the markers.

External moderation is achieved via scrutiny by External Examiners of assessments, marking criteria and processes and Exam Board processes. For details of the sample of work to be seen by External Examiners, please refer to the *External Examiners of Taught Programmes – Policy and Procedures*.

Additional internal and external scrutiny is also effected by (re)validation of programmes when programmes, learning and teaching and assessments are reviewed by a panel of internal academic staff and students and external academics and professionals.

Please refer to Appendix 7 for regulations governing the process of moderation, reconciliation of marking differences and how students may lodge an appeal concerning the marking and/or moderating process.

*(NB Students cannot appeal against the academic judgement of a marker.)*

## **Section C4            Marking time**

Marking of student work is an activity which is a normal part of the duties of academic staff, except during authorised leave, public/statutory holidays and University closure days. It is not driven by the semester dates which apply to student attendance and shall not be delayed by student vacation periods.

All coursework, practical assessments, exams and Extended Independent Studies (EISs) due to be submitted or completed during teaching weeks shall be single marked, double marked or moderated (as appropriate) within 15 working days of the published submission date<sup>1</sup> or with the permission of the Dean (for example, where staff are officially on leave).

Work does not need to be seen by the External Examiner before being returned to students.

Details of the requirements for scrutiny by External Examiners can be found in the *External Examiners of Taught Programmes – Policy and Procedures*.

An exception to the marking turnaround times detailed above is the Independent Study (IS) for Masters programmes, which is due to be submitted on either the last working day of September or the first working day of February, shall be double marked and normally returned to the student within 6 weeks of the published submission date.

## **Section C5            Return of work to students**

Work shall normally be returned to students with feedback and the final mark (for summative assessments) as soon as it has been marked/moderated with the exception of the following:

- a) the final assessment for a module shall normally be returned to students within 20 working days unless this falls within the vacation period, in which case the work shall be returned during week 1 of semester 2 (for semester 1 assessments) or during week 13 (for semester 2 assessments);

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<sup>1</sup> Excluding days when the University is closed as a result of statutory or closure days (eg period between Christmas and New Year).

- b) where students are on placement, the programme may return the work after the placement has been completed;
- c) work due to be submitted during the semester 2 assessment period shall normally be single marked, double marked or moderated (as appropriate) and returned to students with feedback and the final mark (for summative assessments) during the Student Advice Week/Days following submission with the exception of failed work requiring a second attempt, which shall be returned as soon as possible and no later than Tuesday of week 4 of the summer vacation;
- d) the Extended Independent Study (EIS) - programmes may return the marked EIS to students as late as Student Advice Week unless the work has failed, in which case it shall be returned as soon as possible after marking and no later than the date set in the Exam Board Guidelines for work requiring resubmission during the summer vacation although the date for resubmission shall reflect the amount of remedial work required to bring the work to a pass level;
- e) assessments which are being investigated following an allegation of poor academic practice or academic misconduct. If the investigation is still on-going at the point when the assessment is due to be returned, the Academic Conduct Officer shall inform the student that the work is being investigated in accordance with the *Academic Misconduct Policy*;
- f) in cases of staff illness, the Department shall publish a deferred return date at the earliest opportunity. Where staff illness continues for more than 10 working days, the Department shall investigate alternative markers.

#### **Section C6            Personalised Feedback for Assessments**

Personalised feedback shall be provided on all assessments, with the exception of formal written exams.

#### **Section C7            Feedback – format and purpose**

Feedback on all cover sheets for coursework shall normally either be typed or recorded using audio/visual software or equivalent. Additionally, feedback may be incorporated into the assessment: this may be handwritten, typed or recorded using audio/visual software or equivalent, as appropriate.

In addition to personalised feedback on the cover sheet and in the body of the assessment, Programmes may provide additional feedback in one or more of the following forms as appropriate for the assessment/subject:

- a) discussion in class;
- b) generic feedback delivered electronically for example via the LN.

Opportunities shall also be provided for students to discuss feedback and/or seek clarification in person with the module leader/marker(s).

#### **Section C8            Queries about marks transcription errors or marking procedures**

Queries about marks, feedback, transcription errors or marking procedures should be raised at the time of the assessment or as soon as possible after assessments are returned.

Students cannot request that an assessment be remarked, moderated or submitted to the External Examiner. Details about the University's policy with regard to marking and moderation can be found in Appendices 7 and 8 of these Regulations.

#### **Section C9            Academic misconduct, including plagiarism and poor academic practice**

Where a marker or student believes that they have identified an instance of poor academic practice, plagiarism or other form of academic misconduct, the marker shall investigate the matter fully in accordance with the *Academic Misconduct Policy* and the student shall pass the relevant details to their Faculty Office or the RKE Centre who shall refer the matter to an Academic Conduct Officer.

## **SECTION D      AWARD CALCULATION PROCESSES AND EXAM BOARD PROCESSES**

### **Section D1      Calculation of module results**

The mark for each assessment, entered on the University's student record system (SITS), shall always be a whole number. Where an assessment is made of two or more elements, each element shall normally be entered separately on the University's student record system (SITS) and the final mark shall be calculated as an aggregate of the marks for all of the elements, based on the weightings set forth in the module description. In cases, where this is not desirable or practicable, the programme shall be responsible for combining marks for two or more elements and round the result to a whole number.

The rule for rounding to a whole number for assessments with multiple elements and for overall module results calculated by SITS is as follows:

- a) If first digit immediately following the decimal place is 4 or lower then no change is made to whole number and the numbers to the right of the decimal place are removed (thus 44.49 would become 44)
- b) If the digit immediately following the decimal place is 5 or higher then add one to the digit to the left of the decimal place and all numbers to the right of the decimal place are removed (thus 44.51 would become 45)

Where a module is graded Pass/Fail only, no mark shall be allocated and the result will not contribute to the calculation for award classification.

### **Section D2      Award of Credit**

Students are required take modules in accordance with the pathway defined for their programme. Students are awarded credit for all modules for which they successfully complete the assessment and other specified requirements as stated in the Programme Specification and Module Description.

Where a student is permitted to retake a module, either via repeat study or trail fail, for which credit and/or marks have already been received, any previously received credit and/or marks shall no longer count as part of the student's academic profile for the programme but will appear on the student's transcript. The student is also required to attend and retake all elements of the repeated module(s) and submit new work for all assessments when they repeat study. However, a student may only be required to submit the assessments if they are permitted to trail fail without attendance. This shall be confirmed between the Programme and the student. See also Section C of the *Academic Regulations for Taught Programmes* for details about trail fails and assessment.

Students may apply to audit one or more modules but they shall confirm their intention to audit the module within two weeks of starting it. No credit may be given for audited modules, although they shall be recorded on intermediate and final transcripts. Approval for a student's request to audit a module is at the discretion of the Module Tutor.

### **Section D3      Calculation of awards, classifications and upgrade rules, exit awards**

The *Academic Regulations for Taught Programmes* defines the credit requirements for awards and the award calculation rules. Programmes may set additional requirements that specific-named modules shall be included.

