

## **6L - Assessment Board Decision-Making, Including the Implementation of Assessment Regulations: Procedure**

### **1. SCOPE AND PURPOSE**

- 1.1 This procedure is for Bournemouth University staff.
- 1.2 This procedure provides explanatory information on the key features of the University's assessment regulations to assist Assessment Boards in applying them. It provides examples of standard practice in the University in dealing with issues that commonly arise at Boards in terms of both regulations and more general issues. It also outlines the parameters of discretion open to Boards when implementing the regulations.

### **2. KEY RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 2.1 **Assessment Boards:** to implement assessment regulations in the light of University requirements and good practice, and confer awards for taught courses on behalf of Senate.
- 2.2 **Faculties/Partners:** to manage and operate Assessment Boards and implement their decisions.

### **3. ACCESSING OTHER RELEVANT BU DOCUMENTS**

- 3.1 All documents can be accessed [here](#)
- 3.2 Other documents with direct relevance to this are:
- *3P - Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and UK Credit Transfer (UKCT): Policy and Procedure;*
  - *3Q - Movement of Students between Programmes: Policy and Procedure;*
  - *6A - Standard Assessment Regulations for taught awards:*
    - *6A - Standard Assessment Regulations: Undergraduate Programmes*
    - *6A - Standard Assessment Regulations: Postgraduate Taught Programmes*
    - *6A - Standard Assessment Regulations: Foundation Degree Programmes*
    - *6A - Standard Assessment Regulations: Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma Programmes*
    - *6A - Standard Assessment Regulations: Integrated Masters Programmes*
  - Programmes with approved amendments to the University's *Standard Assessment Regulations*, the amended regulations are noted in the approved Programme Specification;
  - *6D - Marking, Independent Marking and Moderation: Policy and Procedure;*
  - *6E - Assessment Feedback and Return of Assessed Work: Policy and Procedure;*
  - *6H - Academic Offences: Policy and Procedure for Taught Awards;*
  - *6J - Exceptional Circumstances: Policy Policy and Procedure*
  - *6K - Assessment Boards: Policy;*
  - *6M - Research Misconduct: Policy and Procedure;*
  - *11K - Student Disciplinary: Policy and Procedure.*

## Procedure

### 4. DISCRETION AVAILABLE TO ASSESSMENT BOARDS

- 4.1 The parameters within which Assessment Boards operate are embedded in the assessment regulations and the inclusion of words such as 'normally' or 'may' signal when there is more than one option available to the Boards. The measures taken should be consistent across the cohort and reflect, as far as possible, established institutional practice (as outlined in this procedure). Boards should be mindful of the level of discretion that can be exercised during Board proceedings and **wherever exceptional decisions are made, the rationale must be clearly recorded in the Board minutes.**

### 5. IMPLEMENTING THE UNIVERSITY'S STANDARD ASSESSMENT REGULATIONS

- 5.1 The following provides explanatory information on each section of the Standard Assessment Regulations and provides guidance on the application of the regulations.

#### 6.0 Period of registration (*Section 5 of the Assessment Regulations*)

- 6.1 This section specifies the maximum period of registration within which students must complete the programme. The period of registration for each award is longer than the typical length of the programme to allow time for such occurrences as deferral requests, exceptional circumstances and remedying failure. Normally, if a student has not completed within the registration period, they would be required to withdraw from the programme although the Programme Board can allow an extension to the registration period if there are deemed to be reasonable grounds. Where this is the case a clear timetable for completion should be agreed and communicated to the student in writing. In certain cases, extensions may be considered as a Chair's Action. To reflect more flexible modes of delivery, there is no minimum period of registration. The minimum duration of a programme will be determined by the delivery and assessment schedule for that programme.

#### 6.2 Pass mark (*Section 6 of the Assessment Regulations*)

- 6.2.1 A formally defined element of assessment is recorded in the 'summative assessment' section of the unit specification and will be shown on the Board Report and the student Transcript.

