UNIVERSITY *of York*

Guide to Assessment, Standards, Marking and Feedback 2016-2017

Table of Contents

Introduction

The University's formal procedures relating to the conduct of assessment for taught programmes are embodied in the Ordinances and Regulations, principally Ordinance 6, and Regulation 5. This booklet sets out supplementary policies and procedures that have been established through decisions taken in committee and through case law. It should be read in conjunction with the Ordinances and Regulations. Also included are summaries of the more important administrative procedures, although detailed information on specific procedures is circulated from time to time by Registry.

Unless stated otherwise, these procedures should be taken to apply to all assessments leading to awards of the University.

Each edition of the Guide to Assessment, Standards, Marking and Feedback incorporates amendments to policies approved by the University Teaching Committee, the Special Cases Committee, the Standing Committee on Assessment and Senate during the previous academic year. The revised Guide is available to academic and administrative staff, students and external examiners.

This edition (2016/17) includes amendments made throughout 2015/6.

The Guide to Assessment, Standards, Marking and Feedback is also available at: www.york.ac.uk/about/departments/support-and-admin/registry-services/guide

All staff are advised to check this site throughout the year for a list of any further revisions to the Guide.

Assessment: Principles, Policies and Requirements

1.   Assessment Principles

1.1   University assessment principles

Assessment leading to University awards should be based on the principles of

- Equity
- Openness
- Clarity
- Consistency

1.2   Linking principles to policies

Working within the principles, departments are responsible for developing their own policies and procedures in respect of assessment. Policies and procedures must be linked explicitly to the teaching and learning aims and outcomes of the academic programme concerned and to the aims and objectives of the department. They must be designed to ensure that students are treated equitably and should allow students the opportunity to demonstrate that they have achieved the learning outcomes of a programme of study. They must provide a clear framework within which examiners can make judgements on the comparative performance of students.

2. Definitions

2.1   Defining purposes of assessment[1]

"Assessment is a complex topic since it involves two distinct aspects. First, it forms an essential element of the learning process. Students learn both from assessment activities and from their interaction with staff about their performance in those activities. This interaction has two elements: a focus on their learning and the extent to which that has been demonstrated in the assessment, and a focus on furthering their learning, which may itself subsequently be assessed. The later element is often referred to as 'feedforward'.

Second, it is the means by which academic staff form judgements as to what extent students have achieved the intended learning outcomes of a programme, or of an element of a programme. These judgements form the bases for the grading of student performance through the allocation of marks, grades, and (where applicable) classification, and (provided the learning outcomes have been met) for the award of the credit or qualification to which the programme leads."

---

[1] Taken from the text of the QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Chapter B6: Assessment of Students and the Recognition of Prior Learning. (October 2013)

The way in which students are assessed fundamentally affects their learning. Good assessment practice is designed to ensure that, in order to pass the module or programme, students have to demonstrate they have achieved the intended learning outcomes. To test a wide range of intended learning outcomes, diversity of assessment practice between and within different subjects is to be expected and welcomed, requiring and enabling students to demonstrate their capabilities and achievements within each module or programme.

Students need to be aware of the purposes and implications of different assessment tasks and it is important that students know whether the outcomes of each assessment are to be used for formative and / or summative purposes.

2.2   Defining terms

Assessment is usually construed as being diagnostic, formative or summative. Commonly held understandings of these terms are that:

- diagnostic assessment is used to show a learner's preparedness for a module or programme and identifies, for the learner and the teacher, any strengths and potential gaps in knowledge, understanding and skills expected at the start of the programme, or other possible problems. Particular strengths may lead to a formal consideration of accreditation of prior learning;

- formative assessment has a developmental purpose and is designed to help learners learn more effectively by giving them feedback on their performance and on how it can be improved and / or maintained. Reflective practice by students sometimes contributes to formative assessment;

- summative assessment is used to indicate the extent of a learner's success in meeting the assessment criteria used to gauge the intended learning outcomes of a module or programme.

An assessment process can, and often does, involve more than one of these assessment purposes. For example, an assessment component submitted during a module may provide formative feedback designed to help students improve their performance in subsequent assessments. An end-of-module or end-of-programme examination or other assessment normally results in a summative judgement being made about the level the student has attained, but any feedback on it may also have an intended formative purpose that can help students in assessment later in their programme, or on another programme.

3. Assessment Policies

3.1 Oversight of assessment policies

Assessment leading to university awards is governed by a regulatory framework, in the University Regulations, and by a set of guidelines, in this Guide. The implementation of the framework and set of guidelines is the responsibility of departments. The monitoring and development of this framework and set of guidelines is the responsibility of the University Teaching Committee and its related sub-committees.

In implementing this framework and set of guidelines, departments are responsible for creating their own local policies and procedures regarding assessment leading to university awards for particular programmes of study. These local policies and procedures must be consistent with the regulatory framework described in the university regulations and this Guide. In particular, they must be consistent with the principles of assessment described in Section 1.1. Local policies and procedures regarding assessment and the making of a University award for a particular programme of study should be linked explicitly to the teaching and learning outcomes for that programme of study, and they should allow students the opportunity to demonstrate that they have achieved these learning outcomes. Furthermore, they must provide a clear framework within which examiners can make judgements on the comparative performance of students.

3.2 Departmental rules on assessment

Departments must comply with University policies on assessment. Where additional departmental policies exist, they must be clearly documented in a durable format (e.g. PDF). This information can form part of a departmental or programme specific handbook, but it must be clear which policies and procedures will apply to a given student. Care should be taken when developing departmental policy to ensure that they are consistent with the University's assessment principles of equity, openness, clarity and consistency. Issues to consider for departmental policy can be found in Appendix A.

Departments are responsible for ensuring that documentation about assessment is made available to all staff, students and External Examiners. Heads of Departments must ensure that new members of staff receive appropriate induction to departmental assessment policies and procedures. Documents about programmes, including any assessment policies, should be kept available until at least a year after all students on a cohort have completed their studies.

3.3 Scope of policies

Departmental assessment policy must cover all assessments which formally contribute to an award of the University of York, whether undertaken by students on campus or under other conditions (e.g. distance learning, placement, exchange). Each department that contributes to a combined programme of study must consider the performance of combined programme students with the same rigour as for students on a single-subject programme.

3.4   Planning assessments, marking and feedback

In order to ensure assessment policy and good practice are maintained, departments should give as much consideration to the planning of assessment, marking and feedback procedures as they do to the planning of timetabled teaching sessions. Such planning should take into consideration relevant variables, including:

- the need to set appropriate assessment tasks for different programmes/ modules/ levels;
- consideration of a range of assessment tasks to support development of a range of skills and to balance marking demands across a programme;
- the dangers of over-assessing and therefore creating unmanageable marking and feedback loads;
- the availability of resources needed for assessment;
- timing of assessment: the assessment for a module should take place during the next available assessment period;
- the need to provide clear information to students about the support available to them in advance of assessment;
- staff availability/ allocation to assessment and marking duties;
- workload balance involved (for staff and students);
- time constraints (including completing marking and feedback within 6 weeks);
- arrangements for marking (i.e. ensuring marking and feedback are planned appropriately for all students and staff).

3.5   Policy approval

Policies and procedures concerning assessment must be approved by the University Teaching Committee in the first instance. Any subsequent changes to these policies and procedures are subject to the approval of the Committee. The University Teaching Committee may, at its discretion, require revisions to a departmental assessment policy in the light of the University's requirements on assessment and good practice in higher education.

3.6   Policy review

Departments are required to review policies and procedures concerning assessment on a regular basis, in the light of the reports of External Examiners. They must ensure particularly that policies and procedures have been implemented consistently, have contributed to the achievement of the outcomes of the degree programmes concerned, and continue to be appropriate to the aims and objectives of the department.

4. Assessment Requirements

4.1 Language of assessment

Except where proficiency in another language is being assessed, or the assessment forms part of an Erasmus exchange programme, all assessments for awards of the University of York must be conducted in English, unless prior consent has been obtained from the Standing Committee on Assessment (or University Teaching Committee at the point of programme approval). Exceptions will be considered only where it can be assured that the academic standards of the assessment are not compromised, where sufficient language expertise exists among the examiners (including the External Examiner), and where the arrangement does not create a lack of equity among students. Assessed work should not be translated prior to marking. This applies equally to collaborative programmes. See UK Quality Code for Higher Education Chapter B6: Indicator 11.

4.2 Conflicts of interest

All personnel involved in the assessment of students, or in administering assessment, are expected to act with the highest standards of probity in this regard. Potential conflicts of interest should be declared at the earliest opportunity to the Chair of the relevant Board of Examiners, who will decide on the appropriate course of action. Serious conflicts of interest affecting External Examiners or the Chair of the Board of Examiners should be notified at the earliest opportunity to the Examinations Office. In determining whether a set of circumstances amounts to a conflict of interest, the test should be whether an outsider, aware of the facts, could reasonably consider that the assessment process might be compromised by the potential conflict of interest.

4.3 Individual assessment arrangements

4.3.1 Procedure

Recommendations for any variation of the standard examinations procedures must be approved by the Standing Committee on Assessment. In the event of dispute, cases may then be referred to the Special Cases Committee.

Requests for individual arrangements may need to be considered by several members of the committee, and students and departments are asked to submit requests in good time to allow thorough consideration.

In the case of individual assessment arrangements, a recommendation on behalf of the Board of Studies should be submitted to the Examinations Office, supported by a Student Support Plan and any appropriate documentation. Detailed guidelines on the process for accessing individual arrangements in University examinations are on the web at www.york.ac.uk/students/studying/assessment-and-examination/taking-an-exam.

The process of applying for individual arrangements for assessment for elective modules is the same as that for other academic study. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that the department in which they are undertaking study – particularly in the case of an elective module – receives the appropriate information in a timely manner so that it can consider the recommendation for an individual arrangement on the student's behalf.

The above procedures also apply to the rescheduling of examinations in individual cases. Students requiring individual assessment arrangements whilst studying abroad should work with the Centre for Global Programmes to ensure that they follow the appropriate procedures at their host institution.

4.3.2   Extra time allowance

Students with a contemporary formal diagnosis of relevant disabilities, who request extra time in examinations and who have the support of the appropriate Board of Studies, will normally be permitted up to 25% extra time on the standard time allowed on any closed University examination of up to three hours' duration and for open assessments of up to 48 hours duration. The recommendation to the Standing Committee on Assessment, on behalf of the Board of Studies, should be submitted to the Examinations Office supported by a Student Support Plan. Applications relating to students following combined programmes should come from the Combined Board of Studies. Where it is considered that an exceptional case exists for extra time beyond these limits, Boards of Studies must make a specific recommendation for each paper based on quantitative assessments of the amount and intensity of reading and writing involved in the particular paper, together with various contributing factors (e.g. the candidate's writing speed), and demonstrating compatibility with the learning outcomes being assessed. Boards may wish to consider alternative assessments that may be appropriate for individual students as an alternative to extra time.

4.3.3   Extensions for students with disabilities which require regular flexibility in deadlines

A student with a contemporary diagnosis of a disability which may occasionally interfere with the student's ability to plan their time on assessments may have a recommendation included in their Student Support Plan (SSP) for occasional extensions without necessary recourse to the Exceptional Circumstances Affecting Assessment Policy. This adjustment can only be made with the explicit recommendation by the student's disability advisor within their Student Support Plan, and with the Chair of Board of Examiners, who must assure the SCA that timekeeping or the ability to meet deadlines is not a professional competency or formal learning outcome of the course.

The procedure for allowing these extensions must adhere to the following principles:

   a. Wherever possible students should be encouraged to meet the advertised deadlines. Students cannot be offered 'blanket extensions' to all work on a programme. To allow a set amount of extra time on all assessments would de facto set a new deadline, which the student is equally likely to struggle with in the event of an unforeseen flare-up or deterioration in their condition.

   b. Each extension must be requested in writing by the student to the department's disability contact where the disability contact is an academic member of staff. (Where the disability

contact is an administrative member of staff, the extension must be requested from the Chair of Board of Examiners). The request must include the reason for the request (which must relate to their disability) and where appropriate, include the duration to date of the period of particular difficulty.

c. In approving extensions under this policy, the department should be mindful of the other assessment obligations the student is under, and avoid overloading the student wherever possible. A discussion with the student to identify a reasonable timeframe for any extension may well be appropriate at this point. Extensions will not be considered grounds for future mitigation claims, and where a student's workload is being pushed back on a large scale, the potential value of a Leave of Absence should be discussed with the student.

d. In the event that the department or the student become concerned that either this policy is no longer effective, is being misused by the student, or suspect that additional support may be required to allow the student to continue with their studies, they should contact the disability adviser and the SSP can be revisited to ensure adequate support is available. The disability adviser or the Department may escalate concerns to the Head of the ODT/ Disability Services and the CBoE to determine adequate support mechanisms.

4.3.4   Spelling / grammar stickers

When a student has a certified disability that recommends they should not be penalised for errors of spelling or grammar in a closed examination or an open assessment and the recommendation is agreed by the Board of Studies to be consistent with relevant published module and/or programme learning outcomes, the following procedure will be adopted. A standard sticker wording will be prepared by the Examinations Office and distributed to the departments. The Boards of Studies should ask students who have been professionally assessed and found to have such a disability for written confirmation that they wish to have stickers placed on their assessments. Requests from students wishing to have stickers on their work should be forwarded to the Standing Committee on Assessment for approval. Once approval has been given the stickers can be placed on assessments by departmental administrators prior to marking. The stickers will alert the marker that the student has such a disability and that errors of spelling or grammar should be ignored.

All departments are expected to comply with this process, and it must be applied to all eligible students on all taught programmes.

4.4   Abiding by announced assessment programme

Throughout their programme of study, students should be subject to the broad principles of assessment that were in place at the time they began the programme. Where individual students interrupt their period of study (for example, through leave of absence) departments are not expected to maintain particular assessment procedures. This recommendation does not preclude changes during a programme of study, but these should be the exception rather than the rule.

All students are expected to undertake the assessment as outlined in module documentation unless they have been formally notified otherwise by the Board of Studies or by Registry.

Any variation in the assessment regime described in module documentation available to students at the time module choices were made constitutes an 'exceptional' programme modification and must be approved by the University Teaching Committee. Such variations include modifications to the timing of assessment as well as its nature (see 'Approval of Modifications to Existing Taught Programmes of Study', available at www.york.ac.uk/staff/teaching/procedure/programmes/programme).

Requests for such modifications will normally be approved only if either:

a. all students involved have been consulted and given their written consent for the change; or

b. the department can provide evidence that no student on the module (including visiting students and any students taking the module as an elective) will be disadvantaged by the change.

Requests may have to be considered at a full meeting of the University Teaching Committee and departments are asked to allow for the timings of committee meetings if they wish to propose changes of this type. The same principle applies to modifications to the published teaching timetable and to assessment regulations of a programme of study for an existing cohort of students.

4.5   Non-written or non-recorded work

Assessment that is not based on written or recorded work should not comprise in total more than 12.5% of the weighted contribution to the final award. Any divergence from this principle requires the approval of the University Teaching Committee. Programmes that include practice elements are exempt from this rule. Combined Boards of Studies must ensure that the 12.5% principle is not violated in a combined programme as a whole.

4.6   Assessment governing 'mixed student' modules

For the purposes of this document, 'mixed student' modules are defined as modules in which students from more than one department are being assessed. Where a module is taken by students from more than one department, all students will be governed by the assessment rules of the department offering the module. Departments should make available to incoming students full details of the assessment methods, the criteria and standards, the timing of submission of assessment and the release of results, to ensure that students are aware of specific departmental practices when choosing their module. Departments should also ensure that incoming students are made aware of departmental policies regarding accessibility, presentation of work, referencing conventions, and extensions.

Chairs of Boards of Studies of the home department should ensure that marks will be available in good time for the Board of Examiners meeting before approving an elective request.

4.7   Agreed penalties

4.7.1   Deadlines for assessed work

Deadlines for assessed work must be published in a format that is accessible to students. All work submitted late, without valid exceptional circumstances, will have ten percent of the available marks deducted for each day (or part of each day) that the work is late, up to a total of five days, including weekends and bank holidays e.g. if work is awarded a mark of 30 out of 50, and the work is up to one day late, the final mark is 25. After five days, the work is marked at zero. Note, however, that the penalty cannot result in a mark less than zero.

Departments must not set Friday deadlines for the submission of assessed work. In order to ensure equity for students, the facilities for handing in student work should be open for a minimum of three hours prior to the deadline for submission, and any students in a queue to hand in work at the deadline should be able to hand in the work without penalty. A record of submission time should be kept.

4.7.2   Other penalties

Any other penalties (e.g. for over-long essays) must be published in a format that is accessible to students in the relevant programme information.

4.7.3   Pass/fail modules and components

The penalty for submitting late on a pass/fail module or on a pass/fail component is a fail. Failures in pass/fail modules cannot be compensated, but can be re-assessed (if the module is defined as re- assessable). Departments should be aware of the consequences of failure of non-reassessable pass/fail modules when designing programmes.

4.7.4   Reassessment – failure to submit an assessment or attend an examination

Where a student, with no valid exceptional circumstances, has failed to submit an assessment by the deadline + 5 days or has failed to attend an examination, a mark of '0' will be awarded (see 4.7.1). The student will be given the opportunity for reassessment except where a module is defined as non-reassessable in accordance with Regulation 5.2 (c) and (d). However, if the examination or assessment missed is already a re-sit or re-assessment to redeem an initial failure, no further reassessment opportunities will be available without proof of exceptional circumstances.

4.8   Academic Integrity

4.8.1   University's Online Academic Integrity Tutorial

All students are required to complete successfully the University Online Academic Integrity Tutorial within the first year of their programme of study. (See Regulations 2.6 (c), 2.7.7, 5.7a and 6.5 (c).) Confirmation of successful completion is required for:

   a. students registered on Foundation certificate programmes, to be able to achieve their award;

   b. undergraduates at the end of their first year, in order to be able to progress;

   c. students registered on pre-Masters programmes, to be able to achieve their award;

   d. students on postgraduate taught programmes before their first assignment is marked, although submission of the assignment will be accepted regardless of whether the student has completed the tutorial;

   e. candidates for the degrees of MPhil and MA/MSc by research, when the thesis is submitted for examination;

   f. doctoral students, when confirmation of enrolment is submitted.

Registry will not process a student's results, or their confirmation/progression decisions, or send any thesis they submit for a research degree to the examiners, until this confirmation has been received.

The Online Academic Integrity Tutorial should be used in combination with departmental or discipline-specific guidance as part of more general academic skills training and educating students about plagiarism. Departments are encouraged to require their students to undertake the Tutorial in the Autumn Term prior to submission of their first assessment.

4.8.2   Academic Misconduct

The academic misconduct policies, guidelines and procedures are given at: www.york.ac.uk/about/departments/support-and-admin/registry-services/academic-misconduct. These should be read in conjunction with the Regulations, and include guidance on advice to students and departmental responsibilities.

Departments must ensure that students are aware of all issues relevant to academic misconduct before they undertake or prepare work for assessment. In particular they should draw students' attention to the requirement to complete successfully the Online Academic Integrity Tutorial. Students must be provided with explicit written guidance as to where the boundary lies between permissible mutual assistance and inappropriate collusion in open assessments. Boards of Studies should:

   a. include specific statements in student handbooks about how to avoid committing academic misconduct while maintaining the pedagogical value of legitimate collaboration in electronic and other environments;

   b. take steps to ensure that all members of the Board of Studies and all those involved in the marking process are aware of the University's guidelines on academic misconduct;

c. consider modifying assessment practices to reduce opportunities for academic misconduct;

d. require students to maintain appropriate, verifiable hard-copy records of progress on empirical research projects (e.g. a bound Lab Book) which a party other than the candidate can verify, and to be able to make this available at any point to supervisors and internal or External Examiners;

e. review annually their academic misconduct guidelines to their students, e.g. at the first meeting of the Board;

f. designate members of staff responsible for ensuring compliance with the University's expectations regarding students and academic misconduct and to serve on the faculty's Standing Academic Misconduct Panels.

4.8.3   Staff submission of student work to SafeAssign® or Turnitin®

To ensure the highest levels of academic integrity and in line with University Regulation 5.7b staff have the facility to submit student work to the text matching packages – SafeAssign® and Turnitin®. In accepting the University Regulations on admission, students have agreed to the University's use of these software packages. However, as submitting student work to these software packages involves sharing student work and data with a third party, departments and staff should:

a. clearly state their policy regarding the use of SafeAssign® or Turnitin® to all students in programme and module information;

b. follow the VLE guidance available at 'Setting up the TurnitinUK® assignment tool' OR 'Setting up a SafeAssignment® submission point'.

4.9   Notification of results

Departments should publish their policies for timing of notification of results to students in programme documentation. Undergraduate students should be notified at least five weeks prior to the date of a resit period that they will need to resit an assessment. Postgraduates need to be informed at least three weeks prior to the reassessment. Where a taught postgraduate programme requires students to pass the taught component in order to progress to a research project, resit or other arrangements of compensation should normally be such as to allow successful students to graduate with their cohort.

4.10   Conduct of assessment administered at departmental level

4.10.1   Assessment conditions

Tests, examined practicals and similar types of examination should, as far as possible, be held in the same conditions as those for closed formal examinations. In particular, attendance should be checked and recorded, there should be adequate invigilation and a member of staff should record receipt of the scripts at the end of the examination.

4.10.2   Record-keeping

A record should be maintained indicating receipt by the department of all essays, reports, projects and similar written work. Departmental and student handbooks should make it clear that students must keep Laboratory Books or other appropriate records of project work until their degree is complete.

4.10.3   Submission of assessments in electronic formats

Departments should decide how assessed work submitted electronically and without an identical paper-based version is to be receipted and assessed. They must also ensure that the work can be retained as submitted for a minimum of one year and a maximum of six years.

Departments allowing or requiring students to submit assessed work by email should note that the IT Service is unlikely to be able to resolve a claim made by a student to have submitted work which the department believes not to have received. Fail-safe procedures must be implemented for any such system, e.g. the named member of staff responsible for receiving the work must email each student to acknowledge their submission, and students must be warned to enquire further if they do not receive such an electronic 'receipt' within a given period of time.

4.11   Retention of assessment papers/evidence

4.11.1 All material relating to assessment contributing to an award of the University should be kept for at least one year after the relevant examinations have been completed, that is to say, after the meeting of the Senate or (for undergraduate Certificates and Diplomas) the Standing Committee on Assessment at which the results were confirmed.

4.11.2   All written or recorded work contributing to the final award should be available for external examination or comment. Where such work has been returned to students, students are responsible for retaining it in a portfolio for possible future external scrutiny. Departments are responsible for alerting students to this requirement, which is particularly important in relation to the award of Aegrotat degrees.

4.11.3   Where such marked work is returned to students, departments should consider retaining photocopies of a sample of scripts for quality assurance purposes, and advising students that they do so.

4.11.4   Departments should not return answer scripts to closed examinations that contribute to the final award; however, departments are encouraged to permit students to have supervised access to their own answer scripts as a means of feedback. In reaching a decision on whether to do this, Departments should consider whether access to scripts is likely to be useful to students, or whether alternative forms of feedback would be more effective. Departments are free to devise their own schemes for managing access (e.g. deciding whether access occurs on a given day for any student, or only for students who make a specific request; whether access is allowed only for specific groups; how requests will be managed) subject to the following principles:

- the possibility of access should be advertised to all students to whom it is open;
- no fee should be charged for access to scripts;
- students may not photograph or copy their answers during access;
- alteration of an exam script constitutes academic misconduct, with the possible penalty of a zero mark for the exam;
- access may be supervised by research students, administrative staff, or academic staff, bearing in mind the requirements of anonymity;
- individual requests for access to the exam scripts should not be granted unless the department has agreed to grant access as part of the feedback strategy.

Students should be reminded that they have no right of appeal against the academic judgement of examiners. However, any clerical or procedural errors identified by the students as a result of access to their script should be reported immediately in writing to the Chair of the Board of Examiners responsible for the module. The Chair or nominated deputy should investigate and exercise academic judgement to determine whether further action should be taken. Such judgements should be made in the context of the cohort of students taking the module. The student should receive a response in writing.

4.12   Assessment of study away from York

Special measures are required for the assessment of materials based on study abroad and work placements, and the following recommendations are made.

- Study Abroad – North American, Erasmus exchanges and any other study abroad should have clear statements of particular arrangements for assessment and how these relate to proposed incorporation within a programme of study. These statements should be available before any exchange is undertaken.
- Placement – Placements rarely involve closed assessment. Any external organisation involved in assessment should receive full written guidance on the conduct and requirements of assessment in advance of the placement beginning. It is good practice for any open assessment from a placement to be second-marked from within the University, however it is recognised that in some cases a component of assessment will be within the hands of the placement organisation (e.g. conduct) and then second marking is not possible. In such cases there should be an inspection visit.
- Distance Learning – Consideration should be given to an appropriate balance between open and closed assessments to guard against the possibility of academic misconduct.
- For information on the conduct of distance examinations, see section 5.12.

4.13   Assessment of visiting students

For the purposes of this document, visiting students are defined as students of another University (almost invariably overseas) who are admitted for up to one year to take modules at York which are then normally recognised for credit as part of the degree programme at their home institution.

a. Visiting students are required to submit all required assignments and written work and/or to attend any examinations which constitute the normal assessment regime for the module(s) for which they are registered. A fail mark will usually be issued for a module if the student has not met this requirement, but see also 4.13.b and 4.13.c.

b. The above expectation should normally only be varied in cases where:

   i.   the standard assessment is an examination scheduled for a time after the student has left the University, or

   ii. a module has been shortened in order to allow a student to take elements of the module without completing the full module requirements.

In the case of examinations, departments should substitute some other form of assessment designed to establish whether the expected learning outcomes of the module have been met. This may be a special examination to be sat by the student prior to leaving the University, or some equally rigorous written assessment. Because of the inherent logistical difficulties, every effort should be made to avoid students sitting examinations after leaving York. Where this is unavoidable, the principle outlined in paragraph 5.12 must be adhered to. However, the examination may be scheduled to take place at a later time than the examination at York if the student's home University states in writing that it is willing to accept the risk of collusion.

For a student to be allowed to take a module of shortened length, the department should ensure that the Board of Studies has approved a new module form detailing the module credits, learning outcomes and methods of assessment as a minimum. This form should then be forwarded to Registry for set up in SITS.

c. Where it is not possible to meet the requirements in 4.13.a or 4.13.b, and where students are unwilling to submit to the normal assessment regime for a module, the student should be informed that they will be deemed to have failed the module and a fail mark will be recorded on the student's academic transcript. Exceptions may be made in the following circumstances:

   - subject to the agreement of the department concerned, a student may take a module on an 'audit' basis provided that he or she requests to do so by the end of the third week of the term in which the module begins;
   - such requests should only be agreed to if the student provides a written statement from his or her home University approving the request;
   - requests to audit modules received after the third week of term will not be accepted;
   - students will not receive credit for any modules taken on an audit basis.

d. Visiting students are required to register for modules which constitute the normal full credit load for the period they are at York. Exceptions may be made in the following circumstances:

   - where a student is required to undertake academic work for his or her home university, subject to the agreement of the department(s) concerned, or where a student is studying at York for the equivalent of one semester at his or her home institution, a student may take fewer credits than the normal full load providing:

i. the student requests to do so by the end of the third week of his or her first term;

ii. the student's home University provides written permission and a clear statement confirming the proportion of the student's annual credit load which this work represents;

iii. the combined credit load of home and host University is approximately a normal full credit load.

It is not possible to drop modules after the third week of term. A fail mark will be issued on the academic transcript for any modules remaining on a student's record for which assessments have not been completed.

Subject to the agreement of the department(s) concerned, a student may take more credits than the normal full load (normally up to a maximum of 60 credits in a term, 110 credits in two terms or 140 credits in three terms, excluding credit for Languages for All courses and modules) provided that he or she requests to do so by the end of the third week of his or her first term. Such requests should only be agreed to if the student provides a written statement from his or her home University approving the request. Requests received after the third week of term to add modules should not be agreed to.

e. In order that academic transcripts for visiting students can be issued in a timely manner, work submitted by visiting students should normally be marked as soon as possible after it is received even if this is in advance of the normal submission deadline. For the same reason, the Standing Committee on Assessment has agreed that marks for non-award-seeking (visiting) students need not be ratified by an External Examiner, but will be ratified internally (by the Chair of the Board of Studies, the Chair of the Board of Examiners or the Head of Department) prior to submission for academic transcript production.

f. Opportunities to retake or resit modules are not available to visiting students after leaving York, and it is important that home institutions have ensured that alternative arrangements to deal with any assessment results that do not meet the requirements of a student's degree programme at their home University (e.g. arrangements for the gaining of credit) are in place before study is undertaken at York.

g. Any variations in the above requirements for the assessment of visiting students must be approved in advance by the Standing Committee on Assessment.

4.14   Student attendance and participation

Marks or grades should not be awarded to students purely to incentivise or reward attendance i.e. purely for turning up. This approach to addressing student engagement issues is not permissible because:

- it is an inappropriate approach for an academic institution which espouses independent learning;
- addressing an attendance problem by awarding marks may mean underlying issues in a programme or module are ignored;
- awarding marks for attendance leads to grade inflation;
- penalising students for missing classes may result in far more appeals for exceptional circumstances and staff being asked to make ever more complex judgments about what is a reasonable excuse for absence;
- awarding marks for attendance means increasing student's extrinsic rather than intrinsic motivation which can be counter-productive to developing life-long learners.

Providing marks for 'participation' should also be considered with caution. Such practice may contribute to grade inflation if it is unstructured. In addition, such practice may negatively affect inclusivity resulting in a student perception that such marks are unfair.

Where assessment of student engagement or participation is included in modules to ensure student achievement of programme learning outcomes (e.g. development of debate skills in seminars; fulfilling professional responsibility to a group task), what constitutes 'participation' i.e. the aspects to be judged, need to be clearly defined beforehand (criteria); the expectation for participation at different levels (i.e. 1st year; 2nd year; 3rd year; Masters; PhD) needs to be specified and fully understood by staff and students; and students should have formative opportunities to perform and receive specific feedback (oral or written) on improving their performance.

4.15   Support in preparation for reassessment or sits-as-if-for-the-first-time

Students who are retaking assessments will not normally receive any repeat of the teaching associated with the module. All electronic and printed materials associated with the course should continue to be available to the student under the same conditions that they were available during the teaching of the module.

Students should not expect one-to-one tuition in preparation for resit examinations or sits-as-if-for-the-first-time, and members of academic staff are not required to make themselves available for consultation during the summer vacation. However, teaching staff on modules should make themselves available following the release of feedback, ideally through office hours or bookable appointments but at least via email, to discuss both the feedback and strategies for the preparation for any repeated assessments.

Assessment Formats

5.   Closed Examinations

5.1   Information about closed examinations for students

The Examinations Office issues a 'Students' Guide to University Closed Examinations' for students sitting formal examinations at York for the first time. The Guide is available at www.york.ac.uk/students/studying/assessment-and-examination/taking-an-exam.

5.2   Clarity of instructions and questions

Staff should make every effort to ensure that examination instructions and questions are clear and easily understood by the students. For guidance in this area – see Appendix L.

5.3   Security of examination materials

The security of examination materials is of the utmost importance and departments should have procedures in place to communicate with colleagues and External Examiners, as well as to store examination papers and scripts during the assessment process. Draft exam papers must be treated carefully to avoid compromising the security and validity of the paper before the examination. The use of computers to draw up examination papers means that careful attention must be paid to the security of the PC used to write questions or assemble the paper. Departments are encouraged to undertake regular reviews of their processes. The IT Service has provided user-friendly guidelines on encrypting sensitive Word documents, available at http://www.york.ac.uk/itservices/it/security/encryption/.

