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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.*

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

FOR STUDENTS JOINING BU PROGRAMMES AT LEVEL 4 AND LEVEL 7 FROM SEPTEMBER 2021 ONWARDS

### 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*
  - For those programmes with approved amendments to the University's *Standard Assessment Regulations*, the amended regulations (as 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 - Academic Misconduct: Policy and Procedure;*

- 11K - Student Disciplinary: Policy and Procedure.

## Procedure

### 4. APPROVED EXCEPTIONS TO STANDARD ASSESSMENT REGULATIONS

- 4.1 *Standard Assessment Regulations* are applicable, without modification, to all programmes across the University unless exceptions have been approved as part of the approval or review process. Such exceptions would normally only be granted to accommodate the requirements of Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs). Exceptions to the regulations are recorded in the Programme Specification and in a limited number of programmes they are produced in full. The detail of any approved exceptions to the *Standard Assessment Regulations* must be clearly articulated at the beginning of the Board.
- 4.2 A change in the way standard regulations are applied to an individual student's profile may also occur where study choices necessitate changes, e.g. where units undertaken as part of a student exchange replace credit-bearing BU units. As marks for units undertaken elsewhere are not used to calculate classification of the University's own award, the final award is calculated solely on the basis of the units undertaken at BU (see Sections 6.8.2 and 6.8.7). Similarly where a student is granted credit exemptions towards a BU programme on the basis of prior learning (e.g. entering a programme with advanced standing), award classification is calculated solely on the basis of the units undertaken at BU (see Sections 6.8.3 and 6.8.7).

### 5. DISCRETION AVAILABLE TO ASSESSMENT BOARDS

- 5.1 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.**

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

- 6.1 The *Standard Assessment Regulations* are presented in 15 sections. The following provides explanatory information on each section and provides guidance to Assessment Boards on the application of the regulations. Recent key changes to the regulations have been highlighted.

6.2	<b>Period of registration (Section 5 of the Assessment Regulations)</b>
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- 6.2.1 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.

6.3	<b>Pass mark (Section 6 of the Assessment Regulations)</b>
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- 6.3.1 The pass mark for each unit is stated in the assessment regulations. Normally this is 40% (UG) and 50% (PG). A pass must also be obtained in those formal assessment element(s)/unit(s) that are assessed on a pass/fail basis in order for an overall unit pass to be awarded. From November 2016 - For Boards held in SITS, the student record system will no longer recognise marks between 39.5% to less than 40% (UG) / 49.5% to less than 50% (PG) as a unit pass and credits will not be awarded.

- 6.3.2 Programme Boards are reminded that a formal element mark which falls below 36.0% (UG) and below 46.0% (PG) in a 'formally defined element' of assessment is an indication of failure of that piece of work. 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. From November 2016, it has been clarified that where a unit consists of only one formal element of assessment (e.g 100% weighted) irrespective of the number of informal sub-elements it may have (see 6.3.3 below), if the overall mark is below the unit pass mark then that too is an indication of failure (although the unit may be eligible for compensation as per the requirements outlined in section 6.4).
- 6.3.3 A formal element of assessment may contain informal sub-elements, i.e. comprise a portfolio of smaller assessment tasks which contribute to the overall formal element mark. These informal sub-elements of assessment are not recorded individually in the 'summative assessment' section of the unit specification nor on the Board Report. Provided that the overall mark for the formally defined element of assessment is a pass, not all sub-elements of assessment need to be passed.
- 6.3.4 Where a formal assessment element has been identified as a Late Submission and accepted by the Programme Board, it does not change how the Board determines formal element or unit passes. *(Section 6.6 provides details on the Late Submission regulation (the '72 hour rule') and also cross-references to other related ARPP documents.)*

