



# REGULATION AND CREDIT FRAMEWORK FOR THE CONFERMENT OF AWARDS

APPROVED BY ACADEMIC BOARD  
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# REGULATION AND CREDIT FRAMEWORK FOR THE CONFERMENT OF AWARDS

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## 1 Preamble

*This document incorporates and supersedes the Undergraduate and Postgraduate Academic Frameworks. All programmes contained within the Research Degrees Academic Framework and the Postgraduate Initial Teacher Education Framework will continue to operate within the provisions of those Frameworks.*

- 1.1 This document, together with the Research Degrees Academic Framework and the Postgraduate Initial Teacher Education Framework, sets out the regulations and credit framework for all awards made by the University.
- 1.2 Wherever the term 'Academic Board' appears, it refers to the Academic Board of Canterbury Christ Church University.
- 1.3 Reference to 'Level of Study' refers to the levels of study within the *UK Quality Code for Higher Education*.

## 2 Responsibility of the Academic Board

- 2.1 The Academic Board is responsible for the approval of the Regulation and Credit Framework for the Conferment of Awards, and for the approval of any amendments to this document.
- 2.2 The Academic Board is responsible for:
  - (i) the design and approval of all programmes of study and their associated awards;
  - (ii) the operation of all Boards of Examiners;
  - (iii) the assessment and examination of students;
  - (iv) the appointment of External Examiners; and
  - (v) the operation of the External Examiner system.
- 2.3 The Academic Board will establish General Regulations for the design and approval of programmes of study.
- 2.4 The Academic Board may establish Special Regulations, the purpose of which is to identify specific requirements within a named programme or programmes.
- 2.5 The Academic Board will specify the arrangement for the membership, powers, duties and conduct of Boards of Examiners.
- 2.6 The Academic Board will ensure that all arrangements in place to meet these responsibilities are reviewed on a periodic basis to determine that they remain fit-for-purpose.

- 2.7 The Academic Board may, in extraordinary circumstances, dispense with any of these Regulations, and may publish arrangements for doing so.
- 2.8 The Academic Board may in the most exceptional of cases, use its discretion to offer an award other than that determined by the Regulations where that discretion is to the benefit of the candidate.
- 2.9 The Academic Board may delegate such of its powers under these Regulations as it may from time to time see fit.
- 2.10 The exercise of such delegated powers shall on each occasion be reported to the following meeting of the delegating body as that body shall from time to time direct.

### **3 Scope of the Regulation and Credit Framework for the Conferment of Awards**

- 3.1 Unless clearly indicated otherwise, these Regulations apply to all programmes of study which lead to an Award, or to the award of credit, by Canterbury Christ Church University ('the University'), wherever they are delivered.
- 3.2 Where specific regulations are approved to apply to programmes validated after a certain date, this is clearly indicated.
- 3.3 Unless clearly indicated otherwise, these Regulations apply to all students registered at the University, irrespective of the date of registration. Where there is a previously approved Regulation or Special Regulation that confers any additional rights on a student due to the date of the student's initial registration, and continuing registration, on a programme, the student may rely upon this Regulation or Special Regulation.
- 3.4 Where specific regulations are approved to apply to particular groups of students after a certain date, this is clearly indicated.
- 3.5 In any conflict of interpretation between these Regulations and any associated procedural documents, these Regulations shall have precedence, even if this means that approved procedures cannot be completed.

### **4 Schemes**

- 4.1 The Academic Board may approve a Scheme for programmes to be grouped together. Schemes may set out arrangements for the management of the programmes, which must be followed, unless they conflict with the Regulation and Credit Framework for the Conferment of Awards or with a Special Regulation.

### **5 Modules and credit**

- 5.1 Credit is awarded for passing modules rather than specific learning outcomes.
- 5.2 Credit is awarded on the principle that 10 credits relates to a notional 100 hours of learning time.

- 5.3 Where modules carry credits, these shall be to the value of 10, 20 or 40 credits, with the following exceptions:
- (i) research degree programmes and programmes at level 8;
  - (ii) a 60 credit dissertation or extended module at the final stage of a Master's degree;
  - (iii) a 30 credit short course.
- 5.4 A programme may include modules of 10 credits, where
- (i) there is a clear academic rationale set out in the programme specification, AND
  - (ii) there are at least two 10 credit modules made available to students within the subject at the particular level.
- 5.5 Unless precluded by a Scheme, a bachelor's degree programme will offer an Individual study module worth 20 and/or 40 credits at level 6. Where a programme includes both sizes, a student will be permitted to take a maximum of 40 credits on such modules.
- 5.6 'Pass/fail only' modules may only be included at Levels 4, 5, 6 and 7, where there is clear evidence at validation that this is required to meet the employer expectation and best practice, including the requirements of professional, statutory, regulatory bodies.
- 5.7 Where modules that are classified as 'pass/fail only' are included in a classified award, the arrangements for classification will be set out in the Special Regulations, which in the case of awards at Level 5 and Level 6 must demonstrate how compensation will be applied.
- 5.8 A Master's degree will include a dissertation or extended module of 40 or 60 credits at level 7. Where a programme includes both sizes, a student will be permitted to take a maximum of 60 credits on such modules.

### **Negotiated modules**

- 5.9 Negotiated modules are modules with a set of intended learning outcomes, some or all of which will be generic, and some of which may be negotiated by students, and which have an assessment regime and assessment criteria, which can be tailored to an individual student's particular needs.
- 5.10 Negotiated modules may be validated at any level.
- 5.11 The validation process will ensure that pre-defined learning outcomes align with the generic learning outcomes in Appendix 1, contribute to the achievement and demonstration of programme learning outcomes, and do not prevent programmes from aligning with national subject reference points. Where students are permitted to negotiate some learning outcomes as part of study on a negotiated module, the validation process will ensure that there are arrangements to establish that they align with the programme learning outcomes and level descriptors.

### **Starred Modules**

- 5.12 A starred module is a stand-alone module that has not been validated as part of a programme.
- 5.13 Starred modules may be validated at levels 4, 5 and 6.
- 5.14 Starred modules are available on all programmes at levels 4, 5 and 6, unless precluded by a scheme.
- 5.15 Where starred modules are available, they are optional for a student.
- 5.16 Subject to arrangements set out at validation, a student may select one 20-credit starred module, or two 10-credit starred modules, at each level of study. A starred module will be at the same level as the remaining modules being studied in that academic year.

### **Module marks**

#### **Modules at level 7**

- 5.17 At level 7 modules are classified prior to the determination of the overall class of the award.
- 5.18 Where a module consists of more than one assessment, the validation document is to include an algorithm to demonstrate how the outcome is to be calculated.
- 5.19 Where a module is awarded with Distinction, this will be for marks of 70% and above.
- 5.20 Where a module is awarded with Merit, this will be for marks in the range of 60-69%.
- 5.21 The pass mark for a module at level 7 will be 50%.

#### **Modules at levels 4, 5 and 6**

- 5.22 At levels 4, 5 and 6 modules are not classified.
- 5.23 The pass mark for a module at level 4, 5 and 6 is 40%.
- 5.24 A module mark at levels 4, 5 and 6 is determined by calculating the weighted average of each assessment mark, except in the case of a re-sit assessment for a student who has achieved the pass mark for a module, but who has not passed one or more elements of assessment required to pass the module, in which case the greater of the original average mark or the pass mark will apply.

## **6 Programmes and pathways**

- 6.1 A programme (including those which lead to staged awards) may contain named pathways.
- 6.2 All pathways must contain:



- (i) an award title differentiated from the main award title;
  - (ii) pathway-specific intended learning outcomes that justify the use of a differentiated award title.
- 6.3 Each named programme/pathway must be distinguishable from another named programme/pathway by at least 40 credits at the level of the target award.<sup>1</sup>

## **7 Awards**

- 7.1 The University makes academic awards for the demonstration of the achievement of threshold learning outcomes.
- 7.2 An award is made by the Academic Board, on the recommendation of the Board of Examiners.
- 7.3 All Awards of the University, whether credit bearing or not programmes, are assigned to a level and will have learning outcomes set in alignment with the level descriptors, published in Appendix 1.
- 7.4 The Academic Board shall have the power at any time to deprive any holder of an award of the University following the recommendation of a Panel appointed by the Chair of the Academic Board for the purpose of reviewing the case.
- 7.5 Where APL is not precluded by special regulations, a student may satisfy the requirement of an award through accreditation of prior learning, subject to University rules on APL.
- 7.6 The Academic Board may approve awards that are additional to those set out below, as it sees fit.

### **Awards at level 8**

- 7.7 The following are approved for award by the University at Level 8 without credit:
- (i) Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (abbreviated to PhD).
- 7.8 The following credit-bearing degrees are approved for award by the University at Level 8:
- (i) Degree of Doctorate of Education (abbreviated to EdD);
  - (ii) Degree of Doctorate in Clinical Psychology (abbreviated to D. Clin. Psychol).
- 7.9 To qualify for a credit-bearing Doctorate, a student must:
- (i) pass at least 540 credits, of which at least 360 credits must be at Level 8.
- 7.10 Regulations for the conduct of Research Degrees are included in the Research Degrees Academic Framework.

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<sup>1</sup> This applies to all programmes validated after 1 September 2013

## **Awards at level 7**

7.11 The following are approved for award by the University at Level 7:

- (i) Degree of Master of Philosophy (abbreviated to MPhil)
- (ii) Degree of Master by Research (abbreviated to MA)
- (iii) Degree of Master of Arts (abbreviated to MA)
- (iv) Degree of Master of Business Administration (abbreviated to MBA)
- (v) Degree of Master in Education (abbreviated to MEd)
- (vi) Degree of Master of Music (abbreviated to MMus)
- (vii) Degree of Master in Research (abbreviated to MRes)
- (viii) Degree of Master of Science (abbreviated to MSc)
- (ix) Degree of Master of Surgery (abbreviated to MCh)
- (x) Degree of Master in Teaching and Learning (abbreviated to MTL)
- (xi) Postgraduate Diploma of Higher Education (abbreviated to PG Dip)
- (xii) Postgraduate Certificate of Higher Education (abbreviated to PG Cert)
- (xiii) Postgraduate Certificate in Education (abbreviated to PGCE)

7.12 Regulations for the award of the Degrees of Master of Philosophy and Masters by Research are included in the Research Degrees Academic Framework.

7.13 To qualify for a Master's degree (other than the Degrees of Master of Philosophy and Masters by Research), a student must:

- (i) pass at least 180 credits, of which at least 160 credits must be at level 7
- (ii) pass an extended module/dissertation at level 7.

7.14 A Board of Examiners may recommend that a student be awarded a Master's degree:

- (i) with Distinction, OR
- (ii) with Merit, OR
- (iii) Pass.