The method for calculating a final award shall be to calculate the result correct to a whole number, using the same rounding method as described above.

### **Section D4      Compensation**

Except when forbidden by accreditation, the Faculty Exam Board has discretion to compensate failure in one optional or mandatory module at levels 4, 5, 6 or 7, provided that the student has met the following conditions:

- a) no more than one module worth up to 20 credits has been failed at that level;

- b) a module mark of no more than 10 marks below the minimum pass mark defined for that level in the Appendix 2 of the *Assessment Regulations* has been achieved for the failed module;
- c) all the other modules required to be taken for the programme at that level have been passed;
- d) the learning outcomes required for that level of study have been achieved.

The module may be compensated whether or not the student is permitted a second attempt.

Compensation may not be applied for work that is not submitted, unless covered by valid evidence of extenuating circumstances.

The mark for the failed assessment(s) shall remain unchanged; instead the overall mark for the compensated module(s) shall be capped at the minimum pass mark and shall be clearly identified on the student's transcript.

The student may elect not to accept the compensation and may request permission to submit a second attempt for the assessment or retake the module(s) for a substantive mark, provided that they have not already been offered an opportunity to do so. This might involve a repeat period of study. The deadline for such requests shall normally be within 15 working days of the date of the letter confirming the decision of the Exam Board.

#### **Section D5 Compensation on Grounds of Extenuating Circumstances**

The Faculty Exam Board has, in exceptional cases, wider discretion to compensate at all levels for failure due to mitigating circumstances where valid evidence of extenuating circumstances has been received and where there is sufficient evidence from other assessments to satisfy the Departmental or Collaborative Partner Exam Board of the students' understanding of the subject matter and that the student has met the learning outcomes of the module(s) affected.

Where an assessment mark is compensated on concessionary grounds, the assessment element **shall** be raised to the minimum pass mark appropriate to the level of the module without restricting the final mark for the module.

There is no limit to the number of modules that may be compensated on concessionary grounds as long as the Exam Board is satisfied that the student has demonstrated the ability to work at an appropriate level in the pathway for which they are registered and that they have met all learning outcomes. The advantage to the student is that they are not required to (re)submit or (re)take assessments or modules.

The student may elect not to accept the compensation and may wish to reattempt the assessment or retake the module(s) for a true mark. This might involve a repeat period of study.

### **SECTION E ROLE OF EXAM BOARDS AND EXTERNAL EXAMINERS**

#### **Section E1 Role of Exam Boards**

Exam Boards are Sub-Committees of Senate with delegated responsibility for ratifying marks and taking decisions regarding progression and the award of qualifications.

The University normally operates a two-tier Exam Board process. The 'upper' tier, at Faculty level shall, on the basis of ratified marks received from the relevant Departmental Boards, take decisions concerning progression and the award of qualifications for all students within a cohort on a named programme or group of programmes. The 'lower' tier, at Departmental level shall ratify marks for modules within a programme or group of programmes. In some cases, both boards shall be combined into a single meeting and, in such cases, the Faculty Board shall take decisions concerning modules results as well as progression and award.

The Faculty Exam Board is chaired by the Dean of Faculty and attended by the Faculty External Examiner.

The Departmental Exam Board is chaired by the Head of Department and attended by the relevant Programme External Examiner(s).

In some cases, the Faculty Exam Board will take on the role of both tiers and confirm module results as well as awards/progression. In these cases, the relevant Programme External Examiners shall normally attend in place of the Faculty External Examiner.

The timings, details and conduct for Exam Boards are published annually in the *Conduct of Exam Boards for Taught Programmes including Collaborative Partners - Guidelines* published on the University Intranet.

## **Section E2            Role of External Examiner**

The criteria and procedures to be followed for the appointment of External Examiners for taught programmes and their responsibilities and duties may be found in the *External Examiners of Taught Programmes – Policy and Procedures*.

## **SECTION F COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS**

Students who wish to complain may do so in accordance with the *Complaints Policy*.

Students have a right to appeal against the decision of the Exam Board only in accordance with the *Academic Appeals Regulations*.

While a student may disagree with the academic judgement of the Faculty Exam Board, Panel of Examiners/Assessors or individual member of staff, they cannot complain or appeal with reference to academic judgement.

Please refer to Section 2 of the *Academic Appeals Regulations* for further details about possible grounds for appeal and deadlines for submitting an appeal.

## APPENDIX 1      QUALIFICATION DESCRIPTORS

### Qualification Descriptors

Each programme is required to provide a programme-specific qualification descriptor for the final award and any exit qualifications, associated with the programme, in their Programme Specification. These descriptors comply with the Qualification Descriptors defined by the QAA in *The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies* in the *UK Quality Code for Higher Education Higher Education Part A: Setting and Maintaining Academic Standards* October 2014.

### Descriptor for a Higher Education Qualification at Level 8

Doctoral degree graduates are required to meet this descriptor in full.

A Doctoral degree (Level 8 Qualification) is awarded to students who have demonstrated:

- a) the creation and interpretation of new knowledge, through original research or other advanced scholarship, of a quality to satisfy peer review, extend the forefront of the discipline, and merit publication and/or public performance and other public dissemination.;
- b) a systematic acquisition and understanding of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of an academic discipline or area of creative or professional practice;
- c) the general ability to conceptualise, design and implement a project for the generation of new knowledge, applications or understanding at the forefront of the discipline, and to adjust the project design in the light of unforeseen problems;
- d) a detailed understanding of applicable techniques for research and advanced academic enquiry.

Typically, holders of the qualification shall be able to:

- e) make informed judgements on complex issues in specialist fields, often in the absence of complete data, and be able to communicate their ideas and conclusions clearly and effectively to specialist and non-specialist audiences
- f) continue to undertake pure and/or applied research and development at an advanced level, contributing substantially to the development of new techniques, ideas or approaches.

And holders shall have:

- g) the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and largely autonomous initiative in complex and unpredictable situations, in professional or equivalent environments.

### Descriptor for a Higher Education Qualification at Level 7

Masters degree graduates are required to meet this descriptor in full.

A Masters degree (Level 7 qualification), is awarded to students who have demonstrated:

- a) a systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of their academic discipline, field of study, or area of creative or professional practice;
- b) originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline;
- c) conceptual understanding that enables the student to:
- d) evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline;
- e) evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses;



- f) a comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship.

Typically, holders of the qualification shall be able to:

- g) deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgments in the absence of complete data, and communicate their conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences
- h) demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level
- i) continue to advance their knowledge and understanding, and to develop new skills to a high level.
- j) And holders shall have:
- k) the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:
  - i) the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility
  - ii) decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations
  - iii) the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development.

### **Descriptor for a Higher Education Qualification at Level 6**

Holders of a Bachelor's degree with Honours are required to meet the descriptor in full. The descriptor may also be used as a reference point for other qualifications at level 6 including Pass degree and Graduate Diplomas.