6.4	<b>Compensation (Section 7 of the Assessment Regulations)</b>
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- 6.4.1 A Programme Board may allow a student's overall performance to be compensated for marginal failure within the limits prescribed within the assessment regulations. Decisions to allow compensation must be based on the student's performance/profile to date in the level for which compensation is sought and applies only to the first attempt or any subsequent attempt taken as a first attempt due to mitigation. Only the overall unit is subject to consideration for compensation. Where compensation takes place, the student is awarded the credit for the unit but the original unit mark is not changed.
- 6.4.2 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.
- 6.4.3 Compensation does not apply, as follows:
- a) where a unit mark falls below 38.0% (UG) or 48.0% (PG);
  - b) where a formal element is less than 36% or 46% and any pass/fail element is a fail;
  - c) 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);
  - d) 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);
  - e) when the award itself is less than 60 credits (e.g. a Graduate Certificate);
  - f) 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).
- 6.4.4 However, compensation may be applied:
- a) To students who must repeat a whole level as an outcome of an Academic Offences Panel/Board;
  - b) When a formal assessment element has been identified and accepted by the Board as a Late Submission (submitted within 72 hours of the deadline) providing the unit is otherwise eligible for compensation. *(Section 6.6 provides details on the Late Submission regulation (the '72 hour rule') and also cross-references to other related ARPP documents).*
- 6.4.5 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.
- 6.4.6 It should be noted that separate elements of assessment within a unit are not compensatory and use of the word "compensation" to describe a student passing a unit under Section 6 - *Standard Assessment Regulations* should be avoided at Assessment Boards.

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

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

6.5.2 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.

### **Carrying credit**

6.5.3 Students who have failed 20 credits, or exceptionally 40 credits, or due to Exceptional Circumstances have not yet had opportunity to complete all formal elements of assessment/reassessment within a unit, 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.

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

6.5.4 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**

6.5.5 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**

6.5.6 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.

## 6.6 Submission of coursework and attendance at examinations (Section 9 of the Assessment Regulations)

6.6.1 This section provides information on penalties for Late Submission, Non-Submission and Non-Attendance and how these affect assessment outcomes and Board decisions regarding reassessments and repetition.

### **Assessment deadlines**

6.6.2 Coursework submission dates and formal examination dates apply to all students without exception, including any alternative dates granted through approved mitigation. The following sections outline how the Late Submission regulation (the '72-hour rule') and how Late Submission and Non-Submission/Non-Attendance should be interpreted by Programme Boards in order to determine assessment outcomes.

NB: Also see *6D - Marking, Independent Marking, and Moderation: Policy and Procedure*, *6E - Assessment Feedback and Return of Assessed Work: Policy and Procedure* and student record system guidance to manage the marking, feedback and data input processes leading up to the Assessment Boards.

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

6.6.3 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 or it could relate to a sub-element mark which contributes towards a formal element mark but does not appear on the Board Report.

6.6.4 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.

6.6.5 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.

6.6.6 Submission of coursework/Attendance at an examination will result in the actual mark being recorded for the assessment. In the case of Late Submission, Non-Submission and Non-Attendance the following assessment penalties apply:

1. **Late Submission penalty\*** - the work is awarded a maximum mark of 40% (UG) / 50% (PG) / Pass (for pass/fail assessments, UG and PG);
  2. **Non-Submission/Non-Attendance penalty** - the work is awarded a mark of zero (0%)
- \* The Late Submission mark is not confirmed until it has been accepted by the Assessment Board where it will count towards the student's reassessment allowance for the level.

6.6.7 It should be noted that although a fixed assessment penalty is applied to all Late and Non-Submissions (regardless of whether the piece of work is a formal assessment element or an informal sub-element of assessment), when students' results are input into the student record system the effect the Late or Non-Submission will have on the overall assessment outcomes will vary (depending on whether they relate to formal assessment elements or informal sub-elements of assessment). The processes for Board consideration of Late and Non-Submissions are outlined in Sections 6.6.8 and 6.6.9 respectively.

#### 6.6.8 **Board consideration of Late Submission**

6.6.8.1 The '72-hour rule' requires the Programme Board to accept a late piece of written coursework/artefact in the first instance which meets the following requirements, providing:

- a) the work has been received within 72 hours of the submission deadline;
- b) the work is a first submission/submission as if for the first time due to mitigation;
- c) the formal element mark to which the late assessment relates to is at/above 36% (UG) and 46% (PG) and the overall unit mark is a pass (unless there is only one formal element of assessment (e.g 100% weighted) and it must achieve the unit pass mark or the unit is eligible for compensation as per the requirements in section 6.4);
- d) the unit and credits awarded in this way are counted towards the reassessment allowance for the level (but must not exceed the limit for the level).

NB: This will also apply to the first attempt in repeat mode or any subsequent attempt taken as a first attempt in repeat mode due to mitigation.