7.15 To be awarded a Master's degree with Distinction, a student must complete satisfactorily the requirements of the award and EITHER:

- (i) achieve a Distinction in 120 credits, excluding any Level 6 credits, OR
- (ii) achieve a Distinction in 60 Level 7 credits that are not part of the Postgraduate Certificate or Postgraduate Diploma curriculum.

7.16 To be awarded a Master's degree with Merit, a student must complete satisfactorily the requirements of the award and EITHER:

- (i) achieve a Merit in 120 credits, excluding any Level 6 credits, OR
- (ii) achieve a Merit in 60 Level 7 credits that are not part of the Postgraduate Certificate or Postgraduate Diploma curriculum.

7.17 To qualify for a Postgraduate Diploma students must:

- (i) pass modules to the value of 120 credits, of which at least 100 credits must be at Level 7.
- 7.18 A Board of Examiners may recommend that a student be awarded a Postgraduate Diploma:
- (i) with Distinction, OR
  - (ii) with Merit, OR
  - (iii) Pass.
- 7.19 To be awarded a Postgraduate Diploma with Distinction a student must complete satisfactorily the requirements of the award and achieve a distinction in 80 credits.
- 7.20 To be awarded a Postgraduate Diploma with Distinction, a student entering with advanced standing to the value of 60 credits at level 7 must achieve a Distinction in 60 credits that do not form part of the advanced standing, except where there are arrangements to import marks, when the student must achieve a Distinction in 80 credits.
- 7.21 To be awarded a Postgraduate Diploma with Merit a student must complete satisfactorily the requirements of the award and achieve at least a merit in 80 credits.
- 7.22 To be awarded a Postgraduate Diploma with Merit, a student entering with advanced standing to the value of 60 credits at level 7 must achieve a merit in 60 credits that do not form part of the advanced standing, except where there are arrangements to import marks, when the student must achieve a merit in 80 credits.
- 7.23 To qualify for a Postgraduate Certificate students must:
- (i) pass modules to the value of 60 credits, of which 40 credits must be at Level 7.
- 7.24 Detailed regulations for the award of a Postgraduate Certificate in Education are contained within the Postgraduate Initial Teacher Education Framework.

### **Awards at level 6**

- 7.25 The University may validate:
- (i) undergraduate single honours programmes, which are located in a single subject or a coherent interdisciplinary grouping of modules in a specific area.
  - (ii) undergraduate combined honours programmes, where students follow programmes of study in two subjects.
- 7.26 The following awards are approved for award by the University at Level 6:
- (i) Degree of Bachelor of Arts (abbreviated to BA);
  - (ii) Degree of Bachelor of Laws (abbreviated to LLB);
  - (iii) Degree of Bachelor of Music (abbreviated to BMus);

- (iv) Degree of Bachelor of Science (abbreviated to BSc);
  - (v) Graduate Diploma (abbreviated to Grad Dip);
  - (vi) Graduate Certificate (abbreviated to Grad Cert);
  - (vii) Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (abbreviated to PGCE)
  - (viii) Professional Graduate Certificate in Education and Training.
- 7.27 Regulations relating to the award of a Professional Graduate Certificate in Education and Training are included within the Lifelong Learning Modular Scheme.
- 7.28 To qualify for a Bachelor's degree with honours and to pass level 6 students must:
- (i) pass at least 360 credits of which 120 credits must be at level 6
  - (ii) pass level 5
  - (iii) pass level 4.
- 7.29 A Board of Examiners may recommend that a student be awarded a Bachelor's Degree
- (i) with First Class Honours, OR
  - (ii) with Upper Second Class Honours, OR
  - (iii) with Lower Second Class Honours, OR
  - (iv) with Third Class Honours.
- 7.30 A Board of Examiners may recommend that a student be awarded an Ordinary Degree.
- 7.31 To qualify for an Ordinary Degree, a student must:
- (i) pass at least 300 credits of which 60 credits must be at level 6
  - (ii) pass level 5
  - (iii) pass level 4.
- 7.32 In calculating the honours degree class, except where the student enters level 6 with advanced standing, the marks for each module are weighted according to their credit rating and the level of the module, with Level 6 marks weighted to Level 5 marks in the ratio 60:40.
- 7.33 For the purposes of determining whether particular module hurdles have been achieved, a module mark is rounded to the nearest integer. For the purpose of determining a classification, module marks are not rounded to the nearest integer.
- 7.34 For the Honours degree classification, except where the student enters level 6 with advanced standing, a weighted average of the marks of the best 100 credits at Level 5 and the marks of the best 100 credits at Level 6 will be used and rounded to the nearest integer, as follows:

- (i) where the final mark is 70% and above, the award of First Class Honours will be made;
- (ii) where the final mark is 60% - 69%, the award of Upper Second Class Honours will be made;
- (iii) where the final mark is 50% - 59% the award of Lower Second Class Honours will be made;
- (iv) where the final mark is 40% - 49% the award of Third Class Honours will be made.

7.35 For the Honours degree classification where the student enters level 6 with advanced standing, the degree classification is based on the average mark of the best 100 credits at Level 6.

7.36 A Board of Examiners may recommend that a student be awarded a Graduate Diploma.

7.37 To qualify for a Graduate Diploma, a student must:

- (i) pass at least 120 credits at Level 6;
- (ii) have entered the programme with a degree at level 6.

7.38 A Board of Examiners may recommend that a student be awarded a Graduate Certificate.

7.39 To qualify for a Graduate Certificate, a student must:

- (i) pass at least 60 credits of which at least 40 credits must be at Level 6 and the remainder must be at Level 5;
- (ii) have entered the programme with a degree at level 6.

7.40 Detailed regulations for the award of a Professional Graduate Certificate in Education are contained within the Postgraduate Initial Teacher Education Framework.

#### **Awards at level 5**

7.41 The following are approved for award by the University at Level 5:

- (i) Foundation Degree (abbreviated to FD);
- (ii) Diploma of Higher Education (abbreviated to Dip HE);
- (iii) Higher National Diploma (abbreviated to HND)

7.42 To qualify for a Foundation Degree and to pass level 5, a student must<sup>2</sup>:

- (i) pass at least 240 credits, of which 120 credits must be at level 5
- (ii) pass level 4

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<sup>2</sup> This applies to students entering from September 2014. The regulations for students prior to September 2014 are set out in the Foundation Degree Protocols (pre-March 2014): <http://www.canterbury.ac.uk/quality-and-standards-office/regulation-and-policy-zone/special-regulations.aspx>

- 7.43 A Board of Examiners may recommend that a student be awarded a Foundation Degree
- (i) with Distinction, OR
  - (ii) with Merit, OR
  - (iii) with a Pass.
- 7.44 The award of distinction or merit will be
- (i) awarded only where 100 credits or more are graded (as opposed to Pass/Fail)
  - (ii) based on the 100 credits that are graded, where 20 credits are Pass/Fail.
- 7.45 For the Foundation Degree classification, an average of the marks of the best 100 credits at Level 5 will be used and rounded to the nearest integer, as follows:
- (i) where the final mark is 70%-100%, the award of Distinction will be made;
  - (ii) where the final mark is 60% - 69%, the award of Merit will be made;
  - (iii) where the final mark is 40% - 59% the award of Pass will be made.
- 7.46 To qualify for a Diploma of Higher Education, a student must:
- (i) pass at least 240 credits, of which 120 credits must be at level 5
  - (ii) pass level 4.
- 7.47 To qualify for a Higher National Diploma and to pass level 5, a student must:
- (i) pass at least 240 credits, of which 120 credits must be at level 5
  - (ii) pass level 4
- 7.48 A Board of Examiners may recommend that a student be awarded a Higher National Diploma
- (i) with Distinction, OR
  - (ii) with Merit, OR
  - (iii) with a Pass.
- 7.49 For the Higher National Diploma classification, an average of the marks of the best 100 credits at Level 5 will be used and rounded to the nearest integer, as follows:
- (i) where the final mark is 70%-100%, the award of Distinction will be made;
  - (ii) where the final mark is 60% - 69%, the award of Merit will be made;
  - (iii) where the final mark is 40%-59% the award of Pass will be made.

#### **Awards at level 4**

- 7.50 The following are approved for award by the University at Level 4:
- (i) Certificate of Higher Education (abbreviated to Cert HE).
  - (ii) Higher National Certificate (abbreviated to HNC)

- 7.51 To qualify for a Certificate of Higher Education and to pass level 4 students must pass at least 120 credits, all of which must be at level 4.
- 7.52 To qualify for a Higher National Certificate and to pass level 4, a student must:
- (i) must pass at least 120 credits, all of which must be at level 4.
- 7.53 A Board of Examiners may recommend that a student be awarded a Higher National Diploma
- (iv) with Distinction, OR
  - (v) with Merit, OR
  - (vi) with a Pass.
- 7.54 For the Higher National Certificate classification, an average of the marks of the best 100 credits at Level 4 will be used and rounded to the nearest integer, as follows:
- (iv) where the final mark is 70%-100%, the award of Distinction will be made;
  - (v) where the final mark is 60%-69%, the award of Merit will be made;
  - (vii) where the final mark is 40%-59% the award of Pass will be made.

#### **Awards at Level 0**

- 7.55 The following are approved for award by the University at Level 0:
- (i) Foundation programmes
- 7.56 Students on a Level 0 programme must study modules to the value of 120 credits. Progression to Level 4 requires students to pass all modules.

#### **Award of Credit**

- 7.57 Where a student does not qualify for an Award, the University may award credit at the appropriate level.

#### **University Diplomas and Certificates**

- 7.58 The following University Awards are approved:
- (i) University Diploma;
  - (ii) University Certificate;
  - (iii) Diploma in Education and Training.
- 7.59 Regulations relating to the award of a Diploma in Education and Training are included in the Lifelong Learning Modular Scheme.
- 7.60 A programme leading to the award of a University Diploma will require a student to take modules to the value of 60 credits at levels 4, 5 or 6.
- 7.61 A programme leading to the award of a University Certificate may require a student to take modules to the value of 10, 20, 30, or 40 credits at levels 4, 5, 6 and 7.

7.62 The University may approve for award a University Certificate with an alternative designation where so required by a professional or statutory and regulatory body without alteration to these Regulations.

## **8 Progression**

### **Progression**

8.1 In order to progress from one level of an Award to the subsequent level of the Award, a student must pass all the modules that comprise the Level of the Award at which they are studying, unless one of the exceptions set out in 8.2, 8.3 and 8.5 applies.

8.2 A student studying for an undergraduate award may have compensation for a maximum of 20 credits at each level, except where compensation is excluded by Special Regulations.