Bachelor's degrees with Honours are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

- a) a systematic understanding of key aspects of their field of study, including acquisition of coherent and detailed knowledge, at some of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of defined aspects of a discipline;
- b) an ability to deploy accurately established techniques of analysis and enquiry within a disciplines;
- c) conceptual understanding that enables the student to:
  - i) devise and sustain arguments, and/or to solve problems, using ideas and techniques, some of which are at the forefront of a disciplines;
  - ii) describe and comment upon particular aspects of current research, or equivalent advanced scholarship, in the discipline;
- d) an appreciation of the uncertainty, ambiguity and limits of knowledge;
- e) the ability to manage their own learning, and to make use of scholarly reviews and primary sources (for example, refereed research articles and/or original material appropriate to the discipline);

Typically, holders of the qualification shall be able to:

- f) Apply the methods and techniques that they have learned to review, consolidate, extend and apply their knowledge and understanding, and to initiate and carry out projects;
- g) Critically evaluate arguments, assumptions, abstract concepts and data (that may be incomplete), to make judgement, and to frame appropriate questions to achieve a solution – or identify a range of solutions – to a problem;
- h) Communicate information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialist and non-specialist audiences;

And holders shall have:

- i) The qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:
  - i) the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility;
  - ii) decision marking in complex and unpredictable contexts;

- iii) the learning ability needed to undertake appropriate further training of a professional or equivalent nature.

### **Descriptor for a Higher Education Qualification at Level 5**

Holders of a Diploma of Higher Education or Foundation Degree are required to meet the descriptor in full.

Diplomas of Higher Education and Foundation Degrees are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

- a) knowledge and critical understanding of the well-established principles of their area(s) of study, and of the way in which those principles have developed
- b) ability to apply underlying concepts and principles outside the context in which they were first studied, including, where appropriate, the application of those principles in an employment context;
- c) knowledge of the main methods of enquiry in the subject(s) relevant to the named award, and ability to evaluate critically the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems in the field of study;
- d) an understanding of the limits of their knowledge, and how this influences analyses and interpretation based on that knowledge;

Typically, holders of the qualification shall be able to:

- e) use a range of established techniques to initiate and undertake critical analysis of information and to propose solutions to problems arising from that analysis;
- f) effectively communicate information, arguments and analysis in a variety of forms to specialist and non-specialist audiences and deploy key techniques of the discipline effectively;
- g) undertake further training, develop exiting skills and acquire new competences that will enable them to assume significant responsibility within organisations;

And holders shall:

- h) The qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of some personal responsibility and decisions making

### **Descriptor for a Higher Education Qualification at Level 4**

Holders of a Certificate of Higher Education are required to meet the descriptor in full.

Certificates of Higher Education (level 4) are to students who have demonstrated:

- a) knowledge of the underlying concepts and principles associated with their area(s) of study and an ability to evaluate and interpret these within the context of that area of study;
- b) an ability to present, evaluate and interpret qualitative and quantitative data, in order to develop lines of argument and make sound judgments in accordance with basic theories and concepts of their subject(s) of study

Typically, holders of the qualification shall be able to:

- c) Evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems related to their area(s) of study and/or work
- d) Communicate the results of their/work accurately and reliably, and with structured and coherent argument
- e) Undertake further training and develop new skills with a structured and managed environment

And holders shall:

- f) The qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of some personal responsibility

## APPENDIX 2 MARK SCHEME AND GRADE DESCRIPTORS FOR LEVELS 3 - 8

### Pass Grades and Marks for Levels 3 – 8

Table 1 Pass Grades and the equivalent percentage mark range

Level 3 – 6 Minimum pass mark is 40%		Level 7 Minimum pass mark is 50%		Level 8
A / AQ	70% or above	PD / PDQ	70% or above	UP an ungraded Pass *
B / BQ	60 – 69%	PM / PMQ	60% - 69%	
C / CQ	50 – 59%	P / PQ	50 – 59%	
D / DQ	40 – 49%	UP / UPQ	ungraded Pass for Pass / Fail modules *	
UP / UPQ	ungraded Pass for Pass / Fail modules *			

\* *Ungraded Passes (UP) shall have no accompanying percentage mark.*

#### A Pass grade immediately followed by a 'Q', eg 'DQ', 'PQ' or 'UPQ':

indicates a module which is an overall pass but which contains one or more assessments which have failed the qualifying mark for that assessment but the Exam Board has confirmed that the student has met the learning outcome(s) of the failed assessment(s) elsewhere.

#### A substantive mark:

reflects the student's actual achievement and may be anything between 0 – 100%. A substantive mark is awarded for the first attempt at an assignment or exam (unless the assessment is graded Pass/Fail only). It may also be awarded for a second attempt if the student is deemed to have valid extenuating circumstances, as approved via the University's [Extenuating Circumstances Policy](#)

#### A capped mark:

is the mark awarded for a late submission or a second attempt following failure or non-submission. All work must be given an indicative mark but where the student is submitting a second attempt (following failure or non-submission) or repeating a module, the mark recorded on their transcript will normally be 'capped' at the minimum pass mark for that level. Where a module is to be capped, then each assessment for that module shall be capped before the overall module result is calculated, ie the University shall not aggregate the indicative marks and then cap the module result.

### Other Grades

- L** indicates that this is a first attempt at an assessment, which has an approved extension and when the mark is received, it will be for a substantive mark
- M** indicates that this is a second attempt at an assessment, which has an approved extension but the mark may be for a substantive or capped mark (to be specified by the Exam Board).
- R** Indicates a failed assessment/module for which the student is permitted to submit a second attempt for a capped mark.
- Q/QF<sup>2</sup>** **Q** Indicates a module which, although it has achieved an overall pass mark, contains one or more assessments which have failed the qualifying mark for that assessment (as detailed in the Module Description) and the student is permitted a second attempt to pass the failed

<sup>2</sup> *Q grades only apply to modules which have two or more summative assessments.*

*Q grades do not apply to modules passed on aggregate or modules with only one summative assessment.*

assessment(s). For instance, some programmes set requirements for a minimum mark of 35% or 40% for each piece of assessment.

**QF** Indicates a module which is an overall pass but which contains one or more assessments which have failed the qualifying mark for that assessment and for which no second attempt is permitted.

The Departmental/Collaborative Partner Exam Board may replace the Q or QF grade with the pass grade appropriate to the aggregate mark, followed by a Q, if they are satisfied that the student has met the learning outcomes of the failed assessment(s) in one or more other modules at the same level or above. Where the Q or QF grade is changed to a pass grade, the pass grade shall be followed by the letter 'Q' as detailed in the table above.

(Because the compensation regulation only applies to modules with an overall mark below the minimum pass mark, modules with grade Q or QF cannot be compensated.)

**F** Indicates a failed assessment/module for which no opportunity for a second attempt exists.

**FA** Indicates a failed assessment/module due to an infringement of the programme-specific Attendance Rules. This grade shall normally only be applied where the attendance rules relate to a PSRB requirement or a Health & Safety issue.