Examination question papers should be delivered to the Examinations Office via the Google Drive. Answer scripts must be collected from the designated collection venue by departmental representatives and delivered by hand to their destination within the University and a receipt obtained, or be sent by registered post or similar secure means to destinations outside the University. If completed examination scripts must be sent via mail before marking has been completed, copies of the original scripts (either hard copies or scans) should be taken to protect students in the event that scripts do no arrive safely at their destination. More detailed information about maintaining security in the preparation of examination papers is issued annually and guidelines for staff and departments are provided at https://www.york.ac.uk/staff/teaching/themes/assessment/examinations/security/.

Advice can also be provided by Dr Arthur Clune, Assistant Director (Infrastructure), in IT Services (01904 328470, arthur.clune@york.ac.uk).

5.4   Examination scheduling and timetabling

a. University examinations for Undergraduate students are scheduled in Spring Week 1 and Summer Weeks 5-7.

   Examinations for Postgraduate Students should normally be scheduled during the Common Assessment Periods but departments may decide to hold examinations, particularly resit examinations, departmentally in order to accommodate the quick turnaround periods required by the intense nature of PGT study. These exams must be invigilated to the required standard, and trained invigilators can be provided by the Examinations Office at the department's expense.

   The Common Assessment Period will not apply to Foundation Certificate or pre-Masters programmes. This reflects the fact that these may have non-standard start points in the academic year.

b. Examinations will be timetabled according to the following restrictions:

   - timetabled examinations will be held in one of three available 'slots' in each day of the Common Assessment Period. These are normally:
     - 9.00am (with standard scheduled durations up to 3 hours)
     - 1.30pm (with standard scheduled durations up to 3 hours)
     - 6.00pm (with standard scheduled durations up to 2 hours)
   - students will not be required to sit more than two exams per day
   - total exam duration for any individual student will not exceed 10 hours per day or 16 hours in 2 days (including extra time as adjustment for any disability)
   - additional time in examinations is added on to the end of the advertised time, which may impact on the break available between examinations if a student has more than one examination scheduled per day, though reasonable attempts will be made to accommodate at least 1.5 hours between examinations.

c. Examinations may be timetabled for any day falling within term time. Saturdays are regularly used, and the use of Bank Holidays may also be necessary depending on the volume of examinations to be scheduled. Examinations are normally scheduled Monday to Saturday between 9.00am and 8.00pm.

d. Centrally-administered examinations will have the following durations: one hour; one hour and thirty minutes; two hours; two hours and thirty minutes; three hours. Departments unable to comply with these examination lengths may arrange and invigilate their own examination sessions to the required standards.

5.5   Examination candidate numbers

a. As part of the operation of the University's anonymous marking policy students are identified only by their examination candidate number until marking has been completed. Examination candidate numbers are the only 7-digit number appearing on the student's University Card, are automatically generated from the student records system at enrolment and are carried forward from year to year.

b. It is important to ensure that examination candidate numbers remain secure. All staff involved in the examining process must maintain the confidentiality of students' examination numbers. Students should be advised that they must keep them confidential and the importance of not entering their name in addition to their number on any closed or open assessment should be emphasised.

5.6   Establishing student identity

a. Candidates are required to display their legible University Card on their desks throughout an examination; photographs on the cards will be checked by invigilators in the first 30 minutes of each examination.

b. A candidate unable to produce their legible University Card will have this noted on their examination script before it is submitted. The candidate will be required to answer some security questions and provide a specimen signature in the examination room. In addition the candidate will be required to provide two forms of identification, one of which must be their legible University Card and one of which must evidence their signature, to their department within one working day of the examination session. Except with the express permission of the SCA, candidates who do not provide suitable identification to their department within the specified time frame will be deemed not to have attended the examination and their script will not be marked.

c. Any person found to be impersonating a student in an examination and whose identity is unknown will be reported to the police. This will normally be done by the Academic Registrar, or the Registrar and Secretary, or, if the incident occurs out of normal working hours, by an appropriate deputy.

5.7   Invigilation

a. The agreed ratio of invigilators to students in University examinations is two invigilators for between 2 and 50 students; three invigilators for between 51 and 100 students; four invigilators for between 101 and 150 students and five invigilators for 151 students or more. Variation of these ratios is at the discretion of the Examinations Office, in consultation with the Chair of the Standing Committee on Assessment where appropriate.

b. Short training sessions for invigilators are offered by the Examinations Office prior to the major examination periods. All new invigilators are required to attend a training session before being permitted to invigilate.

c. Invigilators are responsible for the enforcement of the regulations and policies that govern the conduct of invigilated examinations. A senior invigilator, appointed by the Examinations Office for each examination session, takes overall responsibility for the conduct of the examination and the invigilation process, including ensuring that the number of examination scripts collected matches the total receipted by departmental representatives.

d. A full set of information on relevant policies and procedures is distributed to all invigilators in advance of their session. A copy is also available on the web http://www.york.ac.uk/about/departments/support-and-admin/registry-services/exams/invigilators/.

e. All invigilators should be present in the examination room at least fifteen minutes before the start of each session and are expected to give their undivided attention to the surveillance of candidates during examinations. Invigilators should patrol the examination room at intervals to minimise the risk of candidates cheating and to check that candidates are using only the additional materials permitted by Boards of Examiners for particular examinations.

f. Invigilators have the authority to require any candidate to leave the examination room for good cause and must submit a written report on the circumstances to the Registrar.

g. The exam-setter or his/her proxy must either be present or available by telephone throughout the relevant exam session unless specific permission to waive these requirements has been sought from the Standing Committee on Assessment in advance of the examination.

h. It is important that the one-to-one relationship between the candidate and their script is maintained. Candidates who finish early should not be permitted to leave before their script has been collected by an invigilator. At the end of the examination, invigilators must ensure that students remain seated at the end of the examination until all the scripts are collected.

5.8   Use of the Professional Invigilation Team

a. The Examinations Office appoints, trains and manages a team of professional invigilators drawn from suitably qualified persons not currently employed on the University's salary scales for Academic Research or Teaching staff including a team of professional Senior Invigilators. Departments may nominate invigilators if they wish.

b. Departments may be asked to meet the costs of using additional invigilators to support arrangements such as those outlined in 5.9.a.iv.

c. The Examinations Office is responsible for the formal appointment and general briefing of the professional invigilation team.

5.9   Materials and resources permitted in examinations

a. Permitted materials

The following material is permitted on a candidate's desk in an invigilated examination:

     i. A clear pencil case or clear plastic bag, which may contain:

- Pens
- Pencils
- Rubber
- Pencil sharpener
- Ruler

     ii. A small (500ml max) clear bottle of still water

     iii. University Card

     iv. If permitted by the department, open books, dictionaries (see below), calculators (see below), other materials.

         It is the student's responsibility to ensure that approved books that they are permitted to bring into an examination room do not contain illicit material (see section 6.2.5).

     v. Candidates must remove all items from their pockets before entering the examination. Invigilators may ask to check candidates' pockets. If candidates are found with any items in their pockets it will be considered to be academic misconduct, even if they are not items that could have provided them with an advantage during the examination.

b. Dictionaries

Except where proficiency in a language other than English is being assessed, or a special case has been made to the Standing Committee on Assessment on the basis of the learning outcomes of the module concerned, University Teaching Committee has agreed that candidates will not be permitted to bring individual dictionaries into examinations, nor will dictionaries be provided.

c. Calculators

In addressing the difficulties arising from the use of calculators in University examinations, the Examinations Office has a standard calculator (Casio fx-85ES or fx-85GT) that is distributed to those students for whom a calculator is necessary in the completion of particular examination papers. Departments should advise the Examinations Office that they will require these calculators to be available to candidates at the time of submission of the relevant examination paper. Candidates will not normally be permitted to bring their own calculators into formal examinations except where departments make prior arrangements for this with the Examinations Office. If departments wish candidates to have access to a calculator, this must be included in the examination rubric. Candidates will not be permitted to request the use of a calculator if this is not included in the rubric.

Departments should ensure that students are informed in good time of the model of calculator that will be provided so that they can familiarise themselves with its use before the examination. Details and instructions for the use of the calculators are available at www.york.ac.uk/students/studying/assessment-and-examination/taking-an-exam/what-to-bring and departments may wish to include this information in the relevant student handbooks. It is the candidates' responsibility to familiarise themselves with the university calculators in advance should this be required. Invigilators will not provide assistance in using calculators during examinations.

Departments wishing to provide a different model of calculator to their candidates must advise the Examinations Office in advance of the examination that they will be doing so. If the department is supplying substitute calculators to students under examination they must undertake to check in advance that these do not hold any additional information, nor could be subsequently programmed to do so.

If the use of students' own calculators is to be permitted in a formal University examination then departments must provide staff competent to check such calculators to ensure they do not hold any additional information, nor could be subsequently programmed to do so, in the period after the candidates have entered the examination room and before the examination begins.

Arrangements regarding calculators may differ slightly for distant examination centres; see section 5.12.

d. The use of electronic devices in examinations

Departments should be aware of the potential misuse by examination candidates of small data storage units capable of holding large quantities of text, as well as numerical and scientific data.

All departments should ensure their students are aware of and understand the current regulations relating to academic misconduct, in particular that failure to comply with the instructions regarding electronic devices constitutes academic misconduct.

Candidates are not permitted to bring mobile telephones, electronic diaries, electronic dictionaries, smart watches or other data storage units into formal examinations. An announcement to this effect

must be made at the beginning of each examination session and reiterated in the "Notes to Invigilators" issued to each examination invigilator by the Examinations Office. Invigilators should ensure that any such devices inadvertently carried into an examination room are made inaccessible to students during the examination session by placing them in a clear plastic bag underneath the candidate's desk. Items must be switched off by the candidate before placing them in the bag. If any electronic device capable of storing data is found to have been left switched on during an examination it will be treated as academic misconduct, regardless of whether the candidate accesses the device during the examination. If an alarm or any other noise (including that made by vibrations) is audible from such devices during examinations it will be treated as a case of academic misconduct.

Exceptions to this requirement will be permitted only if formal approval has been sought from and granted by the Standing Committee on Assessment in advance of the examination session(s) in question.

5.10   Behaviour in examinations

a. Candidates should be allowed to leave the examination room only for good reason and should always be accompanied by an invigilator.

b. Any form of cheating or deception, including plagiarism, collusion and the fabrication of marks or data in relation to work submitted for assessment or examination at any stage of a student's programme, is academic misconduct, and will be treated as such.

c. Candidates may not bring written or printed material or equipment, including calculators, into the examination room for a closed examination unless provision has been made for this and the items in question have been approved by the examiners (see sections 5.9 and 6.2.5).

d. Candidates found taking illicit material into closed examinations or possessing such material in a closed examination will, at a minimum, receive a mark of zero for the paper. Illicit material is any material that is not permitted as part of the rubric and includes information stored on or accessible from electronic devices, paper notes and notes on the body. Students found to have had such material in their possession will receive a penalty under the Academic Misconduct policy.

e. Candidates may use examination scripts or booklets for rough work but should be informed that it is their responsibility to cross out such rough work before handing in their paper. Paper is not given out for rough notes. If candidates do need to make rough notes they may use their answer booklet. It is their responsibility to cross out any notes they make that they do not want the examiner to mark. All written work, including such notes, must be submitted. Extracting pages from bound examination answer booklets (even if they only contain rough work) is regarded as academic misconduct.

f. Candidates may not communicate with anyone except the invigilator during a closed examination.

g. Candidates may enter the examination room up to half an hour after the start of the examination, and thereafter only in exceptional circumstances and with the permission of the invigilator. Except in exceptional circumstances such candidates should finish their examination at the scheduled time.

h. No candidate may leave the examination hall less than three-quarters of an hour after the start of the examination except with the permission of the invigilator. Candidates may not leave the examination hall during the last 15 minutes of an examination.

i. Smoking (including the use of electronic cigarettes) is not allowed during examinations.

5.11 Absence or illness from closed examinations

a. It is the responsibility of students to present themselves for examination as required by Regulation 5.5 (e).

b. A candidate taken ill prior to or during the period of an examination must contact his or her medical practitioner immediately and obtain a medical certificate which should be forwarded without delay to the departmental administrator. This must happen before the examination results are considered by the appropriate Board of Examiners. The department will submit the evidence to the relevant Exceptional Circumstances affecting Assessment (ECA) committee to consider the claim.

c. Where candidates are taken ill during an invigilated examination, whether it is departmentally or centrally administered, the "Illness During Examinations" form (pads available from Registry) should be completed and a copy given to the candidate to take to the Medical Centre. Actions taken should be recorded on the Examination Information Sheet, or equivalent in the case of an examination administered within a department.

5.12 Conduct of distant examinations

The University's procedures for security, conduct and invigilation must be adhered to during examinations taking place at a distance.

a. Unless other arrangements are approved by the Standing Committee on Assessment in advance, the timing of formal examinations must ensure that all examinations for the same module, no matter in which country they are taking place, begin at the same time GMT. Where this is not practical (e.g. the same examination taking place in the UK, USA and India), then the candidates at one or more overseas locations must be chaperoned so they are unable to make any contact with individuals at a different site who are sitting the examination at a different time GMT.

b. Examiner availability during the distant examination is essential, even if the examination is conducted in a different time zone. A mechanism for immediate contact with York should queries arise during the examination must be established in advance.

c. All examination practices with regard to special arrangements, toilet supervision, arrangements for the treatment of candidates who arrive late or wish to leave early, and the use of calculators and dictionaries, should follow the guidelines in the Guide to Assessment for the current year. Where appropriate, the Standing Committee on Assessment may approve provision of a basic calculator (i.e. standard arithmetical operations only, and no memory retained at 'switch-off') in place of the standard University calculator.

d. Special arrangements involving computer or reader or scribe support must be approved by the Standing Committee on Assessment in advance (see section 4.3), and an assurance received that proposed invigilators have been carefully selected and have received adequate training.

e. Appeals from all students (including distance learning students) are covered by the Special Cases Committee procedures. Students making appeals are always invited to submit a written statement and may be invited to attend a hearing in person, but where this is not practicable telephone or video-conferencing arrangements may be made. In every case a student may be accompanied by a registered student or employee of the University and/or either a Sabbatical Officer of the Students' Union or the SU Education and Welfare Support Co-ordinator or, for postgraduate students, an officer of the Graduate Students' Association (see Regulation 2.8.4 (d) and 6.7.4 (c)).

6. Open Book Examinations

6.1   Purpose

Open book examinations (where students are allowed to bring certain specified papers / books into the exam) aim to reduce reliance on memorising information which in life is often very accessible e.g. formulae, law statutes. This allows more time in the exam for higher level tasks e.g. displaying understanding through using basic information available to solve problems; choosing and applying appropriate formulae to specific tasks. Open book examinations are more suitable where the aim is to test what students can do with the information to which they have access, rather than whether they can recall basic information.

6.2   Procedures

Where open book examinations are arranged as central examinations, the same procedures should be followed as for Closed Examinations (see Section 5) with the addition of the following:

6.2.1   Pre-exam information regarding open book materials

Students should have explicit information well before the exam about which materials they will be allowed to bring into the exam and about expectations for use of materials in the exam e.g. referencing.

Staff should take care to only specify materials to which all students will have access.

The materials allowed to be brought into an open book exam should be specified by the module leader clearly on the exam paper. Specifications should include:

- specific texts / book titles / editions, if required
- types of notes / formula sheets / revision sheets permitted
- technical equipment, if required.

6.2.2   Arrangements for the exam

Consideration should be given to accessibility issues such as a student's ability to handle multiple books / papers in an exam, suitability of exam room furniture, spacing and time allowances for students allowed extra time.

6.2.3   Failure to bring specified materials

It is the student's responsibility to bring the correct materials to the exam. If a student has not brought materials for an exam, they should be allowed to take the exam without the materials.

Module leaders may provide spare copies of texts, textbooks, books or technical materials if they wish. However, in order to maintain equity, notes or formula sheets should not be provided unless every student receives a copy.

6.2.4   Invigilation in open-book examinations

Invigilators should ensure that only those materials specified on the exam paper are allowed in the exam hall. Materials that are not specified on the exam paper must be left outside the exam hall.

Particular vigilance should be shown by invigilators during open book examinations to ensure that students have not concealed illicit material in approved materials e.g. pre-written paragraphs, possible answers, pages pasted into books.

6.2.5   Open book examinations and Academic Integrity

It is the student's responsibility to ensure that notebooks, texts or other approved books that they may be permitted in an examination room do not contain illicit material. Illicit material would include texts not specified on the exam paper, pre-written possible exam answers or formulae. Candidates found taking illicit material into closed examinations will, at a minimum, receive a mark of zero for the paper.

7. Open examinations (Take-home examinations)

Examples:

a.   students are given an assessment task to complete in a limited time (e.g. overnight or over one or two days) at home.

b.   an assessment in which students are given the assessment topic OR assessment material to research, consider, or read about before the exam. After the research period (e.g. overnight or over one or two days), the students are given a precise task to complete under exam conditions.

7.1   Purpose

Open examinations can be useful if the assessment aims to assess whether students have achieved learning outcomes which cannot normally be assessed in a limited time or under exam conditions. Such outcomes could involve reading and referencing from multiple specific texts or the ability to synthesise information from a number of sources.

7.2   Examination requirements

In order for the exam to be run equitably for all students, information needs to be very clear about:

- when and where the exam question / research material / exam task can be picked up or accessed. For large cohorts it is important to ensure that such material is distributed as quickly and fairly as possible;
- which materials can be consulted or referenced or if there are particular limitations on resources to be used;
- how much time should be spent on the preparation as opposed to the task;
- word limits and how work needs to be presented or formatted for submission;
- the deadline by which the exam has to be handed in and penalties thereafter.

7.3   Open examinations and Academic Integrity

As students will have access to exam materials, open information and be outside a closed exam environment, consideration needs to be given to the dangers of collusion. It should be assumed that students on the same course will discuss released materials, topics and questions so assessment designers need to take this into account and design tasks and plan accordingly.

8. Cumulative Assessment – multiple tasks throughout a module

Examples: e.g. weekly class tests, lab reports or lab books, reflective journal entries or portfolio work.

8.1 Purpose

The intended purpose of multiple assessment tasks throughout a module should be clear for all staff and students beforehand. Purposes for such assessments may be:

a.   to aid engagement with work throughout the module;

b.   to aid reflection on learning throughout a module;

c.   to practise skills in order to improve performance;

Consideration needs to be given to how undertaking the tasks involved is linked to feedback / input on performance during the module.

8.2 Staff and student workload

Multiple assessments can be time-consuming. For students, time taken to complete multiple tasks to a high standard should not exceed the credit limit for the module. Module leaders also need to plan carefully for the marking load associated with multiple task assessment – both during a module and once the completed assessments have been submitted.

8.3 Cumulative assessment and Academic Integrity

Consideration needs to be given to how important it is that students undertake their own work.

Where students cooperate during labs or to complete class problems, the boundaries between work that can be discussed and work that should be submitted as the student's own need to be clear.

8.4 Requirements for assessment

Staff and students should be clear:

- what is required to be submitted in order for the assessment to be considered complete. This may relate to how many individual tests or reports are required to be submitted, the word length of a complete journal or the number of completed items in a portfolio;
- what exactly will be assessed. This may mean all the submissions are assessed or a proportion of submissions are assessed. Whatever rules govern the body of work to be assessed, all students should understand this clearly beforehand;
- which elements are essential to meet the criteria for assessment. If certain elements of writing are necessary or certain types of approach then this should be made clear to students beforehand;

- when the work must be submitted, how submission will take place and what the penalties are for late submission.

8.5   Non-completion and reassessment

Consideration needs to be given to what happens if the requirements of the assessment are not met i.e. a student does not submit the required elements. If unusual and unpredictable circumstances have prevented the student from completing all the tasks then the Exceptional Circumstances affecting Assessment Policy can be applied. For Category 2 students, failure to complete or submit an assessment without a successful xceptional circumstances claim will normally result in a zero for that assignment, with reassessment opportunities commensurate to those available in the event of any other failure on that assessment.

9.   Essays (non-examination conditions)

9.1   Purpose

Purposes for assigning an essay (completed over time) may be to encourage students to:

a.   study a topic in greater depth through reading about and evaluating different viewpoints and perspectives;

b.   come to a better understanding of theories and concepts through internalising them in order to construct and sustain an academic argument;

c.   display the extent of their synoptic thinking and understanding of the module or a module topic;

d.   develop their ability to analyse and apply new ideas / theories to their experience and practice.

9.2   Staff and student workload

Consideration should be given to whether students are given opportunities for tutorials and / or feedback on drafts during the writing process. Such support has implications for staff time and for ensuring equity of input for students. To counter these issues, the amount and type of support offered to students can be outlined beforehand.

Consideration should also be given to how working on essays may distract students from other learning within the module. If students start to work on a module essay too early, this can mean that they ignore the rest of the module materials.

9.3 Module essays and Academic Integrity

As students are not under exam conditions, assessing via module essays can open the door to Academic Integrity questions. To avoid this and deter plagiarism, the following approaches can be helpful:

- ensuring students are asked to answer a very specific essay question rather than addressing vague topic areas;
- linking essay questions to current affairs / topical issues / specific cases or examples;
- avoiding providing the same titles to students year after year;
- having a draft or formative feedback stage to address integrity issues early;
- including submission of evidence of the research process in the final mark.

9.4 Requirements for assessment

Staff and students should be clear about:

- the standards criteria and/or weightings which will be used to assess the essays;
- the reference format which will be expected (this should be specified in the published criteria and consistently applied across markers);
- any other formatting requirements that are particular to the department or the assessment;
- when the work must be submitted, how extensions can be arranged, how submission will take place and what the penalties are for late submission.

9.5 Marking and feedback

Marking and providing feedback on essays can be time-consuming, especially if the essays are double-marked. In order to meet the expectation of marking and feedback turnaround in six weeks (see Feedback Policy, particularly Section 15.1.3) and providing students with feedback that is detailed enough to encourage learning, module leaders with larger cohorts should consider producing a clear marking schedule.

9.6 Resubmission and reassessment

In the criteria for marginal fail, clear guidance needs to be given concerning which parts of an essay can be developed for resubmission and which cannot. For reassessment, consideration needs to be given to how the same learning outcomes can be assessed in a shorter period.

10.   Dissertations / Individual Projects / Independent Study Modules

10.1   Purpose

Writing a dissertation or undertaking a project provides taught students (including undergraduates and taught postgraduates) with the opportunity to undertake a piece of individual research / investigation and examine an aspect of the subject they have been studying in more depth. Such tasks can therefore assess such skills as the ability to:

- work independently;
- narrow / define / focus a research area of their choice;
- read widely and critically reflect on written research in an appropriate and thorough manner;
- think through varying methodological approaches and adopt the necessary approaches suitable to the topic being researched;
- conduct research;
- manage a challenging, extended piece of work.

10.2   Requirements

10.2.1   *Clarity of expectations and criteria*

As the project or dissertation may be a new assessment format for many students, expectations need to be made as clear as possible. Preparation modules or workshops need to ensure students know what an acceptable dissertation / project looks like. A useful activity, to familiarise students with expectations and criteria, is to provide students with an opportunity to mark a few dissertations / projects themselves and discuss the results. This can highlight common problem areas such as failing to sufficiently define a research question /inappropriate structure / failure to include enough theory or literature /"storytelling" / lack of critical analysis.

Students also need to receive clear information about submission procedures, formats and deadlines.

10.2.2   *Choice of topic*

As the choice of topic and / or narrowing of a topic can be the first major hurdle students face when completing their own research, consideration needs to be given to how much guidance students are given at this stage. Module leaders need to ensure students have equal opportunities in selecting their research themes and what mechanisms will be employed to ensure equity of projects available to students.

10.2.3 Supervision – staff and student workload

It is important that both students and staff are fully aware of their responsibilities in relation to the conduct of the work, the time management of the work and the degree of support and guidance to be offered. In this area, departments should aim for consistency of practice in the supervision of dissertations / projects. Care should be taken to avoid over-supervision and under-supervision. Supervision and feedback could be at various stages:

- Proposal / project focus stage
- Literature review
- First draft.

Allocating marks to parts of dissertations or projects needs careful consideration. Although this can ensure students stay on target with regard to managing their time, breaking up a large mark may mean the production of more criteria. Also, allocating numerous marks for numerous pieces of work at different stages can also lead to mark inflation if students automatically receive marks for handing in work.

10.3 Dissertations, projects and Academic Integrity

A project or dissertation may be the first piece of extended writing undergraduate students have undertaken for some time – especially in subject areas that are more reliant on examinations. Even for taught postgraduate students, this is often the first piece of independent primary research a student has undertaken, and almost certainly the longest piece of academic work they have been asked to produce. The pressure and stress this produces can make accidental or deliberate academic misconduct a real possibility.

To counter this danger, clear guidance needs to be given regarding what constitutes plagiarism, how students can manage their sources and how they should reference and cite clearly. Where primary research is expected, clear guidance should also be provided on appropriate research practice to help students to avoid other forms of academic misconduct.

The University policy on proof reading should be brought to the attention of such student from the start.

10.4 Marking and feedback of dissertations

10.4.1 Marking of Undergraduate dissertations

As dissertations and projects often warrant a high weighting (e.g. 80%) in high credit modules (e.g. 40 credits or more) in the final year of a programme (higher stage weighting for final stage marks), the marks for such assessments are extremely significant for a students' degree classification. As a result, extreme care needs to be taken with marking such significant pieces of assessment (see Appendix E). Establishing agreed standards between markers, double-blind marking and moderation should be considered.

Also, as students invest significant time and energy into these pieces of assessment, equal thought should be given to the quality of response and feedback provided.

10.4.2 Marking of Taught postgraduate dissertations

Dissertations for taught postgraduates often constitute around a third of a Master's student's work whilst they are studying with the University, and they are often handed in as the student leaves York. It remains of the utmost importance however, that students receive meaningful and timely feedback on their ISM projects. It is also important, given the weight of the work towards award marks, that care be taken with marking such significant pieces of assessment (see Appendix E).

Establishing agreed standards between markers, double-blind marking and moderation should be considered.

10.5 Submission, extensions and penalties

Students should be fully and clearly informed about:

- when their dissertations / projects have to be submitted (time / date). (See section 4.7.1);
- how their dissertation / project should be submitted – e.g. front cover / format / required pages / binding and presentation;
- where their dissertation / project should be submitted and to whom.

Procedures for granting extensions to submission dates and the procedures followed for late submission of projects / dissertations should be made as clear as possible to students. Such procedures should be outlined clearly in module information, briefings, on posters in departments and in supervision meetings.

10.6 Reassessment and resubmission

Reassessment through resubmission on Independent Study Modules is allowed under certain circumstances. For students on taught postgraduate courses or those on Integrated Masters Programmes (where the ISM is worth more than 40 credits), reassessment is only possible where the ISM receives a marginally failing grade (defined in Appendix N). In these cases, the credit value of the reassessment exceeds the normal reassessment limits. Students on Integrated Masters Programmes with ISMs worth up to or exactly 40 credits may be reassessed on ISMs, if the volume of reassessment is available to them within the normal reassessment and compensation rules. In each case, consideration should be given to what is realistically possible in terms of revising a substandard dissertation/ project within a limited time frame.

11. Posters and Presentations

11.1 Purpose of assessment

The purpose of assigning a poster or presentation as an assessment should be clear for staff and students beforehand. Purposes for assigning such assessment may be to encourage students to:

a.   analyse / synthesise information from a variety of sources;

b.   study / revise topics in depth to gain a firm grasp of key arguments and evidence, key themes, or key conclusions;

c.   consider a topic thoroughly in order to decide how best it can be summarised and presented interestingly to an audience – thereby making considered judgments about content, organisation and focus;

d.   develop their visual and oral communication skills;

e.   develop self-confidence and confidence as professional participants in their discipline;

f.   think more creatively about their subject area.

11.2   Logistics

The arrangements necessary for assessment via posters and presentations need considerable thought. In particular,

- Resources – material and technical resources necessary need to be ordered well in advance. It is advisable that limits on how students use resources should be made clear to ensure equity.
- Rooms / Space – suitable spaces for poster displays, concurrent presentations or performances need to be booked well ahead of time. Also, technical resources in rooms need to be checked.
- Timing – for presentations, a schedule is necessary and needs to be distributed well in advance. The schedule should, as far as possible, ensure equity for students i.e. presentations should not happen too far apart. The schedule should take account of how much time is needed to set-up each presentation, how much time is allowed for each presentation (including Q&A if called for) and how much time is needed for marking each presentation. The schedule should allow time for breaks to counter marker fatigue and be flexible enough to allow for some over-run of presentations.
- Markers – if presentations are to be joint marked, arrangements need to be made for enough markers to be available and to be ready to mark consistently.

11.3   Standards

It is important to provide clear sense of expectations as early as possible to students and markers. If possible, exemplar posters or videos of exemplar presentations should also be available for establishing standards between markers and orienting students about the expectations.

If criteria are used for assessment related to elements of communication such as "Pace / tone" in a presentation or "Graphic design" in a poster, it is reasonable for students to expect some input on these skills or some opportunity to practise the skills and receive feedback.

As presentations cannot be reviewed again (unless recorded) it is recommended that the number of criteria is limited. This allows markers to focus on a few agreed factors during the presentation.

11.4   Feedback and learning

In order for students to have an opportunity to develop skills and learn from the experience of producing posters and presentations, it is recommended that students receive feedback as quickly as possible and that they are allowed to keep their posters and record their presentations in order to have the opportunity to review their work after receiving feedback.

As the marking of posters and presentations is very immediate, it is important that markers have had the opportunity to use any criteria to mark samples and to discuss the standards expected for different marks beforehand.

11.5   Moderation and Marking

The presentation of work – either as a poster or presentation – does not allow for student anonymity. As a result, joint marking is recommended to ensure equity. To single mark performance-based assessment worth more than 10% of any module, a recording MUST be made to allow for later moderation.

Whilst marking, markers should be allowed enough time to make reasoned judgements, agree marks and to make written comments.

It would be advisable, for future moderation purposes, for a percentage of posters to be kept and a percentage of performances to be recorded each time the assessment is run.

11.6   Reassessment

Consideration needs to be given as to how a poster or presentation can be reassessed.

12.   Group Projects

12.1   Purpose

It is very important that work assigned to group work actually needs to be accomplished by groups. Without a clear purpose for convening a group and working together, groups may produce several individual end products which do not work together. Therefore, the purpose of group projects should be clearly identified during module planning, including why it is appropriate for the assignment to be completed in groups and how the process and content of the project will help to achieve the stated learning objectives in the module. If group process skills (e.g. team-working, communication) are to be developed and assessed during the module then group process learning objectives and assessment criteria need to be clearly defined. This information should be explicitly communicated to students from the outset.

12.2   Clarity of information

Students, and all staff involved in the module, should receive information regarding the requirements for the assessment, including details of procedures relating to:

- the task to be undertaken;
- the necessity for group work to complete the task;
- the basis for group membership;
- rules that cover the operation of groups;
- task allocation within the group;
- what to do if a group loses a member, cannot continue to function as a group or needs to adjust/ adapt to events which arise in the group (i.e. exceptional circumstances). Guidance should include how the students can value and acknowledge this experience as part of their learning;
- the conduct of group meetings – expectations regarding frequency, timing and group contact outside scheduled class times;
- feedback stages during the assignment period to report group progress and final outcomes;
- the weighting of the assessment in the overall module;
- due dates for assessment completion;
- penalties for late submission etc.;
- the procedure and criteria for assessing the group;
- the procedure and criteria for assessing individual contributions, if such contributions are to be assessed;
- how marks will be allocated between the collaborative process (i.e. the way individuals collaborated during the project) and the collaborative product (i.e. the final group document and/or presentation);
- who will carry out the assessment (e.g., individual lecturers, panel of lecturers, peers);

- how the contribution of each member to the group project will be assessed (e.g. using individual process diaries, peer/external assessment of collaborative process and assignment content).