6.6.8.2 The '72-hour 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 as per 6.6.8.1 above, the Board will act as follows depending on whether the Late Submission is classed as a formal or informal assessment element:

#### **1. 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**. The programme support officer will have a note of the uncapped mark achieved for information. For formal elements assessed on a pass/fail basis the code **PLS: Pass, Late Submission** is used.
- b) The Programme Board will consider the Late Submission and accept the work as the capped reassessed piece of assessment and count the unit credits towards the level allowance for reassessment (but see d) below).
- c) Work accepted in this way must not exceed the reassessment allowance for the level. If it does, the Board will act in accordance with Section 12 of *ARPP 6A - Provision for Failed Candidates* (but see d) below).
- d) 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 principles outlined in Section 13 of *ARPP 6A - Provision for Failed Candidates with Valid Reasons for Poor Performance*.
- e) The student should not normally be required to do any further work for the coursework that was submitted late but may be required to be reassessed in other failed elements, or repeat failed units in accordance with Section 12 of *ARPP 6A - Provision for Failed Candidates*.

#### **2. 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.
- b) The failed work is considered as per normal in accordance with Section 12 of *ARPP 6A - Provision for Failed Candidates* (but see c) below).
- c) Where mitigation is accepted, the Programme Board may offer the student an assessment as if for the first time in accordance with Section 13 of *ARPP 6A - Provision for Failed Candidates with Valid Reasons for Poor Performance*.

#### **3. Informal sub-element of assessments (coursework only):**

- a) The informal sub-element mark which has been capped at a maximum of 40%/50%/Pass contributes to the formal element mark which is displayed on the Board Report. Late Submission of a sub-element does not appear on the Board Report and is not coded against the formal element.
- b) There is no requirement for a student to pass each sub-element of assessment so as long as the overall mark for the formal element to which the sub-element relates to is a pass/above pass, no further penalties will apply and the Late Submission does not contribute to the reassessment allowance (but see c) and d) below).
- c) If the formal element to which the Late (sub-element) Submission relates to requires reassessment, the Board will act in accordance with Section 12 of *ARPP 6A - Provision for Failed Candidates* (but see d) below).
- d) Where mitigation is accepted for the formal element to which the sub-element relates to, 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 Section 13 of *ARPP 6A - Provision for Failed Candidates with Valid Reasons for Poor Performance*.

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

**6.6.9.1 From November 2016, it has been clarified that 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, then the process outlined in 6.6 should be followed.**

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

**6.6.10.1** 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 Board will act as follows:

## **NON-SUBMISSIONS/NON-ATTENDANCE**

### **4. Formal assessment elements:**

- a) The formal element mark appears as zero (0%) on the Board Report and is identified with a code *NS: Non Submission*.
- b) The Board will act in accordance with Section 12 of *ARPP 6A - Provision for Failed Candidates* (but see c) below).
- c) 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 Section 13 of *ARPP 6A - Provision for Failed Candidates with Valid Reasons for Poor Performance*.

### **5. Informal sub-element of assessments (coursework only):**

- a) The informal sub-element mark of zero (0%) contributes to the formal element mark which is displayed on the Board Report. Non-Submission of a sub-element is not coded against the formal element.
- b) There is no requirement for a student to pass each sub-element of assessment so as long as the overall mark for the formal element to which the sub-element relates to is a pass/above pass, no further penalties will apply and the Non-Submission does not contribute to the reassessment allowance unless the formal element requires reassessment in accordance with Section 12 of *ARPP 6A - Provision for Failed Candidates* (but see c) below).
- c) Where mitigation is accepted for the formal element to which the sub-element belongs, 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 Section 13 of *ARPP 6A - Provision for Failed Candidates with Valid Reasons for Poor Performance*.

## **6.7 Awards (Section 10 of the Assessment Regulations)**

- 6.7.1 The awards available for conferment are listed in the assessment regulations and the specific requirements, in terms of units, are outlined in the Programme Specification. All *Standard Assessment Regulations* include reference to work experience as a requirement for named awards (see Sections 6.5.4-6.5.6 above for details).
- 6.7.2 Final awards are conferred by the Programme Board following successful completion of all specified aspects of the programme. Intermediate awards are conferred by a Programme Board where a student has formally indicated their intention to withdraw from the programme or in cases of irredeemable failure. Intermediate awards are also normally classified (see Section 6.8 below) and this is reflected on the student record. Students who have not met the requirements for a named intermediate award will be awarded credit for all units successfully passed.