**T** Transferred to another programme before completion of the assessment/module

**W** Indicates that a student withdrew from the module before completion.

**AP** Indicates that there is a case of alleged plagiarism against an assessment within the module. This code is only used when the alleged plagiarism is under investigation (refer to the University's *Academic Misconduct Policy* for further details). If the alleged plagiarism is not proven, then the module grade will be changed to that appropriate to the aggregate mark by senior Registry staff.

**PR/PF** Indicates a case of plagiarism proven through the University's *Academic Misconduct Policy*. Used only by senior Registry staff. (The assessment shall be given a mark 1% to indicate work was submitted.)

**CP** Indicates that the module was a compensated pass.

**CN** Indicates that one or more of the assessments for the module was compensated due to concessions.

## Grade Point Average

Once the weighted mean average of module marks has been calculated, according to Award Calculation Rules defined in the *Academic Regulations for Taught Programmes*, this shall be converted to the equivalent grade point score to provide a cumulative Grade Point Average.

**Table 1** Grade point scores and the equivalent percentage mark range

Grade point score	Percentage mark range	Grade point score	Percentage mark range
4.25	75 +	2.25	48 – 49
4.00	71 – 74	2.00	43 – 47
3.75	67 – 70	1.50	40 – 42
3.50	64 – 66	1.00	38 – 39
3.25	61 – 63	0.75	35 – 37
3.00	57 – 60	0.50	30 – 34
2.75	54 – 56	0.00	29 or less
2.50	50 – 53		

## Grade Descriptors for marks achieved at Levels 3 - 6

The grading descriptors that follow offer representations of achievement by marks from 100 to 0. The pass mark for modules which accrue credit at levels 3 – 6 is 40%.

Programmes and subjects may enhance these criteria to meet the specific requirements of the subject and, where relevant, professional bodies.

### **Grade A\*** **80-100%**

Work at this level which demonstrates:

- a) an outstanding mastery of the material;
- b) a high level of awareness of the controversies and critical standpoints and present a sustained analytical argument;
- c) genuine insights and present a constructive, independent and original line of thought.

The candidate will relate the topic under consideration to wider issues, and make valid generalisation in moving from the empirical to the abstract.

Correct referencing techniques will be used throughout.

(Staff and students should note that the A\* grade may be used on coversheets and assignments as part of the feedback process. A mark of 80% and above will not be distinguished from a mark of between 70- 79% on the University's student records system and will show as an A grade only)

### **Grade A** **70-79%**

Work at this level which demonstrates:

- a) mastery of the material;
- b) awareness of the controversies and critical standpoints and the ability to sustain an analytical argument;
- c) genuine insights and show the ability to develop a constructive, independent or original line of thought.

The student will show recognition of how the topic under consideration relates to wider issues, and an ability to make valid generalisations in moving from the empirical to the abstract.

Correct referencing techniques will be used throughout.

**Grade B** **60-69%**

Work at this level which demonstrates:

- a) good knowledge of the material;
- b) a high level of competence in knowledge and analysis;
- c) awareness of controversies or critical standpoints and the ability to make appropriate connections and distinctions.

It falls short of First Class through failure to sustain a high level of perception or of original thought, and is distinguished from Second Class (Lower Division) by the grasp and insight it shows and the adroitness of its argument.

**Grade C** **50-59%**

Work at this level which demonstrates:

- a) sound knowledge of the material;
- b) an average capacity to advance a case and to deploy information, though without sophisticated analysis.

Work might be placed in this category if an essentially descriptive approach combined with soundness of argument and competent coverage of the topic.

**Grade D** **40-49%**

Work at this level which demonstrates:

- a) some, though possibly superficial, knowledge.
- b) recognition of the main implications of a question, but it would tend to adopt a factual and descriptive (rather than analytical or interpretative) approach.

Work at this level is likely to be adequate but undistinguished and limited in awareness or incomplete in treatment of topic.

**Fail Grades** **<40%**

Students awarded a mark below 40% at the first attempt shall normally be permitted a second attempt to achieve a capped mark of 40%, a grade D.

**Grade F** **35-39%**

Work in this mark range which is normally characterised by some weakness in one or more of the following areas:

- a) a level of failure to fully consider the questions set;
- b) some inadequacy of material or knowledge;
- c) an inability to fully advance or defend a coherent argument based on sufficiently relevant or detailed evidence.

Inadequacy of expression may bring a Grade D answer into this category.

**Grade F** **2-34%**

Work at this level which is characterised by one or more of the following weaknesses:

- a) total failure to consider the questions set;
- b) gross inadequacy of expression, material or lack of knowledge;
- c) inability to advance and defend a coherent argument based on relevant evidence

**Grade F** **1%**

This mark indicates the work has been submitted but was failed on grounds of one of the following:

- a) poor academic practice;
- b) proven academic misconduct;
- c) second attempt submitted after the deadline;
- d) corrupt, unreadable files or incorrect format submitted for eSubmission.

**Grade F** **0%**

Work not submitted.

**Grade Descriptors for marks achieved at Level 7**

The grading descriptors that follow offer representations of achievement by marks from 100 to 0. The pass mark for modules which accrue level 7 credit is 50%.

**Grade PD (Pass with Distinction) 100 - 70%**

An outstanding piece of work in every regard which demonstrates:

- a) a thorough and wide-ranging knowledge of the subject
- b) a thorough and insightful understanding of the issues involved
- c) an ability to analyse critical contributions on the subject
- d) an ability to independently research and bring together material to support an argument
- e) an ability to express an original, reasoned argument in a lucid manner
- f) an ability to make valid generalisations in moving from the empirical to the abstract
- g) excellent research competencies in terms of presentation, language and referencing.

**Grade PM (Pass with Merit) 69 – 60%**

A very good piece of work which demonstrates:

- a) a detailed knowledge of the subject
- b) a well developed knowledge of the critical contributions on the subject
- c) an ability to use and organise research material in a focussed manner
- d) good analytical skills combined with careful, systematic coverage of the topic
- e) detailed research in terms of presentation, language and referencing
- f) an ability to make appropriate connections and distinctions and present a clear, convincing argument.

**Grade P (Pass) 59 - 50%**

A good piece of work which demonstrates:

- a) a sound to reasonable understanding of the subject and the issues involved
- b) a good knowledge to general familiarity of the critical contributions on the subject
- c) an ability to use and organise research material to support ideas and arguments
- d) sound analytical skills combined with competent coverage of the topic
- e) good to competent research competencies in terms of presentation, language and referencing
- f) at the upper end of the scale, students may also demonstrate an ability to make appropriate connections and distinctions and present a clear, convincing argument.

**Fail Grades > 50%**

Students awarded a mark below 50% at the first attempt shall normally be permitted a second attempt to achieve a capped mark of 50%, a grade P.