#### 6.3 Compensation (*Section 7 of the Assessment Regulations*)

- 6.3.1 Compensation is not an exceptional decision and should usually be applied to all students who are eligible. **Where compensation is not allowed the rationale for the decision must be clearly recorded in the minutes.** Some awards with approved amended regulations have further limits regarding the level of compensation to allow for PSRB requirements.
- 6.3.2 Compensation does not apply, as follows:
- where a unit mark falls below 38.0% (UG) or 48.0% (PG);
  - where a formal element is less than 36% or 46% and any pass/fail element is a fail;
  - where students have failed other units within the level (students must obtain a unit pass normally a mark of 40% or above for UG or 50% or above for PG in the remaining credits at the same level as the unit(s) for which compensation is considered);
  - when students are undertaking a reassessment or a repeat unit (in these cases, the student must obtain a mark of 40% or 50% to pass);
  - when the award itself is less than 60 credits (e.g. a Graduate Certificate);
  - before the student has attempted a minimum of 60 credits (therefore it may not apply to CPD or part-time students who are considered at a mid or in-level Programme Board).
- 6.3.3 The decision to compensate by an in or mid-level Programme Board must be based on the information and profile to date and the decision cannot be overturned by the end-of-level Programme Board. The student must be advised of the consequences of further failure in subsequent units at the same level.

## 6.4 Progression (Section 8 of the Assessment Regulations)

- 6.4.1 Students must meet the progression requirements as outlined in the Programme Specification before being permitted to commence to the next level/stage of study.

A student may be permitted to work on a dissertation alongside reassessment of taught units but they must be made aware of the implications if they subsequently fail the reassessment.

### **Work experience/placement as a progression requirement**

- 6.4.2 Some programmes (including sandwich degree programmes) require satisfactory completion of a specified period of work experience, e.g. placement, in order to progress to the next level/stage of the programme and/or as a requirement for the award. Such requirements are detailed in the Programme Specification.

### **Completion of work experience/placement**

- 6.4.3 Where the number of specified weeks has not been met, the Programme Board would normally take one of the following options depending on the level of performance to date, the intended learning outcomes (ILOs), nature and value of the work experience, the number of weeks outstanding and any exceptional circumstances:

- a) complete the required number of weeks prior to commencing, during or after the next level as specified by the Programme Board;
- b) stipulate an alternative number of weeks to be completed;
- c) where available, offer the student an alternative award in accordance with the regulations (i.e. a full time award rather than a sandwich degree).

### **Reassessment of work experience/placement**

- 6.4.4 Where the work experience assessment has been failed, the Programme Board would normally take one of the following options depending on the circumstances:

- a) offer an appropriate reassessment (*Section 12 - Standard Assessment Regulations*);
- b) where available, offer the student an alternative award in accordance with the regulations (i.e. a full time award rather than a sandwich degree).

NB: Non-credit bearing student exchanges may be built into a placement year for a period of up to one semester. Where this is the case, the method of reassessing the placement will be appropriate to the ILOs as specified in the Programme specification.

## 6.5 Assessment penalties for late/non-submission and non-attendance

- 6.5.1 Late Submission, Non-Submission and Non-Attendance without valid circumstances all carry fixed penalties which are outlined in *6A - Standard Assessment Regulations*. The relevant penalty is always applied directly to the individual piece of assessment regardless of the unit structure. Therefore, an assessment penalty may be attached to a formal element mark which shows on the Board Report

- 6.5.2 There are three possible outcomes for the submission of coursework:

1. **Submission** - The work is submitted on time by the submission deadline;
2. **Late Submission\*** - Written coursework/artefact\*\* is submitted within 72 hours of the submission deadline (first submission/submission as if for the first time only);
3. **Non-Submission** - The work is submitted after 72 hours of the submission deadline, is not submitted at all, or does not meet the description in point 2. above.

\*Failure to complete other types of coursework which require attendance on a given date such as an in-class test or a presentation will be treated as a non-submission.

\*\* The Programme Team determines what constitutes an artefact.

- 6.5.3 There are two possible outcomes for the sitting of an exam:

1. **Attendance** - The examination is sat at the agreed time on the agreed date;
2. **Non Attendance** - The examination is not sat.

- 6.5.4 The Late submission rule applies to the first attempt in repeat mode or any subsequent attempt taken as a first attempt in repeat mode due to exceptional circumstances.
- 6.5.5 The Late Submission rule only applies to the submission of written coursework/artefacts and does not apply to other types of coursework which require attendance on a given date such as an in-class test or a presentation. If these are not completed on time, they will be treated as a Non-Submission and awarded a mark of zero (0%). It also does not apply to reassessments that are submitted late.

#### **LATE SUBMISSIONS**

Where a student submits a piece of written coursework/artefact within 72 hours, the Board will act as follows.