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

**From September 2016, the classification boundaries within the *Standard Assessment Regulations* have been closed** (e.g. an UG Second Class, Upper Division (2:1) is now written as 60% to less than 70% (previously written as 60 - 69%).

### ***Calculation of award classification***

- 6.8.1 The classification system for each award is outlined in the relevant assessment regulations for the programme. The classification for Bachelor (Hons), Foundation degrees, taught Masters, Integrated Masters and HN awards is automatically based on the most favourable of two possible criteria, namely:
- a) credit-weighted aggregate mark for all units specified for the award;
  - b) profile of marks across all units at the highest level of the award.

### ***Student Exchanges***

- 6.8.2 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. It has been clarified in Section 6.8.7 below how student exchanges which occur at the final level of the award affect the Profile Rule. Student exchanges may also be built into a non-credit bearing placement year (see Section 6.5.5 above).

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

- 6.8.3 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>. Section 6.8.7 below clarifies how RPL/UKCT which occurs at the final level of the award affects the Profile Rule.

### **Internal Transfers**

- 6.8.4 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**

- 6.8.5 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.
- 6.8.6 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 (see 6.8.3 above) or for those who have undertaken credit-bearing units on a pass-fail basis as part of a student exchange (see 6.8.2 above).
- 6.8.7 When calculating the student's classification via the profile regulation the student record system only uses unit marks that are clearly in the classification boundary, i.e. 70.0% and above for a 1<sup>st</sup>/Distinction, 60.0% and above for 2.1/Merit, 50.0% and above for a 2.2. Marks that fall below a classification boundary are not used in the calculation.

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

- 6.8.8 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 (see section 6.9).

6.9	<b>Provision for failed candidates (Section 12 of the Assessment Regulations)</b>
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### **Level entitlement for reassessment**

- 6.9.1 A Programme Board will normally allow students to make good failure before they proceed to the next stage or level of the programme. Any such decision will involve reassessment opportunities up to and including the specified limit for reassessment for the level (e.g. 60 credits at Level 4, 40 credits at Level 5) and that a student will only be required to repeat a unit or units when they exceed this limit and/or when they fail in reassessment. Where a student fails in an amount of credit that is over and above the level entitlement for reassessment, the units that should be reassessed and the unit(s) that should be repeated will be determined as per 6.9.5 – 6.9.6 below (also see Appendix 1).

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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.



- 6.9.2 The reassessment entitlement for students with exceptional circumstances and opportunities to improve a pass mark that has been deemed to have been adversely affected due to mitigation is outlined in Sections 6.9.20-21 below.
- 6.9.3 All *Standard Assessment Regulations* include reference to non-credit bearing work experience as a progression and/or award requirement. Sections 6.5.4-6.5.6 above provide guidance for Boards when students fail these elements.
- 6.9.4 The reassessment limits in the postgraduate regulations accommodate programme structures where dissertations and projects can take place alongside taught units. Under the regulations, the normal maximum limit for postgraduate reassessment is up to 3 units totalling no more than 100 credits. However, where programmes have a 120-credit dissertation or project, students who have failed only this unit, may be reassessed in this unit only. If a student has previously failed any other units, they must be advised that reassessment of the 120 credit project will not be permitted.

***Determining reassessments and repetition within a level***

- 6.9.5 Programme Boards may consider provision for failed candidates in one or more mid or end-of-level Boards depending on the programme structure and mode of study. Where more than one Programme Board takes place within an academic level of study, the order in which reassessments are granted may naturally occur through the process of these successive Boards. At other times, Boards may be required to exercise discretion to determine which units should be reassessed and which one(s) should be repeated. Normally a Programme Board will consider students who have failed one or more units as follows:

- a) For a failed candidate who remains within the limit or reaches the limit for reassessment at the time of the Board - The Board is required to determine reassessments only.
- b) For a failed candidate who has reached and exceeded the limit for reassessment by the time of the Board - The Board is required to determine which units should be reassessed and which units should be repeated in line with guidance in Section 6.9.6.
- c) For a failed candidate who has previously reached the limit for reassessment and has no reassessment opportunities left at the time of the Board - The Board is required to determine repetition only.