**Grade F 49 – 2%**

Work at the upper end of this scale which demonstrates:

- a) a general, but incomplete understanding of the subject
- b) some knowledge of the literature on the subject
- c) some ability to develop and support an argument
- d) a tendency to express ideas through description and anecdote rather than analysis
- e) difficulties with presentation, language and referencing.

Work at the lower end of this scale which shall be unsatisfactory and demonstrates:

- a) little understanding of the subject and its implications
- b) a limited amount of reading and poor knowledge of the previous contributions on the subject
- c) limited ability to formulate and sustain a clear argument
- d) poor presentation skills and serious problems with language and referencing.

**Grade F 1%**

This mark indicates the work has been submitted but was failed on grounds of one of the following:

- a) poor academic practice;
- b) proven academic misconduct;
- c) second attempt submitted after the deadline;
- d) corrupt, unreadable files or incorrect format submitted for eSubmission.

**Grade F 0%**

Work not submitted.

**Grade Descriptors for Level 8**

Assessments at level 8 are graded pass/fail only and shall have no accompanying percentage mark. Results shall be recorded as follows:

**UP Ungraded Pass**

**F Fail**

Programme Leaders may adopt specific criteria for individual assignments, as appropriate.



## **APPENDIX 3      IN-YEAR TRANSFERS AND CREDIT ISSUES FOR YEAR-LONG MODULES**

### **Resolving Credit Issues for In-Year Transfers**

- 3.1 Full-time undergraduate students shall complete 120 credits each academic year. Part-time undergraduate students shall complete the modules for which they are registered by the end of week 2 of each semester.
- 3.2 Where the Programme deems it impossible to divide a year-long module, they shall make this clear to all parties and ensure that this is taken into account when responding to a student's request to transfer. This may require a student to undertake additional study in order to effect their transfer.
- 3.3 If a student is transferring mid-year, they shall complete all Semester 1 modules as originally registered (ie they shall complete assessments whether these are scheduled in semester 1 and/or 2 if the module itself runs only in semester 1).
- 3.4 Students who do not complete the module shall be deemed to have failed the module and this may mean that they are unable to proceed/graduate if they have an incomplete profile for the current academic year as a result.

### **Year-long modules with assessment split 50:50 over the two semesters**

- 3.5 If the student is part-way through a year-long module, they shall agree with the PL, who owns the module, whether they shall either:
  - a) complete that module and all assessments as scheduled in the module handbook; or
  - b) be permitted to complete 50% of the assessment and be credited with half the normal credits for that module (eg 15 credits of a 30 credit module).
- 3.6 If the student wishes to transfer into a year-long module, they must agree with the PL, who owns the module, whether the student shall either:
  - a) be required and supported to catch-up on missed teaching and complete the module and all assessments as scheduled in the module handbook; or
  - b) be required and supported to complete 50% of the assessment and be credited with half the normal credits for that module (eg 15 credits of a 30 credit module).

### **Year-long modules with assessment split unevenly over the two semesters**

- 3.7 Where a module does not split the assessments evenly over the academic year, the Programme Leader, who owns the module, shall decide whether the student shall either:
  - a) complete the module as required in the module handbook; or
  - b) be given an individually customised assessment to enable them to complete 50% of the assessment load and be credited with half the normal credits for that module (eg 15 credits of a 30 credit module)

### **Customised Assessments**

- 3.8 Customised assessments should enable students leaving a module at the end of the semester 1 to be assessed on teaching and learning covered in semester 1 only. Students joining a module at the start of semester 2 should be assessed on teaching and learning covered in semester 2 only. Where necessary, programmes shall ensure that additional support is provided if work covered in semester 1 is necessary to the students' future studies.

For students joining a module, additional formative assessments could be used to enable the student to become familiar with the subject/programme before completing a summative assessment.

## Setting Customised Assessments: Example

### **Module has 3 assessments:**

**Ass 1 due in week 10 of S1      weighted 30%**

**Ass 2 due in week 6 of S2      weighted 30%**

**Ass 3 due in week 14 of S2      weighted 40%**

### **Leaving this module: option A**

A student leaving the module at the end of S1 might have already completed Ass1 and be set a customised assessment weighted 20% to be submitted at the end of S1 or early in S2.

Total assessment weighing = 50%. If passed, the module is credited to the student's profile with half the normal credits.

### **Leaving this module: option B**

A student leaving the module at the end of S1 who has not already completed Ass1 would be set a customised assessment weighted 50% to be submitted at the end of S1 or early in S2.

Total assessment weighing = 50%. If passed, the module is credited to the student's profile with half the normal credits.

**NB    Care needs to be taken that the student is not unduly advantaged if feedback is given on Ass1 before they have submitted their customised assessment.**

### **Joining this module: option A**

A student joining the module at the end of S1 would be set a customised assessment weighted 10% to be submitted in week 6 when other students are submitting Ass 2 and then submit Ass 3 in the normal way

Total assessment weighing = 50%. If passed, the module is credited to the student's profile with half the normal credits.

### **Joining this module: option B**

A student joining the module at the end of S1 would a customised formative assessment to be submitted in week 6 when other students are submitting Ass 2 and then submit a customised Ass 3 in week 14 and this be weighted 50% instead of the usual 40%.

Total assessment weighing = 50%. If passed, the module is credited to the student's profile with half the normal credits.

**NB    In both A and B above, care needs to be taken that the student is not unduly disadvantaged for missing teaching from semester 1.**

*The above options are suggestions for how programmes might go about customising assessments to enable students to complete 50% of the module's assessment. Programmes are welcome to vary them to suit local circumstances, assessment types, timing of events etc. In all cases, programmes shall ensure that all students affected are treated consistently and fairly.*

## Collective Responsibility

- 3.9 In all cases, the Programme Leader for the Subject/Programme being left and the Programme Leader for the Subject/Programme being joined AND the student are all responsible for ensuring that they are aware of how the transfer is being managed and that the process will ensure that the student will complete the requisite number of credits for the academic year. By signing the form, the staff

members and the student acknowledge that they understand the process and have taken steps to ensure the transfer will enable the students to complete their academic commitments.

- 3.10 If these procedures are not followed, students are unlikely to achieve sufficient credits and, if this happens, students will not be able to proceed with their studies or graduate without being required to repeat study.

Please refer to Section D3: Internal Transfers of the *Academic Regulations for Taught Programmes* for further details.

## APPENDIX 4      SETTING WORD LIMITS AND PENALTIES

### Setting Word Limits with Penalties is Optional

- 4.1 Word counts for assessments are normally defined by programmes in the individual Module Descriptions contained in the Programme's Definitive Document or in the Programme or Module Handbook. A word count is a guide to students and staff about what is expected for each assessment.
- 4.2 Word counts are not intended to be used as word limits and therefore, there is no University-wide policy for penalising students who undershoot or exceed word counts. If programmes wish to set a word limit, then they are required to follow these Regulations.
- 4.3 The Programme/Module Leader shall make the word limit and penalties clear to students:
  - a) by verbally informing the students when discussing assessments;
  - b) by including details in the Module and/or Programme Handbook.
- 4.4 Programmes may set their own penalties for equivalent infringements of time-limited or other forms of assessments eg for presentations or performances, see paragraph 4.9 below for some examples. In such cases, the Module and/or Programme Handbook shall specify these in the marking criteria for those assessments.