8.3 A student on a Level 4 programme that comprises the first stage of an award at Level 5 of 240 credits, or the first stage of an award at Level 6 of 360 credits may trail and progress to Level 5 of the programme where:

either

(i) the student has passed 100 credits and is referred in 20 credits, but has not yet had the opportunity to exhaust all re-sit opportunities for the referred credits, because either (a) the first re-sit opportunity has been taken but not passed or (b) there are extenuating circumstances that have prevented the first re-sit opportunity from being taken;

or

(ii) the student has passed 80 credits, is referred in up to 40 credits, has achieved an average mark of 35% in each of the modules comprising the 40 credits for which the student has been referred but has not yet had the opportunity to exhaust all re-sit opportunities for the referred credits, because either (a) the first re-sit opportunity has been taken but not passed or (b) there are extenuating circumstances that have prevented the first re-sit opportunity from being taken;

and

(iii) the course of action in respect to either 8.3(i) or 8.3(ii) is not prohibited by a Special Regulation.

8.4 A student permitted to trail and progress to Level 5, who does not pass the referred credit by the end of Level 5, either directly or through compensation, will not be permitted to progress to Level 6 or to receive the target award at Level 5.

(i) Where the student has not exhausted any resit opportunity, the student may apply to interrupt the programme to complete the assessment.

(ii) Where a student has exhausted the resit opportunities, the student will be required to withdraw and will be entitled to any award and/or credits that have been gained.



- 8.5 A student on a Level 5 programme that comprises the second stage of an award at Level 6 of 360 credits, may trail and progress to Level 6 of the programme where:
- (i) the student has passed 220 credits and is referred in 20 credits, but has not yet had the opportunity to exhaust all re-sit opportunities for the referred module as a result of extenuating circumstances;
- or
- (ii) the student has passed 200 credits, is referred in up to 40 credits, has achieved an average mark of 35% in each of the modules comprising the 40 credits for which the student has been referred, but has not yet had the opportunity to exhaust all re-sit opportunities for the referred credits as a result of extenuating circumstances;
- and
- (iii) the course of action in respect to 8.5(i) or 8.5(ii) is not prohibited by a Special Regulation.
- 8.6 A student permitted to trail and progress to Level 6 as the result of extenuating circumstances at Level 5, who does not pass the referred credit by the end of Level 6, either directly or through compensation, will not be permitted to receive the target award at Level 6.
- (i) Where the student has not exhausted any resit opportunity, the student may apply to interrupt the programme to complete the assessment.
  - (ii) Where a student has exhausted the resit opportunities, the student will be required to withdraw and will be entitled to any award and/or credits that have been gained.
- 8.7 A Special Regulation will only be approved to exclude the rights of students, as set out in 8.2, 8.3 and 8.5 above, where there is clear evidence at validation that this is required to meet employer expectation and best practice, including the requirements of professional, statutory, regulatory bodies.

## **9 Compensation within undergraduate programmes**

*[The Regulations relating to compensation will apply for new Level 4 students from September 2012; Level 5 students from September 2013 and Level 6 students from September 2014.]*

- 9.1 Unless precluded by a scheme for professional regulatory purposes, compensation will apply to all undergraduate programmes.
- 9.2 Compensation does not apply to programmes at level 7.
- 9.3 Unless excluded by Special Regulations, a student who has not passed 120 credits may be eligible for compensation. A Board of Examiners can apply compensation and permit a student to progress to the next Level or gain an award if the student has:
- (i) passed modules to the value of at least 100 credits AND
  - (ii) obtained a mark of at least 35% in any failed module AND

(iii) obtained an average mark of 40% for all 120 credits studied.

9.4 In addition, a Board of Examiners must confirm that all the learning outcomes for the Level have been met.

9.5 Compensation is to be applied at the first possible opportunity, i.e. when the full profile of marks covering all 120 credits for a Level is available to the Board of Examiners.

9.6 A student will be awarded the credits for a compensated module.

9.7 The mark for a compensated module will be recorded as 40% on a transcript.

9.8 If compensation is applied then no re-sit opportunity will be granted for the failed module(s) unless a student specifically asks for this opportunity.

## **10 Accreditation of Prior Learning**

10.1 Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) may take one of two forms, Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning (APCL) and the Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL).

10.2 APL may be used either for advanced standing into a programme or for the award of credit.

10.3 All decisions relating to the APCL and APEL are subject to the oversight of the Academic Board.

10.4 Decisions regarding the APCL and APEL are a matter of academic judgement.

10.5 Both APCL and APEL are limited to 50 per cent of the credits contributing to the award, except:

- (i) where entry is being sought at the commencement of level 6 of an undergraduate degree;
- (ii) where entry is being sought to a Master's degree with an appropriate Postgraduate Diploma;
- (iii) where an exemption has been granted by the Academic Board. Approved exemptions will be identified in the Procedures for APL document.

10.6 The smallest unit for which APCL and APEL may be used is a module, except where an exemption has been granted by the Academic Board.

10.7 Achievement used for APCL and APEL is to have occurred during the previous five years. Where the claim is made using APCL, the five-year period is from the date that the award is made.

### **Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning**

10.8 APCL does not result in the award of credits by the University, unless specifically approved by the Academic Board.

10.9 Students using APCL for Advanced Standing may use credits that have already been used for other awards on one occasion only. The credits and not the marks or grades derived from those credits can be re-used.

- 10.10 Where APCL is used for Advanced Standing, all Prior Certificated Learning must be at least at the same HE Level as the module or modules for which exemption is being sought.
- 10.11 Where APCL is used, marks or grades are not used for the classification of student performance, except where Special Regulations have been agreed by the Academic Board.

#### **Award of credit through Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning**

- 10.12 APEL is awarded on the basis of the student's learning acquired through reflecting on experience. APEL decisions will be taken on the basis of documentary evidence as outlined in the Assessment Procedures Manual.
- 10.13 The University will award credit as the result of the successful accreditation of prior experiential learning.
- 10.14 The relevant Board of Examiners is responsible for the oversight of arrangements where credit is sought through the accreditation of prior experiential learning.

### **11 Entry requirements**

- 11.1 The Academic Board will approve the general entry requirements for programmes of study leading to the awards under these Regulations.
- 11.2 Entrants must satisfy the requirements for admission to the programme of study or, provided that the individuals authorized by the University are satisfied that the candidate is capable of successfully completing the proposed programme of study, be dispensed from such requirements. The Academic Board will approve the arrangements for the admission and registration of students who demonstrate they are adequately qualified to pursue the programme.
- 11.3 A programme may be designed in a way that requires students to enter with advanced standing through the accreditation of prior learning. Where this is the case, this will be subject to the University's regulations on the accreditation of prior learning.

### **12 Period and level of study**

- 12.1 Depending upon the mode of study approved for a programme, a student may be registered for study EITHER:
- (i) on a full-time basis OR
  - (ii) on a part-time basis.
- 12.2 The Academic Board may specify the arrangements whereby the period of study for a programme may be varied.
- 12.3 A student must complete a programme within the specified period of registration for the level of programme. Unless provided for in a scheme, the

period of registration is to include any periods during which the student is required or permitted by the University to interrupt study for the programme and any period of extension to the programme approved by the University, other than for maternity.

- 12.4 For studies at an undergraduate level, defined as study at levels 4, 5 and 6, a student must complete the studies for each level of study within a maximum of three years for full-time students and a maximum period of four years for part-time students, provided the student has studied part-time for the level for at least two years.
- 12.5 For studies on taught programmes at level 7, the following time limits apply:
- (i) a student must complete a programme for a Postgraduate Certificate within a maximum of one year for full-time students and a maximum period of two years for part-time students;
  - (ii) a student must complete a programme for a Postgraduate Diploma within a maximum of two years for full-time students and a maximum period of four years for part-time students;
  - (iii) a student must complete a programme for a Master's Degree within a maximum of three years for full-time students and a maximum period of six years for part-time students.
- 12.6 For studies on research programmes, the following time limits apply:
- (i) the period of registration for the Research Degree by thesis shall be three years full-time and five years part-time. In exceptional circumstances there is a maximum period of five years full-time and eight years part-time permitted;
  - (ii) the period of registration for the Master of Philosophy shall be two years full-time and three years part-time. In exceptional circumstances there is a maximum period of three years full-time and five years part-time permitted;
  - (iii) the period of registration for the Masters by Research shall be one year full-time and two years part-time. In exceptional circumstances there is a maximum period of three years full-time and five years part-time permitted.
- 12.7 The Academic Board may establish criteria to grant exemption from part of a programme leading to an award.
- 12.8 The Academic Board may specify the arrangements by which, in cases of illness or other reasonable cause, a student may interrupt the registration for a programme, which will normally be no longer than a period of one year at each application.
- 12.9 The Academic Board may prescribe the requirements relating to the extension of periods of study.

- 12.10 A student's registration may be terminated due to unsatisfactory progress or attendance. The Academic Board will approve the arrangements for such a termination of registration.

### **13 The approval of short courses**

- 13.1 Faculty Quality Committees, on behalf of the Academic Board, may approve a University Certificate for a short course of 40 credits or less.
- 13.2 The Academic Board may approve an award other than University Certificate for a short course if such an award is required to meet regulatory or professional requirements. The Academic Board may delegate authority for such approvals to another appropriate body within the University.
- 13.3 The Academic Board may approve an award for a short course which includes a subject title. Such approval may be delegated by the Academic Board to another appropriate body in the University.
- 13.4 All short courses that are assigned to a level will have learning outcomes set in alignment with the level descriptors, published in Appendix 1.
- 13.5 A University Certificate (or other award made for a short course) cannot be made as an exit award from another award.

### **14 Assessment and examinations**

- 14.1 Students must abide by these Regulations and by the Assessment Procedures Manual.
- 14.2 Students must be informed, in the Student Handbook or similar document, of the date of each assessment by the beginning of each module.
- 14.3 A student must fulfil all the assessment requirements of the programme by such dates as may be prescribed.
- 14.4 All students shall be provided with details in writing of the assessments for the programme for which they are registered and the methods of assessment which will be used in deciding whether or not the student is to be recommended for an award of the University.
- 14.5 Formal feedback on assessed work must be provided to students in line with the University's agreed procedures as set out in the Assessment Procedures Manual.
- 14.6 Attendance at all examinations and assessments associated with the approved programme of study is required and any candidate who fails to be present for such an examination at the time and place published by the Registry, School, or partner institution, except when prevented from doing so by illness or other sufficient cause, will be deemed to have failed in that part of the examination.
- 14.7 All candidates are required to sit examinations at the location so appointed by the Academic Registrar, unless delegated to a collaborative partner, through a formal agreement.

- 14.8 Only a candidate who is registered on a programme of study at the University and is eligible to do so, may sit the appropriate assessments, or enter the examination room for that programme.