Appendix 1 includes more detailed examples of when Board discretion to determine reassessments and repetition would be/would not be required.

Programme Boards may exceptionally determine a lower reassessment limit for a student who exceeds the level of entitlement for reassessment on academic grounds; whereby it would be in the best interests of the student to attempt reassessment in less credits to give them the best opportunity to pass some reassessment and not be set up for further failure. **Where these exceptional decisions are made, this must be clearly recorded in the minutes.**

***Academic judgement***

- 6.9.6 Where Board discretion is required as outlined in 6.9.5 example b) above, 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:

Determining reassessment

- a) In the first instance, the Board will accept any Late Submission(s) identified on the Board Report as 'LS' (work submitted within 72 hours of the deadline and which has achieved a formal element mark of at least 36% (UG) and 46% (PG)) as the reassessment as long as the programme regulations (e.g. the overall unit mark is a pass) and the student's profile for the level allow this<sup>3</sup> (see Section 6.6 above).

Beyond this, the Board will then act as follows:

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<sup>3</sup> I.e. the reassessment allowance for the level must not be exceeded.

- b) Select the most appropriate units from an academic perspective (e.g. based on co-requisites and/or natural linkages between units/assessments);
- c) Select units which the Board considers the student is most likely to pass through reassessment, e.g. by choosing partially failed units over fully failed units or where the Board knows that a student has performed well in a non-submission (which has been submitted more than 72 hours late and has therefore achieved a mark of 0%);
- d) Where the unit size varies, select units to make up the full reassessment allowance (e.g. if the level allowance is 40 credits and the student has failed one 20-credit and one 40-credit units, choosing the 40-credit unit would make full use of the allowance);

#### Determining repetition

- a) Select units with poor performance in comparison with other failed unit(s);
- b) Select units with poor engagement;
- c) Select units with non-attendance and/or non-submission(s) (identified on the Board report as 'NS').

6.9.7 It is possible that some students who fail beyond the reassessment limit may not be able to gain the requisite learning to pass all reassessments and may therefore be required to repeat the failed units. 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 for the student to repeat the failed unit(s).

#### ***Reassessment of more than one formal element of assessment within a unit***

6.9.8 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 (as per section 6.3 above). 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 (see Sections 6.3 and 6.4 above). In addition, **from November 2016 - For Boards held in SITS, the student record system will no longer recognise marks between 39.5% to less than 40% (UG) / 49.5% to less than 50% (PG) as a unit pass and credits will not be awarded.**

#### ***Reassessment of 'sub-elements'***

6.9.9 Provided that the overall mark for the formally defined element of assessment is a pass, not all sub-elements of assessment need to be passed (see Section 6.3.3 above). It is only in cases where the accumulative formal element mark falls below 36.0% (or 46.0%) that the Programme Board must decide on a reassessment unless there is only one formal element of assessment for the unit (e.g. 100% weighted) and therefore reassessment must be determined to ensure that the unit can be passed overall. Normally this would be the failed sub-element only or an equivalent task to test the failed ILOs. However, depending on the place of the unit in the curriculum and the individual student's profile, it may be appropriate for the Board to set a broader reassessment task to ensure that the student achieves appropriate underpinning for the next level.

6.9.10 Where Assessment Boards consider informal sub-elements of assessment, these are not identified on the Board report in any way, as the penalty for Late-Submissions or Non-Submission is always applied directly to the individual piece of assessment regardless of the unit structure.

NB: This principle has not changed from previous years but has been clarified here in more detail. Section 6.6 provides further details on how Boards determine reassessments under the Late Submission regulation (the '72 hour rule'). Also see *6D - Marking, Independent Marking, and Moderation: Policy and Procedure*, *6E - Assessment Feedback and Return of Assessed Work: Policy and Procedure*, and student record system guidance to manage the marking, feedback and data input processes leading up to the Assessment Board.

