



**Bournemouth
University**

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This document is part of the Academic Regulations, Policies and Procedures which govern the University's academic provision. Each document has a unique document number to indicate which section of the series it belongs to.

6A - Standard Assessment Regulations: Foundation Degree Programmes

1. SCOPE AND PURPOSE

- 1.1 Every Bournemouth University programme which leads to an award of the University, including the award of credit, is governed by a set of standard assessment regulations. The University has six sets of standard assessment regulations (Higher National, Foundation degree, Undergraduate, Graduate Certificate/Diploma, Integrated Masters and Postgraduate taught programmes) which form part of the University's [Academic Regulations, Policies and Procedures](#).
- 1.2 The regulations in this document govern Foundation degree programmes and are intended for Bournemouth University staff and students. The regulations must be followed by the Assessment Boards (Unit and Programme Boards) which are authorised to assess candidates in accordance with the relevant assessment regulations. Programme Boards also recommend that awards of the University be conferred on those who achieve the standards required for an award.
- 1.3 The standard regulations are applicable, without modification, unless:
- exceptions have been approved by the University for whole programmes, e.g. to accommodate the requirements of Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs). Where this is the case, the exceptions are recorded in the Programme Specification and the Level/Programme Handbook and must be clearly articulated to the Programme Board at the beginning of the meeting.
 - an individual student's entry profile and/or study choices necessitate changes, e.g. where units undertaken as part of a student exchange replace credit-bearing Bournemouth University units. As marks for units undertaken elsewhere will not be used to calculate classification of the University's own award, the final award is calculated solely on the basis of the units undertaken at Bournemouth. Similarly, where a student is granted credit exemptions towards a Bournemouth University programme¹, award classification is calculated solely on the basis of the units undertaken at Bournemouth².
- 1.4 All students sign up at enrolment to accept the assessment regulations prevailing at the time and any subsequent approved modifications during their registration period. The assessment regulations are made available to students on the portal and are provided on enrolment in their Programme Handbooks. All students are notified of any changes made to the assessment regulations during their studies. The most recent changes to the regulations were introduced for all students from September 2017.

¹ Exemptions may be granted to students on the basis of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) or UK Credit Transfer (UKCT). These terms were referred to as the 'Accreditation of Prior Learning' (APL) up until September 2014.

² Therefore, the number of credits on which the profile regulation is based for classification purposes is fixed as outlined in the relevant Standard Assessment Regulations and cannot be adjusted for students who have undertaken credit-bearing units on a pass-fail basis as part of a student exchange or those who have exemptions on the basis of RPL/UKCT.

2. KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- 2.1 **Senate:** to approve the standard assessment regulations and any amendments to these.
- 2.2 **Education Committee:** to review the assessment regulations periodically and recommend amendments to Senate.
- 2.3 **Assessment Boards:** to implement the assessment regulations. The Assessment Boards derives authority from the University Senate.

3. ACCESSING OTHER RELEVANT BU DOCUMENTS

- 3.1 All documents can be accessed [here](#)
- 3.2 These regulations should be read in conjunction with the *6L - Assessment Board Decision Making, including the Implementation of Assessment Regulations: Procedure* which provides information on the application of the assessment regulations and outlines standard practice within the University in dealing with issues that commonly arise at Assessment Boards.
- 3.3 Functions and operation of Assessment Boards are as detailed in the *6K - Assessment Boards: Policy*.
- 3.4 *6H - Academic Offences: Policy and Procedure for Taught Awards*
- 3.5 *6M - Research Misconduct: Policy and Procedure*
- 3.6 *11A - Academic Appeals: Policy and Procedure for Taught Awards*

Regulations

4. PRINCIPLES

- 4.1 These regulations conform to the principles set out in the current version of the University's *Academic Regulations, Policies and Procedures*.

5. PERIOD OF REGISTRATION

- 5.1 The maximum periods which a student may take to complete the programme, from first registration, are normally as follows.

| | Full-time, maximum (years) | Part-time, maximum (years) |
|---------------|---|----------------------------|
| CertHE | 2 | 4 |
| FD | 4 | 6 |
| CPD | As above from first registration to a CPD framework | |

- 5.2 Periods of registration may formally be adjusted by the Programme Board on reasonable grounds. Maximum periods of registration may be set for students who enter with credit.