#### **Location of examinations**

- 14.9 All venues for examinations must be suitable for the prevention of examination misconduct.
- 14.10 Examinations taken at more than one location must be held concurrently. The Academic Registrar may set this aside to enable a student to sit an examination at a separate location, where:
- (i) extended invigilation procedures are put in place AND
  - (ii) a student is required, for academic reasons associated with the programme, to be in residence outside the University at the time of the examination, OR
  - (iii) there are exceptional circumstances, supported by appropriate documentary evidence, in which instance any additional cost involved in arranging the examinations will normally be borne by the student.
- 14.11 All University examinations must be appropriately invigilated, as determined by the Academic Registrar.

#### **Examination resources**

- 14.12 A Board of Examiners may permit candidates to bring into the examination additional resources for some papers, as stipulated in the question paper rubric. This includes such additions as set texts, case studies, dictionaries and music scores.
- 14.13 Where a Board of Examiners permits candidates to bring into the examination additional resources, candidates must be informed in writing, at least four weeks before the commencement of the examination period, that:
- (i) the responsibility for bringing any materials stipulated as required for the examination is theirs, and
  - (ii) possession of unauthorised material, including non-authorised resources, in the examination, whether for intended use or not, constitutes an infringement which will be subject to penalty.
- 14.14 In examinations where additional resources are not stipulated in the rubric for the examination, the possession of such a resource will be considered an infringement of regulations in the same way as possession of any unauthorised items.

#### **The language of assessment and the use of dictionaries**

- 14.15 The language of assessment is to be English, except where the programme validation provides that assessment should be in a language other than English.

- 14.16 In the event that assessment is conducted in a language other than English:
- (i) the internal and External Examiners must be fluent in both English and the language of assessment;
  - (ii) assessed work must be first and second marked in the language of assessment, in line with the requirements relating to marking procedures.
- 14.17 Translation of work will only be allowed where the following applies:
- (i) there is to be prior approval of the translator by the University;
  - (ii) translation is by a translator of professional standing;
  - (iii) the translator follows the professional practice of translation into the translator's first language;
  - (iv) where there is uncertainty about meaning in the original, the area of uncertainty is identified.
- 14.18 Candidates whose first language is not English may apply to use a translation dictionary (which is defined as a dictionary that contains translations only and does not contain extensive definitions, formulae tables or diagrams) during any time-constrained assessment. Each application will be considered individually on its merits. It is the responsibility of the candidate to make an application in writing to the Academic Registrar.
- 14.19 Requests for the use of a translation dictionary are to be made to the Academic Registrar no later than seven working days in advance of the time-constrained assessment.
- 14.20 Use of dictionaries (other than translation dictionaries) in examinations may only be used if permitted by the Assessment Procedures Manual.
- 14.21 Any candidate found using a dictionary other than under the above provisions will be reported as specified in the Academic Misconduct Involving Assessments and Examinations procedures, contained within the Assessment Procedures Manual. A breach of these procedures will be regarded as academic misconduct.

#### **Security and data protection in examinations**

- 14.22 Examination papers shall be prepared in compliance with the Assessment Procedures Manual.
- 14.23 All electronic and paper copies of assessments or assessment materials must be kept securely stored at all times, in line with the Assessment Procedures Manual.
- 14.24 Any security failures, such as lost drafts, missing disks or other breaches in security, will require a new paper to be set.
- 14.25 In the administration of examinations, the University will adhere to the principles set out in the Code of Practice for the Higher and Further Education Sectors on the Data Protection Act 1998. Examinations are defined as "any

process for determining the knowledge, intelligence, skill or ability of a candidate by reference to his performance in any test, work or other activity”.

- 14.26 All assessed work including all examinations, coursework, attendance records and feedback must be kept for six months after the meeting of the final Board of Examiners, with the exception of work at Level 4 which need only be retained for six months from the relevant Board of Examiners. Thereafter, it may be disposed of in line with the University Document Retention Strategy.
- 14.27 Examination scripts will not normally be returned to candidates. Arrangements for the return of course work, where appropriate, must be communicated to students in module guidance or programme handbooks.
- 14.28 When it is thought desirable to keep a student’s work for longer than set out in the University Document Retention Strategy the student’s consent must be sought.

#### **Emergency requiring the evacuation of an examination room**

- 14.29 In the event that a disturbance to a timed examination lasts longer than 30 minutes, the examination will be considered abandoned.
- 14.30 Arrangements will be made for the setting of an alternative examination at a later date if this is judged appropriate by the Board of Examiners. The duration of the examination before the disturbance, and the level of the examination will influence the decision relating to such alternative arrangements. The timing of the alternative examination is to be agreed by the Board of Examiners after consultation with the Academic Registrar. Normally, the examination will be held at the next possible opportunity.
- 14.31 Any alternative examination will have the status of a sit for all the candidates recorded as present at the examination. The Board will consider candidates absent from the examination in the usual manner.
- 14.32 Candidates will be informed of the results of the examination, and may decline the offer of the alternative examination. In these circumstances, the marks awarded will be recorded as the confirmed mark. Otherwise, the marks obtained in the alternative examination will be confirmed, and the marks obtained from the abandoned examination cancelled.

### **15 Special arrangements for University examinations**

- 15.1 Where an application, supported by evidence, is made to the Academic Registrar two weeks in advance of an examination, the Academic Registrar may permit special arrangements for an examination of a candidate with a disability or an injury. It will be specified whether this is a standing arrangement or relates only to a single, specified assessment.
- 15.2 The following special arrangements are permitted:
  - (i) the provision of additional time for the completion of a paper and/or for rest breaks;



- (ii) reading, or having read to the student, the paper prior to the start of the examination and their answers read back to them;
  - (iii) the provision of special facilities, or an amanuensis, a computer or a tape recording machine;
  - (iv) varying the mode of the assessment.
- 15.3 A candidate who requests special arrangements must submit appropriate evidence as set out in the Assessment Procedures Manual in advance of any special arrangement being made.
- 15.4 There will be no retrospective consideration given for evidence submitted later, outside permitted extenuating circumstances requests.
- 15.5 The Registry may, in an emergency, make special arrangements in line with standard procedures for the examination. The special arrangements made are to be reported to the Academic Registrar as soon as is practicable.

#### **The use of an amanuensis**

- 15.6 A request for an amanuensis must be submitted to the Academic Registrar, who may approve it on a stand-alone or continuing basis.
- 15.7 The Academic Registrar will ensure that the amanuensis does not have a personal connection to the candidate, other than as a regular amanuensis or carer.
- 15.8 The amanuensis must not prompt the candidate for choice of words, or otherwise indicate in any way a belief or opinion regarding the answer.
- 15.9 The amanuensis must not use short-hand writing and must record answers in the language in which the assessment has been set.
- 15.10 Dictionaries may not be used by the candidate or the amanuensis, except where approved by the Academic Registrar, due to special circumstances.

## **16 Arrangements for assessments**

### **Responsibilities of Examiners**

- 16.1 A single examiner is ordinarily responsible for the marking of an examinable unit. An examinable unit may be a single assessment or a clearly identified part of a single assessment. The exception is where there is a requirement that a module or a programme requires Double marking.
- 16.2 The examiner is responsible for applying the assessment criteria approved by the Board of Examiners and providing the feedback to students.

### **Anonymous Marking**

- 16.3 All written examination scripts are to be marked anonymously.

- 16.4 Where anonymous marking is extended to course work, the arrangements are to be included in the Board's marking policy and to be communicated to candidates through the programme handbook.
- 16.5 Anonymity ends at the point at which the marking procedure is complete, and the marks are handed over to the person who transfers the marks to the mark sheet by name rather than examination number.

#### **Marking illegible scripts**

- 16.6 An illegible script, either in its entirety or in part, is one that is not possible for an examiner to decipher in such a way that a fair assessment can be made.
- 16.7 At least three examiners must ascertain that they have failed to decipher the script before work is treated as illegible.
- 16.8 An indication of work deemed to be illegible should be made on the script.
- 16.9 No marks shall be given or deducted for work deemed illegible.
- 16.10 If, as a result of decisions on illegibility, a piece of work does not attract sufficient marks to pass, the work will be treated in line with the University's re-sit regulations.

#### **Second marking**

- 16.11 Second marking is the process whereby a second internal member of the Board of Examiners ensures that the criteria for assessment and arrangements for feedback have been appropriately applied through the sampling of the work assessed by the first marker.
- 16.12 All assessed work must be second marked in line with the Assessment Procedures Manual.
- 16.13 Unless Double marking is applied, second marking will be through a process of sampling, as set out in Assessment Procedures Manual.
- 16.14 A brief report will be provided on the second marking process, using the appropriate University template, to provide evidence of the completion of the process. The second internal examiner will not be responsible for providing any feedback to students.
- 16.15 Where the second internal marker for a unit of assessment indicates significant inconsistencies in the marking, systematic deviations from the marking criteria or inappropriate feedback to students, all assessment for that unit of assessment will be double-marked.

#### **Double marking**

- 16.16 Double marking is the process whereby a second internal member of the Board of Examiners ensures that the criteria for assessment and arrangements for feedback have been appropriately applied through the review of every piece of assessment.

- 16.17 Double marking may not be applied to the work of selected students or to selected pieces of work.
- 16.18 Double marking is required in the following circumstances:
- (i) where a piece of work is undertaken only by a single student, such as independent study, dissertation, negotiated module assessment;
  - (ii) where it is impossible to revisit the assessment that is not part of a sample performance and exhibition, or where a piece of work is taken only by a single student;
  - (iii) where, because of a requirement of an external regulatory body, the programme validation imposes Double marking and binds the Board of Examiners to adopt the practice as a policy decision;
  - (iv) where the Academic Board requires Double marking to take place.
  - (v) where the second marking for a unit of assessment indicates significant inconsistencies in the marking, systematic deviations from the marking criteria or inappropriate feedback to students.
- 16.19 The second examiner will provide a brief report on the Double marking process, using the University template, to provide evidence of the completion of the process. The second internal examiner will not be responsible for providing any feedback to students.
- 16.20 In the case of a disagreement following double marking, between two double markers, and a resolution with the first and second markers is not possible, the Chair of the Board of Examiners will appoint a senior member of staff to review the work of the whole cohort and whose marks will be those reported to the Board of Examiners.