12.3   Group work and academic integrity

Module leaders should ensure that students understand the difference between legitimate cooperation through group work and collusion. This can be achieved using scenario activities to exemplify to students where grey areas can occur and delineating very clearly what is to be assessed – collaborative process elements, the products of group work or individual products – or all three.

12.4   Feedback on progress

In order for learning related to working in groups to occur, it is important that groups have an opportunity to reflect on the group processes they encounter as they encounter them. Formative feedback and group monitoring can therefore be very valuable tools to reinforce essential learning points.

12.5   Assessing group projects

There are numerous ways to assess group projects. It is important that the assessment approach matches the stated learning outcomes. Here are some possible alternatives:

12.5.1   Group assessment

The work of the group (i.e. the product), can be assessed and then the same mark awarded to each member of the group. This rewards effective collaboration but more dedicated students may feel it is unfair if 'freeloaders' are similarly rewarded.

12.5.2   Divided group mark

The product can be awarded a single mark, and the group can then agree on the number of those marks gained by each individual. This allocation of marks to individuals is best done against previously agreed criteria. Use of a divided group mark can disproportionately reward assertiveness or negotiating skills, although the requirement that marks are justified (with evidence and with reference to criteria) reduces this danger.

12.5.3   Individual and group marks

Students can each receive the same mark for the product of the project and an individual mark for their contribution to the project. Their contribution can be assessed by observations of the group at work, and/or from a brief, individual critical reflection by each group member on the project and what they learned from it.

12.5.4   Individual interview

A short interview with each group member will provide a good idea of the nature and extent of each student's contribution to the work of the group. The mark for the project could then be moderated up or down by up to 10% on the basis of this interview.

12.5.5   Project exam

A short written exam can be set in which students are asked to describe and analyse specific aspects of the project process and their contribution to it. This exam mark can be used as an individual mark which moderates the group mark.

12.6   Methods for assessing individual contribution to group work

There are various ways to allocate individual marks for work conducted in groups – see Appendix C. These methods can mean that students learn to reflect on their contribution to the group product and students who have worked harder in a group have the opportunity to get the credit they deserve.

12.7   Criteria for assessing groups

It is advisable that if the group product and group process are both going to be assessed, each has separate criteria. The criteria for the group product would most probably be similar to criteria for other assessment tasks (i.e. essay / report / presentation criteria). The criteria for group processes however may need more consideration but could include such areas as:

- meeting attendance;
- contribution to the task;
- degree of cooperative behaviour / ability to work with others;
- time and task management;
- efficiency at problem-solving;
- evidence of capacity to listen;
- responsiveness to criticism;
- contribution to group discussion;
- ability to organise own work vs degree of supervision needed;
- ability to motivate / guide others;
- adaptability to new situations.

12.8   Reassessment

Reassessment of a group-based product may be possible by an alternative assessment instrument as long as the alternative instrument assesses the same learning objectives.

As it will probably not be possible to recreate a group in order to reassess a student where the group process is part of the assessment, consideration needs to be given to how such aspects of assessment will be reassessed.

If the group processes constitute a significant part of the learning objectives and assessment for the module, making the assessment non-reassessable may be considered. However, departments should appreciate that such a decision could have serious consequences for students. To mitigate this risk, departments should consider how groups will be monitored throughout the original assessment to ensure all students are on track.

Where the group processes constitute a less significant part of the learning objectives and assessment, alternative assessment instruments may be possible for reassessment. This could include examining the student regarding their understanding and analysis of the group tasks and process that were undertaken during the original task. Where the reassessment instrument differs from the original, the reassessment instrument should be clearly stated in the module information.

12.9 Viva voce examinations in taught programmes

For the purposes of this guidance, 'a viva voce examination' is defined as 'one student being interactively examined by examiners'. These examinations may not be used in determining degree classifications but only as an assessment for a module where all students registered for the module are so examined.

Where the item of assessment contributes more than 10% of the total mark for the module the following applies:

a. It must be conducted with at least two Internal Examiners present. External Examiners may or may not be present. The final decision on what questions should be asked rests with the Internal Examiners.

b. The consequence of non-attendance is a mark of zero for that element of the assessment for the module.

c. It must be audio/video recorded for two reasons:

  i. The audio-recording will be used by further Internal Examiners not present at the examination in case the Internal Examiners present cannot agree a mark for it.

  ii. The audio-recording may be used by the student to appeal against inappropriate bias in the viva. The audio-recording will be treated in just the same way as an examination paper and will be destroyed by the department confidentially after one year.

13.   VLE and delivery of summative assessment

13.1   The University's centrally supported virtual learning environment, Yorkshare, is designed to support formative assessment activities through its assessment engine. In addition to this, it can also support the submission of students' assignments for summative marking through its anonymous file submission tool, which is a resilient application.

There is always some chance of system downtime, however, and the VLE team cannot always track system problems when they happen out of standard office hours, and cannot correct the system when outages happen out of hours until the following working day. For this reason, it is recommended that online submission deadlines follow the same guidelines as hard copy submissions in terms of timing: deadlines should be set during normal working hours, and early in the week to keep late submitting students from accumulating multiple penalty points over a weekend.

13.2   Use of the VLE for closed summative assessment (exams)

The E-Learning Development Team (ELDT) has established a protocol for delivering online closed examinations using a dedicated instance of the University's centrally supported virtual learning environment Yorkshare – VLE Exam – for examinations only. VLE Exam is most appropriate for the delivery of examinations, comprising mainly multiple-choice style and short answer questions, with up to 20 different question types supported. VLE Exam can be used to assess cohorts of up to 200 students sitting an examination at the same time.

Departments wishing to use the VLE for closed summative assessments are responsible for ensuring a PC classroom is available for the examination, bearing in mind that access may be restricted during the January CAP. The PC classroom should be booked for the examination prior to the start of teaching in order to ensure the department can abide by the announced assessment programme. The Examinations Office and IT Services should be notified in advance of the booking being made so that demand can be monitored (see 13.2.3 below).

13.2.1   Guidance to students

Staff coordinating the examination should ensure that their students are familiar with the VLE exam environment prior to undertaking a summative assessment. It is recommended that opportunities for students to familiarise themselves with the examination environment be provided through the provision of a formative assessment of a similar format, incorporating question types and content relevant to the specific module of study. (The provision and delivery of a formative exam should be arranged with the ELDT, following the same protocol for summative exams, as outlined below.)

Students should be clear about the format of the assessment, the number and type of question items to be used, the time limit they will be facing in the actual exam. Special arrangements for students that require additional requirements should also be addressed prior to the exam taking place (e.g. extra time or a separate work station environment with accessibility controls).

13.2.2   Preparation of the exam questions and configuration of the test environment

Academic staff must ensure that examination questions are prepared so that they are suitable for the examination platform that they will be presented in. For VLE exams, the question-set should be shared with the E-Learning Development Team (ELDT) at least four weeks in advance of the date of the examination, so that the appropriate checks can be performed to ensure that the question items are fully compatible with the examination environment and that there are no usability issues (e.g. problems with the rendering of images or challenges with navigation between question items) which might impact on the running of the examination and adversely affect students in their completion of the exam. Consideration should also be given to accessibility requirements for the examination and any reasonable adjustments for students with special requirements should be made in advance of the examination. The ELDT should be informed if students require additional time to complete the exam, which will need to be factored into arrangements on the day of the exam, regarding the cut-off point at which the VLE Exam test site will be made unavailable to staff and students.

13.2.3   Mitigation of performance risks

It is of the utmost importance that the platform used to deliver online examinations is technically reliable and robust and that the examination environment (PC classroom) is correctly set up for the delivery of a computer-based examination. To ensure that adequate preparations are in place, it is the responsibility of the staff coordinating the examination to:

- Book the PC classrooms that will be used for the examination, ensuring that rooms are also booked an hour before and after the examination duration, so that IT Services staff have control of the room to prepare it for the examination and then return it to its original state;

- Notify IT services of the date of the examination and the PC classrooms that will be used, requesting that the classrooms be prepared so that individual work stations are locked down and with browser controls presented to students in examination mode with restricted access to the test environment.

IT Services will also need to ensure that no major maintenance work on the IT network is scheduled to run during the examination, which might affect the performance of the examination environment and connectivity between individual work stations and the test environment. The ELDT may also need to apply updates to the VLE Exam environment in the weeks before the examination, as well as run a range of stress tests and checks to the hardware and software that will be used.

Whilst these measures should address most performance issues and ensure that the exam runs smoothly, it should be recognised that no computer-based system is 100% reliable and technical failure either at the network level or with the examination software may still occur. An individual computer or hardware associated with an individual computer may fail, and in the worst case the network may go down. Spare keyboards should therefore be provided in each examination room – as a rule of thumb 10% of the machines in each examination room should be reserved for contingency use – to allow candidates to be moved to another machine if an individual computer fails. Back-up paper copies of the examination should also be provided by paper setters via the Examinations Office in case of widespread network or electrical failure.

13.2.4   Security of examination materials

The security of examination materials is of the utmost importance. Examinations are therefore delivered using a separate dedicated version of Yorkshare (VLE Exam). VLE Exam can only be accessed from university supported machines on campus. The test site which is used to deliver a specific examination is only made available to students for the one/two hour duration of the examination.

Outside that time, the test site can only be accessed by tutors involved in setting and marking the examination. Students cannot access the examination questions until they have entered the unique password for the examination. This unique password, which is only known to the tutors setting the examination and the ELDT, is only released to students immediately before the start of the examination.

In the week leading up to the examination, the examination coordinator should ensure that a spreadsheet of students who will be taking the exam is shared with the ELDT, so that the ELDT can enrol them on the test site within the VLE Exam environment. Student accounts are created by the ELDT, based on a list of usernames and Exam IDs provided by the Department

The ELDT will ensure that the test site remains unavailable until the exact date and time of the examination, when it will be released – with invigilators then guiding students through the log in process to the VLE Exam environment and providing students with the correct password to access the test.

Immediately after the examination has been completed and all submissions have been received and verified by the ELDT's VLE Application Manager, the examination site will be made unavailable to all users. Should the exam include open answer question types, which require manual marking, a copy of the exam will be prepared for the marking and moderation activities with Exam IDs removed and then shared with the exam coordinator. Otherwise marking is automated and the VLE Application Manager will prepare a spreadsheet of marks which will then be shared with the exam coordinator.

13.2.5   Materials and resources permitted in examinations

Online delivery of closed examinations opens up the possibility of students accessing other materials and resources through collaboration, communication and discovery. This includes the use of email and social networks to communicate and collaborate, and the use of search engines such as Google to locate materials. Computers used to deliver online closed examinations are therefore 'locked-down' before the start of the examination, that is, access to the internet and non-permitted software is blocked – in fact, normally access is provided to the test site within the VLE Exam environment only.

13.2.6   Behaviour in examinations

Regulations for online closed examinations are the same as those for standard closed examinations with the following exceptions:

1. Candidates must arrive 15 minutes before the published start time of the examination

2. Candidates are not permitted to leave the examination room before the end of the examination

Further information

- Summary checklist of key responsibilities that need to be addressed in the preparation and delivery of a computer-based exam: the Learner Engagement with e-Assessment framework http://tinyurl.com/LEeAP-framework [pdf]

- A video case study of a VLE exam design approach: https://elearningyork.wordpress.com/learning-design-and-development/case-studies/vle-exam/

- Information on the technology set-up that is used to support the VLE Exam service: https://elearningyork.files.wordpress.com/2016/01/durham2016_vle-exam.pptx

- Information on item analysis techniques for reviewing question-items (screen cast): https://elearningyork.wordpress.com/2013/08/13/running-item-analysis-on-a-test

For more information and consultation over examination plans, please contact the E-Learning Development Team at vle-support@york.ac.uk

13.3   Electronic Submissions of Assessments

Where departments allow or require electronic submission of assessments, the following principles will apply:

a. Submission of correct file to the wrong module site, but within the deadline for submission will be treated as correctly submitted. If a student realises that they have made such an error, it is their responsibility to alert the department and to explain where the submission has been made.

b. Departments should provide an alternative mode of submission (such as email to a central email account) for instances where technical difficulties prevent a student from submitting via the appropriate submission point. In order to use such a submission point, however, students must be able to provide evidence that it was not possible to submit in the normal way. Evidence will be verified by the ELDT and/or IT Services. Issues such as browser compatibility or file size, which could reasonably have been checked in advance, will not be accepted as grounds for alternative submissions. It is expected that only VLE downtime or very rare technical issues, such as blocking of the whole internet in a particular geographical

region, would be accepted as grounds for alternative submissions.

c. Submission deadlines must be set during normal working hours in order to ensure that technical support for submission points will be available.

d. If an assessment setter wishes to stipulate that files submitted must be of a certain type then Departments must configure submission points to restrict submissions to acceptable file types for the assessment in question. Any such restrictions should be advertised to students at the time of the issuing of the assessment, rather than only at the point of submission.

   Where the integrity of formatting is essential for a text file submission – i.e. layout and formatting must be locked down so that the submission file is presented in exactly the same way to the marker, irrespective of the browser and operating system that is being used – then PDF must be stipulated as the only acceptable format for submissions. The marker's copy of the work must be identical to the one submitted by the student.

e. VLE submission points should normally be configured to allow multiple submissions of the same assignment. If more than one version is submitted, then the latest version before the deadline should be the one marked, unless no versions are submitted on time, in which case the first submission after the deadline should be marked. To be clear, if at least one submission is made before the deadline and another is made afterwards, then the last version before the deadline is the one accepted.

   Students should be aware that a submission is only successfully completed when a time-stamped receipt has been issued to them. Submissions with images will take longer than plain text files. We advise that a submission should be attempted no later than 30 minutes before the official deadline in order to ensure that the work is received in time and does not incur a lateness penalty.

f. Standard lateness penalties should be applied, as for any other open assessment submission. The time returned on the receipt should be used to determine whether a submission is late, with no 'margin of error' at all. Please note that the time stamp on the final receipt issued by the VLE when a submission has been successfully completed is the one that is used to determine whether a submission is late or not – irrespective of when the submission process was actually initiated. There is no margin for error when determining whether a submission is on time – the date and time stamp on the final receipt is the only evidence that will be taken into account.

14. Standards and Marking

14.1 Principles of standards and marking

Clear shared standards
- exemplify the expectations of particular disciplines and professions,
- are acknowledged by the national and international academic community,
- provide modules, programmes and degrees with legitimacy, and
- are the basis of professional judgement and confidence in such judgement.

As such, standards – and the marking practices which apply and uphold those standards – are the foundation of a fair and respected assessment system. As part of the assessment system of the University, the standards and marking practices implemented by departments should be consistent with University policy and abide by its principles of assessment: equity, openness, clarity and consistency.

14.2 Establishing standards

14.2.1 Departmental responsibility

It is the responsibility of the department to ensure that colleagues who teach and/or mark on the same programme have a shared understanding of the standards expected of students. This shared understanding should relate to expectations of student achievement within modules and between levels. Departments should also be aware that they must be able to justify their procedures for establishing this shared understanding to University Teaching Committee and its representatives (e.g. at periodic review), to External Examiners, to external quality assurance agencies (including PSRBs, where relevant), and to possible appeals by students to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education.

In relation to embedding shared understanding of standards among colleagues, specific consideration needs to be given to postgraduates who teach (PGWTs). Whether these postgraduates are running tutorials, seminars, or labs, or marking formative work or summative work, they should have a clear understanding of the expectations of the department in terms of learning, assessment and achievement.

If postgraduates are involved in marking and providing feedback, it is especially important that they understand fully level-criteria and how to guide students toward improvement.

14.2.2 Assessment design

Departments should spend significant effort agreeing on ways in which learning will be assessed and the criteria which will be used for each form of assessment. Agreement should be reached on such areas as core criteria, level criteria and marking procedures for different assessment formats. This process should be repeated regularly in order to review whether criteria are fit for purpose, to embed understanding of the criteria into practise and to educate new staff.

14.2.3 Reflection on practice

Following assessment and marking, Boards of Examiners should reflect on module results and identify modules that appear to have results that are consistently lower or higher than the departmental average for the level. The expectation should be that the academics and PGWTs involved in teaching / marking those modules meet to examine the calibration of their marking practices to those of the wider department.

14.3 Deciding on marking processes

It is the responsibility of the department to ensure that all of their marking practices and procedures follow the Standards and Marking Principles outlined above and the marking requirements outlined below (14.4; see also 14.2.1).

In deciding how to arrange marking for each assessment in each module, departments should take account of the following aspects:

14.3.1 Balancing the impact of marks, the fairness of marking and the efficiency of marking

Departments should be aware that the methods used to ensure fairness and adherence to standards in marking will depend partly on the risk of error due to the nature of the assessment task (e.g. how complex the task is, how much interpretation is required of the marker, and how much evidence is available for later moderation) and the potential consequences of error. The higher the risk and potential consequence of error, the greater should be the degree of scrutiny.

For examples of balancing the impact of marks and the fairness of marking to decide on a marking approach, please see Appendix D.

14.3.2 Matching assessment formats to appropriate marking processes

In addition, the degree of scrutiny should also be balanced with considerations of the learning-value of the assessment with regard to providing students with timely marking and feedback. If factors such as the number of students, number of marking staff, type of assessment or time available for marking impose particular restrictions, consideration should be given to which type of assessment format is most appropriate for the module and which marking process is the most appropriate to provide fair and meaningful marks and feedback.

For guidance on the types of marking process which can be used with different types of assessment formats, please see Appendix E.

14.4   Marking requirements

14.4.1   Ensuring equity and consistency in marking

Departments should state clearly how their procedures for marking ensure equity and consistency. In particular, all work contributing to progression decisions or a final award must be marked using a procedure which has in-built monitoring capabilities. Such procedures might include:

- standardised marking in which acceptable answers are discussed and agreed by markers before marking commences;
- moderated marking in which markers are monitored by an appointed moderator;
- second marking in which first markers mark papers and these are checked by second markers;
- blind double marking in which two markers both mark the assessed work independently then come together to agree on the final mark;
- joint marking in which two markers, working at the same time, mark live assessments;
- answer key marking in which assessed work is marked according to a specified answer key.

For guidance regarding which procedure is suitable for different types of assessment, please see Appendices D and E.

14.4.2   Anonymous marking

a. Anonymous marking is mandatory for all assessment contributing to a final award, except where unfeasible (e.g. in assessed practicals; weekly tutorials with associated written work; performance-based assessments; assessments not based on written or recorded work; projects) or unnecessarily cumbersome (e.g. in class tests). Departments should consider how best to deal with marks which contribute to progression but not an award. Attention should be paid to the weight of each assignment and weigh this against the value of personalised feedback at the earliest stages of a degree programme.

b. Students are allocated a random examination candidate number when they first enrol at the University. The number is shown on each student's University Card. Registry is responsible for these arrangements. Candidate numbers should be used in place of names in all assessment that is marked anonymously.

c. Departments should devise schemes which ensure that, as far as is practicable, markers do not know which examination number corresponds to which candidate when assessments are marked. However, once marking is concluded, anonymity should not interfere with effective feedback to students.

d. Marks under consideration by a Board of Examiners should remain anonymous.

An individual's module marks contributing to a degree classification, progression decision, or final result may have been released during the course of a year but are provisional until recommendation has been confirmed by a Board of Studies.

e. Preserving the anonymity of a student's marks may not in fact preserve the anonymity of the student, especially in small departments and some smaller postgraduate programmes. Nevertheless, it is important that all departments attempt to preserve anonymity as far as possible by adopting the practice given above.

f. Departments should include in their student handbooks a section describing their own procedures for anonymous marking; they should also emphasise to students the importance of using the correct examination candidate number.

g. Members of staff having access to students' examination candidate numbers through the student records system should ensure that this information is treated in strict confidence.

14.4.3   Blind, double marking

Where departments practise blind, double marking, they should pay attention to the procedures necessary to ensure that markers arrive at their judgements independently of one another. This may require guidance to first markers on the nature of annotations that should be written on scripts before they are second marked.

14.4.4   Marking to the Full Range

Departments should pay particular attention to ensuring that their marking procedures and practice support the use of the full range of marks by markers. It is important that this matter is given due consideration as a limited mark allocation in a module can have a significant effect on a student's final degree classification. For further guidance, see Appendix O.

14.5   Supervisors

A student's supervisor may also be the first marker of their student's project or dissertation provided that the second marker is not involved in the supervision of the project or the dissertation at any point.

14.6   Resolving differences between markers

Departments should have guidelines on how differences in marks between markers are resolved, based on the following principles:

a. The margin of difference that is regarded as a significant discrepancy should be stated clearly. This margin might simply be the difference in the number of marks, or might occur whenever the markers assign a different class to the work, or be a combination of these factors. Departments may wish to give particular attention to critical borderlines e.g. pass/fail or 2:1/2:2.

b. Where the difference between the two markers is not regarded as significant, an agreed mark can be returned by the markers without further documentation; this agreement might be obtained by negotiation between the markers or by a systematic process of taking the rounded mean.

c. In all cases where a significant discrepancy has occurred, the markers should engage in negotiation to attempt to determine an agreed mark. The rationale for any agreed mark should be documented, and be detailed sufficiently to permit scrutiny by the Board of Examiners and the External Examiner(s).

d. If the markers are unable to reach an agreement, a further internal marker or moderator should be appointed by the Board of Examiners. This individual should have access to the reports of the first two markers as well as the script and should determine the mark, documenting their rationale, which should be detailed sufficiently to permit scrutiny by the Board of Examiners and the External Examiner(s).

e. External Examiners should not be asked to adjudicate between internal markers. However, the process by which marks are resolved should be open to their scrutiny and comment. In particular, External Examiners should have access to the original marks of the markers.

14.7   Annotation of examination scripts

14.7.1   It is good practice for every page of an examination script to be initialled by at least one of the examiners. This practice can be useful if students query marks. University regulations do not permit the re-marking of scripts.

14.7.2   Examination scripts are exempt from data subject access under data protection legislation because they are statements from the students, not data about them. However, Examiners' (Internal and External) comments on the content of scripts or dissertations are disclosable, whether recorded on the script or held separately. Students have the right of access to data consisting of the marks given, and any comments upon which they were based.

14.7.3 All comments committed to writing should be fair and defensible. It is recommended that they should relate to the script rather than the student. Minutes of Boards of Examiners Meetings are also disclosable under the Data Protection Act 1998 where they are mentioned by name or candidate number.

14.7.4 All material relating to assessment contributing to an award of the University should be kept for at least one year after the relevant examinations have been completed, that is to say, after the meeting of the Senate or relevant committee at which the results were confirmed.

14.7.5 Further information on the University's Data Protection Policy on Teaching and Examining may be found at: www.york.ac.uk/recordsmanagement/dpa/index.htm.

14.8 Examination scripts that deviate from the rubric

Departments should have clear guidance, publicised to both candidates and markers, on how scripts will be marked where the student has answered the wrong number of questions, or has (in some other way) failed to comply with the exam rubric.

14.9 Transcription of illegible scripts

14.9.1 As scribes (also called amanuenses) are specifically provided for students with a contemporary formal diagnosis of a relevant disability, such a service cannot be used for students with illegible handwriting who have no such diagnosis.

14.9.2 Basis for transcription request

Academic staff should not feel obliged to spend time deciphering an illegible examination script. If they are unable to read a script, they can request that it be transcribed.

14.9.3 Maintaining equity

Transcription needs to be carried out in such a way that students are not able to improve the quality of the answers they have given on the examination script; for this reason the transcription should be undertaken by an individual approved by the Standing Committee on Assessment. This procedure ensures that this process is undertaken in controlled conditions, is accurate and that the student gains no material advantage.

14.9.4 Costs

There are no resources available to provide this service and the student must cover the costs involved. At the current level of support this would be the current rate of pay per hour for an assistant invigilator. This payment must be made before the transcribed script is released for marking.

14.9.5 Disputes

Any disputes between the transcriber and the student must be recorded by the transcriber and signed by the student.

Disputes will be referred to the Chair of the Board of Examiners (or Board of Studies if there is a conflict of interest) for resolution.

14.10 Exceptional circumstances

In order to ensure equity between students, marking should be conducted without regard to exceptional circumstances.

14.11 Deadline for releasing results and feedback

The maximum turnaround time for summative feedback and marks to students is six weeks. Where students are required to resit assessments, they must be given adequate time to prepare. Undergraduate students must be given at least 5 weeks between the notification of the need to resit and the resit itself. For Postgraduates, this period must be at least 3 weeks. For Category 1 students, this period is 4 weeks regardless of whether the student is postgraduate or undergraduate.

14.12 Recording results

All assessment marks that count towards an award, or a mark on an academic transcript, or a progression decision, must be recorded on the University's Student Record System (SITS).

14.13 Security of work submitted for assessment

Departments must ensure that all materials submitted for assessment are treated carefully to avoid materials going astray and to ensure students' personal information is not compromised.

The permitted methods for sharing electronic files (e.g. scanned copies of exam scripts to be sent to a marker away from the institution) are:

   a. Via shared filestore, provided either by IT Services or by the department

   b. Via Google Drive with a University account

   c. Via an encrypted USB stick

   d. Via email with an encrypted document.

It is strongly recommended that you use either method a or b. Remember that email attachments are not secure and assessment materials should not be sent this way in case they are accidentally sent to the wrong person. Guidance on encryption of attachments can be found here: http://www.york.ac.uk/it-services/it/security/encryption/

Advice can also be provided by Dr Arthur Clune, Assistant Director (Infrastructure), in IT Services (01904 328470, arthur.clune@york.ac.uk).

It is expected that markers will take materials for assessment home. However, such materials should not be taken anywhere else unless a copy is retained in the department. Likewise, if hard copies must be sent through the post, they should be sent recorded delivery and a copy made prior to posting.

15.   Feedback

- is acknowledged as an essential part of the learning process and as a major element in the relationship between lecturer and student;
- is accepted as the purpose of assessment for learning (formative assessment) and a valued benefit of assessment of learning (summative assessment);
- is planned into the curriculum and is linked to clear paths of progression;
- is related clearly to the stated learning outcomes and specific assessment criteria;
- is provided in a way that ensures it is useful, adequate, fair and timely (see 15.1.3).

15.1   Feedback policy

15.1.1   Roles

An important factor to clarify regarding the learning process at University is that it involves an end to the basic "learner – teacher" relationship of secondary education. The relationship between the student and the lecturer is essentially different, just as the University environment is different. University students and lecturers are all part of a learning community in which individuals are assumed to have, or be developing, the ability and maturity to initiate and direct their own learning. In light of these differences, the University believes that both lecturers and students have certain responsibilities concerning learning and feedback.

A student's responsibilities related to learning and feedback include:

- being a fully active participant in the learning dialogue between lecturer and student;
- planning their own learning, consciously reflecting on their needs as a learner and actively accessing the assistance they need to improve, as necessary;
- being aware that it is their responsibility to take full advantage of all the learning and feedback opportunities provided to them.

A lecturer's responsibilities related to learning and feedback include:

- providing a challenging, active learning environment;
- planning their teaching such that it is clear what is expected of students and what assistance is available to students to address student needs and support their learning;
- providing the best quality, most timely feedback possible on students' work.

15.1.2   Purposes and forms

To clarify terms for the benefit of students and lecturers, the University views "feedback" as any part of the learning process which is designed to guide student progress. This guidance can involve many different elements such as helping to clarify what is expected (goals, criteria, expected standards),

responding to learners' needs or providing guidance toward a deeper level of learning and understanding. Feedback is an essential part of the learning dialogue between student and lecturer and this dialogue should help the student not only to reflect on their own learning but also to feel more clear about their progress.

The nature of the feedback can also vary depending on, for example, discipline, level of study, nature of delivery, student numbers and learning outcomes. For examples of possible forms of feedback, please see Appendix F: Forms of Feedback.

15.1.3   *Principles underlying the meaningful provision of feedback*

The university believes that in order for feedback to be effective as part of an on-going learning dialogue between student and lecturer, the following four basic principles need to be met.

Adequacy: Students should be provided with adequate feedback in order to facilitate improvement, and should not have to request it. Adequate feedback is understood to mean:

- more than a mark or mark indication;
- the provision of feedback, in some form, on both formative and summative assessments;
- the provision of opportunities for further follow-up guidance, if necessary.

Timeliness: Students should receive feedback within 6 weeks of submission of the assessment.

Timely feedback is understood to mean feedback that:

- is received soon enough to ensure that it is understood in the context of the learning activities;
- allows students sufficient time to improve their performance before next being assessed;
- is received by the published deadline.

Usefulness: Students should receive useful feedback. Useful feedback is understood to mean feedback that:

- students can understand as relevant to their learning and progression;
- is provided in a format that is legible, focussed and relevant to the task;
- is supported by clear information and direction as to the standards of performance expected i.e. linked explicitly with assessment criteria and mark descriptors;
- provides clear information on the state of current achievement and indications of areas for improvement.

Fairness: Students should receive fair feedback. Fair feedback is understood to mean feedback:

- that is, as far as possible, unbiased and objective;
- that provides guidance on future learning to students, irrespective of the student's level of achievement;
- that relates to the specific assessment under consideration, not the student or the student's unrelated past work or achievements.

15.2   Procedures concerning feedback

15.2.1   Department Statements on Feedback

a. Departments are responsible for providing feedback to students on all assessments in all modules.

b. Each department, as a whole, should discuss and agree an approach to learning, assessment and feedback that is effectively integrated and how the four principles outlined above will be effectively implemented throughout the department.

c. Once an agreement on an approach has been reached, departments should produce a clear Statement on Feedback which corresponds to the purposes, principles and good practice outlined in this document and makes clear what students can expect from the department. For a model framework, see Appendix G: Model for Statements on Feedback.

d. Clear information about expectations can make all the difference for students and can significantly improve their understanding of the part assessment and feedback play in their learning. Therefore, consultation with students regarding the design and composition of the Statement on Feedback is recommended.

e. The Statement on Feedback to students should be consistent with the departmental policies on assessment.

f. Departments should be aware that feedback practices will be subject to a variety of legal rules or policies. For guidance relating to these policies, please see Appendix I: Legal Issues related to Feedback.

g. The departmental statement should be published in departmental handbooks for staff, postgraduates who teach and students. Students should also be actively alerted to opportunities for feedback throughout their programme of study.

h. It is the responsibility of individual departments to arrange support for staff and students regarding feedback where necessary and undertake their own review of practice as part of their regular evaluation of programmes. The University Teaching Committee will monitor department practices through periodic review, Annual Programme Review and following up the outcomes of the NSS and other surveys.

i.   The departmental statement should be updated in response to any changes in policy set out in future editions of the University Guide to Assessment.

15.2.2   Module Design and Feedback

During the design of new or adaptation of existing modules, consideration should be given to planning for effective feedback for learning. Consideration should be given to such factors as the:

- likely number of students taking the module;
- length of the module;
- level of the module;
- timing of assessment, marking and feedback periods;
- relationship of the module to other modules (i.e. learning connections);
- availability of teaching / learning support;
- possible use of technology (VLE);
- the balance of regular, low stakes opportunities to practise with feedback against sparing, rigorous, high stakes assessment and feedback opportunities.

The published information for each module should include clear indication of:

- the student's responsibilities in the feedback system;
- in what format students will receive feedback;
- exactly when students will receive feedback following assessments;
- on what basis (ie. criteria / mark descriptors) they will be assessed and given feedback.