##### ***Formal assessment elements - student's original unit mark is a pass/above***

- a) The formal element mark appears capped at 40% (UG) / 50% (PG) on the Board Report and is identified with a code **LS: Late Submission**.
- b) Where mitigation is accepted, the Programme Board may decide to award the actual uncapped mark or to offer an assessment as if for the first time in accordance with the *Standard Assessment Regulations*.

##### ***Formal assessment elements - student's original unit mark is below a pass***

- a) The formal element mark achieved will be displayed and identified with a code **LS: Late Submission** on the Board Report. For formal elements assessed on a pass/fail basis the code **FLS: Fail, Late Submission** will be used.
- a) The failed work is considered as per normal in accordance with *Standard Assessment Regulations, including where exceptional circumstances are accepted*

#### **6.5.6 Late Submissions after an agreed extension / deadline**

If a student is given an agreed extension on their coursework/artefact (e.g. due to mitigation) but subsequently submits late after the agreed extension/deadline, standard late submission regulations apply.

#### **6.5.7 Board consideration of Non-Submission/Non-Attendance**

Where a student submits a piece of coursework later than 72 hours, or does not submit anything at all, it will be classed as a Non-Submission. Where a student does not attend an examination, it will also be classed as a Non-Submission. Both carry a penalty and the work is awarded a mark of zero (0%). The formal element mark appears as zero (0%) on the Board Report and is identified with a code NS: Non Submission. Where exceptional circumstances are accepted for work submitted after 72 hours and marked, the Programme Board will award the actual uncapped mark.

### **6.6 Classification (Section 11 of the Assessment Regulations)**

#### ***Student Exchanges***

- 6.6.1 In the case of student exchanges involving outgoing students (i.e. where students have studied a part of their University degree at an institution other than at BU), marks do not count towards the final classification as students' work is recognised on a pass/fail basis only. Therefore, whilst students receive credit for passed units, any carry forward mark towards classification will be calculated on the basis of the units studied at BU only. Student exchanges may also be built into a non-credit bearing placement year.

#### ***Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and UK Credit Transfer (UKCT)***

- 6.6.2 Where a Board ratifies Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) or UK Credit Transfer (UKCT) decision, the credits awarded contribute to the award on a pass-fail basis and no marks will contribute to the classification of the award<sup>1</sup>.

#### ***Internal Transfers***

- 6.6.3 Where a student transfers from one programme to another as per 3Q - *Movement of students between programmes: Policy and Procedure*, the student's mark profile will move across with them to the receiving programme, including any penalties associated with reassessments and/or repeat units<sup>2</sup>.

#### **Profile regulation**

- 6.6.4 The profile regulation concerning classification applies to all final awards where specified in the assessment regulations for the programme. Whilst it does not apply to intermediate exit awards, it does apply to the intermediate Bachelor (Hons) award of an Integrated Masters award where students exit with this award. It requires that students who have performed at a higher classification than their aggregate mark in at least 2/3rds of their final level credits, be awarded the higher classification if the aggregate mark is no more than 3 marks (3.0%) below the classification boundary. **Therefore an aggregate mark would need to be 47.0% to less than 50%, 57.0% to less than 60% or 67.0% to less than 70% for the profile regulation to be applied. There is no discretion for a Programme Board to award a higher classification to**

students who marginally fall short of the profile regulation. Therefore, an aggregate mark of 66.93 for example could **not** be considered under the profile regulation.

- 6.6.5 The number of credits on which the profile regulation is based for classification purposes is fixed as outlined in the relevant *Standard Assessment Regulations*. The regulation cannot be adjusted for students who achieve pass-fail credits at the final level of the named award. Therefore the limit remains unchanged for students who have exemptions on the basis of RPL/UKCT exemptions or for those who have undertaken credit-bearing units on a pass-fail basis as part of a student exchange.

#### **Awarding a Bachelors degree without honours**

- 6.6.6 Failure/non-completion of up to 40 credits at Level 6 following assessment allows the possibility of the award of a Bachelors degree without honours. However students who are registered on an honours degree and fail up to 40 credits at Level 6 should in the first instance be offered the opportunity in writing to be reassessed.