### Calculating the number of words

- 4.5 The Module and/or Programme Handbook shall specify the method of calculating the number of words for assessments and shall specify what must be included and excluded.
- 4.6 The following is an *example* of how this might be expressed only:

Included in the word count:

  - a) every word from the introduction to the conclusion, including headings;
  - b) quotations included in the body of the text (see also f) below);
  - c) in-line references;

Excluded in the word count:

  - d) title pages;
  - e) abstracts;
  - f) indented quotations of 3 lines or more;
  - g) bibliographies;
  - h) list of references;
  - i) footnotes/endnotes, unless excessive;
  - j) appendices (which might be confined to diagrams, tables, maps, and visual images and would normally be no more than half the size of the main work);
  - k) original diagrams, graphs, images etc (if included would normally be considered as equivalent to a ½ page of text regardless of their size ie approximately 100 words, regardless of font size.)

### Specifying Penalties

- 4.7 The Module and/or Programme Handbook shall state in the assessment criteria for each assessment whether penalties shall be imposed for exceeding and/or undershooting word limits and, where penalties will apply, must include the details of penalties:
  - a) applying to submissions for substantive marks;
  - b) applying to submissions for a capped mark;
  - c) applying to submissions for modules graded pass/fail only;

- d) whether deductions could result in the overall mark dropping below a pass;

4.8 The following infringements could incur a marking penalty:

- a) any excess and/or deficiency;
- b) an excess of 10% or more of the word limit, with no penalty for undershooting the word limit;
- c) an excess or deficiency of 10% or more of the word limit;
- d) an escalating penalty scale for greater excesses only or for greater excesses or deficiencies;
- e) omitting or recording the wrong word count.

4.9 Penalties include:

- a) where any excess is penalised, this could mean that work beyond the word limit would not be marked (although it could receive feedback);
- b) a percentage of the raw score deducted, eg 10% for a lesser infringement and 20% for a greater infringement;
- c) result capped to the minimum pass mark;
- d) automatic fail for second attempts and/or modules graded pass/fail only;
- e) omission of the word count from the cover sheet could mean work is not accepted for marking;
- f) significantly incorrect word count recorded on the cover sheet could mean work capped at minimum pass mark;

4.10 Penalties for time-limited forms of assessment (eg presentations or performances) could include:

- a) markers could cease marking once the limit is exceeded (although they could still provide feedback);
- b) a percentage of the raw score deducted, eg 10% for a short, defined infringement and 20% for a long defined infringement;
- c) result capped to the minimum pass mark;
- d) automatic fail for second attempts and/or modules graded pass/fail only.

### **Word Count Declarations**

4.11 Staff shall check the declared word count on the cover sheet against the word limit specified for that assessment: where the word count exceeds the specified word limit, the appropriate penalty shall be applied.

4.12 Word count declarations shall be checked where it appears to markers that the word limit for the assessment has been breached; in addition some assessments should be randomly selected for testing. Where an assessment is selected for testing an electronic version in Microsoft Word format shall be supplied if requested and the word count shall be checked using the latest version of Microsoft Word installed on the University computing network.

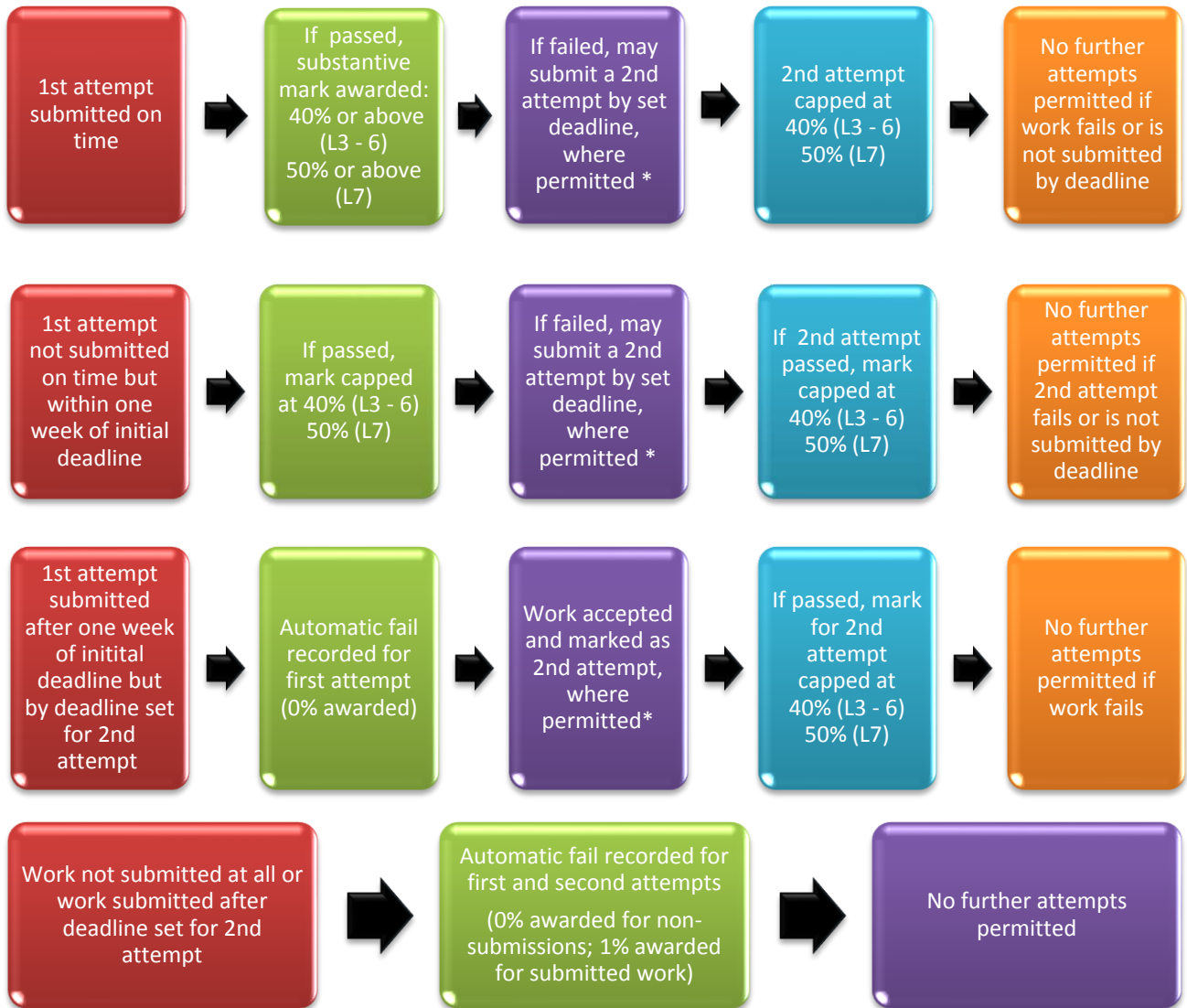
### **Second Attempts following Word Limit Penalties**

4.13 A second attempt shall not be permitted where assessments are subject to a word limit penalty, which reduces the mark to the minimum pass mark (ie 40% for L3 – 6 work / 50% for L7/8 work).