15.2.3   Feedback on Formative Assessment (assessment that does not count toward the final module mark or degree classification)

a. Formative assessment and feedback are often dealt with by multiple staff members – module leaders; other lecturers; PGWT – therefore, it is important that there is clarity and coordination between staff members working on the same module regarding, for example, task objectives, how tasks relate to the module as a whole, how formative tasks relate to summative tasks, task criteria and agreed feedback approaches. This coordination is the responsibility of the module leader.

b. It is recognised that a wide range of summative assessment methods are used by departments, many of which may be new to students. It is therefore good practice for departments to use formative assessments to provide students with the opportunity to experience / practice any given assessment method prior to its use towards summative assessment which contributes to the degree award, and to provide formative feedback on the exercise.

c. Where seminar or tutorial performance constitutes a substantial part of the subject, departments should have mechanisms in place to give qualitative feedback on performance, although this need not involve an indicative mark.

d. Where drafts of essays or stages in a process are used as formative assessment, clear information needs to be given about the degree and type of feedback available, especially relating to the responsibility of the student for their own work.

e. Where problem sheets are used, departments should either provide students with a worked solution, or clarify to students on an individual or small group basis where they have made mistakes.

f. Where practical work is being assessed, departments should provide students with sufficient feedback to enable them to reflect on and improve their performance.

15.2.4 *Feedback on Summative Assessment – Non-exam based*

In relation to extended essays, dissertations, performances and projects

a. Departments should specify a minimum amount of opportunities for formative feedback to be given in support of coursework assessments and consider equity between students in this provision. For example, tutors may agree that each extended essay for a module can be submitted once for feedback during the preparation period.

b. Feedback on drafts of assessments should be frank, constructive and not misleading i.e. writing "a great start" as a comment on a draft essay could lead the student to expect a good final mark.

Although staff commenting on such assessments may well refer to mark descriptors in the course of providing feedback on drafts, it is unwise to comment directly on the likely mark of a specific piece of work. Staff should clarify to students that they may not be an examiner or will not be the sole examiner. The member of staff can only offer feedback and advice, and cannot guarantee that following the advice will ensure success. The advice usually takes the form of general guidance, possibly with some detailed illustrative examples. It need not be exhaustive. The student's ability to demonstrate that they have achieved the learning outcomes is being assessed, not the member of staff's: the quality of the final piece is the responsibility of the student.

c. Following marking, sufficient feedback should be made available to students in either oral or written form to fully communicate the rationale for the mark which has been awarded. See Principles above – Section 15.1.3.

15.2.5 *Feedback on Summative Assessment – Examinations*

a. Departments need to clearly specify how feedback (over and above a mark) will be provided on their examinations. For suggestions of approaches to providing feedback on examinations, please see Appendix H: Improving feedback on closed examinations.

b. Where closed examinations are made up of several distinct sections, as a minimum, marks for each section should be provided, in addition to overall feedback.

c. Feedback to a cohort on general performance in an exam can be provided before double marking / collation / External Examiner procedures are finalised. This can be done online or in specific exam feedback sessions.

d. Student access to marked examination scripts: Following successful pilots schemes which allowed students limited and supervised access to marked examination scripts, the Standing Committee on Assessment and the Chairs of Boards of Examiners forum recommends that all students are given access to marked progressional examination scripts, where departments can facilitate the process. This is particularly helpful for students on programmes which rely heavily on examination as an assessment format and are therefore often feedback-light.

Departments need to consider how to administer such access in a fair, efficient, economical and professional manner.

15.2.6 *Marking procedures and feedback*

a. The marking procedures engaged in by departments should be arranged to balance the need for fairness with the need to support learning. This means that marking, collating marks and checking mark distribution should be arranged so that feedback is still timely and useful.

b. Where single marking is used, it is especially important that marks and feedback are linked to explicit marking schemes or criteria.

c. Where multiple markers are involved in marking assignments, it is important that feedback is fair and consistent across the cohort. Holding standardisation meetings, using agreed criteria and using standard feedback sheets can be helpful.

d. Where second or double marking is used and feedback is provided, students should only be supplied with the mark and feedback as agreed by both markers.

e. Provisional marks: Departments should, wherever possible and reasonable, provide students with feedback and provisional marks with a clear and appropriate proviso as to their marks being provisional only, prior to confirmation by the Board of Examiners. Provisional marks should be communicated to students as an integer on the appropriate University mark scale.

f. Resits / capping marks: Marks achieved at resit examinations should be fed back to students – even though these marks might subsequently be capped in the case of Category 1 students, or won't count towards award marks or degree classifications for Category 2 students.

15.2.7   Supervisory feedback

Supervisions (i.e. meetings which take place between a student and their academic/personal supervisor, at least once per term) should provide students with the opportunity to discuss and reflect on their overall performance with reference to such feedback as is available to the supervisor and the student. Procedures which allow students time to consider performance reports and feedback before discussing these with the supervisor should be considered in order to make the meeting meaningful for both student and supervisor.

15.2.8   Taught Masters programmes

For taught Masters programmes, the principles and procedures above apply. Prompt and detailed feedback is particularly important due to the relatively short nature of taught Masters programmes. Modules should be arranged such that students have the opportunity to be involved in a useful and meaningful feedback process before the submission of another significant piece of assessment.

Examiners for Taught Programmes

16.   Board of Examiners for Taught Programmes

16.1   Constitution of the Board of Examiners

16.1.1   University Ordinances 1.4 and 6 are relevant to this section of the Guide.

16.1.2   All teaching members of the Board of Studies are members of the Board of Examiners, as are the External Examiners; also any members of the academic and academic-related staff of the University who have assessed any of the students under consideration, and any other individuals recommended by the Board of Studies to, and approved by, the Standing Committee on Assessment may be members of the Board of Examiners. See also section 17 (Internal Examiners).

16.1.3   The quorum for a Board of Examiners for all taught programmes is a minimum of three, at least one of whom must be an External and one an Internal Examiner. For PGT progression boards only, the Board of Examiners may meet without the External Examiner, though the quorum remains three. Where an exit award is the automatic consequence of failure, the External Examiner's approval can be inferred from the signing of the previous progression list. Where there is no previous progression list (i.e. at the progression point in PGT programmes) the External can approve the award without needing to be present.

16.1.4   For combined programmes, the members of a Combined Board Executive Committee, together with an appropriate External Examiner, may consider and recommend degree classifications; to be quorate, the Board must include at least one representative of each department involved in offering the combined programme.

16.1.5   For procedures for the Board of Examiners for research students, please consult the Policy on Research Degrees.

16.2   Role and powers of the Board of Examiners

16.2.1   University Ordinance 6 is relevant to this section of the guide.

16.2.2   The functions of the Board of Examiners include:

- ensuring the University's principles of assessment underpin assessment processes and decisions;
- taking an overview of the array of marks in relation to both performance of individual students and to mark distribution from individual modules, in the presence of the External Examiner(s) (see also section 18.3.j);
- ratifying provisional marks;

- making recommendations to Senate, on behalf of the Board of Studies, on awards, progression and reassessment;
- ensuring documentation is completed.

16.2.3 Boards of Examiners are required to convene formally at least once a year in order to make decisions about student progression (unless no students are registered on the programme) and in order to provide adequate opportunities for the External Examiner to interact with staff and, where appropriate, students.

16.2.4 Boards of Examiners are also required to convene at the end of each programme for which they are responsible in order to make award decisions. This meeting must be attended by at least one External Examiner (see sections 16.1.3 and 18.3 d,j).

16.2.5 Minutes must be kept of meetings of the Board of Examiners, with particular attention to decisions relating to individual students.

16.2.6 Exam boards must be held in time for results to be entered into SITS in time for graduation and progression deadlines. For undergraduates, this requires that boards considering finalists meet by the end of Summer Week 10, other boards for undergraduates meet by the end of Tuesday of Summer Week 11, and the postgraduate boards meet by the end of November at the latest.

16.3   Procedures of the Board of Examiners

Members of the Board of Examiners are involved in a variety of meetings at different stages in the academic calendar. At the end of each stage of a degree programme, the following meetings should take place:

- Scrutiny Panel
  When: late week 9, summer term
  Who: Chair of Board of Examiners, administrative staff, other examiners as appropriate
  Purpose / powers: the job of the Scrutiny Panel is to prepare the ground for the main Departmental Exam Board, by checking that marks have been received and processed for all modules and that any penalties (lateness or academic misconduct) have been applied. They should also give initial consideration to any issues raised by External Examiners on particular modules, and to check for any further inconsistencies or irregularities which might be brought to External Examiners' attention.
- Departmental Exam Board (or Module Board)
  When: early week 10, summer term
  Who: Chair of Board of Examiners, as many members of teaching staff as possible, External Examiner(s)
  Purpose / powers: the job of the Departmental Exam Board is to finalize and approve marks for all modules. The Board should ensure that all queries have been resolved, and any scaling has been agreed and applied. After this point, module marks will not be able to be changed. External Examiners are asked to make their oral reports to the Board at this meeting.
- Programme Exam Board (or Ratification Panel)
  When: late week 10, summer term, at least 2-3 days after Departmental Exam Board

Who: Chair of Board of Examiners, other teaching staff as appropriate, External Examiner(s) (minimum: three people including at least one External for single-subject programmes; for combined degrees, at least one representative of each department). However, the External does not need to be physically present, but may take part by phone or Skype, provided they have access to full documentation.

Purpose / powers: the Programme Exam Board's role is to confirm that module marks have been correctly entered into SITS and to ratify the stage and award marks which are then calculated from the module marks, and the progression and award decisions generated. The meeting will receive overall runs of marks for candidates and will formally recommend (to Senate) degree results. This meeting will not expect to change any marks, either at module level, or at stage or award level. There may be discussion of the overall award profile for the degree(s), but this will feed into future discussion, rather than resulting in changes for the current cohort.

16.3.1 For Combined degree programmes, a similar structure is followed to that outlined above, but there will be as many Departmental Exam Board meetings as there are departments involved in the combined programme. When all relevant department have finalized marks for their own modules, progression and award decisions are generated and confirmed by a Combined Ratification Panel, which will involve representatives from all departments as well as an external examiner, either in person or via Skype.

16.3.2 For taught postgraduate programmes, the structure is identical to that outlines for undergraduate programmes, but the timescales are different, since postgraduate programmes tend to finish in late summer, with less pressure on marking and board meetings from imminent graduation deadlines.

17. Internal Examiners

17.1 Permanent contract, limited contract and casual staff

17.1.1 A distinction should be drawn between those staff for whom the University can accept responsibility as Internal Examiners (i.e. continuing employees, whether on permanent or limited-term contracts) and those for whom it cannot (i.e. casual teaching staff, persons not employed by the University). Those in the latter category may be involved in assessing examination work and in advising an Internal Examiner on the mark to be awarded; in every such case, however, the Internal Examiners will be required to 'second mark' the work concerned and be formally responsible for the marks awarded.

The departmental Examinations Secretary or other person appointed by the Board of Studies should be given formal responsibility for ensuring that appropriate marking procedures have been properly carried out.

17.1.2   For the purpose of Ordinance 6.4 'academic staff' includes not only teaching, but also research, library and computing staff with appropriate levels of expertise and training. Staff who are also students of the University are eligible to be Internal Examiners provided they are on permanent or limited-term contracts with the University as outlined in section 17.1.1 above.

17.2   Responsibilities

Staff nominated to act as Internal Examiners of the University may be required to take responsibility for the marking processes within single-subject or combined programmes, or taught postgraduate programmes.

17.3   Internal examiner lists

Departments will be asked to confirm lists of Internal Examiners annually for approval by the Standing Committee on Assessment. These should also indicate separately, for information, the names and status of persons covered by Section 17.1.2.

18.   External Examiners

The following guidelines have been formulated on the basis of the QAA's UK Quality Code for Higher Education: Chapter B7. External examiners must be appointed for all provision that leads to an award of the University, including collaborative provision and all undergraduate material.

18.1   Purpose

The purpose of the University's external examining system is:

a. to ensure that its assessment policies and procedures are fair and fairly operated, and that the principles of clarity, equity, consistency and openness are observed;

b. to ensure that assessment methods are appropriate;

c. to ensure that the structure and content of programmes of study are appropriate;

d. to ensure comparability of standards with other similar institutions.

Ordinance 6 outlines the University's formal position on External Examiners.

18.2   Nomination and appointment

a.   The Academic Support Office is responsible for notifying departments that an External Examiner's period of appointment is nearing its end and that a replacement examiner needs to be nominated. Departments are asked to provide details of nominations on a standard form issued by

the Academic Support Office, or available at www.york.ac.uk/ about/departments/support-and-admin/registry-services/exams/examiners. Nominations are approved by the Standing Committee on Assessment on behalf of Senate.

b.   Departments should provide a CV for the nominee indicating that they meet the required person specification. External examiners must be able to show appropriate evidence of the following:

    i.   knowledge and understanding of UK sector agreed reference points for the maintenance of academic standards and assurance and enhancement of quality;

    ii.   competence and experience in the fields covered by the programme of study, or parts thereof;

    iii.   relevant academic and/or professional qualifications to at least the level of the qualification being externally examined, and/or extensive practitioner experience where appropriate;

    iv.   competence and experience relating to designing and operating a variety of assessment tasks appropriate to the subject and operating assessment procedures sufficient standing, credibility and breadth of experience within the discipline to be able to command the respect of academic peers and, where appropriate, professional peers;

    v.   familiarity with the standard to be expected of students to achieve the award that is to be assessed;

    vi.   fluency in English and where programmes are delivered and assessed in languages other than English, fluency in the relevant language(s) (unless other secure arrangements are in place to ensure that external examiners are provided with the information to make their judgements)

    vii.   meeting applicable criteria set by professional, statutory or regulatory bodies

    viii.   awareness of current developments in the design and delivery of relevant curricula

    ix.   competence and experience relating to the enhancement of the student learning experience.

c.   Departments should not nominate as external examiners anyone in the following categories or circumstances:

   i.   A member of a governing body or committee of the appointing institution or one of its collaborative partners, or a current employee of the appointing institution or its collaborative partners;

   ii. Anyone with a close professional, contractual or personal relationship with a member of staff or student involved with the programme of study;

   iii. Anyone required to assess colleagues who are recruited as students to the programme of study;

   iv. Anyone who is, or knows that they will be, in a position to influence significantly the future of students on the programme of study;

   v.   Anyone significantly involved in recent or current substantive collaborative research activities with a member of staff closely involved in the delivery, management or assessment of the programme(s) or modules in question;

   vi. Former staff or students of the institution unless a period of five years has elapsed and all students taught by or with the external examiner have completed their programme(s);

   vii. A reciprocal arrangement involving cognate programmes at another institution;

   viii. The succession of an external examiner by a colleague from the examiner's home department and institution;

   ix. The appointment of more than one external examiner from the same department of the same institution.

Where an examiner does not meet one or more of the criteria under sections 18.1.b or 18.1.c, the department must include an explanation of the ways in which the proposed examiner does not meet the required criteria and a justification for the appointment on the nomination form for consideration by the SCA.

d.   Nominees should not normally hold more than one other concurrent substantial External Examinership during the relevant period

e.   Former External Examiners may not normally be appointed for a further period until an intervening period of at least five years has elapsed.

f.   In line with the QAA Quality Code for Higher Education the duration of an external examiner's appointment will normally be for four years. Once approved, the Academic Support Office will confirm the appointments in writing to the nominee.

Exceptional extensions of one year to ensure continuity (for example where a programme is in the process of running out and it would be ineffective to involve a new external examiner) are permitted subject to the approval of the Standing Committee on Assessment. Departments who wish to request an exceptional extension to an external examiner's appointment must submit a rationale for the extension to the Academic Support Office. The Academic Support Office will submit the case to the Standing Committee on Assessment who will consider the merits of the request.

The contract of an External Examiner may be terminated prior to the normal expiry date of the appointment if the External Examiner fails to fulfil his/her obligations to the University, or if a conflict of interest arises which cannot be satisfactorily resolved. A written request for such a termination should be submitted to the Standing Committee on Assessment for approval.

Departments are sent copies of all official University correspondence with External Examiners. Letters of appointment include details of the term of office and rates of payment of fees and expenses. External Examiners are sent copies of this document, an annual report form and an expenses claim form on appointment and annually thereafter.

18.3   The role of External Examiners

In broad terms, External Examiners are asked to:

a.   comment and give advice on programme content, balance and structure;

b.   review and evaluate examinations and other forms of assessment and assessment practices (including assessment of work-based learning, where relevant), particularly in relation to any work which contributes to progression decisions or to the final award;

c.   assist in the ongoing calibration of academic standards through the review and evaluation of the outcomes of the assessment process;

d.   be a member of, and attend, Boards of Examiners, where their signature is required to support the Board's recommendations for awards and recommendations of failure to progress, and ensure fairness and consistency in the decision-making process;

e.   submit a written report on an annual basis to the Vice-Chancellor including commentary and judgments on the validity, reliability and integrity of the assessment process and the standards of student attainment.

More specifically, this will normally include the following:

f.   Comment on draft examination papers and other forms of assessment.

g.   Scrutiny of examination scripts.

External Examiners have the right to see all examination scripts. Where a selection of scripts is scrutinised, the principles for selection should be agreed in advance. These principles should ensure

that External Examiners see a sample of scripts from the top, middle and bottom of the range and have enough evidence to determine that internal marking and classifications are of an appropriate standard and are consistent. External Examiners should normally be asked to scrutinise the scripts of borderline candidates, those of candidates assessed internally as first class or as failures.

External Examiners cannot change marks agreed by the Board of Examiners for an individual piece of work under any circumstances, but can make recommendations that marks be changed to the Board of Examiners, who are free to accept the recommendation or not. If the recommendation to change a mark is not accepted, both the recommendation and the reasons for its refusal should be minuted in the Board of Examiners minutes. If External Examiners are asked to advise on changes to marks on individual scripts, they should do it in the context of the full range of marks from all the scripts in the cohort. External Examiners for taught programmes should not act as markers under any circumstances.

Where a student undertakes a module as an elective or option in a department other than their 'home' department, the Board of Examiners and its External Examiner for the module is responsible for the mark awarded to the student for that module, within the cohort of students studying the module. The Board of Examiners and the External Examiner of the 'home' department is responsible for the incorporation of that mark into the mark profile of the student and approval of the student's overall degree classification.

h.   Scrutiny of other assessed work.

All written or recorded work contributing to progression decisions or to the final award should be available for external examination or comment. External Examiners should also have access to evidence relating to other work which contributes to the final award, e.g. Internal Examiners' comments on oral performance in seminars.

i.   Viva Voce examinations.

Viva voce examinations for taught students may only be used as an assessment method for entire modules or cohorts. They cannot be used to determine the degree classifications for borderline students.

j.   Attendance at meetings of Boards of Examiners.

The role of the External Examiner at meetings of Boards of Examiners is particularly important in the event of disagreement on the mark to be awarded for a particular piece of assessment. Meetings also provide a valuable opportunity for External Examiners to offer comments and advice on any aspect of the assessment process.

k.   External Examiners are expected to attend meetings of the Board of Examiners when their signature is required to support recommendations for awards or progression. If, for good reason, an External Examiner cannot attend a Board of Examiners meeting in person, participation by video or telephone conferencing (with the approval of the Standing Committee on Assessment) is an

acceptable alternative. The External Examiner must have access to all relevant paperwork in order to be able to fully participate in such a meeting.

Where the award of a qualification (i.e., an exit award) is an automatic consequence of a failure, an external examiner should be able to approve such an award without the need to be physically present at, or otherwise participate in, a Board of Examiners.

l.   Provide an oral report on their main findings which is minuted at the Board of Examiners meeting, and which can be used for the Annual Programme Review.

m.   Declare any conflicts of interest to the Chair of the Board of Examiners at the earliest opportunity (see 18.2.c).

18.4   The responsibilities of the department

Departments are responsible for ensuring that External Examiners are provided with all necessary information for the effective fulfilment of their role as outlined above, and that they are consulted at appropriate stages of the assessment process. This will include providing External Examiners with detailed syllabus and programme structure information and liaising with them on arrangements for meetings of Boards of Examiners. External Examiners should also be provided with a copy of the Annual Programme Review each year as it is submitted to University Teaching Committee. It is also considered to be good practice for the latest Annual Programme Review report, including the reports of outgoing and continuing External Examiners, to be sent to newly-appointed External Examiners. Departments should ensure that they check with new External Examiners if they have any special needs. Departments may also wish to consider ways in which Examiners might have an opportunity to meet with students on the programmes they are examining, so that they might reflect on the student experience of the provision in their reports.

Individual departments are responsible for providing External Examiners with information about assessment policies and procedures.

When planning assessment schemes and schedules, departments should ensure that they are not overloading External Examiners, but should also take into account the need for effective moderation by External Examiners.

Departments are responsible for ensuring that all written or recorded work contributing to the final award or to progression decisions is available for external examination or comment. Where such work has been returned to students, students are responsible for retaining it in a portfolio for possible future external scrutiny and departments are responsible for alerting students to this requirement.

Departments should include the name, position and institution of their external examiners in module or programme information provided to students. Departments should caveat this information however with a statement indicating that "it is inappropriate for students to make direct contact with external examiners, in particular regarding their individual performance in assessment. There are appropriate mechanisms available to students, such as appeal or complaint". Any External Examiners who are contacted directly should forward the relevant communication directly to the Chair of Board of Studies without replying to the student.

18.5   Reporting

Examiners are asked, in their expert judgement, to report upon:

i.   whether the academic standards set for the University's awards, or part thereof, are appropriate;

ii.   the extent to which the assessment processes are rigorous, ensure equity of treatment for students and have been fairly conducted within the University's regulations and guidance;

iii.   the standards of student performance in the programmes or parts of programmes that they have been appointed to examine;

iv.   where appropriate, the comparability of standards and student achievements with those in some other higher education institutions;

v.   good practice they have identified.

a.   *Procedure*

The University requires each External Examiner to submit a written annual report to the Vice-Chancellor within two months of completion of the annual examining process. At the end of a period of office, the report should be extended to cover the entire examining period.

The standard report form provided should be completed and submitted direct to the Vice-Chancellor in the pre-paid envelope supplied, or returned electronically to the Academic Support Office.

Fees are only authorised for payment upon receipt of a signed report.

Departments are responsible for ensuring that, within a reasonable time, External Examiners are provided with a response to their comments and recommendations, including information on the detailed consideration of their reports, and an indication of any action taken as a result of the report, or clear reasons for not accepting any recommendations or suggestions.

b.   Review

External Examiners' reports are considered at meetings of Boards of Studies. In addition, the University requires all departments to carry out an Annual Programme Review of their taught (and research) provision, which includes reflection on external examiners' comments and reports (where available), and to report to University Teaching Committee on the outcomes of the review. Details of Annual Programme Review are available at: www.york.ac.uk/staff/teaching/monitoring-and-review/apr.

Each department must also submit a log of issues raised by External Examiners, and the actions taken in response, to the Academic Support Office. The logs should include: actions taken in response to the External Examiner's comments; an indication of those recommendations made by the External Examiner that will not be taken forward and the rationale for not implementing the External Examiners' suggestions; and confirmation that the External Examiner has received a response to their annual report which fully addresses their comments (including the reasons for not taking action in response to issues raised). The Academic Support Office reviews the undergraduate programmes log in the Autumn term and the postgraduate programmes log in the Spring term, in order to ensure that departments are responding to External Examiners' feedback in a timely and appropriate manner.

The Academic Support Office writes an External Examiner summary report (one for undergraduate programmes and one for postgraduate programmes) which identifies common themes arising from External Examiners' annual reports. This summary report is considered by the Standing Committee on Assessment and University Teaching Committee who take forward any University-wide issues and issues of serious concern. As part of their consideration of the External Examiner summary reports all members of the Standing Committee on Assessment and members of University Teaching Committee have access to External Examiner annual reports and issue logs (above).

c.   Confidential matters

The reports of External Examiners are normally available for discussion widely within the University (see section (b) above). In particular, External Examiners' reports will be shared with student representatives, so it should not be possible to identify individuals (and particularly individual students) in these reports. Exceptionally, an additional, separate and confidential report may be submitted to the Vice-Chancellor if an External Examiner considers this to be appropriate (for example, on highly confidential matters related to individual staff members or on any matter of serious concern).

If an External Examiner has a serious concern relating to systemic failings with the academic standards of a programme(s) which remains unsatisfied having submitted a confidential report to the Vice-Chancellor, s/he may invoke the QAA's concerns scheme or inform the relevant professional, statutory or regulatory body (QAA Quality Code for Higher Education, Chapter B7, 2011). Guidance for External Examiners on QAA's concerns scheme is available at:
http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/QAA_concerns_guidance_external_examiners.pdf

d.   Content

External Examiners are asked to comment, as appropriate, on the following:

i.   the appropriateness of programme structure and content, including the appropriateness of the learning outcomes of the programme (and all its elements) to its educational aims and those of the students;

ii.   for Foundation Degrees, the extent to which the programme meets the defining characteristics of such an award (namely, employer involvement, accessibility, articulation and progression, flexibility and partnership, as set out in the QAA Foundation Degree benchmark statement at www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Documents/Foundation-degree-qualification-benchmark.pdf, and the appropriateness of work-based learning elements;

iii.   teaching quality and methods as revealed in examination scripts;

iv.   assessment methods, coverage of learning outcomes and whether the assessment processes and marking schemes applied by Internal Examiners are appropriate and appropriately used;

v.   the administration of all assessed work by Internal Examiners, including the time available for marking and the impartiality with which the assessments were conducted;

vi.   the standard of students' performances in terms of their knowledge, skills and understanding and comparison with those of students on similar programmes elsewhere;

vii.   the standard of particular degree classifications awarded and comparison with similar awards at other institutions;

viii.   the procedures followed by the Board of Examiners and the adequacy of the level of participation by External Examiners in the assessment process;

ix.   whether disability issues have been adequately addressed in processes;

x.   the procedures for induction and preparation for their role and the time available to perform it.

18.6   Fees and expenses

Fees for External Examiners for taught programmes are calculated on the basis of an annual fee as detailed in the letter of appointment, plus a capitation fee based on the number of students examined. Fees are paid upon receipt of a signed report. In addition, the University will reimburse travelling expenses and any other reasonable expenses necessarily incurred. Claim forms for expenses are issued to External Examiners annually by the Academic Support Office.

Rules for Assessment, Progression and Award

19.   Introduction

19.1   This section sets out the rules relating to assessment, progression and award under the modular scheme. The rules apply to all undergraduate programmes (including Integrated Masters) commencing in or after academic year 2010/11, Graduate Programmes from 2012/13, any postgraduate programmes commencing in or after 2011/12 (with the exception of programmes in the electronics department, which adopted modularisation in 2012/13) and programmes offered by the International Pathway College from 2016/17.

Sections follow which outline the specific requirements for Foundation Certificate (FC), Undergraduate (U), Graduate (G), Pre-Masters (PM) and Taught Postgraduate (P) programmes.

19.2   Details of the scheme's award, stage and module requirements for those involved in programme design, approval and review are available at www.york.ac.uk/staff/teaching/programme-development/programmes/ programme-design.

19.3   A glossary of terms can be found in Appendix B.

20.   Overview of the Modular Scheme

20.1   The University operates a modular scheme for taught programmes. The modular scheme requires academic programmes to comprise of modules, which are allocated a certain credit value based on notional student workload, and are assigned to levels based on their academic content and outcomes.

To be eligible for an award of the University of York a student must undertake an approved programme of study, obtain a specified number of credits (at a specified level(s)), and meet any other requirements of the award as specified in the Award Regulations and Programme Specifications, and other University regulations (e.g. payment of fees). Credit will be awarded upon passing a module's assessment(s). Some credit may be awarded where failure has been compensated by achievement in other modules. Some opportunities for reassessment are available.

20.2   A student must satisfy the requirements for each stage of his/her programme (a stage is equivalent to a year's full-time study) before progressing to the next stage. If a student does not meet the stage requirements s/he will be required to leave the University; s/he may be eligible for a lower volume award. Students undertaking an integrated masters who do not meet the stage requirements, may be eligible to transfer to the related bachelor's programme. Students who undertake study abroad or a work placement as 'additional' credit and do not achieve that credit, will transfer to the relevant variant of the programme.

20.3   Exceptions to the award regulations are permitted in order to meet non-negotiable requirements of Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs). Exceptions require University Teaching Committee approval and are recorded in the Programme Specifications.

20.4   Individual student cases of exceptional circumstances affecting assessment are dealt with by the appropriate departmental and University committees.

20.4.1   Multi-cohort modules

20.4.1a.   There must be a clear statement of learning outcomes for each cohort of students where there are students from two (or more) different years of study in the same module. These learning outcomes may or may not be different for different years of study but, either way, the assessment and mark descriptors need to be appropriate for the learning outcomes.

a.   If the learning outcomes are the same for the two cohorts then work should be marked to the same criteria and without reference to the cohort in which an individual student may lie.

b.   If the learning outcomes differ for the cohorts then there will be different assessments and/or mark descriptors for each cohort.

c.   Agreed marks need to be subject to analysis by cohort. Where there is evidence for cohort-related performance differences, marks should be moderated to ensure equitable treatment of students from different cohorts, and the assumptions of equity underlying the multi-cohort teaching will need to be re-examined.

20.4.1b   Sometimes it may be academically appropriate for combined programme students to attend a module in one of their disciplines (i.e. not an elective) that is aimed at single-subject students from an earlier year. Modules should not be shared between first-year undergraduate students and students from other years without the approval of University Teaching Committee, except where they have been chosen as electives. The Chair of the Board of Studies has the responsibility of approving, or otherwise, students' choices of elective modules. Explicit approval of the University Teaching Committee is required for taught postgraduate programmes to share modules with undergraduate programmes. Weightings for the individual student should be determined by the cohort to which they belong.

20.4.1c.   Where the programme specification permits it, and a student elects to take a Languages for All (LFA) module as an elective, they may do so at a lower level then their stage would normally permit, so long as the total weight of the lower-level module does not exceed 20 credits. This would allow a student to begin language study without previous experience, or further develop language skills for use after university or during a period of study abroad. Any lower level study of this nature will be reflected on the student's transcript as pass/fail only, and marks achieved will not impact on degree classifications.

21. Completion of Degrees

21.1   Recommendations from Boards of Studies for undergraduate awards are submitted to the Standing Committee on Assessment for approval on behalf of Senate. Special Cases Committee normally holds two meetings at about this time to deal with recommendations from Boards of Studies (for example, to consider recommendations for classified degrees where students have special circumstances) and possible student appeals. It is essential that departments complete the official results lists supplied by the Examinations Office and return these, with the signatures of the Chair of the Board of Studies and the External Examiner(s), immediately after their Board of Studies has approved the results. Full details of the deadline dates and procedures are circulated annually to departments by the Examinations Office.

21.2   Recommendations from Boards of Studies for the award of taught postgraduate and research degrees are submitted to the Standing Committee on Assessment who approve the awards on behalf of Senate. Departments should complete and return appropriate results lists to Registry, signed by the Chair of the Board of Studies and the External Examiner(s), as soon as possible after their Board has approved the results.

21.3   Results should be conveyed to students stating clearly that they are provisional until ratified by the Standing Committee on Assessment on behalf of Senate.

21.4   Parchments or other certificates are issued when enrolment is terminated at the end of a qualification. If a student subsequently re-registers for a higher stage of a programme (e.g. from Certificate to Diploma-level) there is no requirement to surrender the previous award document.

21.5   The role of Senate

Senate delegates the authority to the Standing Committee on Assessment, to ratify the recommendations of Boards of Studies or Graduate School Boards. Ordinance 6.7 provides additional information.

21.6   Academic Misconduct penalties under the current policy are applied at the component level. Failure of components or modules resulting from caps applied in response to academic misconduct will be treated the same way as any other failure. This may result in failure of the intended programme. Final penalties arising from academic misconduct under the policy prior to the academic year 2014/15 are subtracted at the point of award; it is recognised that a student may meet the award requirements but nonetheless fail the award for this reason.