6.7	<b>Provision for failed candidates</b> ( <i>Section 12 of the Assessment Regulations</i> )
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#### **In-Year Retrieval**

- 6.7.1 In-year retrieval (IYR) will normally only apply to assessment in the first semester of Level 0/3 and level 4. Students repeating a first semester level 4 unit or carrying a level 4 unit in level 5 are eligible for IYR. Some assessments may not be eligible for an in-year retrieval attempt and could be exempt due to Professional Statutory and Regulatory Bodies' (PSRB) accreditation or the practical nature of the assessment. This may include scheduled face-to-face exams (where an alternative piece of coursework is not appropriate); practical assessments such as lab or clinical assessments. All exemption requests require a rationale and approval by the Head of Department, Education Service Manager and Deputy Dean. All exemptions must be recorded on the Independent Marking Plan along with the rationale for the exemption.
- 6.7.2 Students will be given the opportunity to 're-work' the original assessment and re-submit within 15 term time days, rather than be given an alternative reassessment. In the case of IYR, the higher mark of the two attempts will stand. Marks will be capped at the pass mark. Feedback is provided on the 'retrieved' piece of work and in a timely manner. IYR submissions are second marked in accordance with 6D Marking and Moderation Policy. The late submission rule is not applicable to the IYR submission deadline.
- 6.7.3 IYR is not compulsory and students 'opt-in' by resubmission. It is the student's choice to participate in the in-year retrieval. Students do not need to advise staff of the intention to opt for an IYR attempt.
- 6.7.4 Students will receive a mark following an IYR submission,  
i. If a student passes the IYR attempt, the mark is capped, and additional feedback is provided via the generic assessment criteria or similar.  
ii. If a student fails the IYR attempt, additional feedback is provided via the generic assessment criteria or similar.
- 6.7.5 Exceptional Circumstances for Board Consideration and Extensions will not apply for an IYR

attempt. The application of Exceptional Circumstances for an IYR attempt would not be accepted as it is a student's choice to submit. The assessment would continue to be capped based on the original failure.

- 6.7.6 The following assessment scenarios will not be eligible for IYR:
- i. non-submission
  - ii. assessments submitted more than 72 hours after the original deadline
  - iii. extensions due to exceptional circumstances, of more than 72 hours after the original deadline
  - iv. submissions subject to an academic offence investigation
  - v. submissions that cannot be marked e.g. incorrect files, corrupt files or blank documents.
- 6.7.7 A student's eligibility for compensation is not affected by IYR. Compensation will be applied as standard to eligible students at the programme board.

***Level entitlement for reassessment***

- 6.7.8 A Programme Board will normally allow students to make good failure before they proceed to the next stage or level of the programme. . A student will only be required to repeat a unit when they fail in reassessment.

***Academic judgement***

- 6.7.9 Where Board discretion is required the Board must reach its decision based on academic judgement of the student's ability to demonstrate achievement of the ILOs to pass the units, level and programme **with the rationale clearly recorded in the Board minutes**. The following guidance is intended to assist Boards in identifying which units to select for completion by reassessment and which ones for completion by repetition based on the Board's knowledge of the programme and the student concerned:
- 6.7.10 There may also be some instances when a student may prefer to repeat all failed units for academic reasons and choose not to be reassessed. Where this is the case, a failure at reassessment, or non-resubmission/non-attendance at resit exam(s) would normally result in a subsequent Board decision or chairs action for the student to repeat the failed unit(s).
- Reassessment of more than one formal element of assessment within a unit***
- 6.7.11 Where a student fails in more than one formal element of assessment within a unit and their other formal element marks range from 36% to less than 40% (UG) or 46% to less than 50% (PG), students should be reassessed in all such elements to ensure that the student is able to achieve the overall unit pass mark. This is because compensation cannot be applied to units where reassessments or repeats have been required so the overall unit mark must not fall below 40% (or 50%) in order for the student to pass.
- Determining the method of reassessment***
- 6.7.12 Reassessment should normally be by the same method and format as that undertaken for the first attempt at formal element level. Where this is not possible, e.g. due to the assessment being a group project, the Board should agree an alternative approach which will assess the relevant ILOs in deciding on the particular form any reassessment should take. Students may be required to submit a new assessment or an amended version of the original assessment as appropriate. Where reassessment is an amended version of their original assessment or aspects of it, and where the work has not been awarded credit, this should not be considered a case of duplication or self-plagiarism (see *6H - Academic Offences Policy and Procedure for Taught Awards*). Students should not normally be required to sit the same examination paper.
- Carrying credit***
- 6.7.13 Normally following an unsuccessful reassessment of a unit (up to 20 credits) or where a student has not yet had the opportunity to complete two attempts at assessment/reassessment within the academic year, Programme Boards will permit students to carry credit from level 4 to level 5, from level 5 to placement year and from level 5 to 6. This is at the discretion of the Programme Board and will be based on the curriculum structure of the programme; particularly where the unit has been validated as a pre-requisite. The principles of carrying credit should also apply where an assessment/unit is marked on a pass/fail basis. The rationale for the decision must be clearly recorded in the minutes.
- 6.7.14 Following any subsequent failure of the carried unit, students will normally be allowed one further opportunity to be reassessed, enabling four attempts in total. Any final reassessment on the carried

unit will not be deducted from the current level's reassessment allowance.