### **Moderation**

- 16.21 Moderation is the process of reviewing summative assessments to ensure consistency in the application of the marking criteria where there is more than one pair of first and second internal markers.
- 16.22 The role of the moderator is to report on the fairness and consistency of the marking process and not to change marks.
- 16.23 Moderation may not be undertaken by Affiliate Examiners.
- 16.24 Moderation requires the work of all first markers to be sampled. The sample is to consist of either a minimum of five pieces of work for each assessment or 10% of the submitted pieces of work for each assessment, whichever is the greater.
- 16.25 Where a moderator believes that marking has been applied inappropriately and a resolution with the first and second markers is not possible, the Chair of the Board of Examiners will appoint a senior member of staff, who will review the work of the whole cohort and whose marks will be those reported to the Board of Examiners.

## **Plagiarism**

16.26 The University prohibits plagiarism as defined in the University's Policy on Plagiarism. Accusations of plagiarism will be investigated and dealt with under the procedures set out in the Assessment Procedures Manual. These procedures must be applied in full. The findings of plagiarism investigations will be binding upon relevant Boards of Examiners.

## **Extenuating Circumstances**

16.27 The University recognises the need to make allowance for particular circumstances that affect students' ability to perform assessments. The procedure for making decisions related to such circumstances is set out in the Assessment Procedures Manual. These procedures must be applied in full.

## **Scaling of Marks**

16.28 The Board of Examiners may permit the scaling of marks by the Board of Examiners as a tool to rectify a significant error in the assessment process.

16.29 The scaling of marks should only be considered where there is significant error in the assessment process, which is clearly identified, which would mean that the assessment type or delivery was flawed, and when all other means to rectify the problem have been explored and discounted.

16.30 Scaling can take place in either direction but when scaling down, the student will be offered the opportunity to accept the scaled mark or to re-sit the assessment which will be treated as a first sit. A student must be informed of their pre- and post-scale mark before they make their decision.

16.31 The scaling of marks must apply to all students undertaking the assessment on the same occasion.

16.32 Where scaling of marks takes place, the procedures set out in the Assessment Procedures Manual must be followed in full.

## **17 Boards of Examiners**

17.1 There shall be a Board of Examiners to make recommendations relating to progression, awards for all undergraduate and taught postgraduate programmes/short courses and the award of credit for modules.

17.2 A Board of Examiners has no discretion to recommend to Academic Board the raising of the classification of an award, other than where a recommendation is made notwithstanding the Regulations.

17.3 If a student has not met the conditions to progress to the next stage/level of a programme then Boards of Examiners have no discretion to recommend to Academic Board that a student is allowed to progress other than where a recommendation is made notwithstanding the Regulations.

17.4 There must be a single Board of Examiners for all students studying the same programme.

### **Terms of Reference of Boards of Examiners**

- 17.5 Deriving its authority from the Academic Board, the programme Board of Examiners shall:
- (i) Ensure that the assessment process is operated in a fair and reliable manner making use of agreed assessment criteria and in line with the University's Regulations and assessment procedures.
  - (ii) agree the marks awarded to each student for each assessment, for each module they have taken;
  - (iii) consider the overall profile of marks for each student and recommend candidates for awards or make recommendations for a course of action in the case of failure;
  - (iv) make recommendations about candidates, not in their final year, who have failed to satisfy the conditions for progression from one level/stage to the next;
  - (v) take account of the decisions made by Extenuating Circumstances Request Panels;
  - (vi) take account of the agreed outcomes of investigations into cases of Plagiarism or academic misconduct;
  - (vii) oversee the nature and timing for re-sit assessments;
  - (viii) where relevant, ensure that the competence of candidates in practical work has been appropriately assessed.
- 17.6 Determine the use of anonymous marking and the extent to which this applies to course work on the programme.
- 17.7 Complete and accurate data for each student under consideration, including details of re-sits, re-submissions and interruptions must be provided for each Board of Examiners.
- 17.8 Boards of Examiners must be conducted in line with the procedures outlined in the Assessment Procedures Manual and it is the responsibility of the Chair of the Board of Examiners to ensure that this occurs.

### **Membership of Boards of Examiners**

- 17.9 Each Board of Examiners shall comprise the following:
- (i) a Chair;
  - (ii) the member of staff who holds primary responsibility for the programme, such as a programme or pathway director;
  - (iii) all module leaders for the modules under consideration;
  - (iv) other examiners who teach on the programme, as nominated by the Dean, or a relevant Head of Department;

- (v) at least one External Examiner, except in those instances at Level 4, where the Academic Board has determined otherwise.
- 17.10 As the External Examiner will endorse the level and standards of a component part of an award as appropriate to its structure by confirming the academic standards of the award at the higher level, External Examiners are not required to participate in Level 4 Boards of Examiners, where Level 4 is a component of an award at Level 5 or Level 6, except where:
- (i) the programme leads to a Level 4 award
  - (ii) there is planned exit award at Level 4
  - (iii) Academic Board deems it as necessary.
- 17.11 Membership of the Board of Examiners is limited to:
- (i) those academic staff with a permanent contract, or on fixed or fractional contracts;
  - (ii) those appointed by Academic Board;
  - (iii) those who are able to participate as affiliate examiners.
- 17.12 Any variation from the above rules for the membership of a Board of Examiners will require the approval of the Academic Board.
- 17.13 Students of the programme shall not be appointed as members of the Board of Examiners for the programme.

#### **Appointment and role of the Chair of the Board of Examiners**

- 17.14 The Chair of the Board of Examiners will be appointed by the relevant Dean(s) of the Faculty(ies).
- 17.15 The Chair must not be involved in the programme in a way which constitutes a conflict of interest. No person who has any direct involvement with the programme, or in the case of a collaborative programme, has any personal or private connections with the partner organisation, may chair the Board of Examiners.

#### **Attendance at the Board of Examiners**

- 17.16 In addition to the members of the Board of Examiners, the following will be in attendance:
- (i) the Academic Registrar, or nominee.
  - (ii) a secretary.
- 17.17 All members of the Board of Examiners should be present at the Board unless prior permission is given by the Chair of the Board of Examiners.

#### **Examiner status**

- 17.18 Only those with Examiner Status can:

- (i) be members of the Board of Examiners for an award bearing programme of study approved by the University;
- (ii) mark examinable work, except in the instance of (a) approved practice assessors, and (b) where the Academic Board determines otherwise.

17.19 The following will have Examiner Status:

- (i) all academic staff that are permanent, or on fixed or fractional contracts;
- (ii) individuals so determined by Academic Board, providing that the individual has undertaken appropriate training, induction and mentoring.
- (iii) those granted Affiliate Examiner Status, subject to limitations.

#### **Affiliate Examiner Status**

17.20 The following may be entitled to the Affiliate Examiner Status:

- (i) staff employed by the University on hourly paid contracts (sessional staff)
- (ii) staff associated with the University, but not employed by it, who provide a sufficiently large contribution to a programme that they are also appropriately involved in examining
- (iii) approved staff teaching on collaborative programmes.

17.21 Recognition of Affiliate Examiner Status is given for a specific programme or subject area only.

17.22 Affiliate Examiners will be appointed using the process set out in the Assessment Procedures Manual.

17.23 Those with Affiliate Examiner Status may not second mark or double mark the examinable work that has been first marked by an Examiner with Affiliate Examiner Status.

17.24 Those with Affiliate Examiner Status may not act as a moderator.

#### **Documentation for Boards of Examiners**

17.25 All Board of Examiners documentation should be produced in line with the guidance in the Assessment Procedures Manual. This will include:

- (i) an agenda which will be circulated in advance;
- (ii) a report on all actions taken by the Chair since the previous meeting;
- (iii) a set of minutes to be approved by the Board of Examiners;
- (iv) student mark profiles.

17.26 The outcomes of meetings of Boards of Examiners must be reported to the Academic Board.

#### **Pre-Board of Examiners Meeting**

17.27 A Pre-Board of Examiners meeting must be conducted in advance of all Boards of Examiners.

17.28 The Pre-Boards of Examiners meeting must be chaired by the Head of Department/School for the relevant programme or his/her nominee.

17.29 The Pre-Board of Examiners meeting is for programme team members and internal examiners only. All approved internal examiners must be invited to the Pre-Board of Examiners meeting. The meeting must involve the individuals who have responsibility for finalising assessment marks.

17.30 The only functions of the Pre-Board of Examiners meeting are:

- (i) To identify any case that needs to be brought to the attention of the Board of Examiners.
- (ii) To review the data to be presented to the Board of Examiners to ensure accuracy and completeness.

### **Recommendations open to a Board of Examiners**

17.31 For each candidate, a Board of Examiners shall recommend to the Academic Board that:

- (i) An award be made on the completion of the student's programme; or
- (ii) the student be permitted to proceed to the next stage of the programme for which the student is registered; or
- (iii) where the student has failed the award or stage, the student be permitted to repeat part or all of the programme and re-sit the assessments as specified by the Board of Examiners in compliance with the Regulations on re-sit and repeat assessments below; or
- (iv) where the student has failed the award or stage, the student be permitted to take further assessments as specified by the Board of Examiners in compliance with the Regulations on re-sit and repeat assessments below; or
- (v) the student be permitted to proceed to an appropriate stage of a different programme as specified by the Board of Examiners; or
- (vi) the student be awarded an alternative award prescribed within the relevant Special Regulations for the programme, with or without further assessment; or
- (vii) the student withdraws from the programme with the award of any credit gained.

17.32 In the case of a taught postgraduate programme, recommend that an award be made subject to certain minor corrections carried out to the satisfaction of the internal examiners to a dissertation or thesis within three months of the official notification to the student of the recommendations of the examiners.

### **Chair's action**

17.33 A Board of Examiners can resolve to delegate to the Chair the authority to take action where:



- (i) there has been full discussion of an assessment matter and a full course of action has been identified, and the Chair is asked to confirm that the assessment process is complete;
- (ii) subsequent to the Board clear evidence of an administrative error has been discovered;
- (iii) subsequent to the Board, a student presents substantive evidence to support a Extenuating Circumstances Request. This evidence must also be reviewed and accepted by the relevant Extenuating Circumstances Request Review Panel;
- (iv) there has been an academic appeal upheld by a University panel.

17.34 Any Chair's Actions must be minuted and reported to the next meeting of the Board of Examiners.

17.35 It needs to be identified whether the External Examiner needs to be involved in agreeing the Chair's Action

## **18 Re-sit and repeat assessments**

### **Stages**

- 18.1 A stage is defined as a discrete element of an award which a student must pass to progress to the next stage of the award.
- 18.2 There may be more than one stage within a level. Where an award comprises more than one level, as opposed to incorporating credit from a lower level, each level will comprise a stage.
- 18.3 Progression from one stage to another can only be approved by a Board of Examiners.