22. University Award Requirements

Award	Minimum Credit Volume	Credit levels	Maximum elective credit volume	Combined degree: credit distribution	
				Main/Subsidiary (A with B)	Equal Combinations (A and B)
Master's Degree	180	At least 150 credits at level 7 (M)			
Postgraduate Diploma	120	At least 90 credits at level 7 (M)			
Postgraduate Certificate	60	At least 40 credits at level 7 (M)			
Integrated Master's Degree[2]	480	At least 120 credits at level 7 (M) taken over stages 3 and 4	80	Variation permitted between 360:120 and 310:170	240:240 regarded as the norm, variation up to 290:190 permitted
Pre-Masters	80	At least 70 credits at level 6 (H)			
Bachelor's Degree with Honours	360	At least 100 credits at level 6 (H)	60	Variation permitted between 270:90 and 230:130	180:180 regarded as the norm, variation up to 220:140 permitted
Ordinary Degree	300	At least 60 credits at level 6 (H) (over stages 2 and 3)	60		
Senior Status LLB[3]	240	At least 100 credits at level 6 (H) with no more than 100 at level 4 (C)	0		
Graduate Diploma	120	At least 100 credits at level 6 (H)			
Graduate Certificate	60	At least 40 credits at level 6 (H)			
Foundation Degree[4][5]	240	At least 90 credits at level 5 (I) or higher	60		
Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE)	240	At least 90 credits at level 5 (I) or higher	60		
Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE)	120	At least 90 credits at level 4 (C) or higher	40		
University Certificate[6]	60	60 Credits at level 4 (C) or higher	n/a		
Foundation Certificate	80 or 120	At least 70 credits at level 3	n/a		

---

[2] Students may be awarded these qualifications with a higher credit volume (for example, where study abroad or work placements are undertaken as additional credit or further credit is required to accommodate PSRB practice requirements.
[3] Not available as an early exit award.
[4] Students who have successfully completed a Foundation Year (Stage 0) as part of their programme will have achieved an additional 120 credits at level 3/ HE level 0.
[5] Not available as an early exit award.
[6] Not available as an early exit award.

Foundation Certificate Programmes

FC1.   Marking Scheme for Foundation Certificate Programmes

FC1.1   Every module should be summatively assessed in order to obtain an indication of a student's success in meeting the assessment criteria used to gauge the intended learning outcomes of a module or programme. Credit will be awarded upon passing a module's assessment(s).

FC1.2   Each module should carry one numerical mark rounded to the nearest integer on the relevant University mark scale, unless the module is designated as pass/fail.

Where a module assessment is made up from a number of components, the normal expectation is that the fixed weightings to be applied to each component mark should be specified in advance and made known to the students. Module marks are then calculated as the weighted mean of the component marks. Departments who would like to apply an alternative approach must obtain the permission of the Chair of the SCA, and should expect to undertake any non-standard administration associated with the alternative.

FC1.3   The University mark scale applied at foundation certificate level (for modules level 3/HE level 0) will be in the range 0-100. The pass mark for any given module is 40. A fail mark of 30-39 is potentially compensatable (see below), and marks of 0-29 and fails on pass/fail modules are outright fails.

FC1.4   Foundation Certificate programmes may include English language modules, whose level shall be mapped to the Common European Framework of Reference. Foundation Certificate programmes shall include a module to be used to determine whether a student has met any specified English Language requirements for progression. Due to the specific nature of the marking scheme for English Language modules, the marks for this module will not be used for the calculation of overall award or progression marks. This module must, however, be passed in order to achieve the award of Foundation Certificate.

FC1.5   Where a Board of Examiners has reason to believe that the raw marks arising from a particular module do not provide an adequate reflection of student performance on the appropriate University scale, the marks should be recalibrated to the University scale, either by remarking or by a rescaling procedure. If rescaling is undertaken it must be performed in the following way.

A number of points of correspondence between the original marking scale and the University scale should be identified. In particular the minimum and maximum marks on the original scale should be placed in correspondence with 0 and 100 respectively on the University scale. Points of correspondence should be located using academic judgement, bearing in mind any relevant descriptors. A sample calculation is presented in Appendix K. The same principle is to be followed, pro rata, if only part of a module assessment is affected.

It is important that the marks of all students taking the module are rescaled in the same way. If the module is shared between programmes the department taking formal responsibility for the module

should take the lead in the process. The External Examiners should be informed of any rescaling and the process and its outcome(s) must be formally documented. Any rescaling must be completed before the reports are produced for the final Board of Examiners Meeting.

FC1.6   Modules may only be marked on a pass/fail basis with the permission of University Teaching Committee. Approval of such modules will only be granted where there is a convincing rationale for this approach (for example, competency based modules in professional/vocational subjects). Such modules cannot be compensated (see sections on Compensation below).

FC1.7   In exceptional circumstances (e.g., relating to PSRB requirements) a case may be made to University Teaching Committee for modules to be denoted as non-compensatable and/or for which reassessment opportunities cannot be provided. The risks related to such modules, and possible alternatives must be fully considered (see the Framework for Programme Design).

FC2.   Progression

FC2.1   In order to progress to a Bachelors with Honours or integrated Masters programme at the University, students must achieve the award of Foundation Certificate (i.e. must pass all modules outright or via compensation or reassessment) in addition to achieving any specified progression requirements.

FC2.2   Pass/fail modules will not be used in the numerical calculation of whether the student has met requirements for progression to Bachelors with Honours or Integrated Masters programmes. However, any pass/fail module must be passed for progression.

FC3.   Compensation and Reassessment

FC3.1   Compensation

In defined circumstances credit may be awarded for failed module(s) where the failure is compensated by achievement in other module(s). The rounded credit weighted mean in each case will be calculated based on first attempt marks in the first instance, but will be calculated based on the lesser of the resit mark and the pass mark should the student be successful at resit. Please note:

Modules which are marked as pass/fail cannot be compensated.

FC3.1.1 If a student fails one or more modules (i.e. achieves a module mark below 40) on a Foundation Certificate Programme s/he may still receive credit for the failed module provided that:

   i. s/he has not been compensated more than 30 credits, with this total including both any modules previously compensated and the module to be compensated; and,

   ii. no module marks are lower than 30; and,

   iii. the rounded credit-weighted mean over all modules taken thus far (including failed modules) is at least 40.

FC3.2   Reassessment

Reassessment is an opportunity for students to redeem failure for the award of credit to meet progression or award requirements. It should be noted that failure in pass/fail modules are always counted as outright fails and cannot be compensated, and consequently any fails of pass/fail modules must be redeemed by reassessment.

FC3.2.1   Re-assessment will be offered in all failed modules which are not designated as non-reassessable (thus a student could potentially re-assess all 80 credits of an 80-credit programme). This reflects the particular nature of the Foundation Certificate and the associated progression to Bachelors with Honours or Integrated Masters programmes.

FC3.2.2   If a student elects not to take a reassessment opportunity when it is offered, the original module mark will be carried forward for the purposes of calculating the award and progression to Bachelors with Honours or Integrated Masters programmes. It is not possible subsequently to choose to take the re-assessment for the purposes of award / progression calculation at a later date.

FC3.2.3   For students who need to undertake reassessment for a module in order to redeem failure for the award of credit, re-assessment marks will be capped at the module pass mark. The capped mark will be used in calculations for the award of the Foundation Certificate and will be recorded on the transcript. Should students fail to achieve the module pass mark by reassessment, the better of the original or re-sit mark will be recorded on the transcript. The uncapped re-sit mark will be used for the purposes of calculating progression decisions on a non-credit, non-award bearing basis.

FC3.2.4   All students who have not previously undertaken a reassessment for a module may be offered the opportunity to undertake a reassessment of the module on a non-credit, non-award-bearing basis if their module mark does not meet the progression requirement. Such a reassessment might be needed because the module is specifically mentioned in the student's progression requirement, or because the overall mark needs to be improved, and may be offered regardless of the original module mark (i.e. this opportunity may be offered to students who have already received a passing mark on the module or who have passed the module via compensation). This is designed to provide reassessment opportunities for students who have met or are likely to meet the requirements for the award of a Foundation Certificate but not the requirements for guaranteed progression. The final mark used for determining progression will be the better of the original or reassessment. Reassessment offered on this basis does not affect the mark used for calculating the award of a Foundation Certificate. The original mark will be recorded on the student's transcript. If the progression requirement is explicit about the mark needed on a particular component of a module, then a reassessment for progression may be offered on a component basis, rather than for a whole module.

FC3.2.5 A student may only be reassessed in a particular module on one occasion. This applies to both reassessment for the purposes of award and reassessment for the purposes of progression.

FC3.2.6 Where there are exceptional circumstances, a student may be offered the opportunity to take an assessment 'as if for the first time', as opposed to a reassessment. Further information is contained within the University's Exceptional Circumstances affecting Assessment (ECA) policy.

Undergraduate Programmes

U1. Marking Scheme for Undergraduate Programmes

U1.1 Every module should be summatively assessed in order to obtain an indication of a student's success in meeting the assessment criteria used to gauge the intended learning outcomes of a module or programme. Credit will be awarded upon passing a module's assessment(s).

U1.2 Each module should carry one numerical mark rounded to the nearest integer on the relevant University mark scale, unless the module is designated as pass/fail.

Where a module assessment is made up from a number of components, the normal expectation is that the fixed weightings to be applied to each component mark should be specified in advance and made known to the students. Module marks are then calculated as the weighted mean of the component marks. Departments who would like to apply an alternative approach must obtain the permission of the Chair of the SCA, and should expect to undertake any non-standard administration associated with the alternative.

U1.3 i. The University mark scale applied at undergraduate level (for modules level 3/HE level 0 to level 6 (H)) is as follows:

- First-class Honours 70-100
- Upper second-class Honours 60-69
- Lower second-class Honours 50-59
- Third-class Honours 40-49
- Fail 0-39*

* Note that in stages 1 and 2, a fail mark of 30-39 is potentially compensatable (see below). In stage 3, a fail mark of 10-39 is potentially compensatable. Lower marks and fails on pass/fail modules are outright fails.

ii. The University mark scale applied for masters level modules used in undergraduate programmes, including integrated master's programmes (level 7/M) is as follows:

- Distinguished performance at postgraduate level 70-100
- Good performance at postgraduate level 60-69
- Satisfactory performance at postgraduate level 50-59
- Fail 0-49*

* Note that in stage 3 of an integrated master's programme a fail mark of 40-49 is potentially compensatable (see below). In stage 4, a fail mark of 10-49 is potentially compensatable. For students taking M level modules on stage 3 of a Bachelor's programme, marks of 10-49 are potentially compensatable. Lower marks and fail marks on pass/fail modules are outright fails.

U1.4 Where a Board of Examiners has reason to believe that the raw marks arising from a

particular module do not provide an adequate reflection of student performance on the appropriate University scale, the marks should be recalibrated to the University scale, either by remarking or by a rescaling procedure. If rescaling is undertaken it must be performed in the following way.

A number of points of correspondence between the original marking scale and the University scale should be identified. In particular the minimum and maximum marks on the original scale should be placed in correspondence with 0 and 100 respectively on the University scale. Points of correspondence should be located using academic judgement, bearing in mind any relevant descriptors. A sample calculation is presented in Appendix K. The same principle is to be followed, pro rata, if only part of a module assessment is affected.

It is important that the marks of all students taking the module are rescaled in the same way. If the module is shared between programmes the department taking formal responsibility for the module should take the lead in the process. The External Examiners should be informed of any rescaling and the process and its outcome(s) must be formally documented.

Any rescaling must be completed before the reports are produced for the final Board of Examiners Meeting.

U1.5   The pass mark for a given module will be determined by the standard of the module, rather than by the programme on which the student is enrolled. The pass mark for any Masters-level modules is 50, and Honours-level modules is 40, regardless of the programme to which it is contributing or the year in which they are taken.

U1.6   Modules may only be marked on a pass/fail basis with the permission of University Teaching Committee. Approval of such modules will only be granted where there is a convincing rationale for this approach (for example, competency based modules in professional/vocational subjects). Such modules will not contribute to the calculation of the final degree classification and failure in these modules cannot be compensated (see sections on Compensation below).

U1.7   In exceptional circumstances (e.g., relating to PSRB requirements) a case may be made to University Teaching Committee for modules to be denoted as non-compensatable and/or for which reassessment opportunities cannot be provided. The risks related to such modules, and possible alternatives must be fully considered (see the Framework for Programme Design).

U1.8   Every stage of a programme generates, alongside the profile of module marks, a credit-weighted total mark that is carried forward to degree classification, as appropriate (see Section U3 below). This process occurs only if a student has met the progression requirements for each stage (see Section U2 below).

U2. Progression in Undergraduate Programmes[7]

U2.1   To progress from one stage to the next a student must achieve 120 credits as specified for their registered programme at the appropriate level(s) for the stage (see the relevant programme specification and the Framework for Programme Design). These credits can be obtained by passing modules; by compensating failure in a limited number of modules with marks between 30 and 40%, or 10 and 40% in the award year (see "Compensation"); or by reassessment in a limited number of modules.

U2.1.1   The progression processes are run in the following order: assessment, compensation, reassessment, compensation. If a student achieves 120 credits after any one of these processes, they will progress to the following stage. If, however, they fail to qualify for compensation or reassessment after failure due to the high load of failed credits, or due to not meeting the compensation rules even after reassessment, they will be deemed to have failed the stage.

U2.1.2   In addition, any supplementary progression requirements specified for their registered programme must be met.

U2.1.2a   Progression at the end of stage 2 of integrated masters programmes requires that students meet a stage average higher than the pass mark for the modules contained in the stage. This stage average must be attained as the average of first attempt module marks and is set at 55. Progression at the end of stage 3 requires a stage average of 40 and additionally the rounded credit-weighted (not stage-weighted) mean over all stage 2 and 3 modules must be at least 50. These averages must be attained as the average of first attempt module marks. Students who do not meet these progression requirements will be considered for transfer to non-integrated masters programmes, subject to them having met the progression requirements for the Bachelor's alternative.

U2.1.2b   Programmes subject to accreditation by Professional Standards and Regulatory Bodies may have additional requirements, such as higher pass marks and lower thresholds of compensation. Programme documentation should make it clear what the consequences are if a student meets normal UoY progression rules but fails to meet the PSRB requirements. These consequences may include transfer to a non-accredited programme of study or termination of the student's study.

U2.1.3   A student should only be considered for transfer to a different programme, if s/he has met the progression requirements plus any additional programme requirements relating to the new programme of study. This may entail having made particular module selections to meet PSRB or later pre-requisite requirements, where these are essential to meet the overall programme learning outcomes. Requests to transfer must be approved by the receiving department and by the Special Cases Committee.

U2.1.4   A student may only register for additional credit (more than 120 credits per year for UG and 180 for PGT) where this is expressly approved as part of the programme specification, or with explicit permission from the Special Cases Committee. Where additional credit is taken, it cannot be included in the calculation of any progression decisions or degree classifications, and as such it must be clear to both the student and the department which credit is additional and which is core.

U2.1.5   If an Exceptional Circumstances affecting Assessment claim is accepted on assessments at the

---

[7] Appendix M provides an overview of progression for undergraduate awards and integrated masters.

end of a stage, but the student has met the necessary progression requirements using the affected attempts, the ECA Committee may allow a student to sit the assessments as if for the first time at the next available opportunity whilst pursuing the next stage. This is permitted in a maximum of 40 credits in a given stage. In this case only, the student will retain the better of the affected mark and the 'sit as if for the first time' mark for the sake of progression and award.

U2.2 Compensation

In defined circumstances credit may be awarded for failed module(s) where the failure is compensated by achievement in other module(s). The rounded credit weighted mean in each case will be calculated based on first attempt marks in the first instance, but will be calculated based on the lesser of the resit mark and the pass mark should the student be successful at resit. Please note: Modules which are marked as pass/fail cannot be compensated.

U2.2.1   Compensation in foundation years (stage 0)

a. If a student fails one or more modules (i.e., achieves a module mark below 40) in stage 0 s/he may still receive the credit for the failed module(s) and progress to stage 1 of the programme provided that:

> i.   s/he has failed no more than 40 credits; and,
>
> ii. no module marks are lower than 30; and,
>
> iii. the rounded credit-weighted mean over all modules taken in stage 0 (including the failed module(s)) is at least 40.

Compensation in foundation degrees

b. In stage 1, if a student fails one or more modules (i.e., achieves a module mark below 40) in the stage s/he may still receive the credit for the failed module(s) and progress provided that:

> i.   s/he has failed no more than 40 credits; and,
>
> ii. no module marks are lower than 30; and,
>
> iii. the rounded credit-weighted mean over all modules taken in the stage (including the failed module(s)) is at least 40.

c. In stage 2, if a student fails one or more modules (i.e., achieves a module mark below 40) in the stage s/he may still receive the credit for the failed module(s) and progress to award provided that:

> i.   s/he has failed no more than 40 credits; and,
>
> ii. no module marks are lower than 30; and,
>
> iii. the rounded credit-weighted mean over all modules taken in the stage (including the failed module(s)) is at least 40.

U2.2.2   Compensation in a University Certificate

a. If a student fails one or more modules (i.e., achieves a module mark below 40) s/he may still receive the credit for the failed module(s) and progress to the Certificate of HE 'top-up', or to award, provided that:

   i.   s/he has failed no more than 20 credits; and,

   ii. no module marks are lower than 30; and,

   iii. the rounded credit-weighted mean over all 60 credits (including the failed module(s)) is at least 40.

U2.2.3   Compensation in Bachelors Programmes[8]

a. In stage 1, if a student fails one or more modules (i.e., achieves a module mark below 40) in the stage s/he may still receive the credit for the failed module(s) and progress provided that:

   i.   s/he has failed no more than 40 credits; and,

   ii. no module marks are lower than 30; and,

   iii. the rounded credit-weighted mean over all modules taken in the stage (including the failed module(s)) is at least 40.

b. In stage 2, if a student fails one or more modules (i.e., achieves a module mark below 40) in the stage s/he may still receive the credit for the failed module(s) and progress provided that:

   i.   s/he has failed no more than 40 credits; and,

   ii. no module marks are lower than 30; and,

   iii. the rounded credit-weighted mean over all modules taken in the stage (including the failed module(s)) is at least 40.

---

[8] For students registered on a Certificate of Higher Education the stage 1 rules apply. For students registered on a Diploma of Higher Education the stage 1 and stage 2 rules apply. Centre for Lifelong Learning students who have undertaken a University Certificate of Lifelong Learning and are 'topping-up' to a Certificate of Higher Education are subject to the same overall rules for a Certificate of Higher Education but the rules will be applied in stages. A maximum of 20 credits-worth of compensation is permitted for the 60 credits of the University Certificate of Lifelong Learning (see above) and 20 credits-worth may be permitted (subject to meeting the other criteria) on the 60 credits of the Certificate of Higher Education 'top-up'.

c. In stage 3, if a student fails one or more modules s/he may still receive the credit and progress to classification provided that:

   i.   s/he has failed no more than 40 credits; and,

   ii. no module marks are lower than 10; and,

   iii. the rounded credit-weighted mean over all modules taken in the stage (including the failed module(s)) is at least 40.

d. In the event that a student fails more than 40 credits in Stage 3 of a Bachelor's programme, they may still be considered for the award of an Ordinary degree, in which case they will be eligible for compensation in a maximum of 20 credits provided that:

   i.   They have passed a minimum of 40 credits without compensation; and,

   ii. The rounded credit-weighted mean of the 60 credits taken in the stage with the highest module marks is at least 40; and,

   iii. No stage three module mark being counted towards the award is below 10.

U2.2.4   Compensation in integrated masters programmes

a. In stage 1, if a student fails one or more modules (i.e., achieves a module mark below 40) in the stage s/he may still receive the credit for the failed module(s) and progress provided that:

   i.   s/he has failed no more than 40 credits; and,

   ii. no module marks are lower than 30; and,

   iii. the rounded credit-weighted mean over all modules taken in the stage (including the failed module(s)) is at least 40.

b. In stage 2, if a student fails one or more modules (i.e., achieves a module mark below 40) in the stage s/he may still receive the credit for the failed module(s) and progress provided that:

   i.   s/he has failed no more than 40 credits; and,

   ii. no module marks are lower than 30; and,

   iii. the rounded credit-weighted mean over all modules taken in the stage (including the failed module(s)) is at least 55.

Where a student has not met the criteria for stage 2 of the integrated master's programme but has met the criteria for the Bachelors programme, the student will be transferred to the Bachelors programme for continuing study.

c. In stage 3, if a student fails one or more modules s/he may still receive the credit and progress provided that:

  i. s/he has failed no more than 40 credits; and,

  ii. no module mark falls below the threshold for compensation appropriate for its level[9]; and,

  iii. the rounded credit-weighted mean over all modules taken in the stage (including the failed module(s)) is at least 40; and,

  iv. the rounded credit-weighted mean over all modules taken in stages 2 and 3 (including the failed module(s)) is at least 50. [10]

Where a student has not met the criteria for stage 3 of the integrated master's programme but has met the criteria for the Bachelors programme, the student will be eligible for the award of a Bachelor's degree on the basis of their results in stages 1 to 3.

d. In stage 4, if a student fails one or more non-ISM modules or an ISM module worth up to 40 credits, s/he may still receive the credit and progress to classification provided that:

  i. s/he has failed no more than 40 credits; and,

  ii. no module mark is lower than 10; and,

  iii. the rounded credit-weighted mean over all modules taken in the stage (including the failed module(s)) is at least 50.

Where a student has not met the above criteria for the award of an integrated masters, students will be eligible for the award of a Bachelor's degree on the basis of their results in stages 1 – 3.

---

[9] For level C/4, I/5 and H/6 modules, the threshold for compensation is 30. For level M/7 modules, the threshold is 40.
[10] Note that this condition does not include the application of stage weighting. If the marks from stages 2 and 3 are such that stage weighting is significant when degree classification occurs, then the borderline rules will allow consideration of alternative weightings, including 1:1:1.

U2.3   Reassessment

Reassessment is an opportunity for students to redeem failure for the award of credit to meet progression or award requirements. It should be noted that failure in pass/fail modules are always counted as outright fails and cannot be compensated, and consequently any fails of pass/fail modules must be redeemed by reassessment if the student is to progress.

U2.3.1   A student may only be reassessed in a particular module on one occasion. If a student elects not to take a reassessment opportunity when it is offered, the original module mark will be carried forward into the progression calculation at that time. It is not possible subsequently to choose to take the reassessment at a later date.

U2.3.2   Any modules for which reassessment opportunities cannot be provided should be clearly identified in the Programme Specifications and approved by University Teaching Committee. Departments may determine whether to reassess a module at the module level or at the component level in light of the nature of the assessment(s) but must make clear to the students in the module specification what the parameters of reassessment are, including whether there are any circumstances in which a student might be permitted to be reassessed on a passed component of a failed module. (This is expected normally only to be permitted in cases where the failed component is non-reassessable).

U2.3.3   The following conditions should apply to the treatment of marks after reassessment:

a. progression decisions following reassessment should be made using the better of the original and reassessment marks for each failed module;

b. following progression, however, where the original credit-weighted mean did not meet the progression requirement, the credit-weighted total mark for the stage should be capped to the lowest value consistent with the mean mark criterion for that stage;

c. following progression, where the original credit-weighted mean has already met the progression requirement, the original credit-weighted total mark for the stage should be allowed to stand;

d. Original 'first sit' marks, rather than resit marks, will be used in degree classification calculations. Resit marks will appear, uncapped, on transcripts, but will not be used in degree calculations. In the event that the credit weighted mean of first attempt marks does not meet the minimum requirement for the award, but all credits were awarded through reassessment or compensation, the award mark will be set at the lowest value consistent with passing the award.[11]

---

[11] For more information on the calculation of degrees, see Section U.3.

e. for stages 2, 3 and 4 of integrated masters programmes, the original stage total mark stands after progression onto the next stage within the integrated masters programme.

U2.3.4   Where a student is not permitted a reassessment opportunity (i.e., cannot meet the specified progression requirements through reassessment as defined above) and there are no exceptional circumstances the student's registration will be discontinued. S/he may be eligible for a lower credit-volume award (see Section F).

U2.3.5   Resit examinations and other assessments likely to affect an undergraduate student's progress to the next year of a programme are held no later than the end of the University's resit week Monday 14th to Friday 19th August 2017, with notification to students of results and recommendations of Boards of Studies as soon as possible thereafter, but in any case no later than by the end of the third week of September.

A reassessment outside the August resit period is permissible provided that all the following conditions are met:

- students taking the reassessment have an outright fail for the module for which they are being reassessed;
- it is in the interest of the student's learning not to be reassessed in the August resit period and for no other reason;
- the reassessment does not impinge on teaching and other assessments;
- the student is given five-weeks' notice of reassessment;
- the reassessment does not require a University administered examination.

U2.3.6   All candidates are normally expected to attend resit examinations in York on the scheduled dates. Departments may be given the opportunity, however, to make a special case for overseas students to take resit examinations at a later date than other candidates, provided they are prepared to produce special question papers for the late resits and provided the arrangements are approved in advance by the Chair of the Standing Committee on Assessment.

U2.4   Thresholds for Reassessment

U2.4.1   Reassessment in foundation years (stage 0)

a. Where a student fails modules and the progression requirement for stage 0 cannot be met by application of the compensation rules, the student is entitled to reassessment in a maximum of 90 credits-worth of failed modules provided that they have failed no more than 90 credits with no more than 50 credits worth of outright fail marks (i.e., module marks less than 30) in that stage.

b. Reassessment in foundation degrees (stages 1,2,3)

In each stage, where a student fails modules and the progression or award requirements for the stage cannot be met by application of the compensation rules, the student is entitled to reassessment in a maximum of 90 credits worth of failed modules (per stage) provided that they have failed no more than 90 credits in that stage with no more than 50 credits-worth of outright fail marks (i.e., module marks less than 30) in that stage.

U2.4.2   Reassessment in a University Certificate of Lifelong Learning

Where a student fails modules and the progression (to the Certificate of Higher Education 'top-up') and/or award requirement cannot be met by application of the compensation rules, the student is entitled to reassessment in a maximum of 50 credits-worth of failed modules provided that they have failed no more than 50 credits with no more than 30 credits-worth of outright fail marks (i.e., module marks less than 30) in that stage.

U2.4.3   Reassessment in bachelors programmes[12]

a. In stages 1 and 2, where a student fails modules and the progression requirement for the stage cannot be met by application of the compensation rules, the student is entitled to reassessment in a maximum of 90 credits-worth of failed modules (per stage) provided that they have failed no more than 90 credits in that stage with no more than 50 credits-worth of outright fail marks (i.e. module marks less than 30) in that stage.

b. In stage 3, where a student fails modules and the award requirements for the stage cannot be met by application of the compensation rules, the student is entitled to reassessment in a maximum of 40 credits-worth of failed modules provided that they have failed no more than 40 credits. A student who has failed more than 40 credits can be considered for an Ordinary Degree, but is not eligible for reassessment to obtain this award.

---

[12] For students registered on a Certificate of Higher Education the stage 1 rules apply. For students registered on a Diploma of Higher Education the stage 1 and stage 2 rules apply. Centre for Lifelong Learning students who have undertaken a University Certificate of Lifelong Learning and are 'topping-up' to a Certificate of Higher Education are subject to the same overall reassessment rules for a Certificate of Higher Education but the rules will be applied in stages. See above regarding the rules relating to the 60 credits of the University Certificate of Lifelong Learning. For the 60 credits of the Certificate of Higher Education 'top-up' a student is entitled to reassessment in a maximum of 40 credits worth of failed modules provided that they have failed no more than 40 credits with no more than 20 credits-worth of outright fail marks (i.e., module marks less than 30).

c. If, following the application of the compensation rules, a student has not met the overall progression or award requirements then they may be reassessed in modules for which potentially compensatable marks (see U1.3) have already been achieved. This will simply be an opportunity, not a requirement.

U2.4.4   Reassessment in integrated masters programmes[13]

a. In stage 1, where a student fails modules and the progression requirement for the stage cannot be met by application of the compensation rules, the student is entitled to reassessment in a maximum of 90 credits-worth of failed modules provided that they have failed no more than 90 credits with no more than 50 credits-worth of outright fail marks in that stage (i.e., module marks less than 30).

b. In stage 2, where a student has met the required stage average, the student is entitled to reassessment in a maximum of 90 credits-worth of failed modules provided that they have failed no more than 90 credits with no more than 50 credits-worth of outright fail marks (i.e., module marks less than 30). Where a student has not achieved the stage average for progression on the integrated master's programme, reassessment opportunities will only be provided for continuation on the bachelors programme.

c. In stages 3 and 4, where a student has met the required stage average for progression or award, reassessment opportunities will be limited to 40 credits, except in the case of a marginal failure of an ISM worth more than 40 credits in Stage 4. For stage 3, where a student has not achieved the stage average for progression on the integrated master's programme, reassessment opportunities will only be provided for award of a bachelor's degree.

Independent Study Modules in Integrated Masters Programmes

d. Where a student has failed an ISM worth more than 40 credits on an integrated master's programme with a mark below 40, there will be no opportunity for reassessment. However, where a student has been awarded a 'marginal fail' mark of between 40 and 49 they will have an opportunity to make amendments which would enable a passing threshold to be reached. The mark after resubmission will be capped at 50. See Appendix N for guidance in relation to the criteria for awarding a marginal fail.

---

[13] Reassessment opportunities within integrated masters programmes at stages 2, 3 and 4 are limited to students who have achieved the required stage average (see U2.2.4biii, ciii and diii above). Thus reassessment within integrated masters programmes is purely an opportunity to satisfy the credit criteria.

U3. Degree Classification (for Undergraduate Awards)

U3.1   The Bachelors with Honours and Integrated Masters awards are classified degrees.

U3.2   The mechanism for calculating degree classifications is as follows:

- Stage 1 (and stage 0 if applicable) marks are excluded from the classification calculation;
- Stage averages are calculated based on the credit-weighted mean of the first attempt marks. Only where the credit weighted mean of first attempt marks would not have met the progression criteria for the stage, the stage average will be calculated based on the credit weighted mean of best attempts and capped at the lowest value consistent with progression at that level. In this case, the lowest value consistent with progression will be used in place of the "credit weighted total" in all following processes.
- For Bachelors Programmes, the mark, rounded to the nearest integer, is computed with the credit-weighted total marks for stages 2 and 3 weighted in the ratio of 2:3;
- For Integrated Masters Programmes, the mark, rounded to the nearest integer, is computed with the credit-weighted total marks for stages 2, 3 and 4 weighted in the ratio 2:3:3;
- For all programmes, classification will be determined by the position of this mark on the University scale unless it lies in the borderline region, defined as the two points below a classification boundary;
- In borderline cases, the next higher classification will be awarded if, and only if, the mark, rounded to the nearest integer, with the credit-weighted total marks for stages 2 and 3 weighted in the ratio 1:1 OR 1:2 (for Bachelors Programmes) and 1:1:1 OR 1:2:2 (for Integrated Masters Programmes) lies in a higher classification band. No further second order conditions will be applied;
- Final penalties arising from academic misconduct investigated prior to the implementation of the 2014/15 misconduct policy are subtracted at the point of degree classification; it is recognised that a student may meet the progression requirements for all stages but nonetheless fail the award for this reason.

U3.3   Pass/fail marks do not contribute to the degree classification.

U3.4   Ordinary degrees, Certificates and Diplomas of Higher Education are not classified.

U3.5   Foundation degrees are awarded on a pass/fail basis, and the final result is calculated on marks from stage 2 modules only. The final degree classification of a student who progresses to a University of York Bachelors with Honours programme, from a Foundation degree programme, is based solely on marks from stage 3 modules.

U3.6   Boards of Examiners, when establishing final degree classifications, are entitled to give special consideration to the award of first-class Honours degrees with distinction ("starred firsts") and to establish criteria in line with their own marking schemes to allow them to do so.