6.7.15 The carried credit could be a core or an option unit. The Programme Board must consider if the failed unit is a pre-requisite and should normally be passed before the student progresses to the next level of study. The Programme Board will look at the student's overall profile and consider each individual's ability to successfully retrieve the failed credit if they are allowed to progress.

As the student will be taking other units at the next level of study, the Board will need to determine whether the carried unit is manageable alongside other units at the subsequent level without attendance.

6.7.16 There may be occasions where students would prefer not to carry credit, and would rather repeat the unit. In these cases, the decision would be up to the student and they should not be expected to have to appeal the Board decision. However, in all cases, students must be advised of the options available to them and the consequences of failing the carried unit e.g. awarded credit only for units passed.

6.7.17 Carrying credit is recognised as different to repeating in the following ways:

Term	Eligibility	Definition
'Repeating'	-  Students who have failed more than 20 credits following reassessment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students are required to attend all lectures and seminars.</li> <li>• Students must submit all coursework and sit all exams again (including elements that have previously been passed).</li> <li>• Academic support is available from programme teams.</li> <li>• Students are charged pro rata per unit repeated.</li> <li>• Students cannot proceed onto the next level of study or to the placement year.</li> </ul>
'Carrying credit'	1. Students who have failed 20 credits.  <b>OR</b>  2. Students who have exceptional circumstances accepted before a programme board and who have failed no more than 40 credits, may exceptionally be allowed to 'carry credit' during the next academic level. This includes the placement year. A decision is based on academic judgement in the best interests of a student's progression  <b>OR</b>  3. Students who have exceptional circumstances and have not had the opportunity to complete all formal elements of assessment/reassessment within a unit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students have the option to attend lectures or seminars, if timetabling allows.</li> <li>• Students only resubmit assessment that has been failed. Passed assessment marks are carried through on the student record. Academic support is available from programme teams.</li> <li>• An alternative assessment may be given where it is not possible to replicate the original assessment, for example assessed group work.</li> <li>• Students will not be charged for the units repeated through carrying credit</li> </ul>

**Successful completion of reassessment and capping of formal element marks**

6.7.18 Students who have succeeded in reassessment with a mark equal to or higher than the pass mark will be capped at the pass mark on the formal element mark only. However, where students have achieved a reassessment mark of between 36% to less than 40% (UG) or 46% to less than 50% (PG) for a formal element, they will only be considered successful in reassessment if they have achieved the overall pass mark for the unit. This means that up to a maximum capped mark of 40%/50% (the pass mark) will be entered into the student record system and displayed on the Board Report for all elements that have been reassessed and the overall unit total will be displayed as whatever number it is calculated to<sup>3</sup>. Where students are assessed as if for the first time due to mitigation, no capping will be applied.

NB: Where a student is reassessed due to an academic offence, the minimum penalty for the mark of the unit in question is normally to be capped at the pass mark. The student record system will do this automatically.

**Mitigation and opportunities to improve marks**

- 6.7.19 No reassessment shall be allowed for a student to improve upon a mark or grading above the pass level unless the Circumstance Board has agreed that the student's performance has been affected by exceptional circumstances. Where this is the case, a Programme Board may allow the student an opportunity to be assessed as if for the first time. The student must be informed in writing that the second mark will stand, even if it is lower than the original mark. If the student chooses not to be reassessed again, the original mark will stand.

**Assessment requirements for repeat students**

- 6.7.20 Students who are repeating units are required to repeat all elements of assessment including those already passed. Students are normally asked to submit new pieces of work when repeating units. Where repeat students submit an amended version of their original assessment or aspects of it, and where the work has not been awarded credit, this should not be considered a case of self-plagiarism (see 6H - Academic Offences Policy and Procedure for Taught Awards).
- 6.7.21 It is at the discretion of the Programme Board to determine whether a failed undergraduate or postgraduate Dissertation or Final Project is retrievable for the purposes of repetition.