4.14 A second attempt shall be permitted where assessments fail to meet the assessment criteria for a pass at the first attempt and the failure includes a word limit penalty.

**APPENDIX 5 SUBMISSION PROCESSES FLOWCHART**

- 5.1 This flow chart illustrates the process described in paragraphs B7 – B11 of these Regulations relating to first and second attempts, including late submission, for all assessments for modules taken at the first attempt or retaken where students’ repeat study or trail fails.
- 5.2 The one week period refers to 5 working days when the University is open and may, therefore, include student vacation periods.



## APPENDIX 6      ESubmission PROCEDURES FOR COURSEWORK VIA A VLE (CANVAS)

### Communication with students on requirements for eSubmission

- 6.1 Programmes shall clearly communicate to students (via Canvas pages, Module Handbooks) the required format of all work submitted electronically and the penalties for not adhering to these requirements.
- 6.2 Identification requirements: Students shall insert their first and last name, student number, and module code (eg Ann Other 1304589 RT1701) in the header of the assignment. These three details shall be in the header of the assignment so that it appears on every page of the assignment.
- 6.3 Programmes shall normally specify their expectations/requirements, eg whether files shall be submitted in a particular format or whether they shall have a marking grid attached. Normally, this shall include standard Microsoft Office formats, as well as PDFs. Programmes shall also clearly state the penalties or marking criteria that will apply for work that does not meet clearly articulated programme requirements.
- 6.4 It is University practice to request work to be formatted as follows:
  - a) Calibri font, size 11, black type (no colours)
  - b) 1.5 line spacing
  - c) 2.5 cm margins
  - d) Page numbered throughout

### Penalties for failing to meet eSubmission requirements


- 6.5 **Corrupt or incorrect format submitted:** this includes a file that cannot be opened directly via Canvas. Where this is identified before the due date for submission is past, the student may resubmit the work. If the problem is identified following the deadline, the assessment shall be graded as a Fail and given a mark of 1% to indicate submission only.
- 6.6 **Incorrect presentation:** Marks shall normally only be deducted if presentation is specified within the marking criteria.

### Setting of submission times

- 6.7 Although eSubmission of work does allow students flexibility in when they submit their work, programmes shall not normally set assignment deadlines outside normal working hours unless there is 24 hour support available. Moreover, since some programmes require students to submit hard copies as well as electronic copies of work and both shall have the same deadline, programmes are advised to set a common deadline between 9.30 am and 3.30 pm. This prevents confusions and allows for any non-technical support from the Faculty Office in case of queries, as well as technical support from ITS, in case of a University technical failure.
- 6.8 Submission deadlines shall normally be set within semester weeks, ie Weeks 1 - 12 in semester 1 and Weeks 1 - 15 in semester 2. This is to allow the appropriate support for the students to be in place. However, if programmes would like to set a deadline during vacation periods, they may seek explicit approval for each assessment from their Programme Committee at a timetabled meeting during the previous academic year. Where unanimous agreement is granted for an explicit request, the date should be included in the appropriate Module/Programme Handbook.

### Dyslexic students

- 6.9 Students whose dyslexia has been recognised by Student Services shall use the electronic sticker and ensure that they cut and paste this into their submitted assignment in the header. The 'sticker' to be used is included here:

Student Name	
Student Number	
Module Code	

- 6.10 Attaching the sticker is advisory, but not a requirement. The responsibility rests upon the student. Identification does not advantage the student – it ensures markers target their feedback appropriately.
- 6.11 Markers shall consult the following guidance document on University Intranet page (*Information Bank > Disabilities and Learning Diversity > Legislation, Policy & Guidelines > [Assessment of work by students with Specific Learning Differences](#)*)

### **Dissertations (Extended Independent Studies and Independent Studies)**

- 6.12 Where programmes require students to submit Extended Independent Studies and Independent Studies in hard copies, they may also request an eSubmission. The requirements shall be clearly detailed in the Canvas pages or Programme/Module Handbook, as appropriate.



## APPENDIX 7 MODERATION PROCESSES

### Marking Policy

- 7.1 The requirements below are a minimum level of acceptable practice, but Departments/Programmes may moderate more than the minimum required if they feel it appropriate (eg when running a new module for the first time; when required by a professional body; or if an external examiner has expressed particular concern about the grading of a module).
- 7.2 All marking shall be personalised: anonymous marking shall only be permitted with the approval of Academic Regulations, Policies and Procedures Committee and normally only where required by a PSRB.

*Refer to Appendix 8 for Personalised Marking Policy for further details.*

### Definitions

- 7.3 The following terms relating to marking are defined by the University as follows:
- a) Moderation refers to the overall process by which the University confirms that an assessment has been marked in line with its expressed aims and learning outcomes and the marking criteria. It provides assurance for students of fairness and equality of marking and assures internal consistency of assessment within a module and a programme.
  - b) Single marking refers to the process where assessments are marked once by a single marker who may be one of a team of markers.
  - c) Double marking refers to the process by which an entire set of assessments is marked independently by two markers without knowledge of each other's grades before coming to together to seek agreement.
  - d) Moderating refers to the process by which a sample of marked work is reviewed by a moderator with sight of the first mark.
  - e) Third marking refers to the process of adjudication when two Double markers cannot agree, in which case a third internal marker is employed. The third marker should be an appropriate and experienced member of staff designated by the Programme Leader.
  - f) Anonymous marking refers to the marking of student work, which has been submitted anonymously, that is, work which is not identified by name.

### Process of Moderation

- 7.4 The first marker(s) shall normally be a member of the teaching team for the module or first supervisor for the project.
- 7.5 The moderator shall normally be a member of the teaching team for the module, or as designated by the Programme Leader. The role of the moderator is to ensure the appropriateness of the marking, taking into account consistency, fairness, application of the agreed marking scheme and academic standards. A moderator may not change marks.
- 7.6 To ensure that there is no bias in the marking procedures, all assessments submitted by a student shall normally be marked and, where required, moderated by someone who does not have a personal interest, involvement or relationship with a student being assessed. In cases where this is not possible, the following procedure shall be followed:

- a) single marked assessment: the student's assessment shall be first marked in the normal way but shall then be moderated by a moderator chosen by the Programme Leader or the Head of Department, where the Programme Leader has a personal link with the student;
- b) moderated assessment: the student's assessment shall be included in the sample if the first marker has the personal link to the student or excluded from the sample where the moderator has a personal link to the student;
- c) double-marked: the student's assessment shall be marked in the normal way

7.7 All assessments shall have clearly defined assessment criteria, as detailed in module handbooks. All markers and moderators shall have a copy of the assessment criteria and, except in the case of double marking, a full list of marks for the assessment in question (not just for the sample).