The following basic requirements for the award of first-class Honours degrees with distinction should be adhered to by all Boards of Studies:

i.   award of a distinction requires the explicit approval of External Examiners;

ii.   criteria must be expressed in terms of the University mark scale;

iii. criteria must be specific (phrases such as 'the great majority 'or 'substantial' should not be used) and state with precision what the criteria are and how they should be applied.

Candidates being considered for a first-class degree with distinction must meet the criteria for a first class degree under the Modular Scheme award rules. The criteria used to calculate distinctions should follow one of the following models:

a.   a minimum overall weighted average (usually 80%, but certainly over 70%) in all marks contributing to the final award, or

b.   a specified weighted proportion of marks over a minimum mark, and a maximum of 12.5% of the weighted contribution to the award below 65%, based on the University mark scale.

U3.6.1   Any Board of Studies wishing to recommend the award of a first-class Honours degree with distinction should submit a supporting statement together with the programme's published criteria for such awards, to the Examinations Office for submission to the Standing Committee on Assessment/Senate. These recommendations must be submitted attached to the standard pass list, which should also indicate the recommendation of a distinction for the candidates affected.

U4.   Study Abroad and industrial placements

U4.1   For the purposes of establishing the weighting in degree classifications only, study abroad

and work placements should be designated as part of a stage within a programme. The study abroad or work placement should contribute to the degree classification in accordance with the formula specified for that stage, based on a credit-weighted mean.

Illustrations:

Example 1: a student takes a year in Europe as 120 additional credits (lengthening a full-time bachelor's degree to four years), designated as part of stage 2. The mark derived for stage 2 would be the credit-weighted mean across 240 credits, giving the year away a value of 20% in the overall degree classification (based on the 2:3 weighting for marks from stages 2 and 3; note that this gives equal weighting to the additional credit in relation to the 'normal' stage 2 for the bachelors programme).

Example 2: a student takes a year in industry as 120 additional credits (again, lengthening a full-time bachelor's degree to four years), designated as part of stage 2. The industrial placement is marked on a pass fail basis. The mark derived for stage 2 would still be based on the credit-weighted mean across 240 credits, but would of necessity exclude the pass/fail element, giving the year in industry a

zero weighting in the overall degree classification (although whether it is passed or failed would be reflected in the final programme title awarded).

Example 3: A student takes a year in industry for which assessment is is divided into two parts: the placement itself, worth 60 credits, and designated as pass/fail, and 60 credits-worth of assessed material including reflective logs and an essay. In this case, the mark for stage 2 would still be based on the credit weighted mean of the two years with the pass/fail material necessarily removed, meaning that the additional year has half the weight of the year at York.

U4.2   Study abroad and work placements should be incorporated into programmes as either 'replacement' or 'additional' credit. Where it is 'additional', this will lengthen the normal period of study required for an award.

U4.3   Where study abroad or work placements are taken as 'replacement' credit, these should usually be given marks on the University mark scale.

U4.4   Where study abroad or work placements are taken as 'additional' credit, Boards of Studies should give consideration to whether, or what proportion of, the credit should be designated as pass/fail or given a mark on the University mark scale (see the Framework for Programme Design).

U4.5   Students should be made aware that reassessment opportunities in relation to study abroad or work placements are not normally available. The nature of any reassessment opportunities should be set-out in the module description/ Programme Information. There is no University limit on the credit volume that can be reassessed in an additional year but departments must set out the details of reassessment opportunities in advance in programme information (including the credit volume that can be reassessed and the nature of the reassessment task). Reassessment is only available where it is available at the host institution, and no work should be reassessed or remarked out of context upon the student's return to York, as the home department will not have access to the teaching materials or the work of the rest of the cohort.

U4.6   Progression decisions should take place prior to a student embarking on any period of study abroad or work placement. Students who fail the preceding or 'normal' credit-load stage (taking into account the outcome of any reassessment) will not be allowed to embark on study abroad or work placement. This should be reflected in student work placement contracts.

U4.7   Students taking study abroad or work placements as additional credit will receive the credit if:

    a. all pass/fail components in the additional credit are passed, and

    b. the credit-weighted mean mark of any numerical marks on the University scale meets the mean mark criterion for the stage in which the additional credit is situated (e.g., for additional credit designated as part of stage 2 a mean mark of 40 is required).

U4.8   Students who do not meet the above criteria may be eligible for reassessment in the failed components of the additional credit for which reassessment is available (see E.5 above).

U4.9   After reassessment, if the above criteria (E.7) are met, the student receives the additional credit and a capped total mark for the additional credit given by the lowest mark consistent with a passing credit-weighted mean (appropriate to the stage). In other cases, the student will transfer to a variant of the programme that does not include the additional credit. Marks for the failed credit will appear on the student's academic transcript but will not contribute to the calculation of the final award.

U4.10   Marks from Student Exchange Programmes

University Teaching Committee has confirmed that an important principle of the University's exchange agreements and Boards of Studies' agreement to permit students to participate in these schemes was an acceptance of the academic content of programmes, workload and assessment methods operated at the partner institution. Work produced whilst on exchange should not be assessed outside the context within which it has been produced.

a. University Teaching Committee has noted that departmental practices must be standardised regarding the conversion of worldwide marks, to ensure parity for students across departments. Conversion tables, approved by the Standing Committee on Assessment, are provided by the Centre for Global Programmes online. These tables provide single integer mark equivalencies for each national grade or classification. Marks above the top integer can only be awarded where the Department can justify this with additional evidence beyond the transcript of study.

b. Only in exceptional circumstances should work completed whilst on exchange be re-marked, and then only with the explicit approval of the Special Cases Committee.

c. Departmental examinations officers must use the approved conversion tables to convert grades provided on official exchange institution transcripts in line with the department's procedure for dealing with study abroad marks. The same procedure must be applied to all students in an outgoing cohort from that department. Departments should provide External Examiners with a clear statement of how worldwide marks have been treated.

d. Departments may use their discretion when awarding marks above the top integer in a table for students who receive the top available mark in the local grading system. Tables should be used in conjunction with other information available from the partner university to ensure that discretionary marks are justified and evidence. Evidence could include rankings in class, tutor reports, assessment sheets or other evidence, and should be reviewed on a case by case basis by the examinations officers in the department. The Centre for Global Programmes will continue to provide course evaluation forms for students to collect additional information whilst they are abroad and will advise students to keep evidence (e.g. papers and test marks) during their studies abroad.

e. A range of marks is possible for fail grades. The minimum passing grade at a partner institution must be converted to a passing mark at York. If the partner institution has a range of failing grades, Departments should use their discretion to award an equivalent grade between 0% and 39%.

f.   Departments may appeal to the Standing Committee on Assessment to make amendments to a specific conversion table in advance of student departure should they feel that it does not provide a fair representation of student performance. Evidence should be provided as to why the amendment is required, as well as an updated conversion table for review.

g.   Study Abroad marks should be converted into the largest module possible which aligns with the student's time abroad. For example, if a student has been on a full-year placement, their marks should be averaged into a single 120 credit module. For a student studying abroad for one term, their marks should be averaged into a 40 credit module. Students on joint degrees will have two marks—appropriate to the proportion of studies taken into each subject during the time abroad. For example, History/English (equal) students would have two 60 credits modules if studying abroad for the full academic year.

h.   Departments are responsible for ensuring that meaningful study abroad modules are set up within SITS to input converted marks for each student.

i.   Departments may choose to calculate a student's study abroad mark from the full credit load shown on the transcript or by discounting a proportion of the credit up to a maximum of 25%. For example, if the full credit load was 16 credits per semester, making 32 for the full year, taken in eight four credit modules, then two whole modules could be discounted. However, if the full credit load was 15 credits per semester, making a total of 30 for the full year, taken in six five credit module, only one module may be discounted, as two would exceed 25% of the total credits taken. Departments can decide the circumstances in which marks will be discounted (including whether they will only discount failed modules, or will discount lowest passing marks in some or all circumstances) but must ensure that a fair and consistent approach is taken when choosing to award grades based on discounted marks including consideration of joint honours students and students studying abroad for less than a full year. This policy must be advertised to student in advance and be clearly explained during the completion of each students' grade conversion checklist.

j.   All departments are required to ensure that students embarking on an exchange have been informed of how their marks will be treated on returning to York, before the student departs. The Centre for Global Programmes will provide each student with a grade conversion checklist that should be used for this purpose. It is recommended that departments keep a signed copy of this checklist, along with any additional information discussed in order to respond to student queries about their grade conversions.

k.   Wherever possible, marks from exchanges should be converted and available in time to meet the normal progression deadlines for returning students. Where this is not possible, for example, when students are on placements of 12 months' duration, marks must be converted and student progression completed by the beginning of the autumn term.

Graduate Modular Scheme[15]

G1. Module requirements and marking schemes

G1.1   Every module should be summatively assessed in order to obtain an indication of a student's success in meeting the assessment criteria used to gauge the intended learning outcomes of a module or programme.

G1.2   Each module should carry one numerical mark on the relevant University mark scale, unless the module is designated as pass/fail (see below).

Where a module assessment is made up from a number of components, the normal expectation is that the fixed weightings to be applied to each component mark should be specified in advance and made known to the students. Module marks are then calculated as the weighted mean of the component marks. Departments who would like to apply an alternative approach must obtain the permission of the Chair of the SCA, and should expect to undertake any non-standard administration associated with the alternative.

G1.3   The University mark scale applied at graduate level is as follows:

- Distinguished performance   70-100
- Good performance   50-69
- Satisfactory performance   40-49
- Fail   0-39*

* Module marks of 0-29 are 'outright fails'. Module marks of 30-39 are potentially compensatable (see Section G2).

G1.4   Standards of attainment on the graduate mark scale should notionally be equivalent to those of undergraduate awards.

G1.5   Where there are good pedagogic arguments, graduate programmes may exceptionally include a maximum of 20 credits-worth of level-7 (M) modules. The use of level-7 (M) credit must be approved by University Teaching Committee and will be recorded by the University and departments. Any Masters-level modules taken as part of a graduate programme are subject to the taught postgraduate mark scale (pass mark is 50).

G1.6   Modules may only be marked on a pass/fail basis with the permission of University Teaching Committee. Approval of such modules will only be granted where there is a clear and convincing rationale for this approach (for example, competency based modules in professional/vocational subjects). Such modules cannot be compensated.

---

[15] Graduate programmes (Graduate Certificates and Graduate Diplomas) are those usually undertaken by students who have completed a Bachelor's degree but wish to pursue further studies that are not necessarily at a higher level (i.e. the programmes are at Honours level (like a Bachelors) not Masters level (like a Masters or Postgraduate Certificate or Diploma).

G1.7 Departments should give thought to the possibility of designating some modules in Graduate Certificates as non-compensatable,[16] given their small credit volume, to ensure that it is not possible for Graduate Certificates to be awarded to students who have achieved failing marks in key components of the discipline reflected in the intended outcomes for the award. The risks related to such modules, and possible alternatives must be fully considered (see Undergraduate Modular Scheme: Framework for Programme Design, Appendix VIII). The use of non-compensatable modules must be approved by University Teaching Committee and will be recorded by the University and departments.

G1.8 Where a Board of Examiners has reason to believe that the raw marks arising from a particular module do not provide an adequate reflection of student performance on the appropriate University scale, the marks should be recalibrated to the University scale, either by remarking or by a rescaling procedure. If rescaling is undertaken it must be performed in the following way. A number of points of correspondence between the original marking scale and the University scale should be identified. In particular the minimum and maximum marks on the original scale should be placed in correspondence with 0 and 100 respectively on the University scale. Points of correspondence should be located using academic judgement, bearing in mind any relevant descriptors. A sample calculation is presented in Appendix K. The same principle is to be followed, pro rata, if only part of a module assessment is affected.

It is important that the marks of all students taking the module are rescaled in the same way. If the module is shared between programmes the department taking formal responsibility for the module should take the lead in the process. The External Examiners should be informed of any rescaling and the process and its outcome(s) must be formally documented.

G2. Compensation and reassessment

G2.1 Compensation

In defined circumstances credit may be awarded for failed module(s) where the failure is compensated by achievement in other module(s).

G2.1.1 Compensation in Graduate Certificates

If a student fails one or more modules s/he may still receive the credit provided that:

i. s/he has failed no more than 20 credits, and
ii. no module marks fall below the threshold for compensation appropriate for its level,[17] and
iii. the rounded credit-weighted mean over all modules taken in the programme (including the failed modules) is at least 40.

---

[16] Departments should note that, in any case, pass/fail modules are non-compensatable by definition.
[17] For level-6 (H) modules, the threshold for compensation is 30. For level-7 (M) modules, the threshold is 40.

G2.1.2 Compensation in Graduate Diplomas

If a student fails one or more modules s/he may still receive the credit provided that:

  i. s/he has failed no more than 40 credits, and

  ii. no module mark falls below the threshold for compensation appropriate for its level,[18] and

  iii. the rounded credit-weighted mean over all modules taken in the programme (including the failed modules) is at least 40.

G2.2 Reassessment

Reassessment is an opportunity for students to redeem failure for the award of credit to meet award requirements. It should be noted that failure in pass/fail modules are always classified as outright fails and cannot be compensated, and consequently any fails of pass/fail modules must be redeemed by reassessment if the student is to progress.

G2.2.1 Reassessment in Graduate Certificates

Where a student fails taught modules and the award requirements cannot be met by application of the compensation rules, the student is entitled to reassessment in a maximum of 20 credits-worth of failed modules provided that they have failed no more than 30 credits, with no more than 20 credits-worth of outright fail (i.e. module marks less than 30 (or 40 for a level-7 (M) module)).

G2.2.2 Reassessment in Graduate Diplomas

Where a student fails modules and the award requirements cannot be met by application of the compensation rules, the student is entitled to reassessment in a maximum of 40 credits-worth of failed modules provided they have failed no more than 60 credits, with no more than 40 credits-worth of outright fail (i.e. module marks less than 30 (or 40 for a level-7 (M) module)).

G2.2.3   If, following the application of the compensation rules, a student has not met the overall progression or award requirements then they may be reassessed in modules for which potentially compensatable[19] marks have already been achieved. This will simply be an opportunity (not a requirement).

---

[18] For level-6 (H) modules, the threshold for compensation is 30. For level-7 (M) modules, the threshold is 40.

[19] By potentially compensatable marks we mean marks between 30-39 for level-H (6) modules and between 40-49 for level-M (7) modules, which could be compensated if, following reassessment, a student's profile of marks means the compensation criteria could be applied.

G2.3   All programmes

A student may only be reassessed in a particular module on one occasion.

G2.4 Whilst reassessments need to be appropriate to measure the learning outcomes, they do not necessarily have to follow the same format as the first assessment. No assessment instruments with which students are unfamiliar should be introduced at the reassessment stage, however.

G2.5 Any modules for which reassessment opportunities cannot be provided should be clearly identified in the programme specification and approved by University Teaching Committee.

G2.6 Where a student is not permitted a reassessment opportunity (i.e., cannot meet the specified award requirements through reassessment as defined above) and there are no exceptional circumstances s/he may be eligible for a lower volume award (see Section C above).

G3.   Awards

G3.1   Graduate Certificates and Graduate Diplomas are not classified. However, a distinction could be awarded for a Graduate Diploma (see criteria below).

Distinctions (Graduate Diplomas only)

G3.2   To be recommended to Senate for the award of a Graduate Diploma with distinction a student must achieve the following at the first attempt:

  i.   a rounded credit-weighted mean of at least 70 over all modules, and

  ii. no failed modules.

G4.   Module requirements and marking scheme for Graduate Senior Status Bachelors Programmes

G4.1   Every module should be summatively assessed in order to obtain an indication of a student's success in meeting the assessment criteria used to gauge the intended learning outcomes of a module or programme. Credit will be awarded upon passing a module's assessment(s).

G4.2   Each module should carry one numerical mark rounded to the nearest integer on the relevant University mark scale, unless the module is designated as pass/fail.

G4.3   The University mark scale applied at Graduate Senior Status Bachelor Level (HE level 4 to level 6 (H)) is as follows:

- First-class Honours 70-100
- Upper second-class Honours 60-69
- Lower second-class Honours 50-59
- Third-class Honours 40-49
- Fail 0-39*

* Note that a fail mark of 30-39 is potentially compensatable (see below), and marks of 0-29 and fails on pass/fail modules are outright fails.

G4.4   Where a Board of Examiners has reason to believe that the raw marks arising from a particular module do not provide an adequate reflection of student performance on the appropriate University scale, the marks should be recalibrated to the University scale, either by remarking or by a rescaling procedure. If rescaling is undertaken it must be performed in the following way.

A number of points of correspondence between the original marking scale and the University scale should be identified. In particular the minimum and maximum marks on the original scale should be placed in correspondence with 0 and 100 respectively on the University scale. Points of correspondence should be located using academic judgement, bearing in mind any relevant descriptors. A sample calculation is presented in Appendix K. The same principle is to be followed, pro rata, if only part of a module assessment is affected.

It is important that the marks of all students taking the module are rescaled in the same way. If the module is shared between programmes the department taking formal responsibility for the module should take the lead in the process. The External Examiners should be informed of any rescaling and the process and its outcome(s) must be formally documented.

Any rescaling must be completed before the reports are produced for the final Board of Examiners Meeting.

G4.5   The pass mark for any Masters-level modules taken as part of a Graduate Senior Status Bachelors Programme is 50.

G4.6   Modules may only be marked on a pass/fail basis with the permission of University Teaching Committee. Approval of such modules will only be granted where there is a convincing rationale for this approach (for example, competency based modules in

professional/vocational subjects). Such modules will not contribute to the calculation of the final degree classification and failure in these modules cannot be compensated (see sections on Compensation below).

G4.7   In exceptional circumstances (e.g., relating to PSRB requirements) a case may be made to University Teaching Committee for modules to be denoted as non-compensatable and/or for which reassessment opportunities cannot be provided. The risks related to such modules, and possible alternatives must be fully considered (see the Framework for Programme Design).

G4.8   Every stage of a programme generates, alongside the profile of module marks, a credit-weighted total mark that is carried forward to degree classification, as appropriate (see Section G6 below). This process occurs only if a student has met the progression requirements for each stage (see Section G5 below).

G5.   Progression in Graduate Senior Status Bachelors Programmes

G5.1   To progress from one stage to the next a student must achieve 120 credits as specified for their registered programme at the appropriate level(s) for the stage (see the relevant programme specification and the *Framework for Programme Design*). These credits can be obtained by passing modules, by compensating failure in a limited number of modules with marks between 30 and 40% (see "Compensation") or by reassessment in a limited number of modules.

G5.1.1   The progression processes are run in the following order: assessment, compensation, reassessment, compensation. If a student achieves 120 credits after any one of these processes, they will progress to the following stage. If however, they fail to qualify for compensation or reassessment after failure due to the high load of failed credits, or due to not meeting the compensation rules even after reassessment, they will be deemed to have failed the stage.

G5.1.2   In addition, any supplementary progression requirements specified for their registered programme must be met.

G5.1.3   Programmes subject to accreditation by Professional Standards and Regulatory Bodies may have additional requirements, such as higher pass marks and lower thresholds of compensation. Programme documentation should make it clear what the consequences are if a student meets normal UoY progression rules but fails to meet the PSRB requirements. These consequences may include transfer to a non-accredited programme of study or termination of the student's study.

G5.1.4   A student should only be considered for transfer to a different programme, if s/he has met the progression requirements plus any additional programme requirements relating to the new programme of study. This may entail having made particular module selections to meet PSRB or later pre-requisite requirements, where these are essential to meet the overall programme learning outcomes. Requests to transfer must be approved by the receiving department and by the Special Cases Committee.

G5.1.5   A student may only register for additional credit (more than 120 credits per year) where this is expressly approved as part of the programme specification, or with explicit permission from the Special Cases Committee. Where additional credit is taken, it cannot be included in the calculation of any

progression decisions or degree classifications, and as such it must be clear to both the student and the department which credit is additional and which is core.

G5.2   Compensation

In defined circumstances credit may be awarded for failed module(s) where the failure is compensated by achievement in other module(s). The rounded credit weighted mean in each case will be calculated based on first attempt marks in the first instance, but will be calculated based on the lesser of the resit mark and the pass mark should the student be successful at resit. Please note: Modules which are marked as pass/fail cannot be compensated.

G5.2.1   Compensation in Graduate Senior Status Bachelors Programmes

a. In stage 1, if a student fails one or more modules (i.e., achieves a module mark below 40) in the stage s/he may still receive the credit for the failed module(s) and progress provided that:

> i.   s/he has failed no more than 40 credits, and
>
> ii. no module marks are lower than 30, and
>
> iii. the rounded credit-weighted mean over all modules taken in the stage (including the failed module(s)) is at least 40.

b. In stage 2, if a student fails one or more modules s/he may still receive the credit and progress to classification provided that:

> i.   s/he has failed no more than 40 credits, and
>
> ii. no module mark falls below the threshold for compensation appropriate for its level,[20] and
>
> iii. the rounded credit-weighted mean over all modules taken in the stage (including the failed module(s)) is at least 40.

G5.3   Reassessment

Reassessment is an opportunity for students to redeem failure for the award of credit to meet progression or award requirements. It should be noted that failure in pass/fail modules are always counted as outright fails and cannot be compensated, and consequently any fails of pass/fail modules must be redeemed by reassessment if the student is to progress.

---

[20] For level C/4, I/5 and H/6 modules, the threshold for compensation is 30.

G5.3.1   A student may only be reassessed in a particular module on one occasion. If a student elects not to take a reassessment opportunity when it is offered, the original module mark will be carried forward into the progression calculation at that time. It is not possible subsequently to choose to take the reassessment at a later date.

G5.3.2   Any modules for which reassessment opportunities cannot be provided should be clearly identified in the Programme Specifications and approved by University Teaching Committee. Departments may determine whether to reassess a module at the module level or at the component level in light of the nature of the assessment(s) but must make clear to the students in the module specification what the parameters of reassessment are, including whether there are any circumstances in which a student might be permitted to be reassessed on a passed component of a failed module. (This is expected normally only to be permitted in cases where the failed component is non-reassessable).

G5.3.3   The following conditions should apply to the treatment of marks after reassessment:

a. progression decisions following reassessment should be made using the better of the original and reassessment marks for each failed module;

b. following progression, however, where the original credit-weighted mean did not meet the progression requirement, the credit-weighted total mark for the stage should be capped to the lowest value consistent with the mean mark criterion for that stage;

c. following progression, where the original credit-weighted mean has already met the progression requirement, the original credit-weighted total mark for the stage should be allowed to stand.

G5.3.4   Where a student is not permitted a reassessment opportunity (i.e., cannot meet the specified progression requirements through reassessment as defined above) and there are no exceptional circumstances the student's registration will be discontinued. S/he may be eligible for a lower credit-volume award.

G5.3.5   Resit examinations and other assessments likely to affect an graduate student's progress to the next year of a programme are held no later than the end of the University's resit week Monday 14th to Friday 19th August 2017, with notification to students of results and recommendations of Boards of Studies as soon as possible thereafter, but in any case no later than by the end of the third week of September.

A reassessment outside the August resit period is permissible provided that all the following conditions are met:

• students taking the reassessment have an outright fail for the module for which they are being reassessed

- it is in the interest of the student's learning not to be reassessed in the August resit period and for no other reason
- the reassessment does not impinge on teaching and other assessments
- the student is given five weeks' notice of reassessment
- the reassessment does not require a University administered examination

G5.3.6   All candidates are normally expected to attend resit examinations in York on the scheduled dates. Departments may be given the opportunity, however, to make a special case for overseas students to take resit examinations at a later date than other candidates, provided they are prepared to produce special question papers for the late resits and provided the arrangements are approved in advance by the Chair of the Standing Committee on Assessment.

G5.4   Thresholds for Reassessment in Graduate Senior Status Bachelors programmes

a. In stage 1, where a student fails modules and the progression requirement for the stage cannot be met by application of the compensation rules, the student is entitled to reassessment in a maximum of 90 credits-worth of failed modules (per stage) provided that they have failed no more than 90 credits in that stage with no more than 50 credits-worth of outright fail marks (i.e. module marks less than 30) in that stage.

b. In stage 2, where a student fails modules and the award requirements for the stage cannot be met by application of the compensation rules, the student is entitled to reassessment in a maximum of 40 credits-worth of failed modules provided that they have failed no more than 40 credits.

c. If, following the application of the compensation rules, a student has not met the overall progression or award requirements then they may be reassessed in modules for which potentially compensatable marks[2121] have already been achieved. This will simply be an opportunity, not a requirement.

G6.   Degree Classification for Graduate Senior Status Bachelor's Degree Awards

G6.1   The Graduate Senior Status Bachelors award is a classified degree.

G6.2   The mechanism for calculating degree classification is as follows:

- Stage averages are calculated based on the credit-weighted mean of the first attempt marks. Only where the credit weighted mean of first attempt marks would not have met the progression criteria for the stage, the stage average will be calculated based on the credit weighted mean of best attempts and capped at the lowest value consistent with progression at that level. In this case, the lowest value consistent with progression will be used in place of the "credit weighted total" in all following processes.

---

[21] By potentially compensatable marks we mean marks between 30-39 (for level C/4, I/5 and H/6 modules), which could be compensated if, following reassessment, a student's profile of marks indicates the compensation criteria could be applied.

- For Graduate Senior Status Bachelors Programmes, the mark, rounded to the nearest integer, is computed with the credit-weighted total marks for stages 1 and 2 weighted in the ratio of 2:3;
- The classification will be determined by the position of this mark on the University scale unless it lies in the borderline region, defined as the two points below a classification boundary;
- In borderline cases, the next higher classification will be awarded if, and only if, the mark, rounded to the nearest integer, with the credit-weighted total marks for stages 1 and 2 weighted in the ratio 1:1 OR 1:2 lies in a higher classification band. No further second order conditions will be applied;
- Final penalties arising from academic misconduct are subtracted at the point of degree classification; it is recognised that a student may meet the progression requirements for all stages but nonetheless fail the award for this reason.

G6.3   Pass/fail marks do not contribute to the degree classification.

G6.4   Boards of Examiners, when establishing final degree classifications, are entitled to give special consideration to the award of first-class degrees with distinction ("starred firsts") and to establish criteria in line with their own marking schemes to allow them to do so.

The following basic requirements for the award of first-class degrees with distinction should be adhered to by all Boards of Studies:

i.   award of a distinction requires the explicit approval of External Examiners;

ii. criteria must be expressed in terms of the University mark scale;

iii. criteria must be specific (phrases such as 'the great majority 'or 'substantial' should not be used) and state with precision what the criteria are and how they should be applied.

Candidates being considered for a first-class degree with distinction must meet the criteria for a first class degree under the Modular Scheme award rules. The criteria used to calculate distinctions should follow one of the following models:

a. a minimum overall weighted average (usually 80%, but certainly over 70%) in all marks contributing to the final award, or

b. a specified weighted proportion of marks over a minimum mark, and a maximum of 12.5% of the weighted contribution to the award below 65%, based on the University mark scale.

G6.4.1 Any Board of Studies wishing to recommend the award of a first-class Honours degree with distinction should submit a supporting statement together with the programme's published criteria for such awards, to the Examinations Office for submission to the Standing Committee on Assessment/Senate. These recommendations must be submitted attached to the standard pass list, which should also indicate the recommendation of a distinction for the candidates affected.

Pre-Masters Programmes

PM1. Marking Scheme for Pre-Masters Programmes

PM1.1   Every module should be summatively assessed in order to obtain an indication of a student's success in meeting the assessment criteria used to gauge the intended learning outcomes of a module or programme. Credit will be awarded upon passing a module's assessment(s).

PM1.2   Each module should carry one numerical mark rounded to the nearest integer on the relevant University mark scale, unless the module is designated as pass/fail.

Where a module assessment is made up from a number of components, the normal expectation is that the fixed weightings to be applied to each component mark should be specified in advance and made known to the students. Module marks are then calculated as the weighted mean of the component marks. Departments who would like to apply an alternative approach must obtain the permission of the Chair of the SCA, and should expect to undertake any non-standard administration associated with the alternative.

PM1.3   The University mark scale applied at pre-Masters level (for modules level 6/HE level H) will be in the range 0-100. The pass mark for any given module is 40. A fail mark of 30-39 is potentially compensatable (see below), and marks of 0-29 and fails on pass/fail modules are outright fails.

PM1.4   Pre-Masters programmes may include English language modules, whose level shall be mapped to the Common European Framework of Reference. Pre-Masters programmes shall include a module to be used to determine whether a student has met any specified English Language requirements for progression. Due to the specific nature of the marking scheme for English Language modules, the marks for this module will not be used for the calculation of overall award or progression marks. This module must, however, be passed in order to achieve the award of Pre-Masters.

PM1.5   Where a Board of Examiners has reason to believe that the raw marks arising from a particular module do not provide an adequate reflection of student performance on the appropriate University scale, the marks should be recalibrated to the University scale, either by remarking or by a rescaling procedure. If rescaling is undertaken it must be performed in the following way.

A number of points of correspondence between the original marking scale and the University scale should be identified. In particular the minimum and maximum marks on the original scale should be placed in correspondence with 0 and 100 respectively on the University scale. Points of correspondence should be located using academic judgement, bearing in mind any relevant descriptors. A sample calculation is presented in Appendix K. The same principle is to be followed, pro rata, if only part of a module assessment is affected.

It is important that the marks of all students taking the module are rescaled in the same way. If the module is shared between programmes the department taking formal responsibility for the module should take the lead in the process. The External Examiners should be informed of any rescaling and

the process and its outcome(s) must be formally documented. Any rescaling must be completed before the reports are produced for the final Board of Examiners Meeting.

PM1.6 Modules may only be marked on a pass/fail basis with the permission of University Teaching Committee. Approval of such modules will only be granted where there is a convincing rationale for this approach. Such modules cannot be compensated (see sections on Compensation below).

PM1.7 In exceptional circumstances (e.g., relating to PSRB requirements) a case may be made to University Teaching Committee for modules to be denoted as non-compensatable and/or for which reassessment opportunities cannot be provided. The risks related to such modules, and possible alternatives must be fully considered (see the Framework for Programme Design).

PM2.   Progression

PM2.1   In order to progress to a Masters programme at the University, students must achieve the award of Pre-Masters (i.e. must pass all modules outright or via compensation or re-assessment) in addition to achieving any specified progression requirements.

PM2.2   Pass/fail modules will not be used in the numerical calculation of whether the student has met requirements for progression to Masters programmes. However, any pass/fail module must be passed for progression.

PM3.   Compensation and Reassessment

PM3.1   Compensation

In defined circumstances credit may be awarded for failed module(s) where the failure is compensated by achievement in other module(s). The rounded credit weighted mean in each case will be calculated based on first attempt marks in the first instance, but will be calculated based on the lesser of the resit mark and the pass mark should the student be successful at resit. Please note:

Modules which are marked as pass/fail cannot be compensated.

PM3.1.1 If a student fails one or more modules (i.e. achieves a module mark below 40) on a Pre-Masters Programme s/he may still receive credit for the failed module provided that:

  i. s/he has not been compensated more than 30 credits, with this total including both any modules previously compensated and the module to be compensated; and,

  ii. no module marks are lower than 30; and,

  iii. the rounded credit-weighted mean over all modules taken thus far (including failed modules) is at least 40.

PM3.2 Reassessment

Reassessment is an opportunity for students to redeem failure for the award of credit to meet progression or award requirements. It should be noted that failure in pass/fail modules are always counted as outright fails and cannot be compensated, and consequently any fails of pass/fail modules must be redeemed by reassessment.

PM3.2.1 Re-assessment will be offered in all failed modules which are not designated as non-reassessable (thus a student could potentially re-assess all 80 credits of an 80-credit programme). This reflects the particular nature of the pre-Masters programme and the associated progression to Masters programmes.