### **Re-sits**

- 18.4 A student who has failed the diet of assessment for a module and has no extenuating circumstances will be recorded as "referred" in that module. A student would be recorded as "deferred" if that student is still to take the assessment for extenuating circumstances reasons.
- 18.5 A student may not re-sit passed credit, except where all modules in a stage are repeated.
- 18.6 The Board of Examiners will normally offer each referred student a single opportunity to make good the relevant assessment, except at level four where there will be two re-sit opportunities.
- 18.7 A student who in the view of the Board of Examiners passes the re-sit assessment will be recorded as having passed the module at the pass mark, except where the assessment strategy of a module requires that one or more elements of assessment in a module must be passed, and the student has already achieved the module pass mark. Where this is the case, the mark

recorded is the original average mark or the pass mark, whichever is the higher.

- 18.8 A student who in the view of the Board of Examiners fails the re-sit assessment will be recorded as having “failed” the module.
- 18.9 Where a student takes and fails an assessment which that student has previously failed, the mark recorded and used by the Board of Examiners shall be the highest mark obtained by the student in the assessment.
- 18.10 A student who has failed a module will not be allowed to progress to the next stage of his or her programme, unless compensation is applied. The student will be recorded as having failed the stage.
- 18.11 A student does not have the right to re-sit. The Board of Examiners may refuse a referred student an opportunity to make good a failed module assessment, but there must be full discussion of the reason why such an opportunity is being withheld, to which discussion the External Examiner must be party (except at Level 4), and the reasons why the assessment opportunity is being refused must be recorded in full in the minutes of the Board of Examiners.
- 18.12 A student who has been refused a re-sit of a module by a Board of Examiners may request an appeal in line with the University’s Academic and Fitness to Practice Procedure.

### **Repeats**

- 18.13 The Board of Examiners may offer each student who has failed the stage of a programme, the opportunity to make good the stage by repeating that stage. This offer is subject to confirmation by the University that a place is available to the student and that the student concerned is eligible to take up the place, and is not barred from doing so by visa requirements in the case of international students, or for other reasons identified by the University. Where the offer is made to repeat the year, the Board of Examiners will record this as “recommended”.
- 18.14 Students opting to repeat a stage must re-enter the programme at the start of that stage. Students will be required to study on the programme validated at the time that they re-enter, unless deemed otherwise by the Board of Examiners, in which instance there must be full discussion of why such an opportunity is being withheld.
- 18.15 The student may opt to repeat the whole stage or may carry forward passed credit and marks. A student may not carry forward some passed credit and repeat other passed credit. Where there has been a significant alteration to the validated programme, the Board of Examiner may limit the amount of passed credit that can be carried forward to ensure that the student can demonstrate that he or she has passed the re-constituted stage, in which instance there must be full discussion of why such an opportunity is being withheld.

- 18.16 A student who successfully passes a repeat module at the first attempt will be awarded the grade or mark that he or she has earned.
- 18.17 A student who fails a repeat module at the first attempt may be referred in that module and allowed a re-sit, which if successful will be recorded at the pass mark.
- 18.18 A student will be allowed by the Board of Examiners to repeat a stage on one occasion only.
- 18.19 Subject to professional requirements, there is no limit on a number of stages that may be repeated.
- 18.20 A student does not have a right to repeat a stage. The Board of Examiners may refuse a referred student an opportunity to make good a failed stage, but there must be full discussion of the reason why such an opportunity is being withheld, to which discussion the External Examiner must be party (except at Level 4), and the reasons why the re-take opportunity is being refused must be recorded in full in the minutes of the Board of Examiners. Grounds for refusal may include availability of places and/or the availability of placement opportunities.
- 18.21 A student who has been refused a repeat of a stage by a Board of Examiners may request an appeal in line with the University's Academic and Fitness to Practice Procedure.

## **19 Progression**

- 19.1 In order to progress from one level of an Award to the subsequent level of the Award, a student must pass all the modules that comprise the Level of the Award at which they are studying, unless one of the exceptions set out in 19.2, 19.3 and 19.5 applies.
- 19.2 A student studying for an undergraduate award may have compensation for a maximum of 20 credits at each level, except where compensation is excluded by Special Regulations.
- 19.3 A student on a Level 4 programme that comprises the first stage of an award at Level 5 of 240 credits, or the first stage of an award at Level 6 of 360 credits may trail and progress to Level 5 of the programme where:
- either
- (i) the student has passed 100 credits and is referred in 20 credits after the first re-sit of those credits, but has not yet had the opportunity to exhaust all re-sit opportunities for the referred credits;
- or
- (ii) the student has passed 80 credits, is referred in up to 40 credits after the first re-sit of those credits, has achieved an average mark of 35% in each of the modules comprising the 40 credits for which the student has been

referred but has not yet had the opportunity to exhaust all re-sit opportunities for the referred credits;

and

(iii) the course of action in respect to either 19.3(i) or 19.3(ii) is not prohibited by a Special Regulation.

19.4 A student permitted to trail and progress to Level 5, who does not pass the referred credit by the end of Level 5, either directly or through compensation, will not be permitted to progress to Level 6 or to receive the target award at Level 5.

(i) Where the student has not exhausted any resit opportunity, the student may apply to interrupt the programme to complete the assessment.

(ii) Where a student has exhausted the resit opportunities, the student will be required to withdraw and will be entitled to any award and/or credits that have been gained.

19.5 A student on a Level 5 programme that comprises the second stage of an award at Level 6 of 360 credits, may trail and progress to Level 6 of the programme where:

either

(i) the student has passed 100 credits and is referred in 20 credits and has been referred after their first sit, but has not yet had the opportunity to exhaust all resit opportunities for the referred credits as a result of extenuating circumstances;

or

(ii) the student has passed 80 credits, is referred in up to 40 credits after the first sit of those credits, has achieved an average mark of 35% in each of the modules comprising the 40 credits for which the student has been referred but has not yet had the opportunity to exhaust all re-sit opportunities for the referred credits as a result of extenuating circumstances;

and

(iii) the course of action in respect to either 19.5(i) or 19.5(ii) is not prohibited by a Special Regulation.

19.6 A student permitted to trail and progress to Level 6 as the result of extenuating circumstances at Level 5, who does not pass the referred credit by the end of Level 6, either directly or through compensation, will not be permitted to receive the target award at Level 6.

- (i) Where the student has not exhausted any resit opportunity, the student may apply to interrupt the programme to complete the assessment.
- (ii) Where a student has exhausted the resit opportunities, the student will be required to withdraw and will be entitled to any award and/or credits that have been gained.

19.7 A Special Regulation will only be approved to exclude the rights of students, as set out in 19.2, 19.3 and 19.5 above, where there is clear evidence at validation that this is required to meet employer expectation and best practice, including the requirements of professional, statutory, regulatory bodies.

## **20 Use of discretion notwithstanding the Regulations**

- 20.1 A Board of Examiners may, in the most exceptional of cases, recommend to the Academic Board that it uses its discretion to make an award notwithstanding the Regulations.
- 20.2 There is an expectation that a Board of Examiners will ordinarily permit a candidate the opportunity to undertake further assessments or to repeat a programme or level in whole or in part. The Board must consider this before considering a recommendation for an award notwithstanding the Regulations. There must be clear evidence as to the reason why a candidate would be unable to undertake further assessments or study.
- 20.3 A recommendation must be based on suitable and sufficient documentary evidence and not oral testimony.
- 20.4 A record of the case presented, the reasons for making the recommendation, the views of the External Examiner(s), and the details of the recommendation, must be made in the Minutes of the Board.
- 20.5 Each recommendation to the Academic Board for the use of discretion notwithstanding the Regulations is subject to individual approval of the Academic Board in the manner set out in the Assessment Procedures Manual.

### **Posthumous and aegrotat awards**

- 20.6 Where a re-sit of an assessment is considered not possible, and the Board of Examiners is satisfied that the student's absence was due to illness or other misfortune or that performance in assessments was impaired by illness or other misfortune, it may:
  - (i) make one of the permitted recommendations to the Academic Board, taking due account of the circumstances in doing so; or
  - (ii) recommend, on the written application of the student, or in the case of incapacity an appointed person with Lasting Power of Attorney, that the student be awarded an aegrotat award, which will be a pass award without any form of classification. Such a recommendation shall be made only where the Board of Examiners is satisfied that, in the absence of illness or other misfortune, the student would have reached the standard required for

the award but where the Board of Examiners has insufficient evidence to enable it to recommend the award, and the student is unlikely to be able to return to complete the programme at a later date. Each recommendation for an aegrotat award is subject to individual approval of the Academic Board in the manner set out in the Assessment Procedures Manual; or

- (iii) recommend the award of a posthumous award where a candidate has taken some of the required assessments, but has died before completion of all of the required assessments, considering the evidence available.

20.7 A student who is recommended for an aegrotat award shall be so informed and may decline to accept the award within twenty eight days of the offer. Instead, the student may request to take any further assessments agreed by the Board of Examiners with a view to qualifying for the award for which the student was originally registered. A student who declines an aegrotat award and instead elects to take any further assessments may not subsequently make a further application for an aegrotat award in the event of failure, but may be reassessed according to the Regulations.

## **21 Academic appeals**

21.1 An academic appeal is defined as a request for a review of the decision-making of an academic or professional body (for example, a Board of Examiners, an Extenuating Circumstances Panel or a Panel established to investigate plagiarism or other academic misconduct) charged with making academic decisions on progression, assessment, extenuating circumstances, academic conduct or awards.

21.2 A student may not appeal against the academic or professional judgement of the examiners or panel members.

21.3 A student may appeal against a decision of an academic body other than a fitness to practise panel or professional suitability panel where specific, satisfactory evidence can be produced by a student that:

- (i) a Board of Examiners could have recommended that the student, following failure, be permitted to take further assessments but did not so recommend without good cause; and/or
- (ii) written extenuating circumstances evidence was appropriately submitted but not properly considered in accordance with the procedures approved by Academic Board; and/or
- (iii) there had been a material administrative error that had not been properly remedied and had a detrimental impact; and/or
- (iv) the assessments had not been conducted in accordance with the current Regulation and Credit Framework for the Conferment of Awards, or with the Special Regulations for the programme.

- (v) The student has valid and specific grounds for claiming that there is substantial independent written evidence, from a qualified professional, directly relevant to performance in assessment *and* that such evidence:
    - (a) Shows the student performance to have been materially affected; *and*
    - (b) is, for demonstrable reasons, of a sort which the student could not reasonably have been expected to submit at the appropriate time under the University's extenuating circumstances procedures; *and*
    - (c) has not been previously received and reviewed by the university; *and*
    - (d) relates to one or more assessment/s recent enough to have been considered when the Board of Examiners or other academic body last made a decision relating to the student.
- 21.4 A candidate may appeal against the decision of a fitness to practise panel or professional suitability panel where satisfactory evidence can be produced by a student that:
- (i) written extenuating circumstances evidence was appropriately submitted but not properly considered in accordance with the procedures approved by Academic Board; and/or
  - (ii) there had been a material administrative error that had not been remedied and had a detrimental impact.
- 21.5 The Academic Board will specify the arrangements, including the time limits, for appeals.