7.8 When double marking, both markers shall record their comments and signature on the assignment cover sheet (or equivalent) together with a single agreed mark.

7.8 Baseline requirements for moderation are as follows:

Assessment type	Minimum Marking requirement
Assessment at all levels which constitutes less than 20% of the module mark	Single marking
Assessment, including exams, at level 4 which constitutes 20% or more of the module mark	Moderating a sample of the failed assessments (normally 20% of the failed assessments or a minimum of 7 failed assessments, whichever is the larger); single marking only for assessments deemed a pass.
Assessment, including exams, at levels 3, 5, 6, 7, and 8 which constitutes 20% or more of the module mark	Moderating at least 20% of the work submitted or a minimum of 7 pieces of work, whichever is the larger; and a sample across all grade categories from failures to firsts/ distinctions.
Assessment which is not available for post-hoc scrutiny (eg performances, presentations etc) where part or all of the mark depends on the standard of presentation or the demonstration of practical skills	Single marking However, programmes may opt for double marking or moderating for the whole cohort or for a sample of at least 20% of the total or a minimum of 7 assessments, whichever is the larger. Where AV recordings are made to aid marking, these may also be made available to External Examiners.
Assessment of practice modules where the theoretical assessment is linked to practice and where the practice element must meet the competency standard set by professional statutory bodies	Students must be observed on separate but not necessarily successive occasions as defined in the Definitive Document for the programme and communicated to the student via the Programme Handbook or equivalent.
The Extended Independent Study (level 6), Independent Study (eg dissertations or equivalent at level 7) and any other individual assessments which contribute more than 15% to a student's overall classification	Double marking
Marking conducted by a member of staff with less than one year's marking experience at the level in question	Moderating of work marked by that person

- 7.10 Where first marking is completed by a team of markers, the sample seen by the moderator(s) shall include assessments marked by each of the first markers to ensure a comprehensive sample.
- 7.11 A sample of work is sent to External Examiners in order for them to report to the University on the soundness and fairness of the assessment process and on the standards of student achievement. External Examiners are not to be used as members of the internal examining team as part of the process of moderation. Further details may be found in the *External Examiners of Taught Programmes – Policy and Procedures* and paragraph 7.18 below.

## Reconciling Marking Differences

### Double Marking

- 7.12 Once double marking has been completed, the markers should discuss any adjustments and reach a consensus before the work is returned to the students. Markers must not just split the difference when they disagree significantly. As noted in G1.4 above, all double markers shall be recorded on the cover sheet.
- 7.13 In cases where the Double markers cannot agree a final mark, then a third internal marker should be designated by the Programme Leader<sup>3</sup>:
- The third marker shall mark the work and may discuss the marks with the double markers before making a decision;
  - In the case of assessments unavailable for post hoc scrutiny, the third marker shall normally mediate a discussion between the first two markers in an effort to resolve the difference. But if no agreement can be reached, then the third marker shall make a decision based on the comments of the first two markers;
  - In all cases, the third marker's decision shall be final;
  - Assessments referred for third marking shall normally be included in the sample sent to the External Examiner.

### Moderating

- 7.14 If the moderator believes that individual marks within the sample are not at the correct level, the moderator shall not change the individual marks for the work, but shall liaise with the first marker(s) with a view to the first marker(s) reviewing and adjusting the marking for the whole batch (ie the moderator cannot recommend the first marker to review to review marks for a proportion of the batch).
- 7.15 If the moderator finds any systematic irregularity or over-harsh/generous marking in the marking for the sample or the cohort, the overall module profile should be discussed with the first marker(s).
- 7.16 If the first marker and the moderator agree that a comprehensive review is required, this shall normally be undertaken by the first marker.
- 7.17 If there is no agreement following discussion between first marker and the moderator, then a mediator (normally the Programme Leader or Head of Academic Department if the Programme Leader is first marker or moderator) shall conduct further exploration in an effort to resolve the difference. If an agreement still cannot be reached, then the mediator shall make a decision based on the points raised in the discussion and their decision shall be final. This shall normally result in one of the following: no action being taken; the work is reviewed by the first marker or a third marker.
- 7.18 The issue and its resolution shall be reported to the External Examiner, in the usual way.

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<sup>3</sup> Where a Programme Leader is involved in the marking process, the Head of Department shall take on this role.

7.19 In the case of approved forms of assessment, which are not available for post-hoc scrutiny, Programmes shall develop, where possible, appropriate procedures that would enable the objectives of moderation set out in paragraphs 7.5 – 6 to be achieved.

7.20 Accurate and clear recording of the method and result of the reconciliation of marks shall be made available to the External Examiner to provide evidence that marking procedures have been conducted in a fair and consistent way.

#### **External Examiner**

7.21 If the External Examiner finds any systematic irregularity in the marking for the sample or the cohort, the overall module profile should be discussed with the Programme Leader to determine whether the assessments have been marked fairly and consistently in line with the expressed aims and learning outcomes and the marking criteria.

#### **Appeals Against the Marking and/or Moderation Process**

7.22 It is important for students to understand the nature of examiners' discretion and judgement when details of module marks are made available to them. The following provisions apply to the exercise of academic judgement in relation to the assessment process:

- a) assessment of a student's work is a matter of judgement, not simply of computation;
- b) marks, grades and percentages are not absolute values, but symbols used by markers to communicate their judgement of different aspects of a student's work;
- c) the academic judgements of markers cannot, in themselves, be questioned or overturned.

7.23 Students may only appeal against a mark in accordance with the criteria defined in the *Academic Appeals Regulations*.

## APPENDIX 8 PERSONALISED MARKING POLICY

- 8.1 The University 'embraces diversity amongst its members and seeks to achieve equity in the experience, progression and achievement of all students and staff through the implementation of transparent policies, practices and procedures and the provision of effective support.'<sup>4</sup>
- 8.2 To this end, the University strongly supports the need for formative and summative personalised feedback, wherever possible, while at the same encouraging students to seek advice and support for their own learning. The University believes that personalised feedback also enables students and staff to develop an open and dynamic relationship via direct communication and enables weaker students to be easily identified at an early stage when essential support can be put in place and progress monitored to ensure that their needs continue to be met throughout their studies.
- 8.3 To ensure that staff can fulfil their role in this process, the University provides staff development programmes in equality and diversity together with periodic consciousness-raising campaigns. The implementation of this Policy on Moderation and the use of clear marking criteria provide both support for staff and reassurance to all that marking standards are maintained, in accordance with the *UK Quality Code*.
- 8.4 Anonymous marking shall only be permitted with the approval of Academic Regulations, Policies and Procedures Committee and normally only where required by a PSRB.
- 8.5 In addition, it should be noted that there are many practical factors that inhibit anonymous assessment of student work, such as practical forms of assessment or small cohort sizes.

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<sup>4</sup> University's *Equality and Diversity Policy*