PM3.2.2 If a student elects not to take a reassessment opportunity when it is offered, the original module mark will be carried forward for the purposes of calculating the award and progression to Masters programmes. It is not possible subsequently to choose to take the re-assessment for the purposes of award / progression calculation at a later date.

PM3.2.3 For students who need to undertake reassessment for a module in order to redeem failure for the award of credit, re-assessment marks will be capped at the module pass mark. The capped mark will be used in calculations for the award of pre-Masters and will be recorded on the transcript. Should students fail to achieve the module pass mark by reassessment, the better of the original or resit mark will be recorded on the transcript. The uncapped resit mark will be used for the purposes of calculating progression decisions on a non-credit, non-award bearing basis.

PM3.2.4 All students who have not previously undertaken a reassessment for a module may be offered the opportunity to undertake a reassessment of the module on a non-credit, non-award-bearing basis if their module mark does not meet the progression requirement. Such a reassessment might be needed because the module is specifically mentioned in the student's progression requirement, or because the overall mark needs to be improved, and may be offered regardless of the original module mark (i.e. this opportunity may be offered to students who have already received a passing mark on the module or who have passed the module via compensation). This is designed to provide reassessment opportunities for students who have met or are likely to meet the requirements for the award of a pre-Masters but not the requirements for guaranteed progression. The final mark used for determining progression will be the better of the original or reassessment. Reassessment offered on this basis does not affect the mark used for calculating the award of a pre-Masters. The original mark will be recorded on the student's transcript. If the progression requirement is explicit about the mark needed on a particular component of a module, then a reassessment for progression may be offered on a component basis, rather than for a whole module.

PM3.2.5 A student may only be reassessed in a particular module on one occasion. This applies to both reassessment for the purposes of award and reassessment for the purposes of progression.

PM3.2.6 Where there are exceptional circumstances, a student may be offered the opportunity to take an assessment 'as if for the first time', as opposed to a reassessment. Further information is contained within the University's Exceptional Circumstances affecting Assessment (ECA) policy.

Postgraduate Programmes

P1. Marking Schemes for Taught Postgraduate Programmes

P1.1   Every module shall be summatively assessed in order to obtain an indication of a student's success in meeting the assessment criteria used to gauge the intended learning outcomes of a module or programme.

P1.2   Each module should carry one numerical mark, unless the module is designated as pass/fail (see below). The pass mark for level 7 (M) modules is 50.

Where a module assessment is made up from a number of components, the normal expectation is that the fixed weightings to be applied to each component mark should be specified in advance and made known to the students. Module marks are then calculated as the weighted mean of the component marks. Departments who would like to apply an alternative approach must obtain the permission of the Chair of the SCA, and should expect to undertake any non-standard administration associated with the alternative.

P1.3. i. The University mark scale applied at taught postgraduate level (level 7 (M) modules) is as follows:

- Distinguished performance at postgraduate level   70-100
- Good performance at postgraduate level   60-69
- Satisfactory performance at postgraduate level   50-59
- Fail   0-49*

* Note that a fail mark of 40-49 is potentially compensatable (see below), and marks of 0-39 and fail marks on pass/fail modules are outright fails.

ii. The University mark scale applied for components in H level modules included in taught postgraduate programmes is as follows:

- First-class Honours 70-100
- Upper second-class Honours 60-69
- Lower second-class Honours 50-59
- Third-class Honours 40-49
- Fail 0-39*

* Note that components on H level modules taught as part of taught postgraduate programmes will be combined into a single integer mark. This mark will be converted into a pass/fail mark, where marks greater than or equal to 40 will represent a pass.

P1.4   In order to be awarded a postgraduate award, a student must achieve an award mark of at least 50% in one of two ways:

- As a credit weighted mean of all first attempt taught module marks and any ISM
- Where a student does not achieve at least 50% as the credit weighted mean of all first attempts, the credit weighted mean of all best attempts will be used, and this mean will be capped at 50%

P1.5   Level 7 (M) modules may only be marked on a pass/fail basis with the permission of University Teaching Committee. Approval of such modules will only be granted where there is a convincing rationale for this approach (for example, competency based modules in professional/vocational subjects or where students are being introduced to a wide variety of techniques as part of an interdisciplinary programme). Such modules cannot be compensated, though reassessment is possible where credit loads permit.

P1.6   All level 6 (H) modules taken as part of a postgraduate programme must be marked on a pass/fail basis. Compensation is not possible on these modules, though reassessment is possible where credit loads permit.

P1.7   Boards should also give thought to the possibility of designating some modules as non-compensatable, particularly within Postgraduate Certificate programmes given their small credit volume, to ensure that it is not possible for Postgraduate Certificates to be awarded to students who have achieved failing marks in key components of the discipline reflected in the intended learning outcomes for the award. The designation of modules as non-compensatable and/or not available for reassessment requires specific approval from UTC. The risks related to such modules, and possible alternatives must be fully considered (for more information, see the Taught Postgraduate Modular Scheme: Framework for Programme Design [www.york.ac.uk/media/staffhome/learningandteaching/documents/programmedevelopment/framework%20-%20PGT%20-FINAL.pdf]).

P1.8   Where a Board of Examiners has reason to believe that the raw marks arising from a particular module do not provide an adequate reflection of student performance on the appropriate University scale, the marks should be recalibrated to the University scale, either by remarking or by a rescaling procedure. If rescaling is undertaken it must be performed in the following way.

A number of points of correspondence between the original marking scale and the University scale should be identified. In particular the minimum and maximum marks on the original scale should be placed in correspondence with 0 and 100 respectively on the University scale. Points of correspondence should be located using academic judgement, bearing in mind any relevant descriptors. A sample calculation is presented in Appendix K. The same principle is to be followed, pro rata, if only part of a module assessment is affected.

It is important that the marks of all students taking the module are rescaled in the same way. If the module is shared between programmes the department taking formal responsibility for the module

should take the lead in the process. The External Examiners should be informed of any rescaling and the process and its outcome(s) must be formally documented.

P2. Progression requirements in Taught Postgraduate Awards

P2.1   Each taught master's degree will have a progression point at the end of the taught section of the programme. In order to progress, students must have been awarded all credits for the taught section either by passing the original assessments, by compensation or by passing the reassessments in line with the compensation and reassessment rules below.

The progression processes will be run in the following order: assessment, compensation, reassessment, compensation.

P2.2   Progression Boards

Progression Boards must take place for all Masters Programmes as soon as possible after all taught elements are marked. Decisions about reassessment, compensation and early exit awards will be made at the progression board. External Examiners must be involved in these meetings, either in person or by teleconference or email, and must have access to students completed and marked scripts prior to any meeting.

P2.3   Staged programmes

Where a staged approach is taken to a programme (i.e., students register for a Certificate before progressing to a Diploma, etc.), the assessment rules are cumulative. So, for example, if a student undertakes 20 credits of reassessment during the 60 credits of the Certificate stage, they will only have 20 credits of reassessment available to them during the 60 credits of the Diploma stage. This is to ensure that all students who are awarded a Diploma or Masters have been subject to the same rules.

P2.4   Optional Additional Credit

Students may only take more credit than is required by their programme with the explicit permission of the Special Cases Committee. In the event that additional credit is approved, it will not contribute to progression or award requirements, and as such, additional credit must be distinguished from credit for award at the outset of the module.

P.2.5   Compensation

In defined circumstances credit may be awarded where a fail mark(s) has been compensated for by achievement in other module(s); provided that it can be demonstrated that the programme's learning outcomes can still be achieved.

Modules that are marked on a pass/fail basis cannot be compensated. Any other modules that are non-compensatable must receive explicit approval from University Teaching Committee and must be recorded in the Programme Specifications.

P2.5.1   Compensation in Masters[22]

If a student fails one or more non-Independent Study Modules (ISM) (i.e., achieves a mark below 50) s/he may still receive credit for the failed module(s) provided that:

    i. s/he has failed no more than 40 credits, and

    ii. no marks are lower than 40, and

    iii. the rounded credit-weighted mean over all non-ISM modules (including the failed module(s)) is at least 50. (This will be calculated based on first attempt marks in the first instance, but will be calculated based on the lesser of the resit mark and the pass mark should the student be successful at resit.)

Independent Study Module(s) cannot be compensated.

P2.5.2   Compensation in Postgraduate Diplomas[23]

If a student fails one or more modules (i.e., achieves a mark below 50) s/ he may still receive credit for the failed module(s) provided that:

    i. s/he has failed no more than 40 credits, and

    ii. no marks are lower than 40, and

    iii. the rounded credit-weighted mean over all modules (including the failed module(s)) is at least 50.

P2.5.3   Compensation in Postgraduate Certificates

If a student fails one or more modules (i.e., achieves a mark below 50) s/ he may still receive the credit for the failed module(s) provided that:

    i. s/he has failed no more than 20 credits, and

    ii. no marks are lower than 40, and

    iii. the rounded credit-weighted mean over all modules (including the failed module(s)) is at least 50.

---

[22] Applied at the end of the 'taught' component of the programme.

[23] Where a staged approach is taken to a programme (e.g. students register for a Certificate before progressing to a Diploma), the assessment rules are cumulative. So, for example, if a student undertakes 20 credits of reassessment during the 60 credits at the certificate stage, they will only have 20 credits of reassessment available to them during the 60 credits of the diploma stage.

P2.6 Reassessment[24]

P2.6.1 A student may only be reassessed in a particular module on one occasion. If a student elects not to take a reassessment opportunity when it is offered, the original module mark will be carried forward into the progression calculation at that time. It is not possible subsequently to choose to take the reassessment at a later date.

P2.6.2 Any modules for which reassessment opportunities cannot be provided should be clearly identified in the Programme Specifications and approved by University Teaching Committee.

The following conditions should apply to the treatment of marks after reassessment:

a. progression decisions following reassessment should be made using the better of the original and reassessment marks for each failed module;

b. following progression, however, where the original credit-weighted mean did not meet the progression requirement, the credit-weighted total mark for the stage should be capped to the lowest value consistent with the mean mark criterion for that stage;

c. following progression, where the original credit-weighted mean has already met the progression requirement, the original credit-weighted total mark for the stage should be allowed to stand;

d. Original 'first sit' marks, rather than resit marks, will be used in calculations of award marks, and for merits and distinctions. Resit marks will appear, uncapped, on transcripts, but will not be used in degree calculations. In the event that the credit weighted mean of first attempt marks does not meet the minimum requirement for the award, but all credits were awarded through reassessment or compensation, the award mark will be set at the lowest value consistent with passing the award.[25]

P2.6.3 Where a student is not permitted a reassessment opportunity (i.e., cannot meet the specified progression requirements through reassessment as defined above) and there are no exceptional circumstances the student's registration will be discontinued. S/he may be eligible for a lower credit-volume award.

P2.6.4 If, following the application of the compensation rules, a student has not met the overall progression or award requirements then they may be reassessed in modules for which potentially compensatable marks have already been achieved. This will simply be an opportunity (not a requirement).

---

[24] Information about the timing of reassessments is included in www.york.ac.uk/media/staffhome/ learningandteaching/documents/programmedevelopment/framework%20-%20PGT%20-FINAL.pdf

[25] For more information on the calculation of degrees, see Section P4.

P2.6.5   If it is not possible for a student to achieve the credit required for her/ his intended award by reassessment, s/he is entitled to be reassessed for a lower credit volume award, as appropriate. The number of credits in which s/he is entitled to be reassessed will be capped at the number permitted for the lower credit volume award.

P2.6.6   For non-ISM modules, marks obtained following reassessment will not be capped. The reassessment mark will appear on the transcript but it will clearly indicate where marks have been achieved at first attempt and at reassessment.

P2.6.7   Reassessment is an opportunity for students to redeem failure for the award of credit to meet award requirements. Students on taught postgraduate programmes must be informed of reassessment opportunities at least three weeks prior to the deadline or examination in order for them to prepare.

P2.6.8

Masters: non-ISM modules

a. Where a student has failed modules and the award requirements cannot be met by application of the compensation criteria, s/he is entitled to reassessment in a maximum of 40 credits-worth of failed modules provided that they have failed no more than 60 credits with no more than 40 credits-worth of outright fail (i.e. module marks less than 40).

Masters: independent study module (ISM)

b. Where a student has failed a Masters' ISM with a mark below 40 there will be no opportunity for reassessment. However, where a student has been awarded a 'marginal fail' mark of between 40 and 49 they will have an opportunity to make amendments which would enable a passing threshold to be reached. The mark after resubmission will be capped at 50. See Appendix N for guidance in relation to the criteria for the awarding of a 'marginal fail'.

P2.6.9 Postgraduate Diploma[26]

Where a student has failed modules and the award requirements cannot be met by application of the compensation criteria, s/he is entitled to reassessment in a maximum of 40 credits-worth of failed modules provided that they have failed no more than 60 credits with no more than 40 credits-worth of outright fail (i.e. Module marks less than 40).

---

[26] Module marks of 0-39 and fails on pass/fail modules are 'outright fails'. Module marks of 40-49 are potentially compensatable (see Section P2.5).

2.6.10 Postgraduate Certificate

Where a student has failed modules and the award requirements cannot be met by application of the compensation criteria, s/he is entitled to reassessment in a maximum of 20 credits-worth of failed modules provided that they have failed no more than 30 credits with no more than 20 credits-worth of outright fail (i.e. Module marks less than 40).

P3   Assessment rules for Masters that consist of 240 or more academic credits

Note that the following rules do not apply to the MA in Social Work. Where a Masters consists of 240 or more academic credits and, as a consequence, exceeds one academic year when taken on a full-time basis, the compensation and reassessment rules will be applied at the end of the first and second year of the programme.

Specifically,

P3.1   At the end of the first year a progression board is held and the following rules are applied to the modules taken in year 1:

Compensation in Masters of 240 Credits or more

If a student fails one or more non-ISM modules (i.e., achieves a mark below 50)

> i.   s/he may still receive credit for the failed module(s) provided that:
>
> ii. s/he has failed no more than 40 credits, and
>
> iii. no marks are lower than 40, and
>
> iv. the rounded credit-weighted mean over all non-ISM modules (including the failed module(s)) is at least 50.

Reassessment in Masters of 240 Credits or more

Where a student has failed modules and the award requirements cannot be met by application of the compensation criteria, s/he is entitled to reassessment in a maximum of 40 credits-worth of failed modules provided that they have failed no more than 40 credits.

P3.2   At the end of the second year a final examination board is held and the following rules are applied to the modules taken in year 2:

Compensation in Masters

If a student fails one or more non-ISM modules (i.e., achieves a mark below 50) s/he may still receive credit for the failed module(s) provided that:

i. s/he has failed no more than 40 credits, and

ii. no marks are lower than 40, and

iii. the rounded credit-weighted mean over all non-ISM modules (including the failed module(s)) is at least 50.

P4   Merits and Distinctions for Postgraduate Degrees

P4.1   Postgraduate degrees are not classified, so undergraduate classification terminology should not be used to describe achievement at this level (e.g. 2:1, First). The awards of Masters will, however, be marked out with Merit or Distinction where the student meets the appropriate criteria. The Postgraduate Diploma will also be marked out with a Merit or Distinction where the student meets the appropriate criteria, regardless of whether the award is achieved as an intended award, an early exit award, or as the result of a failed ISM.

P4.2   The award of Postgraduate Certificate is not eligible for Merit or Distinction, regardless of whether it is achieved as an intended award or an early exit route.

Merits

Masters

P4.3   To be recommended to Senate for the award of a Master's degree with merit a student must achieve the following at first attempt:

i. a rounded credit weighted mean of at least 60 over all modules, and

ii. a rounded credit weighted mean of at least 60 in the Independent Study Module(s) taken, and

iii. no more than 20 credits of failed modules, with no module marks below 40.

Postgraduate Diplomas

P4.4   To be recommended to Senate for the award of a Postgraduate Diploma with merit a student must achieve the following at first attempt:

i.   a rounded credit weighted mean of at least 60 over all modules, and
ii.   no more than 20 credits of failed modules, with no module marks below 40.

Distinctions Masters

P4.5   To be recommended to Senate for the award of a Master's degree with distinction a student must achieve the following at first attempt:

i. a rounded credit weighted mean of at least 70 over all modules, and

ii. a rounded credit weighted mean of at least 70 in the Independent Study Module(s) taken, and

iii. no failed modules.

Postgraduate Diplomas

P4.6   To be recommended to Senate for the award of a Postgraduate Diploma with distinction a student must achieve the following at first attempt:

i. a rounded credit weighted mean of at least 70 over all modules, and

ii. no failed modules.

Exceptional Circumstances affecting Assessment

For forms and student guidance related to exceptional circumstances, contact department administrators or Student Support Services.

23.   Exceptional Circumstances

23.1   Preface and Principles

If a student's performance in, or completion of, summative assessment has been seriously impaired by medical or other unforeseen exceptional adverse circumstances, then this may be taken into account under this policy. No allowance can be made, within this process, for circumstances affecting attendance or other work during the module, except where the assessment itself is closely linked with the attendance.[1] Departments can approve authorised leave for students whose circumstances are affecting them for up to 28 days. In these cases, the student is expected to catch up on the missed material in time for the assessments unless the timing of the circumstances coincides with the assessment itself. For more long-standing conditions[2] and circumstances the student will be expected to have made full use of the appropriate support services provided by the University (e.g. Disability Services) in order to have relevant adjustments made, and/or to develop coping strategies which will see them not only through their study but into later life. Where necessary, students with conditions or circumstances which cannot be resolved or accommodated within a programme of study may need to consider temporary leave of absence from the programme of study in order to allow them to reengage when they are better able to benefit from the programme.

---

[1] Because this policy applies only to assessment of taught material, it is unlikely to apply to most research degree programmes. It does, however, apply to any taught modules, including those which are included in primarily research-based programmes.
[2] The definition of a disability is a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on a person's ability to do normal daily activities. Long term is defined as lasting one year or more or likely to last one year or more. 'Normal daily activities' includes mobility, manual dexterity, lifting, hearing, eyesight, speech, memory, and the ability to concentrate, learn or understand. It includes, but is not limited to, physical and cognitive impairments and long-standing or recurrent mental ill-health.

> Circumstances acceptable under this policy must be exceptional (i.e. serious and unusual) relative to the normal daily challenges that academic study presents, and unpredictable in that the student could not reasonably have been expected either to avoid them, or to allow for them in planning the assessment work or preparation. For example, *It is recognised that the assessment process itself can cause students to be more anxious or stressed than at other times of the academic year, and this should be considered to be one of the normal challenges that academic study presents. Except in a very small number of cases, where the impact is serious and incapacitating, this would not be considered as a valid exceptional circumstance.*

The aim of the exceptional circumstances process is to ensure that fairness and academic standards are maintained for all our students who endeavour to manage the challenges inherent in academic study. It is imperative that only exceptional circumstances are accepted.

The University offers a range of student support services and opportunities to enable students to manage the challenges and demands[3] of academic study. The various support services are accessible to all students and do not require referral. It is therefore important that students understand that using support is not a sign of weakness, rather it is a feature of academic success for some students to access the support services in order to identify and develop successful strategies. It is an expectation of the University that students will access the relevant services if they require them, sometimes signposted by their college, their supervisor or other members of the academic community.

> The usual outcome of a successful exceptional circumstances claim is that the student would be given an extension to a submission deadline or a new opportunity to take the assessment, as if for the first time, at the next available opportunity. In the latter case, the mark from the new assessment replaces any mark already obtained from the original impaired assessment, irrespective of which is higher. Please note, there is no provision for adjusting a student's assessment mark or (other than in some specific situations) degree class.[4]

---

[3] These may include financial, emotional, mental health or disability related issues or may result from difficulties in terms of housing, visa application or other difficulties that are not unusual for some students.
[4] See Section 23.8.

23.2   What qualifies as exceptional circumstances?

Circumstances	Notes
Exceptional Medical Circumstances	E.g. hospitalisation, or incapacitation through injury, illness, or mental health crisis.
Close bereavement	The following relatives are accepted as 'close': partner, child, parent, sibling, grandparent, and grandchild. Housemates or very close friends may also be considered as 'close', though evidence of the relationship may be required.
Victim of a serious crime	
Disabilities for which reasonable adjustments are not yet in place and where the delay is not due to the student	
Exceptional and unforeseeable transport difficulties	E.g. major transport incidents, cancelled flights. This does not include every-day issues e.g. traffic congestion, missed buses or trains.
Interviews for work-placements or for employment which cannot be changed	
Legal proceedings requiring attendance	
Exceptional Personal Circumstances	E.g. events that result in a serious impact on a student's ability to engage with academic work during the assessment period in question.

Please note that the ECA Committee is empowered to make recommendations to Special Cases Committee in relation to Exceptional circumstances which it wishes to accept but which are not covered above. It cannot approve such claims unilaterally.

The following never qualify as exceptional circumstances:

1. Loss of work not backed up or printing problems

2. Accidental submission of an incorrect document (e.g. an assignment from another module or an incomplete earlier draft of the assignment)

3. In the event of electronic submission, the following will not be accepted as exceptional circumstances:

   a. the student submits the wrong file type or a corrupted file;

   b. the student begins their upload after the deadline has passed;

   c. a claim of technical issues on behalf of the University with no proof of an error message/ system failure on either the VLE or the University network.

4. Misreading of the examination timetable

5. English not being a first language

6. Deadlines for work or exams being set close together

The following are not normally regarded as exceptional[5]:

1. Weddings

2. Constraints arising from paid employment (FT students)[6]

3. Holidays

4. Relationship breakdown[7]

5. Moving house

6. Disabilities for which reasonable adjustments have been made

7. Financial difficulties

8. Planned health appointments

9. For an electronic submission of an assessment, a delay of up to 30 minutes between starting and completing the file upload process[8]

Evidence

- Each application must be accompanied by satisfactory supporting evidence, normally from an independent and relevantly-qualified third party professional. The evidence must give direct confirmation of the circumstances, from which it is possible to infer their effect on the student's ability to engage with work in general, or assessment tasks in particular, made at the time of those circumstances or as soon as possible thereafter.
- The evidence needs to indicate the period of disruption, including the duration of the impact. A doctor, for example, may be willing to report a retrospective account given to them by the student after the event, but in itself this does not carry weight as evidence if the doctor simply notes that a student reports the impact.
- Similarly, the University's Open Door Team is only able to provide the type of evidence required when a student has used, or is currently using, the services provided by the team to address the circumstances.

---

[5] The acceptance of these circumstances as exceptional will require evidence not only that they occurred, but of the unforeseeable and unavoidable nature of the circumstance, and of the impact on the student's assessment.

[6] Part-time students may apply for Exceptional Circumstances on the grounds of 'exceptional circumstances arising from employment', but the student would need to show evidence of an unusual and unpredictable level of impact of work. The fact of a part-time student's employment is not, in itself, exceptional.

[7] Exceptions can be made for divorce or relationship breakdowns of an equivalent scale. Evidence would need to be provided of the duration of the relationship, and the impact on the student.

[8] Thus a submission which was started less than 30 minutes before the deadline but which did not complete until after the deadline would not qualify as exceptional, unless there was evidence that a major technical issue had occurred. Students are therefore advised to allow at least 30 minutes for the upload process.

- In the event that the professional concerned did not see the student at the time of the assessment but believes that their condition would have prevented them from engaging not only with assessment, but also with professional support services, a claim can still be considered. The professional's evidence in such a case would need to explain the extent to which the circumstances would have prevented engagement with professional services.
- Students who are too ill, or suspect themselves to be too contagious, to attend a doctor's surgery or other support service at the time of their assessments should engage with online services such as Unity Health's online consultation service, or contact Student Support Services about telephone or email consultations.

Circumstance	Examples of evidence that would support a claim
Exceptional Medical Circumstances	A letter from a doctor, nurse or other health professional confirming the exceptional and unforeseen nature of the exceptional circumstance and the impact on the student. Health professionals must be registered with an appropriate accrediting body, and though evidence of such accreditation will not be required in the first instance, it may be requested should the ECA Committee determine that it is necessary. Any submission that notes only that 'the student reports that…' is not acceptable, as it is not independent third party evidence of either the circumstances or the impact on the student.
Close bereavement	A death certificate or confirmation from an independent relevant professional e.g. a solicitor or an undertaker or an order of service from the funeral ceremony. Where not a relative, the ECA Committee should see evidence of closeness of the relationship in the form of a statement from a third party or a tenancy agreement (in the case of a housemate). If the student is severely affected by the death of someone not considered as 'close' under this policy, they would need to have evidence from an independent third party of the serious impact on them.
Victim of a serious crime	Documentation from the police indicating that the student has reported a crime; an insurance claim, or medical report.
Disabilities for which reasonable adjustments are not yet in place and where the delay is not due to the student	A letter from Disability Services.
Exceptional and unforeseeable transport difficulties	Evidence of a major transportation incident, or a letter from the relevant transport company confirming the nature of the delay. Evidence will also be required that the circumstances described affected the student in question.

Interviews for placements or for employment which cannot be changed	Evidence showing that the interview date cannot be rearranged.
Legal proceedings requiring attendance	A letter from a solicitor or a court.
Exceptional Personal Circumstances	A letter from a student support practitioner, counsellor, religious leader, or other professional third party directly confirming that, in their professional opinion, the circumstances have had a serious impact on the student's ability to engage in assessment activities.

Reasons for non-acceptance of exceptional circumstances

The following examples are indicative but not exhaustive.

i. The student has not submitted the claim within seven days of the assessment, and has not provided or evidenced good reason for failing to do so.

ii. The full information required by the exceptional circumstances form is incomplete.

iii. No independent documentary evidence has been supplied to support the request (letters from family, fellow students or academic supervisors are not normally sufficient on their own but may be submitted in addition to independent third party evidence).

iv. The timing of the circumstances cited would not have adversely affected the assessment(s).

v. The nature of the circumstances cited is not over and above the normal difficulties experienced in life.

vi. Sufficient adjustment has already been made for the same circumstances; the evidence has already been used to support adjustment for the same assessment and no new evidence has been provided.

vii. The circumstances in question relate to a disability for which reasonable adjustments have been made but which the student has not engaged with to a reasonable extent. For example where mentoring or specialist tuition is provided and agreed but for which the student decides not to attend.

viii. The claim is submitted after the assessment marks have been ratified by the Board of Examiners. Claims submitted after ratification cannot be considered by an ECA Committee. Such claims must be considered as formal University appeals.

23.3   Applications for ECA Committee consideration

A student who wishes exceptional circumstances to be considered must apply to the ECA Committee associated with their (Combined) Board of Studies, by submitting the completed University claim form and by providing the required evidence.

An application for an extension to a submission deadline should normally be received at least two working days before that deadline, to allow time for consideration in advance of the deadline. For an application of any kind to be considered *at all* it must be received one calendar week after that assessment itself.

> In the event that a student submits a claim more than seven days after the affected assessment, and/or misses the advertised departmental deadline for the submission of any claims, but submits an evidenced claim before the ratification of the marks by the Board of Examiners, the claim can still be considered, but the ECA Committee must apply the additional test of whether the student had 'good reason' for not submitting the claim in good time prior to considering the claim itself. If the student cannot provide independent evidence of a 'good reason' that they could not have claimed in good time, the claim must be rejected regardless of the strength of the claim.

Outcomes available in response to Exceptional Circumstances

The following outcomes are available in response to an accepted ECA claim. The assessment may or may not have been taken/failed outright.

i.   The opportunity to take or submit the assessment 'as if for the first time', during the August resit week (for undergraduates), or at another appropriate time. If the assessment is set for a time other than resit week, the ECA Committee would be expected to take into account the additional workload for the student and the need to advise the student accordingly.

ii.   An extension to the deadline for an assessment. In the case of finalists, permission to complete the assessment after the end of the programme will result in a postponement of graduation, and requires permission from the Special Cases Committee. In the case of taught postgraduate students, the Board of Studies or Graduate Schools Board can approve extensions of up to six months without Special Cases Committee approval. The deadline for extensions for non-finalists beyond the end date of the summer term in other years should not be later than the end of August. If an extension beyond the end of August is necessary, a leave of absence will be required.

iii. The opportunity to take 'as if for the first time' a different form of assessment than the original assessment. (Alternative assessments cannot be an assessment in a format that the student has never before encountered). This will usually be for practical reasons, e.g. so that the assessment can take place in time for the next stage of the programme. Unlike resit attempts, students granted sits as if for the first time need not be given a set notice period prior to the new assessment attempt (5 weeks for

UG, 3 weeks for PGT), as it is not necessarily expected that the student will require additional preparation time in order to improve their results. Students should, however, be given a reasonable amount of time to complete the assessment task at hand.

iv. Additional work to complete the original learning outcomes of the module, e.g. where practical work has been only partially completed.

v. Recommendations to Special Cases Committee for the award of a taught aegrotat degree where the conditions of the policy on aegrotat degrees are met[9].

vi. If a single module mark is created from a number of marks from assessments testing the same learning outcomes, the following rule may apply. The (Combined) ECA Committee can, in order to produce a module mark, recommend to the (Combined) Board of Studies waiving no more than 20% of the overall module mark. This is permitted only where the learning outcomes for the module have been measured by the remaining assessments for that module.

Where the various elements of a module are intended to test different learning outcomes, such waiving of marks is not permissible. This procedure may be followed for up to a maximum of 40 credits per stage, provided that the learning outcomes for the module(s) have been achieved.

vii. A revised submission (referral) of work already submitted may be permitted if the department has included this in the assessment section of the module specification, or if UTC has agreed that the module or component is non-reassessable.

viii. If an ECA claim is accepted on assessments at the end of a stage, but the student has met the necessary progression requirements using the affected attempts, the ECA Committee may allow a student to sit the assessments as if for the first time at the next available opportunity whilst pursuing the next stage. This is permitted in a maximum of 40 credits in a given stage. In this case only, the student will retain the better of the affected mark and the 'sit as if for the first time' mark for the sake of progression and award.

The following are never permitted:

- substitution of marks;
- changing of marks;
- repeating tuition from a previous stage once the next stage has been commenced.

The following is only permitted with the approval of Special Cases Committee:

- waiving or pro-rating of marks beyond that permitted above.

---

[9] See Section 23.9.

Sits 'as if for the first time'

When a student is offered the opportunity for a sit 'as if for the first time', the student is permitted to *decline* that opportunity, and in such cases the original affected mark will stand. Students will not be able to choose between marks gained at the first and second attempt, and the original mark will become void when the second attempt takes place. Failure to attend or submit 'as if for the first time' will be treated as declining the opportunity to do so. Students will be made aware of their original mark, if available, at the time of being offered a 'sit as if for the first time' as an outcome of submission of exceptional circumstances. Departments should set a date at the end of the stage by which students must inform them of their decision to accept or decline the sit(s) 'as if for the first time'. This will be a different deadline for finalists in order to allow award results to be processed in time for graduation. In order to make an informed decision about which sits 'as if for the first time' to take, the student should have access to all of their marks for the stage.