## **22 External Examiners for taught programmes**

### **The role of External Examiners**

- 22.1 External Examiners for taught programmes, are, in their expert judgment, required to report whether or not:
- (i) the University is maintaining the threshold academic standards for its awards in accordance with the frameworks for higher education qualifications and applicable subject benchmark statements;
  - (ii) the assessment process measures student achievement rigorously and fairly against the intended outcomes of the programme(s) and is conducted in line with the institution's policies and regulations;
  - (iii) the academic standards and the achievements of students are comparable with those in other higher education institutions of which the External Examiners have experience.
- 22.2 External Examiners for taught programmes must have access to student work as set out in the Assessment Procedures Manual.

- 22.3 The independence of External Examiners in making judgements about the examination process and award of qualifications is guaranteed, and no External Examiner shall be dismissed for exercising judgement.

#### **Nomination and appointment of External Examiners for taught programmes**

- 22.4 One or more External Examiners must be appointed for each scheme and/or programme and/or pathway for taught programmes.
- 22.5 External Examiners for taught programmes must be appointed in a way that follows the Assessment Procedures Manual.
- 22.6 The nomination of an External Examiner for a taught award is the responsibility of the Head of School concerned.
- 22.7 All External Examiners for taught programmes must be of an appropriate standing, in line with the criteria for appointment of External Examiners, approved by the Academic Board.
- 22.8 The Education and Student Experience Committee on behalf of the Academic Board shall appoint External Examiners for taught programmes for a period of four years. An exceptional fifth year may be granted by the Education and Student Experience Committee on behalf of the Academic Board where such an appointment is necessary to ensure that the continuity of external examining is maintained.
- 22.9 In exceptional circumstances, the Education and Student Experience Committee may set aside aspects of the criteria for appointment of External Examiners for Taught Programmes.

#### **Declaration of interest**

- 22.10 Nominated and existing External Examiners, for both Taught and Research Degree provision, shall declare any known conflicts of interest to the University.
- 22.11 Identified conflicts of interest shall be resolved by the University before the nomination is approved by the Education and Student Experience Committee, or in the case of an existing External Examiner, before the External Examiner is next asked to undertake any element of his or her duties.
- 22.12 Where a conflict of interest cannot be resolved, the University may decide not to approve a nomination, or to discontinue an existing appointment, following the early termination of External Examiners procedure set out in these Regulations.

#### **Briefing and induction of External Examiners**

- 22.13 Following confirmation of appointment by the Education and Student Experience Committee, each External Examiner for taught programmes shall be provided with a letter of appointment, allocating him or her to a scheme and/or programme and/or pathway.



22.14 External Examiners for taught programmes shall be provided with appropriate briefings and induction.

#### **Early termination of External Examiner contracts**

22.15 The contract with an External Examiner for a taught award may be terminated before the end of the External Examiner's term of office in one or more of the following circumstances:

- (i) the failure to disclose a relationship, contractual or otherwise, which may impair the integrity of the examination process and the independence of the External Examiner;
- (ii) a failure to fulfil the terms of the contract by failing to attend meetings, and/or presenting the required report(s), and/or return students' work following examination;
- (iii) dismissal by the main employer of the External Examiner for improper conduct in relation to the person's employment, which may impair the integrity of examination process or the independence of the External Examiner;
- (iv) disbarment from being able to practise that may impair the integrity of examination process or the independence of the External Examiner, where there is a clinical or professional element to the Programme of Study;
- (v) breach of University policies, including its Equal Opportunities Policy or equivalent.

22.16 The early termination of a contract shall be effected by the Chair of the Education and Student Experience Committee on behalf of the Academic Board, who shall present a report on any such termination to the Education and Student Experience Committee.

22.17 Any External Examiner whose contract is subject to early termination shall have the right of appeal to the Vice-Chancellor within 28 days of the issue of the notice of termination, who shall establish a panel of independent senior members of the University to hear and determine the matter, and make recommendations.

#### **External Examiners and Boards of Examiners**

22.18 All External Examiners must be invited to attend the Board of Examiners for the scheme and/or programme and/or pathway allocated to them.

22.19 No meeting of a Board of Examiners shall take place in the absence of an External Examiner if that External Examiner indicates a wish to be present at the agreed meeting.

22.20 In the event that an External Examiner is unable to attend a meeting of the Board of Examiners, another External Examiner present at the meeting may act for the absentee in confirming the decisions of the Board. Nonetheless:

- (i) the absent External Examiner, in presenting apologies must give explicit agreement for the proceedings to continue, and provide a written report of the assessments undertaken prior to the Board for the consideration of the Board;
- (ii) the minutes should include a statement why the meeting took place in the absence of the External Examiner concerned;
- (iii) the minutes should be provided to the absent External Examiner and a written agreement obtained from the External Examiner for any decisions taken where the it was agreed that the External Examiner present would not confirm the decisions of the Board on behalf of the absentee.

22.21 In the event that no External Examiner is able to attend a meeting of the Board of Examiners, the meeting should be rescheduled, unless agreed otherwise by the Chair and the Academic Registrar. If the meeting is to go ahead, it is important that:

- (i) the matters of business that may be concluded are agreed;
- (ii) the absent External Examiner(s), in presenting apologies, gives explicit agreement for the proceedings to continue, and provides a written report of the assessments undertaken prior to the Board for the consideration of the Board;
- (iii) the minutes should include a statement why the meeting took place in the absence of the External Examiner(s);
- (iv) the minutes should be provided for the External Examiner(s), and a written agreement obtained from the External Examiner(s) for the decisions taken.

22.22 External Examiners must endorse the outcomes of assessments before the publication of results.

22.23 Marks shall not be changed at a meeting of a Board of Examiners as a result of review by an External Examiner, unless the work of the whole cohort is reconsidered.

22.24 In circumstances where an External Examiner is unwilling to endorse a pass list or similar document, attempts must be made by the Board of Examiners to address the concerns of the External Examiner, and the outcome will be reported to the External Examiner, to the Board of Examiners and to the Academic Board. Where the concern cannot be resolved by the relevant Board of Examiners, the External Examiner will be required to make a written report to the Vice-Chancellor and Principal (or nominee) who will resolve the matter on behalf of the Academic Board.

#### **External Examiners' reports**

22.25 The Academic Board will ensure that due consideration is given to all External Examiner reports, the responses made to them, and any relevant subsequent action taken in consequence of a report by an External Examiner.

- 22.26 Each External Examiner must produce an annual report to the institution, in line with the University's report template.
- 22.27 All External Examiner reports will be made available to the Vice-Chancellor and Principal, and to relevant executive officers of the University.
- 22.28 No External Examiner's report for Taught Programmes shall name any student or staff member, or contain material which might be considered prejudicial to an identifiable individual.
- 22.29 The Quality and Standards Office shall be responsible for checking all External Examiners' reports prior to publication to ensure that they do not identify a student or member of staff or include any comment that would allow the identification of an individual student or member of staff. Where reports are found to identify individuals, the External Examiner concerned will be asked to amend the report by the Quality and Standards Office or, if this is not possible, the names will be removed prior to publication.
- 22.30 An External Examiner has authority to send an additional, separate and confidential report direct to the Vice-Chancellor and Principal: if, for example, they are concerned about standards of assessment and performance. This report will remain confidential and will not be shared with students.
- 22.31 Following the publication of each External Examiner report, the Head of School shall ensure that the External Examiner's report is made available to:
- (i) all members of academic staff teaching on the programme;
  - (ii) all students on the programme;
  - (iii) other appropriate parties.
- 22.32 The Head of School shall ensure that appropriate action is taken in response to all issues raised by the External Examiner or that the reason why no action is taken is noted and that such actions are communicated to all stakeholders in the programme, including the External Examiner, and where appropriate external bodies.
- 22.33 The Head of School shall ensure that a formal, written response is made in a format determined by the University, and that this response is sent to the External Examiner and made available to all those to whom the original report was made available.
- 22.34 It is the responsibility of the Head of School to ensure that any significant issue (for example where the External Examiners identifies a current or likely future threat to the standards of the award) is reported to the Academic Board following the procedure identified by the Academic Board.

## **23 Examiners for Research Degrees**

### **Appointment of Internal Examiners for the examination of Research Degrees**

- 23.1 An Internal Examiner for a Research Degree is appointed to examine a specified candidate, and must be appointed in line with the guidance contained in the Assessment Procedures Manual.
- 23.2 The responsibility for the appointment of an Internal Examiner is as follows:
- (i) for the Research Degree by Thesis the First Supervisor of the student is responsible for the appointment of an Internal Examiner, following consultation with the student and the rest of the supervisory panel.
  - (ii) For the Research Degree by Thesis and Coursework the Programme Management Committee or Board of Examiners is responsible for the appointment of an Internal Examiner.
- 23.3 The criteria for the appointment of an Internal Examiner for a Research Degree are that the Examiner must have:
- (i) a sufficient academic career in a relevant field of study of the subject under examination; and
  - (ii) a sufficient research record of national standing, and
  - (iii) one year's experience of supervision in a relevant academic area.
- 23.4 No person who has been involved in the supervision of the research of the candidate under examination may be appointed as an Internal Examiner for the candidate.
- 23.5 Where a candidate is re-examined following failure, the person originally appointed as an Internal Examiner should normally be reappointed, subject to the above requirements in this section.

### **The role of External Examiners for Research Degrees**

- 23.6 External Examiners for Research Degree provision are, in their expert judgment, required to report on:
- (i) whether the academic standard of the thesis they are appointed to examine is appropriate for the award offered by the University, by reference to such sources as published national benchmarks, the national qualifications frameworks, University programme specifications and other relevant information;
  - (ii) the standards of student performance in those programmes or parts of programmes which they have been appointed to examine, and on the comparability of the standards with those of similar programmes or parts of programmes in other UK higher education institutions;
  - (iii) the extent to which the processes for assessment, examination, and the determination of awards are sound and have been conducted according to the University's requirements.

- 23.7 The independence of External Examiner in making judgements about the examination process and award of qualifications is guaranteed, and no External Examiner shall be dismissed for exercising judgement.