6. PASS MARK

- 6.1 The pass mark for each unit will be 40%. Where the unit is assessed by a combination of formally defined separate elements of assessment a pass will be awarded where the total unit mark is at least 40% and the mark in each separate element of the unit assessment is not less than 36.0%.
- 6.2 Where a formally defined separate element is assessed on a Pass/Fail basis, an overall unit pass will be awarded where the total unit mark is at least 40% and a pass is achieved in the Pass/Fail element(s). Where a unit is assessed entirely on a Pass/Fail basis, a pass must be achieved in all formally defined separate elements of assessment.

7. COMPENSATION

- 7.1 When the total mark for a unit is less than 40%, but not normally less than 38.0%, and providing that no formally defined element contributing to the unit assessment has a mark of less than 36.0% (or a fail where assessed on a pass/fail basis), the Programme Board will normally compensate for up to 40 credits at any one level. A pass will be awarded provided that the student to date has obtained a pass mark of 40% (or a pass where assessed on a pass/fail basis), in the remaining credits in the same level as the unit or units for which compensation is considered. Such compensation will only apply to the first attempt (including any subsequent attempt taken as a first attempt due to mitigation) and may not normally apply to a unit or units with a total value of more than 40 credits at any one level. Where compensation has taken place the pre-compensation unit mark will be recorded.
- 7.2 As compensation is based on the appraisal of the student's performance to date in the level for which compensation is considered, it cannot be applied before the student has attempted a minimum of 60 credits at that level.

8. PROGRESSION

- 8.1 To proceed to Level 5, students must normally achieve at least 120 Level 4 credits as specified for Level 4 of the programme concerned and, where appropriate, successfully complete the specified work experience.
- 8.2 Students who have normally failed 20 credits, or exceptionally 40 credits, may progress to the next stage where the Programme Board allows the student to carry the credit into the subsequent level for the next assessment/ reassessment opportunity.

9. SUBMISSION OF COURSEWORK AND ATTENDANCE AT EXAMINATIONS

Submission of coursework

- 9.1 If a piece of coursework is not submitted by the required deadline, the following will apply:
- If coursework is submitted within 72 hours after the deadline, the maximum mark that can be awarded is 40%. If the assessment achieves a pass mark and subject to the overall performance of the unit and the student's profile for the level, it will be accepted by the Programme Board as the reassessment piece. The unit will count towards the reassessment allowance for the level (see 12.2);
This ruling will apply to written coursework and artefacts only;
This ruling will apply to the first attempt only (including any subsequent attempt taken as a first attempt due to mitigation);
 - If coursework is submitted more than 72 hours after the deadline, a mark of zero (0%) will be awarded;
 - Failure to submit/complete any other types of coursework by the required deadline will result in a mark of zero (0%) being awarded.
- 9.2 Extensions, without penalty, may be allowed in cases of illness or genuine exceptional personal circumstances provided that an application is made before the submission deadline, normally before the submission date, and there is good supporting evidence. The application must be made in writing and the signed form submitted to the relevant administrator for authorisation before the deadline. Coursework submitted after the extended deadline will be dealt with as per 9.1 above.

Attendance at examinations

- 9.3 Failure to attend an examination will result in a mark of zero (0%) being recorded.
- 9.4 Examination postponement requests, without penalty, may be allowed in cases of illness or genuine exceptional personal circumstances provided that an application is made before the start time of the examination, normally before the examination date, and there is good supporting evidence. The application must be made in writing and the signed form submitted

to the relevant administrator for authorisation before the deadline. Failure to attend an examination on a revised date will result in a mark of zero (0%) being recorded.

10. AWARDS

- 10.1 All named awards are based on credit. The credits required for each named award are defined in the Programme Specification for the programme concerned.
- 10.2 A **Certificate of Higher Education** will normally be awarded to a student who has been credited with 120 credits overall and at least 100 credits at Level 4, and who does not wish to progress further on the programme or who fails a subsequent level.
- 10.3 A **Foundation degree** will normally be awarded to a student who has been credited with 240 credits overall and at least 100 credits at Level 5.
- 10.4 An **Aegrotat award** may replace either of the above awards when the student has not achieved the required number of credits for the level for which they are considered (see section 13.3). An Aegrotat award is always unclassified.
- 10.5 Where defined as a requirement for the award, the student must have successfully completed the specified work experience.
- 10.6 In the absence of a named award, or eligibility for a named award, the award of credit is given for the successful completion of individual units.
- 10.7 Students may be permitted to replace failed units with units of an equivalent value at a higher level.