**Repeat units that are no longer current**

- 6.7.22 A student repeating units may not demand assessment in units which are no longer current in the programme, e.g. due to programme closure or review. In such circumstances the Programme Board should make special arrangements for the student(s) as it deems appropriate. For a closing programme this might involve undertaking a similar unit or units or designing an individual schedule of delivery and assessment for the student. Where the original programme/level(s) has been replaced by a revised version, the Programme Board should ensure that continuing students undertake a unit or a combination of units which ensure underpinning for the next level. When students are repeating new units in place of the original failed units these should be treated in the same way as if they were taking the original units i.e. the whole unit will be capped at the pass mark and they will be given just one further opportunity to be reassessed within that academic year.

**Pass mark for failed repeat units**

- 6.7.23 All repeated units will be capped at the pass mark on the whole unit total to ensure that students do not gain an advantage over those students who passed the first time. This means that whilst any formal element mark(s) appear as obtained by the student on the Board Report and student Transcript, the overall unit total will be displayed as 40%/50% (the pass mark). The only exception to this is when a Programme Board has previously judged that a student may complete the 'repeat' unit as if for the first time due to mitigation.

**Repetition of units** Where a student is required to repeat one or more failed units, it is assumed that since they will be re-registering, they will be repeating with attendance. If this is not a realistic option, e.g. because the student is living overseas or engaged on work experience/placement, then the Faculty/Partner will need to ensure that arrangements are in place to provide appropriate support.

The student should also be informed in writing of their responsibilities regarding communication with unit staff.

**Reassessment in repeated units**

- 6.7.24 A student who fails repeated unit(s) is entitled to reassessment in the repeated unit(s) If the student has failed the fourth attempt of a unit then they should normally be withdrawn from the programme.

6.8	<b>Provision for candidates with valid reasons for poor performance (Section 13 of the Assessment Regulations)</b>
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- 6.8.1 Programme Boards are required to consider valid reasons for poor performance. Applications for circumstances to be considered must be submitted in accordance with 6J - *Exceptional Circumstances: Policy and Procedure*. Consideration of the applications will take place at a Circumstance Board, details of which are contained in 6K - *Assessment Boards: Policy*. The Programme Board decides what action is taken in light of the findings of the Circumstance Board in line with the *Standard Assessment Regulations*.

- 6.8.2 Where exceptional circumstances are confirmed, the Programme Board will normally allow the student an opportunity to be assessed as if for the first time in order to make good failure unless



the piece of work affected was itself a second attempt or the student's ability to complete their studies is affected. Also see guidance regarding a student's performance in a unit that has been affected by exceptional circumstances but they have passed the unit.

- 6.8.3 The Programme Board may be advised by the Circumstance Board that the circumstances are such that an alternative form of assessment may be more appropriate.
- 6.8.4 In exceptional circumstances, reassessment as if for the first time may not be appropriate, e.g. for students with a terminal illness, and, where future study or future use of the qualification is not considered possible. The Circumstance Board should notify the Programme Board by advising that assessment regulation 13.3 is applicable. This regulation allows for students to obtain recognition of their achievement by the granting of an award without achieving the required amount of credit:
- where there is sufficient evidence of the student's achievement to determine the classification of an award, the Programme Board may recommend the award, or an intermediate award (as specified in the Programme Specification). The *Standard Assessment Regulations* make it clear that the decision of the Programme Board must be ratified by the Chair of Senate. Contact Academic Quality for advice as to how the process should be managed.
  - where there is insufficient evidence to determine the classification of an award or an intermediate award, the student may be recommended for an Aegrotat award. The student must have demonstrated achievement at the level for which an Aegrotat award is considered and that, on the balance of probabilities, the student would have reached the standard required were it not for the exceptional circumstances. The *Standard Assessment Regulations* make it clear that the decision of the Programme Board must be ratified by the Chair of Senate. Contact Academic Quality for advice as to how the process should be managed. An Aegrotat award carries no classification.

In either case, the student will only be awarded with the number of credits achieved. It is in the interests of both the individual student to whom such an award is granted and the graduate body as a whole that the awards outlined in this paragraph are only granted in very extreme circumstances to students who are unable to utilise them in the future.