#### **Nomination and appointment of External Examiners for Research Degrees**

- 23.8 One or more External Examiners must be appointed for each Research Degree submission.
- 23.9 Responsibility for the nomination of External Examiners for Research Degree by Thesis and for the thesis stage of Research Degrees by Thesis and Coursework is delegated by the Academic Board to the Research Degrees External Examiner Appointments Panel.
- 23.10 All External Examiners for Research Degrees must be of an appropriate standing in line with the criteria for appointment of Research Degree examiners, set out in Assessment Procedures Manual, as approved by the Academic Board.
- 23.11 External Examiners for Research Degrees must be appointed in a way that follows the Assessment Procedures Manual.
- 23.12 The nomination of an External Examiner for a Research Degree by Thesis is the responsibility of the first supervisor of the research student concerned, in consultation with the student and the rest of supervisory panel.
- 23.13 The Appointments Panel shall appoint External Examiners for a Research Degree by Thesis for a period of two years, renewable for one further year in exceptional circumstances.
- 23.14 The nomination of an External Examiner for Research Degree by Thesis and Coursework, this responsibility may be carried out by the Programme Management Committee or Board of Examiners.
- 23.15 The Programme Management Committee or Board of Examiners shall appoint External Examiners for a Research Degree by Thesis and Coursework, for up to four years.
- 23.16 In exceptional circumstances, the Research Degrees External Examiner Appointments Panel may set aside aspects of the criteria for appointment of External Examiners for Research Degrees.

#### **Declaration of interest**

- 23.17 Nominated and existing External Examiners for Research Degrees shall declare any known conflicts of interest to the University.
- 23.18 Identified conflicts of interest shall be resolved by the University before the nomination is approved by the Research Degrees External Examiner Appointments Panel, or in the case of an existing External Examiner, before the External Examiner is next asked to undertake any element of his or her duties.

23.19 Where a conflict of interest cannot be resolved, the University may decide not to approve a nomination, or to discontinue an existing appointment, following the procedure set out in these Regulations.

#### **Briefing and induction of External Examiners**

23.20 Following confirmation of appointment by the Research Degrees External Examiner Appointments Panel, External Examiners for Research Degrees shall be provided with a letter of appointment, allocating them to a scheme and/or programme and/or pathway.

23.21 External Examiners for Research Degrees shall be provided with appropriate briefings and induction.

23.22 Liaison with External Examiner(s) for Research Degrees shall be through the person so appointed by the Research Degrees External Examiner Appointments Panel. The department within which the student is being supervised should not liaise with the External Examiner on any matter concerning the examination, once the appointment has been made.

#### **Early termination of External Examiner contracts**

23.23 The contract with an External Examiner for a Research Degree may be terminated before the end of the External Examiner's term of office in one or more of the following circumstances:

- (i) the failure to disclose a relationship, contractual or otherwise, which may impair the integrity of the examination process and the independence of the External Examiner;
- (ii) a failure to fulfil the terms of the contract by failing to attend meetings, and/or presenting the required report(s), and/or return students' work following examination;
- (iii) a persistent failure to make arrangements for receiving thesis and attend, where appropriate, the viva, and/or present the required reports;
- (iv) dismissal by the main employer of the External Examiner for improper conduct in relation to the person's employment, which may impair the integrity of examination process or the independence of the External Examiner;
- (v) disbarment from being able to practise that may impair the integrity of examination process or the independence of the External Examiner, where there is a clinical or professional element to the research degree;
- (vi) breach of University policies, including its Equal Opportunities Policy or equivalent.

23.24 The early termination of a contract shall be effected by the Chair of the Research Degrees Sub Committee, who shall present a report on any such termination to the Quality and Standards Committee.

23.25 Any External Examiner whose contract is subject to early termination shall have the right of appeal to the Vice-Chancellor and Principal within 28 days of the issue of the notice of termination, who shall establish a panel of independent senior members of the University to hear and determine the matter, and make recommendations.

## APPENDIX 1 GENERIC LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. The descriptions provided in this section are generic and apply to all programmes, but may be interpreted differently from one programme to another. Furthermore, the prominence of a particular learning outcome may vary. The programme specification will set out the learning outcomes applicable.
2. The learning outcomes described in this section are derived from, but are not identical to, Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Level Descriptors<sup>3</sup>.

### Generic Learning Outcomes for Level 0 programmes

3. Students who are successful at Level 0 should have demonstrated knowledge and understanding, skills, and other attributes in the following ways:
  - (i) Knowledge and Understanding
    - Students will have a limited factual and conceptual knowledge base, with some appreciation of the breadth of the field of study and the relevant terminology.
    - Students should be able to demonstrate knowledge of the essential concepts, principles and assumptions associated with their subject(s)
  - (ii) Cognitive and Subject Specific Skills
    - Students should have the ability to apply the skills of analysis, synthesis, evaluation independently in relatively simple and familiar contexts, or with guidance or structure when working with greater complexity.
  - (iii) Transferable Skills
    - Students should be able to demonstrate to operate in familiar and well –defined contexts that require use of a specified range of standard techniques

### Generic Learning Outcomes for awards at level 4

4. Students who gain the award of Certificate of Higher Education should have demonstrated knowledge and understanding, skills, and other attributes in the following ways:
  - (i) Knowledge and Understanding
    - Students should be able to demonstrate knowledge of the essential concepts, principles and assumptions associated with their subject(s)
  - (ii) Cognitive and Subject Specific Skills  
Students should be able to:
    - develop lines of argument and make sound judgements in accordance with basic theories and concepts of their subject(s);
    - evaluate and interpret concepts and principles within the context of their subject(s);
    - present, evaluate, and interpret a variety of evidence or data using defined techniques.
  - (iii) Graduate Skills  
Students should be able to:
    - access a range of resources to research, retrieve and manage information;

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<sup>3</sup> Quality Assurance Agency *The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (January 2001) (<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/Framework-Higher-Education-Qualifications-08.pdf>)



- identify strategies for overcoming obstacles and show an awareness of different perspectives and ethical issues;
- identify targets, plan studies, access training, seek evidence to establish achievements, reflect on progress and use feedback to benchmark progress;
- communicate results of their study, using appropriate academic conventions, presentational methods and Information Communications Technology;
- develop the ability to listen, respond to and discuss ideas and issues openly;
- establish objectives, plan work and agree responsibilities and working arrangements, develop cooperative and flexible working relationships through review and negotiation, offer and receive constructive feedback and use initiative responsibly;
- demonstrate such numeracy skills as are appropriate to the subject(s) studied at this level.

### **Generic Learning Outcomes for awards at level 5**

5. Students who gain the award of Diploma of Higher Education should have demonstrated knowledge and understanding, skills, qualities and other attributes in the following ways:

(i) Knowledge and Understanding

Students should be able to demonstrate:

- an understanding of the well-established concepts, principles and knowledge of their subjects, and of the ways in which those principles and that knowledge have developed;
- knowledge and application of the main methods of enquiry in their subject(s);
- an understanding of the limits of their knowledge, and how this influences analysis and interpretation based on that knowledge.

(ii) Cognitive and Subject Specific Skills

Students should be able to:

- select appropriate approaches to solving problems in their subject(s);
- develop lines of argument and make sound judgements in accordance with the theories and concepts of their subject(s);
- evaluate and interpret concepts and principles in the contexts of the subject(s) and to apply these beyond the context in which they were first studied, including, where appropriate, to an employment context;
- present, evaluate, and interpret a variety of evidence or data using defined techniques.

(iii) Graduate Skills

Students should be able to:

- deploy a range of techniques to analyse information by displaying autonomy and initiative in tackling tasks, framing appropriate questions, judging the appropriateness of different approaches and identifying a range of solutions through synthesizing arguments from primary and secondary sources;
- improve performance through reflection on feedback from various sources, by identifying own learning needs and the skills and qualities important for employability, demonstrating autonomy in learning, monitoring effectiveness of action planning, and adopting a flexible planned approach to study;

- communicate effectively information, arguments, and analysis by selecting and using structured and coherent argument, citation techniques and bibliographies, and appropriate information technology applications and resources;
- exercise personal responsibility and decision making, particularly within a working group, by developing an understanding and tolerance of others and the skills of negotiation, reflecting on techniques for peer assessment, appreciating the need for adaptability, and using initiative and leadership and networking in a group setting;
- demonstrate such numeracy skills as are appropriate to the subject(s) studied at this level.

## **Generic Learning Outcomes for awards at Level 6**

6. Students should have demonstrated knowledge and understanding, skills, qualities and other attributes in the following ways:

(i) Knowledge and Understanding

Students should be able to demonstrate:

- a systematic understanding of key aspects of their subject(s) of study, including acquisition of coherent and detailed knowledge, at least some of which should be at the forefront of defined aspects of a discipline
- conceptual understanding that enables them to devise and sustain arguments, and solve problems, using ideas and techniques of the discipline
- sufficient knowledge and understanding to enable them to comment appropriately upon particular aspects of current research, or equivalent advanced scholarship, in the discipline
- an appreciation of the uncertainty, ambiguity and limits of knowledge in their field of study

(ii) Cognitive and Subject Specific Skills

Students should be able to:

- present, evaluate, and interpret qualitative and quantitative data, and develop lines of argument and make sound judgements in accordance with central theories and concepts in their subject(s)
- demonstrate knowledge of the main methods of enquiry and analysis in their subject(s) and apply this in the execution of their own enquiry and analysis
- apply the methods and techniques learned to review, consolidate, extend their knowledge and understanding; and initiate and carry out projects
- evaluate critically arguments, assumptions, abstract concepts and data, some of which may be incomplete
- manage their own learning and make use of a range of learning resources appropriate to the discipline including scholarly reviews and primary sources

(iii) Graduate Skills

Students should be able to:

- use effectively a range of information sources (including electronic sources) to extract and synthesise relevant, valid, and reliable information to develop a reasoned argument, and demonstrate an understanding of ethical dimensions of research

- adopt an autonomous approach to study by monitoring progress through feedback to identify own learning needs, and reflect on achievements to inform career choices
- communicate effectively information, arguments, and analysis to various audiences using appropriate data, presentational methods, vocabulary, and academic conventions
- engage in appropriate computer-mediated communications (CMC) discussion, active listening techniques, and scholarly argument
- engage with others over an extended period to meet goals, by engaging in networking, using a flexible approach to negotiation and co-operation to manage change, adopting a leadership role to enhance group performance, and reflecting on peer assessment
- demonstrate such numeracy skills as are appropriate to the subject(s) studied at this level

## Generic Learning Outcomes for Awards at Level 7

### (i) Knowledge and Understanding

Students must demonstrate:

- 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 professional practice;
- a comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship;
- 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;
- conceptual understanding that enables the student to evaluate:
  - current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline critically; and
  - methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses; and
  - an ability to continue to advance their knowledge and understanding, and to develop new skills to a high level.

### (ii) Cognitive Skills

Typically, students will be able to

- deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and communicate their conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences;
- demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level;
- and will have the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:
  - the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility;
  - decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations; and
  - the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development.