11. CLASSIFICATION

- 11.1 For a **Certificate of Higher Education** all units will normally have a weighting towards final classification. Classification will be based on the credit-weighted aggregate mark as follows:

| | |
|-------------|----------------------|
| Distinction | 70% or more |
| Merit | 60% to less than 70% |
| Pass | 40% to less than 60% |

- 11.2 For a **Foundation degree** classification will be based on whichever of the following is more advantageous to the student and will be based on Level 5 units only:
- Credit weighted aggregate mark as calculated in 11.1;
 - Mark profile. Where a student achieves an aggregate mark which is not more than 3 marks below a classification boundary (60 or 70) and has at least 80 credits at Level 5 in a higher classification than the aggregate mark, the Programme Board will recommend that the higher classification be awarded.

- 11.3 An intermediate award where credit of an equivalent value at a higher level has been applied will not be classified.

12. PROVISION FOR FAILED CANDIDATES

- 12.1 Normally students will be required to make good a failure prior to the commencement of the next stage of the programme, in one of the following ways.

12.2 *In-Year Retrieval*

Level 0/3 and Level 4 students can retrieve a failure in an eligible Semester 1 unit by opting to resubmit the assessment mid-year within an agreed time frame. The mark will be capped at the pass mark and the higher mark of the two attempts will stand. A student's reassessment allowance is not impacted by an in-year retrieval attempt and eligibility for compensation is not

affected by in-year retrieval. Students repeating in level 0/3 and level 4 are also eligible for in-year retrieval. There may be some units which are not eligible for in-year retrieval due to the practical nature of the assessment or PSRB requirements.

Failure and reassessment

12.3 The Programme Board will permit a student who fails at the first attempt to be reassessed within the limit for reassessment for the level (up to and including 60 credits at Level 4 or 40 credits at Level 5), on one occasion only, in one of the following ways:

- resit the examination;
- resit the examination and resubmit coursework;
- resubmit the coursework;
- resubmit a piece of work of equal weight and comparable standard as recommended by the Unit Board and directed by the Programme Board.

12.4 Where a student exceeds the level entitlement for reassessment as detailed above, the Programme Board may exceptionally determine a lower reassessment limit on academic grounds. The Board will act in accordance with 12.10 thereafter.

12.5 Where a reassessment has taken place, the formal element mark will not exceed 40%.

12.6 Any late resubmission(s) will be regarded as a fail. A mark of zero (0%) will be recorded for coursework resubmitted after the specified resubmission deadline.

12.7 The Programme Board may permit candidates who fail to satisfy the requirements for the work-based learning unit(s) to make good their failure by additional study or placement as deemed appropriate.

Carrying credit

12.8 Normally, following unsuccessful reassessment of a unit, the Programme Board may permit a student to carry up to 20 credits into the next level of study (or to repeat the failed unit as per section 12.10 before progressing to the next level of study). Exceptionally, students with mitigation may be allowed to carry up to 40 credits. The following will apply to all credit carried over into the next stage:

- The unit mark for the credit carried over will normally not exceed 40%;
- Where credit that has been carried in to the next stage is failed, the student will normally be allowed one further reassessment opportunity enabling four attempts in total.
- Credit that has been carried in to the next stage must be successfully completed in order to progress to the next level, e.g., a failed level 4 credit cannot be carried into level 6.

12.9 Where a student exceeds the entitlement for carrying credit as detailed above, the Board will act in accordance with 12.10 thereafter.

Repetition of units

12.10 Once a student's reassessment allowance has been exhausted, i.e. the total amount of credits of failed units is beyond the credit limit for reassessment entitlement for the level, or the Board has determined a lower reassessment limit for the student (see 12.2 – 12.3 above), the Programme Board will normally permit the student to repeat the remaining failed unit(s) for that amount of credit once only, or to withdraw from the programme. The Programme Board should decide how reassessment and repetition should be applied to the student's profile.

12.11 Where a student fails in a reassessment for a unit as described in 12.3 above, the Programme Board will normally permit them to repeat the failed unit(s) once only, or to withdraw from the programme.