6.9	<b>Academic Offences and Research Misconduct</b> (Section 14 of the Assessment Regulations)
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- 6.9.1 Where an academic offence / research misconduct is suspected, the Programme Board should not come to a decision on the candidate's results until *6H - Academic Offences for Taught Awards: Policy and Procedure* / *6M – Research Misconduct: Policy and Procedure* have been enacted and the outcome of the investigation has been reported from the appropriate Academic Offences / Research Misconduct Panel/Board. These decisions are final and must be honoured by the Programme Board.

## 7 BOARD ADJUSTMENT OF MARKS

- 7.1 Where it is identified through moderation by external examiners, or other means, that a group of students has been adversely affected in an assessment (e.g. by concerns regarding marking standards, flawed assessment brief/examination question, disruption in an examination etc), the impact on students should be discussed and the marks adjusted as appropriate by the Unit Board.
- 7.2 The adjustment of marks in such cases must always be evidence-based. For example, in the case of a piece of coursework being over or under marked, evidence might arise during sampling by the external examiner.<sup>4</sup>
- 7.3 In the case of a disruption during an examination, the report of the invigilator should provide such evidence.
- 7.4 Where all students are judged to have been adversely affected in an assessment, the Unit Board would normally take one of the following approaches:
- adjust all marks for the assessment in question equally by adding an agreed number of marks or a percentage increase;
  - offer students the option to sit or submit the assessment as if for the first time.
- 7.5 Moderation by external examiners should not normally result in recommendations to change the marks of individual students unless a genuine error in marking has been identified (e.g.

a miscalculation). Individual marks can only be changed if all student work in the same group has been reviewed to ensure that no student would be unfairly advantaged or disadvantaged by the change.

- 7.6 Where Assessment Boards approve the adjustment of marks, whether for the cohort or for individuals, **the rationale must be clearly recorded in the minutes.**

## **8 VIVA VOCE EXAMINATION OF STUDENTS**

- 8.1 In very exceptional cases, the Programme Board may decide to examine a student through an individual viva voce examination as a secondary form of assessment. Such assessment shall not lower a student's marks. This form of assessment may be used:
- as an alternative or additional assessment where satisfactory reasons for poor performance have been established;
  - in such other circumstances as may be proposed by the external/internal examiners in consultation with the Chair of the Programme Board. Normally this would be a combination of factors, examples of which might be a borderline classification mark, where there is no agreement between three markers or as an alternative assessment for certain exceptional circumstances.
- 8.2 Viva voce panels should consist of a minimum of two examiners. The questions asked must be appropriate to the reason for the viva and directly related to the aims and ILOs of the programme or unit. Details of the questions and answers given should be kept on the student file as a record of the discussion. The findings of the viva voce examination must be reported to the Programme Board. Viva voce examinations should not be used as an opportunity for an external examiner to meet students or as a means to provide evidence for a possible disciplinary procedure.
- 8.3 Students must be briefed in advance by the Chair, or member of staff nominated by the Chair, on the reason, format and possible outcomes of the examination.

## **9 DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES**

- 9.1 Where a suspected misconduct is being investigated the Programme Board should not come to a decision on the candidate's results until the *11K - Student Disciplinary: Procedure* has been enacted and the outcome of the investigation has been reported from the Disciplinary Panel. The decisions from the Disciplinary Panel are final and must be honoured by the Programme Board.

Refer to the *11K - Student Disciplinary: Procedure* on the Staff Intranet for further information. Partners may have their own disciplinary procedures which feed into the University procedure.

## **General**

### **10 REFERENCES AND FURTHER INFORMATION**

- 10.1 The QAA's [UK Quality Code for Higher Education](#) includes:
- [QAA Quality Code, Advice and Guidance: Assessment](#)
- [The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications](#)
- 10.2 This policy was reviewed according to the University's [Equality Analysis Procedure](#) in June 2019.

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<sup>1</sup> See 3P – Recognition of Prior learning (RPL) and UK Credit Transfer (UKCT): Policy and Procedure for further information.

<sup>2</sup> Where students carry forward a mark profile associated with reassessments or repeats, the Programme Leader must signal on the Internal Transfer Form which of the units (if any) in the receiving programme will be capped at the pass mark.

<sup>3</sup> The Transcript will display the same marks as the Board Report.

<sup>4</sup> If an external examiner has concerns about a trend arising from the sample of work they have seen, they may request further samples of work in order to confirm or alleviate their concern. It is not necessary for all work to be seen by the external examiner to confirm the trend but the size of the sample should be reasonable, based on the judgement of the external examiner.