#### ***Determining the method of reassessment***

6.9.11 Reassessment should normally be by the same method and format as that undertaken for the first attempt at both formal element and 'sub-element' level (see 6.9.8-9 above). 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**

- 6.9.12 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 may permit students to carry credit between levels 4 and 5, level 5 and the placement year and levels 5 and 6. However this is at the discretion of the Programme Board and will be based on the curriculum structure of the programme; particularly the underpinning learning. 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.
- 6.9.13 Where a failed unit is allowed to be carried to the next level, the pass mark for the unit will not exceed 40%. Following any subsequent failure of the carried unit, students will 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.
- 6.9.14 The carried credit could be a core or an option unit but as the Programme Board is making this decision it must determine whether or not the failed unit in question provides key underpinning learning and must 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.
- 6.9.15 Marks will be ratified at the next end of level/stage Programme Board. If the student fails the carried unit following reassessment then they will be withdrawn by the Programme Board.
- 6.9.16 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.
- 6.9.17 For students with mitigation, normally only 20 credits should be carried over into the next level but exceptionally no more than 40 credits. The rationale for the decision must be clearly recorded in the minutes.
- 6.9.18 Carrying credit is recognised as different to repeating in the following ways:

Term	Eligibility	Definition
'Repeating'	<p>Students who have exceeded the reassessment limit (60 credits at level 4, 40 credits or more at levels 5 and 6).</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Students who have failed more than 20 credits following reassessment.</p> <p>These students are allowed to 'repeat' during the next academic year and cannot proceed onto the next level of study or to the placement year.</p>	<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> </ul>
'Carrying credit'	<p>1. Students who have failed 20 credits.</p> <p>OR</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students have the option to attend lectures or seminars, if timetabling allows.</li> <li>• If repeating the unit students must submit all coursework and sit all</li> </ul>

	<p>2. Exceptionally students who have exceptional circumstances who have failed no more than 40 credits.</p> <p>These students are allowed to 'carry credit' during the next academic level. This includes the placement year.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>3. Students who have exceptional circumstances and have not had the opportunity to complete all formal elements of assessment/reassessment within a unit.</p>	<p>exams again (including elements that have previously been passed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic support is available from programme teams.</li> <li>• Students will not be charged for the units repeated through carrying credit</li> </ul>
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**Successful completion of reassessment and capping of formal element marks**

6.9.19 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>4</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 assessment of failed units/elements**

6.9.20 Where a student has failed beyond the level entitlement for reassessment and a Programme Board agrees that some units were affected by mitigation, these should be assessed as if for the first time. Where this is the case, units with mitigation do not contribute towards the level entitlement for reassessment (unless the mitigation itself is for a second attempt or the assessment is subsequently failed and the mitigation no longer applies). Where a student has exceptional circumstances for some but not all sub-elements that make up a failed formal element mark, mitigation is normally applied to the formal element and the student is allowed assessment as if for the first time in order to test the appropriate ILOs as outlined in Section 6.9.9 above.

**Mitigation and opportunities to improve marks**

6.9.21 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**

6.9.22 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).

<sup>4</sup> The Transcript will display the same marks as the Board Report.

6.9.23 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**

6.9.24 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**

6.9.25 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 (see Sections 6.9.20 above and 6.10 below).

**Repetition of units following reassessment**

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

**Repetition of units following the level entitlement for reassessment<sup>5</sup>**

6.9.27 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**

6.9.28 A student who fails repeated unit(s) is entitled to reassessment in the repeated unit(s) in up to the full number of credits for the reassessment limit for the level (for example 60 credits at Level 4 and 40 credits at Levels 5 and 6). Any such reassessment will result in the full unit mark being capped at the pass mark. If the student has failed more than the reassessment limit for the level, then they should normally be withdrawn from the programme.

6.10	<b>Provision for candidates with valid reasons for poor performance (Section 13 of the Assessment Regulations)</b>
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6.10.1 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 Section 13 - *Standard Assessment Regulations*.

6.10.2 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 Section 6.9.21 regarding a student's performance in a unit that has been affected by exceptional circumstances but they have passed the unit.

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<sup>5</sup> This section also incorporates an exceptional decision by the Board to determine a lower reassessment allowance based on academic grounds (see section 6.9.5).

- 6.10.3 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.
- 6.10.4 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:
- a) 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.
  - b) 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.

<p>6.11 <b>Academic Offences and Research Misconduct (Section 14 of the Assessment Regulations)</b></p>
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- 6.11.1 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>6</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:
- a) adjust all marks for the assessment in question equally by adding an agreed number of marks or a percentage increase;

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<sup>6</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.

- b) 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.

### 11. APPENDICES

[Appendix 1 Determining Reassessments: Examples](#)