12.12 In the case of unit(s) which are no longer current or available, an acceptable alternative will be identified.

12.13 Where a unit has been repeated, the unit mark will not exceed 40%. The Programme Board will permit a student who fails at the first attempt in a repeated unit, to be reassessed, on one occasion only, in one of the ways identified in 12.3 and the unit mark will not exceed 40%.

13. PROVISION FOR FAILED CANDIDATES WITH VALID REASONS FOR POOR PERFORMANCE

13.1 If it is established to the satisfaction of the Programme Board that a student's absence, failure to submit work or poor performance in all or part of an assessment for an award was due to illness, or other cause found valid on production of acceptable evidence, the Programme Board will act as follows.

13.2 Where exceptional circumstances are confirmed, a student may be reassessed as if for the first time in any or all of the elements of assessment, as specified by the Programme Board. If an assessment affected by illness was itself a second attempt, the student will be permitted to be reassessed as if for the second time. Where a student has passed a unit at a first attempt but their performance has been affected by mitigation, the Programme Board may allow the student an opportunity to be assessed as for the first time. In such cases the second mark will stand.

13.3 In exceptional cases, where the student's ability to complete their studies is affected by serious circumstances (such as terminal illness of the student), and it is established that the student is likely to be unable to complete/return to complete their studies within a reasonable time period, the Programme Board may act in one of the following ways.

- Where the Programme Board is satisfied that there is sufficient evidence of the student's achievement to determine the classification of an award, the student may be recommended on the basis of the available evidence for the award for which the student is a candidate, or for an intermediate award specified in the Programme Specification. The decision of the Programme Board must be ratified by the Chair of Senate.
- An Aegrotat award may be recommended when the Programme Board does not have enough evidence of the student's performance to recommend the award for which the student is a candidate or an intermediate award specified in the Programme Specification. Before such a recommendation is made, the student must have demonstrated achievement at the level for which an Aegrotat award is considered. The Programme Board must be satisfied that on the balance of probabilities but for illness or other valid cause the student would have reached the standard required. The decision of the Programme Board must be ratified by the Chair of Senate. Where appropriate, the student must have signified that they are willing to accept the award.

13.4 The above awards in 13.3 may only be considered when the student has not achieved the required number of credits. Although the award title is conferred, the student will only be accredited with the credits achieved.

14. ACADEMIC OFFENCES AND RESEARCH MISCONDUCT

Academic Offences

14.1 Where an academic offence has been committed, the Academic Offences Panel/Board will stipulate the mark to be awarded for the affected unit or element of assessment in line with *6H - Academic Offences: Policy and Procedure for Taught Awards* and the Assessment Board will consider whether the student is eligible for reassessment under Section 12 above.

14.2 Where the Academic Offences Panel/Board has stipulated that no opportunity of reassessment shall be permitted, the Programme Board will withdraw the student from the programme. In such cases, the Academic Offences Panel/Board will stipulate whether the student may or may not be considered for an intermediate award in accordance with the assessment regulations.

Research Misconduct

- 14.3 Where an allegation of research misconduct is confirmed in accordance with *6M - Research Misconduct: Policy and Procedure*, a penalty will be stipulated in line with *6H - Academic Offences: Policy and Procedure for Taught Awards*. The Assessment Board will act in accordance with the principles outlined in 14.1-14.2 above to determine the student's results.

General

15. REFERENCES AND FURTHER INFORMATION

- 15.1 Details of the Academic Offences, Research Misconduct and Appeals Procedures are given in the current version of the University's Academic Regulations, Policies and Procedures, including *6H - Academic Offences: Policy and Procedure for Taught Awards* and *11A - Academic Appeals: Policy and Procedure for Taught Awards*. These are also available via the Student Portal at [Important Information](#).
- 15.2 The QAA's [Advice and Guidance](#): (incorporating the Framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (FHEQ)) describes the level and achievement represented by all taught and postgraduate research awards (other than honorary degrees and higher doctorates) granted by the University. A
- 15.3 The QAA [Higher education credit framework for England: guidance on academic credit arrangements in higher education in England](#) provides guidance and information on the use of credit in programmes leading to a higher education qualification in England.
- 15.4 This policy was reviewed according to the University's [Equality Analysis Procedure](#) in June 2019.