23.4   Composition of the Exceptional Circumstances affecting Assessment (ECA) Committee

i.   Exceptional Circumstances claims must be considered by an Exceptional Circumstances affecting Assessment (ECA) Committee which must be a sub-committee of the Board of Studies. This includes consideration of exceptional circumstances arising during an assessment. There is to be one ECA Committee for each Board of Studies (a single-subject ECA Committee) covering all programmes within the remit of that Board of Studies and one ECA Committee for each Combined Board of Studies (a Combined ECA Committee) covering all programmes within the remit of that Combined Board of Studies.

ii. *Single-subject membership of ECA Committee*

A single-subject ECA Committee must consist of five members of academic staff selected by, but not including, the Chair of the Board of Studies in consultation with the Head of Department. The quorum for meetings of the ECA Committee is three, and an ECA Committee meeting must not take place unless it is quorate. The term of office for members of the ECA Committee should normally be three years (renewable).

iii. *Combined-subject membership of ECA Committee*

A Combined ECA Committee must consist of four members of academic staff selected by, but not including, the Chair of the Combined Board of Studies in consultation with the Heads of Department. If a Combined ECA Committee cannot agree on the acceptability of exceptional circumstances in an individual case, the Chair of Combined ECA Committee shall have a casting vote. The quorum for meetings is three with at least one member from each department, and an ECA Committee meeting must not take place unless it is quorate. The term of office for members of the ECA Committee should normally be three years (renewable).

iv. *Chair and administrator of ECA Committee*

The Chair of the Board of Studies /Chair of the Combined Board of Studies in consultation with the Head(s) of Department should appoint a fixed Chair of the ECA Committee / Combined ECA Committee from its members. (Combined) ECA Committee meetings should be serviced by an

administrator, and all decisions must be recorded.

v. Students are not permitted to attend the (Combined) ECA Committee meetings.

vi. *Conflict of interest*

In cases where a formal complaint has been lodged against a member of the (Combined) ECA Committee by a student making a claim of Exceptional circumstances, or there is an evidenced conflict of interests for a member of the (Combined) ECA Committee, that member should exclude themselves from consideration of the relevant case(s). If, as a result of such exclusions, the (Combined) ECA Committee has insufficient members to conduct its business, then the Chair of the (Combined) ECA Committee may propose to the Standing Committee on Assessment that alternative members should be co-opted.

vii. Meetings may take place either in person or virtually (via email, or other suitable medium), but in either case, quoracy must be adhered to and adequate records kept of the decisions.

23.5   Guidance for ECA Committees

ECA Committees will be guided, in their decisions, by the principles outlined in sections A and B above. If Exceptional circumstances are identified, one of the remedies in section C will be applied.

The following will apply in relation to ECA claims:

i.   Where assessments are affected by exceptional circumstances the normal time-scale for completion of the programme should be adhered to as far as possible.

ii. Exceptional circumstances must be considered and any action decided and applied before the end of the stage of the programme during which they occur.

iii. Consideration of exceptional circumstances should take place at least termly where any claims have been made. As far as possible, approval of arrangements to alter the deadline for completion of module assessment (whether coursework submission or formal examination) must be made in advance of the deadline.

iv. Exceptional circumstances claims submitted against open assessments at least 72 hours prior to the original deadline must be considered in time for the student to make the original deadline in the event that their claim is denied. Students submitting extension requests should be advised to work to the original deadline unless/until they have received notification of the acceptance of their claim.

v. External Examiners must not be involved in the exceptional circumstances procedure.

vi. The usual means of compensating for exceptional circumstances affecting an assessment should be either an extension on the original assessment or the opportunity to take the assessment 'as if for the first time', including where assessments are taken in the final year. It is expected that most re-assessments and attempts 'as if for the first time' will be taken or will have a hand-in date during the resit week in August. Marking of assessments will be completed by the end of August each year.

vii. Where a student is taking an assessment 'as if for the first time' the new mark will stand. The original mark cannot be used except with the approval of Special Cases Committee on a case-by-case basis. Such approval is expected to be very exceptional. For example, this may be considered where the 'sit as if for the first time' is, in itself, affected by accepted exceptional circumstances, and the original attempt, but not the 'sit as if for the first time', meets the progression requirements.

viii. Where the sit 'as if for the first time' is itself separately damaged for a continuing student with no more than 40 credits of affected modules, and the marks in the affected modules would otherwise allow progression to the following stage, the student can be allowed to progress to the following stage. The 'sit as if for the first time' can be completed in the subsequent year, and the student's 'best attempt' will be used.

ix. Consideration of exceptional circumstances must always take place prior to consideration of the assessment result by the Board of Examiners/Board of Studies.

x. If the ECA committee has been notified of exceptional circumstances at the appropriate time but the evidence has not been supplied, it may make a provisional decision if the following conditions are met:

   a. The student has stated the nature of the evidence;
   b. The student has stated why it is not currently available and the ECA Committee accepts the reason(s);
   c. The student has stated when the evidence will be available;
   d. The student is informed that if the evidence submitted does not meet the required standard, the provisional decision will be rescinded.
   e. The student is advised that they may complete the assessment at the standard time in order to ensure that they are not unduly penalised in the event that their claim is not ultimately upheld.

Example: A student has an accident close to the time of assessment and medical evidence has been requested but not supplied by the doctor in time for ECA Committee consideration.

A deadline for appropriate evidence in such cases should be set at no more than 3 weeks after the submission of the original claim. In the event that the evidence is not provided by this date, the provisional acceptance must be rescinded.

xi. When an ECA claim is submitted after the ratification of the assessment marks in question, and when the conditions relating to evidence are not met, the ECA claim cannot be accepted, and the student must follow the procedure for academic appeals through Special Cases Committee if they wish to have their circumstances considered.

xii. Exceptional Circumstances affecting Assessment and Academic Misconduct Policy

Circumstances which might be acceptable as exceptional under this policy will not normally be acceptable as a defence against the award of penalties in relation to academic misconduct. For the treatment of exceptional circumstances with respect to academic misconduct, please refer to the Academic Misconduct Policy.

Example: The death of a close relative is an exceptional circumstance under this policy, since the death adversely affected the student's performance on the assessment for which that mark was awarded. But this death will not waive any requirement of capping of marks for having committed academic misconduct on an assessment. A student in this situation will be entitled to sit the assessment as if for the first time, but the cap will apply to the further attempt.

xiii. Exceptional Circumstances Policy and Equality

The Policy should be applied in accordance with the University's equality policies, which are located at www.york.ac.uk/admin/eo/policies/index.htm

23.6 Procedure for the consideration of exceptional circumstances

i.   *Deadlines for submission of exceptional circumstances*

The deadline for exceptional circumstances claims will be seven days after the affected assessment. Any claim submitted late without good reason should not be considered, and the student should be informed of their right to appeal to the Special Cases Committee within 28 days.

When students are incapacitated they must complete the University's Exceptional Circumstances Claim Form within a week of the normal deadline for completion of the assessment, though they may be accepted later where the claim form is accompanied by compelling evidence detailing good reasons for late submission. Claims of exceptional circumstances must not be considered at the (Combined) ECA Committee level without completion of the form and provision of supporting evidence. Third party applications for consideration of exceptional circumstances should not be accepted unless it can be shown that the student lacks capacity.

Exceptional circumstances claims submitted during the period of an open assessment with appropriate evidence should be considered before the deadline for the assessment. In such a case, the Chair and one other member may make a decision.

ii. *Timing of meetings*

The (Combined) ECA Committee must consider all outstanding cases at the conclusion of each Common Assessment Period, and more frequently when required. The meeting must be held in sufficient time to allow its recommendations to be input into the student record system (SITS), that is, at least three working days prior to any relevant Board of Examiners meeting in order that these recommendations may appear on the relevant reports.

iii. *Confidentiality*

Consideration of exceptional circumstances cannot be anonymous but should, however, remain confidential i.e. shared with relevant members of the committee on a need to know basis. Students cannot share information pertaining to exceptional circumstances but demand that it not be shared in consideration. Discussions and decisions should not normally be disclosed outside the ECA Committee and the recording of decisions. Students should be encouraged to discuss their circumstances with their supervisor, but circumstances should not be disclosed by the ECA Committee. It should be noted,

however, that in cases where a student makes an appeal against a decision of the ECA Committee, the documentation may need to be seen by the Chair of the Board of Studies for comment if requested by the Special Cases Committee in its investigation of an appeal. In addition, the Chair of Board of Studies may need to see the documentation if a recommendation needs to be made to the Special Cases Committee (for example, for a programme extension).

iv. Where the student is offered an attempt 'as if for the first time', the options which will be available if that attempt is failed must be explained to the student before the attempt takes place. Where a student fails an assessment taken 'as if for the first time' during the August resit week, or where the assessment is itself affected by exceptional circumstances, a leave of absence or suspension of enrolment may be needed to accommodate any further assessment (or re-assessment).

v. The student must be informed in writing of the decision within three working days of a decision being made, including explicit reference to their right to appeal to Special Cases Committee within 28 days of the formal notification if they are dissatisfied with the decision. Notification from a University email address to the student's University email address is acceptable.

vi. When the procedure has been completed, the Exceptional Circumstances Claim Form and supporting evidence should be retained on the student's departmental file in a sealed envelope or in a password protected electronic file. This should state that the information contained can only be accessed by a member of the (combined) ECA Committee or the Chair of the (Combined) Board of Studies in the event that Special Cases Committee, or a member of the University investigating a complaint, request their comment as part of an appeal/complaint being investigated, or if the Board of Studies is required to make a recommendation to Special Cases Committee on behalf of the ECA Committee.

vii. The student record system (SITS) should be updated with all decisions as soon as possible and, in any case, within a week of each formal meeting.

viii. Where exceptional circumstances are claimed against a module delivered outside of a student's home department(s), students may be offered extensions or sits as if for the first time at the next available opportunity. Any additional or alternative assessments can only be offered with the agreement of the host department, and where pedagogic and practical concerns make them practicable.

ix. Any requests for consideration of exceptional circumstances which fall outside this procedure should be submitted to Special Cases Committee for consideration.

23.7   Students with Disabilities

Students with physical or mental impairments that have a substantial and long-term negative impact on their ability to study should seek support and reasonable adjustments to assessment through Disability Services. Support and reasonable adjustments, including variable adjustments such as extensions for fluctuating conditions, should be approved as part of a Student Support Plan, and should not be accommodated using the Exceptional Circumstances Policy.

Students with disabilities can claim exceptional circumstances where adjustments have not been made in time for an assessment, so long as the delay in the implementation of the adjustments was not caused by the student. Consideration of disability as an exceptional circumstance may also be appropriate where evidence is provided that an abnormal or unforeseeable temporary change or increase in severity of the disability has occurred. The ECA Committee would need to consider whether the student had the experience or time to manage the situation. Students with disabilities are, of course, also able to use the Exceptional Circumstances procedure when they encounter circumstances other than their disability which meet the criteria of the policy and go beyond their disabilities.[10]

23.8   Adjustment of Undergraduate degree outcomes in light of exceptional circumstances

Adjustment of undergraduate degree outcomes (e.g. raising of degree class) is never allowed as a response to circumstances that can be dealt with through the normal ECA procedures. Only the outcomes in section C above can be applied, and these will only apply to individual assessments.

However, in rare cases a recommendation for a higher class of degree can be made to Special Cases Committee where it has *not been possible* for exceptional circumstances to be submitted and considered before the end of the stage of the programme during which they occurred. The award of a higher class of degree would only be recommended following full and formal consideration of the individual circumstances of any such case.

Example: A student is diagnosed with a disability which is of an on-going nature, e.g. dyslexia, during their third year. Adjustments are made for that academic year, an improvement in academic performance is noted and the student's final mark is borderline. Assessments in previous stages (when no adjustments were made) are therefore likely to have been affected by the disability.

All such recommendations will be considered by the Special Cases Committee, and must be received by Wednesday of week 10 of Summer Term in order to allow them to be considered before the Summer Senate and graduation.

In the event that such a recommendation is accepted by the Special Cases Committee, the following ratios will be applied to the credit weighted stage averages in order to determine whether the student reaches the required average for the higher degree classification:

	2nd Stage Affected	3rd Stage Affected	4th Stage Affected
Bachelor's Degree	1:3	N/A	N/A
Integrated Masters	1:3:3	4:3:8	N/A
	2:3:8		N/A

---

[10] Where students have disabilities which are unpredictable or variable in nature, and where there is evidence that extensions may be required on some work, disability services can recommend that these be dealt with outside of the exceptional circumstances policy. But in these cases, the recommendation must be included in the Student's Student Support Plan, and be approved by the department (who must assure the Standing Committee on Assessment that such extensions are in keeping with the learning outcomes of the programme) (See: Guide to Assessment, Standards, Marking and Feedback, Section 4.3.2).

Please note: any exceptional circumstances which affected the final year of study must be addressed using the provisions in the other sections of this policy, including extensions and sits as if for the first time.

The consideration of such a case does not require that the student be in a 'borderline' area before the alternate weighting is applied, although departments would not normally be expected to make a recommendation to Special Cases Committee where the application of the ratio would make no difference to the student's degree classification. Should the recommendation be approved, the award mark which is shown on the student transcript will remain the traditional 2:3 or 2:3:3 ratio. Only the degree classification will change.

23.9   Policy on Aegrotat Degrees

In the event that a student is rendered, or can be reasonably judged to have become, permanently unable to complete their studies as the result of documented medical, personal or compassionate circumstances, the Board of Examiners may propose that a student be awarded an aegrotat award.

i.   Any aegrotat proposal should be for the next exit point after the student's most recent progression. In order to support such a proposal, the Board of Examiners must present evidence that the student is likely to have met any programme level learning outcomes, and to show that the student was achieving at the appropriate level for the award in question. In order to be considered, the student will normally have been enrolled for more than half of the teaching or research period between the exit award for which the student is already eligible and the progression or award point for the level of award being proposed.

ii.   For research degree and the ISM stage of Taught Postgraduate degrees, the Boards of Examiners must present a statement from the supervisor indicating the scope of the project, and evidence that the student was likely to achieve the standard of research appropriate for the award. The proposal must also be supported by at least one piece of written work which indicates that the student is capable of producing work at the appropriate level (potentially produced during the taught portion of the degree). Where appropriate, the supervisor's report should point the external examiner and the Special Cases Committee to the salient points of the written submission.

iii. Successful completion of a confirmation of study examination for a research student is not necessarily an indication that such a student should be considered for an aegrotat PhD rather than an MPhil, but rather any proposal for an aegrotat research degree should be based on the extent and quality of the research completed (whilst making allowances for its incomplete nature), and measured against the standards of the award in question without the benefit of a viva.

iv. The recommendation of an aegrotat award of the MPhil should be made if the examiners are of the view that the available sections of the thesis are of good presentation and style and with the supervisor' report shows evidence of the student's proficiency in the methods and techniques of research, demonstrating and adequate knowledge and discussion of the literature in a specific field of study. It must show initiative, independence of thought and must be a distinct contribution to scholarship.

v. The recommendation of an aegrotat award of the PhD degree should be made if the examiners are of the view that the available sections of the thesis are of good presentation and style and, with the supervisor' report, show evidence of being a significant contribution to knowledge and of the student's capacity to pursue further research without supervision. The thesis must contain a significant amount of material worthy of publication.

vi. Aegrotat awards will not be classified. They will make reference to the subject studied, though non-aegrotat award at the same level may not.

vii. All proposals for aegrotat awards must have the approval of an external examiner before being put to the Special Cases Committee. This includes research degrees, where an external examiner may need to be appointed through the normal processes.

Academic Misconduct

24. Policy and Procedures

24.1 Scope

These procedures apply to supplementary, foundation certificate[1], foundation degree, certificate, diploma, undergraduate, graduate, pre-Masters[1], taught postgraduate and research programmes of study. They apply to all assessed work, even if that work does not contribute to an award, to module marks or to progression.

24.2 The forms of academic misconduct

The University is committed to developing high standards of academic practice among its staff and students, and to safeguarding the standards of its academic awards to individuals. The University regards any form of academic misconduct as an extremely serious matter [see Regulation 5.7].

Academic misconduct offences are divided into two categories: assessment and disciplinary. Assessment offences are committed by a student(s) in work submitted for assessment for their own programme of study and for which the penalty or judgement can be applied to the assessed piece of work. Disciplinary offences are offences committed by students, or staff, that are intended to gain an advantage in assessment (for themselves or for others) where the penalty cannot normally be attached to a specific piece of their own academic work.

In order to be confident about the standards of academic awards it is essential that work submitted for assessment is a fair reflection of the abilities of the student having used *legitimate* resources and forms of support in the production of their academic work. The definitions listed below seek to make the boundaries between authorised and unauthorised support clearer than they have been in policy documents previously. For example, the offence of commission and incorporation states clearly that it is an offence for students to use commercial essay writing services, or to seek the help of friends and family in improving their work. Similarly, the definition of the offence of personation has been widened to cover the relatively new phenomenon of students providing material to commercial essay writing services, as a sign of the University's commitment to academic integrity across the higher education sector.

24.2.1 *Assessment offences*

- Plagiarism – the presentation of ideas, material, or scholarship sourced from the work of another individual, group or entity without sufficient acknowledgement.

---

[1] See 24.3.11 Probationary modules.

- Collusion between students taking the same assessment – is the process whereby two or more students work together – without official approval – and share ideas, solutions or material in work submitted for assessment.
- Cheating – failure to comply with the rules of closed assessments e.g. unauthorised access to materials in a closed assessment.
- Commission and incorporation – to seek to gain advantage by incorporating material in work submitted for assessment that has been improved by, or commissioned, purchased or obtained from, a third party e.g. family members, friends, essay mills or other students not taking the same assessment.
Fabrication – to seek to gain advantage by incorporating falsified or fabricated material or data in work submitted for assessment or publication.

24.2.2   Disciplinary offences

- Personation – one, or both of, a) to produce work for another student with the reasonable expectation that the incorporation of that work is intended to deceive an examiner, b) to appear as another student in an assessment(s).
- Deception – presenting fabricated or misleading evidence to gain advantage in assessment arrangements (e.g. exceptional circumstances) or in making research proposals.
- Unethical research behaviour – unethical behaviour in the undertaking of research or in seeking funding e.g. including failure to obtain appropriate permission to conduct research, unauthorised use of information which was acquired confidentially, failure to acknowledge work conducted in collaboration, fraud or misuse of research funds or equipment.
- Academic misconduct involving staff members – any offence, as defined above, involving staff members who are also students.
Academic misconduct alleged subsequent to the conferment of an award – any offence, as defined above, alleged or discovered after the award of a degree from the University of York.

24.2.3   Differential procedures for assessment and disciplinary offences of academic misconduct

Offences 1-5 (assessment offences) are dealt with within departments and faculties through Standing Academic Misconduct Panels.

Offences 6-11 (disciplinary offences) are dealt with by University disciplinary procedures or other existing mechanisms. (See Regulation 7)

24.2.4   Students carrying forward penalties from the previous Academic Misconduct scheme

If a student has already committed an offence under the academic misconduct scheme in place prior to October 2014 the offence is *not* counted if a second offence of the same type is committed under the new scheme i.e. two offences of the same type need to be committed under the new scheme for the penalties for second offences to apply. However, any penalties already accrued under the previous academic misconduct scheme should still be deducted from the final award mark.

24.3   General principles

24.3.1   Standard of proof

It is sufficient to establish cases of academic misconduct 'on the balance of probabilities', rather than 'beyond all reasonable doubt'. This means that the StAMP needs only believe that it is likely that misconduct occurred, rather than the process requiring that the evidence be indisputable that misconduct has occurred.

24.3.2   Responsibility of the student

The student shall be considered responsible for the academic integrity of all work they submit for assessment, including group assessments. If insufficiently acknowledged material is discovered in open assessments by examiners, the question of whether the student has behaved (or intended to behave) dishonestly or unethically must not be a factor in the decision to report the case to the relevant assessment officer or not; and expressions of a lack of intent are not a valid justification for misconduct. This principle that the student is responsible for their actions also applies to the reporting of any illicit material brought into closed examinations by students.

24.3.3   Sufficient acknowledgement of sources

The aim in all assessed work should be for the student to make the clear distinction between their own ideas and those drawn from other sources. The University expects all scholars to be able to paraphrase source material with appropriate citations, include page references in the citations appropriately where material is quoted directly, present secondary citations in a way that makes clear the extent of their own scholarship, present data accurately, produce an accurate reference list and consistently follow the referencing system mandated by their department(s), or editors of journals and/or commissioners of other academic outputs.

The extent to which students deviate from this expectation should be reflected in the marks given to the work and the degree to which a student should be adjudged to be deliberately misleading the examiner(s) in the presentation of the work.

Sufficient acknowledgement of sources is also expected of students in closed examinations, although the form that acknowledgement takes may be less onerous than in open assessments.

24.3.4   Improving of assessed work by third parties prior to submission

The aim of assessment is to establish the level of understanding, skills and performance of the individual student enrolled on the programme rather than measuring the extent of the student's social and/or familial networks' level of understanding, skills and performance. Proofreading should only be done in accordance with the University Guidance on Proofreading, which can be found here:
http://www.york.ac.uk/media/abouttheuniversity/supportservices/academicregistry/registryservices/guide/Guidance%20on%20Proofreading.pdf

Students are responsible for making the guidelines on proofreading, and the rules against commissioning clear to any third party they ask to check their work for English language usage and presentation.

Formal support mechanisms, such as support given in acknowledgement of a specific disability and agreed by the relevant Board of Studies, are not considered to be inappropriate support.

24.3.5   Penalising assessment offences of academic misconduct

Wherever possible it is the module to which the assessment is connected that contains the penalty for academic misconduct. This will ensure the effect of any mark reduction is proportionate to the stage of the degree. The mark awarded to a piece of work affected by academic misconduct should, as a matter of principle, be treated the same as any other mark awarded as a part of the award (e.g. a module failed as a result of academic misconduct will be treated in the same way as a module failed for inadequate scholarship or incorrect work.) Marks caps for academic misconduct are applied before any other penalty e.g. late submission or over-length work.

24.3.6   Exceptional Circumstances

Where academic misconduct is alleged or suspected, a student may not use exceptional circumstances – as defined by the University's Exceptional Circumstances affecting Assessment Policy - as a defence. The only exception to the general inability of a student to claim exceptional circumstances with regards to academic misconduct are circumstances where, in the professional opinion of mental health specialists, the student's psychological state at the time of the offence was such that they were unable to differentiate between morally right and morally wrong in relation to their actions (cf. The Exceptional Circumstances Affecting Assessment Policy Section E.xi. at http://www.york.ac.uk/students/support/academic). Investigatory panels should not infer the inability to differentiate between right and wrong from a more general diagnosis of mental health issues; the professional evidence presented to the panel must specifically address this question in relation to the student's psychological state at the time of the alleged offence.

In the event that exceptional circumstances are claimed and upheld against the same assessment for which a suspicion on misconduct is upheld, any marks caps applied to the original assessment will also apply to any 'sit as if for the first time' allowed to compensate for the exceptional circumstance. The student should be informed of this, but may benefit from the 'sit as if for the first time' if their original mark was not as high as the cap set by the StAMP.

Examiners should not, if a claim of exceptional circumstances has been made, use the existence of those circumstances as a factor in the decision to report the case to the module co-ordinator, departmental StAMP representative or SCA regardless of whether the claim has been accepted by the ECA Committee.

24.3.7   Failure to detect academic misconduct in the past

Where academic misconduct is alleged or suspected, a student may not use as a defence the failure of any member of academic staff to detect academic misconduct at an earlier point in time in their studies.

When a suspicion is raised about a given piece of work, departments may not return to any work prior to the current assessment period to refer it to a StAMP or apply penalties. Departments may, however, review previous work outside of the StAMP procedures to determine if any pedagogic or formative feedback can be given to the student and considered by the department based on patterns of behaviour across multiple pieces of work.

24.3.8   Misconduct in formative work

Formative assessment is primarily designed to give feedback on progress and inform development but does not contribute to a module mark. In this spirit, if the affected work does not count towards an award, a transcript mark, or a progression decision, the misconduct should normally be addressed by specific and extensive feedback on the issue that has raised concern.

24.3.9   Misconduct in re-assessment tasks

Where a student commits academic misconduct and subsequently fails a progression hurdle, a resit opportunity for the module or modules affected by academic misconduct may be granted if the programme regulations would ordinarily provide a resit opportunity to a student who had obtained the same profile of marks without misconduct. The marks obtained at resit will be used to make a progression decision in the usual way.

If a student is found to have committed misconduct in a reassessment and thereby fails the progression hurdle, no further reassessment opportunity should be given, except with the explicit permission of the Special Cases Committee (See the Exceptional Circumstances Policy, Section E.vi.).

24.3.10   Standing Academic Misconduct Panels (StAMPs)

One of the overarching aims of the Academic Misconduct Policy is to ensure consistency of decision-making and judgements across academic departments and units in relation to the handling of academic misconduct cases. The Standing Academic Misconduct Panels (StAMPs) are the mechanism by which the University will ensure Academic Misconduct procedures reflect the assessment principles of consistency, clarity, transparency and equity.

The Standing Committee on Assessment, acting on behalf of the University, will constitute a Standing Academic Misconduct Panel (StAMP) for each of the three faculties. The StAMP is a pool of staff comprised of nominated academic members of departments or centres within the faculty. Departments will normally provide two to three academic members of staff to their faculty StAMP, but will be asked to identify additional staff to cover in the event of extended period of absences of their StAMP representatives.

When a case of academic misconduct requires the investigation of a StAMP, a panel will be formed and be chaired by a member of the department from which the affected module originates and two other members from the faculty of which their department is a member. This is to ensure a consistent approach to academic misconduct cases can be fostered whilst also sharing caseloads between members of staff.

24.3.11 Probationary modules

Some modules will be deemed to be 'probationary'. Suspected incidences of plagiarism and collusion that take place in probationary modules can be dealt with outside of the normal procedures, and exclusively within the department. The emphasis in terms of response should be on the student correcting their errors and understanding of academic integrity, although a marks reduction will normally still be appropriate. Modules in Stage 1 of all undergraduate programmes are deemed to be probationary unless otherwise approved (see below), as are all modules offered by the International Pathway College at both Foundation Certificate and Pre-Masters level. Probationary modules in other stages of an undergraduate programme or anywhere on a Taught Postgraduate programme and non-probationary modules in Stage 1 of an undergraduate programme need the specific approval of the Standing Committee on Assessment. Boards of Examiners should keep a record of any modules exceptionally included or excluded as probationary.

24.3.12 Second offences

Second offence means an offence discovered after procedures for the first offence have been completed.

24.4 The Academic Misconduct procedures

These procedures should be followed for students on all programmes.

They are illustrated in a flow chart in Appendix 1.

24.4.1 Initiating procedures

Initiating the procedures in respect of plagiarism

Where the examiner(s) believes that the assessed work contains evidence of plagiarism (i.e. the insufficient acknowledgement of sources) the examiner(s) must come to a decision about the extent of the misconduct:

a) Where there is the occasional referencing error (i.e. where the same minor error is not frequently repeated or a pattern of mistakes cannot be seen), the marker notes this in the feedback and is specific about the error and can reduce the mark or not using academic judgement or departmental policy/grade descriptors. Work matching this description need not be referred to the Standing Academic Misconduct Panel.

b) Where there is evidence of more widespread or systematic misunderstanding, or of badly executed paraphrasing or acknowledgement of sources, or of another misconduct offence then the examiner(s) should bring this to the attention of the module co-ordinator together with evidence of the errors/misrepresentation that is causing concern. The module co-ordinator will then send details of the case(s) to academic-misconduct@york.ac.uk.

c) The information provided must include the student's name, number, and programme of study, and the student's previous record in relation to academic misconduct.

d) The examiner must provide a statement indicating the reasons for their suspicion, and evidence of the suspicious nature of the assessment (potentially including a Turnitin report, or annotated copy of the script). This statement should indicate specific pages, paragraphs or phrases which are raising concern, rather than simply being an indication of duplicated text, and should include enough detail to allow the panel to investigate without subject specific knowledge.

e) A member of the exams team, acting on behalf of the Standing Committee on Assessment, will nominate a StAMP member from the reporting department/unit to act as Chair on the case and provide the names of two other StAMP members who will be assigned to the case(s), together with an SCA contact. The StAMP investigatory panel will normally be assigned within 5 working days of the initial report.

Initiating the procedures in respect of cheating

Where the invigilator(s) of a closed examination have reported a suspected case of cheating any unauthorised material must be removed, a full report made using the 'Unauthorised Material Form' and the Exams Office informed immediately following the exam.

The report from the Senior Invigilator, the evidence and the details of the student will be sent by the Exams Office to a nominated departmental representative(s) of the relevant Standing Academic Misconduct Panel to initiate a StAMP investigatory panel meeting or other form of consultation. The Exams Office will also nominate a SCA member to assist the StAMP investigatory panel.

Initiating the procedures for disciplinary misconduct offences

The process in respect of the defined disciplinary offences is different as they fall under the remit of University Regulations, Ordinances or Human Resources policies and procedures.

The University's Regulation 7 deals with matters of student discipline. Among the actions that could be pursued under the disciplinary procedure is the offence of fraud, deception or dishonesty towards the University, its members or visitors. Disciplinary offences 6, 7 and 8 would constitute such behaviour.

Regulation 7.2.3 explains the need for an investigation to establish, on the balance of probabilities that an offence has occurred. This section also explains the Head of Department's power to fine a student up to the maximum detailed in the regulation for disciplinary offences, and that the relevant Board of Studies may also, following consultation with the Registrar and Secretary, recommend to the Vice Chancellor that the student be suspended or excluded.

Members of the exams office may consult with the Assistant Registrar: Student Progress, the Chair of Standing Committee on Assessment and the Academic Registrar in deciding what procedures take precedence.

Deciding what StAMP is appropriate for the specific case

The assessment should determine the StAMP to which the case is referred. In the case of combined degrees the case should be sent to the faculty StAMP relevant to the module the assessment is attached to. Cases from supplementary programmes e.g. Languages for All, CELT and the Centre for Lifelong Learning should be directed towards the most appropriate faculty based on departmental affiliation or discipline of the module in question. The Assistant Registrar: Student Progress will make the decision if there is uncertainty.

24.4.2 The initial consideration by the StAMP investigatory panel

Responsibility for initiating the StAMP investigatory panel's consideration of the case(s)

It is the responsibility of the StAMP representative from the department that reports the case(s) of academic misconduct to contact the other nominated members of the StAMP investigatory panel in order to consider the case(s).

A StAMP investigatory panel, will/can meet virtually if they prefer and should consider the scripts against other judgements made in the past by the StAMP in order to ensure consistency and to try and eliminate risk of bias. The StAMP investigatory panel has a designated member of SCA to help advise them where necessary and to provide overview of the process. The SCA contact must be copied into all relevant electronic correspondence between members of the investigatory panel and provided with minutes of all meetings.

The StAMP investigatory panel should be convened as quickly as possible so as not to delay unnecessarily the marking and feedback schedule of the reporting department. In the event that one of the members of the StAMP is or appears to have become unavailable to consider a case, the chair of the panel should inform academic-misconduct@york.ac.uk as soon as practicable to allow an alternate to be assigned.

Possible actions as the result of the StAMP investigatory panel's initial consideration of the case(s)

The StAMP investigatory panel makes a judgement as to whether the evidence presented suggests that a full investigation would be appropriate.

a) If the panel determines that the evidence does not warrant further investigation, but that the work nonetheless suffers from poor practice in attribution, and the offence is one where a marks penalty can be applied, the work is returned to the marker to assign a mark and, where appropriate, with a recommendation that the mark should be in the range of 0 to 59 depending on the other qualities of the work. The student should be informed of this decision. Cases where a full investigation is not held will not count as formal cases of academic misconduct against the student's record. These decisions can be considered by future StAMPs if future offences occur, but penalties in future cases should reflect first offences and not second.

b) If it is believed that the case warrants a full investigation (see 3.2 for what would be considered serious in relation to plagiarism), then the StAMP investigatory panel Chair (with support, where appropriate, from their departmental administration team) informs the student that academic misconduct is suspected, provides sample evidence and requests a response from the student within 7 days. The student(s) should also be encouraged to seek advice from supervisors, the Students' Union or Graduate Students' Association. The student can, in response, submit a written statement or request an interview with the relevant StAMP investigatory panel (though it should be made clear to students that there is no inherent advantage to an interview in the majority of cases).

c) In cases of suspected collusion the StAMP investigatory panel may interview the students at this point in proceedings to establish whether it is collusion.

d) In the event that the student elects to attend an interview, or that the panel determines that an interview is the most appropriate way to determine the nature of the offence, the Chair of the StAMP investigatory panel must ensure that students are afforded sufficient time (normally 7 days) before the interview to seek advice or to arrange to be accompanied. Students have the same right to be accompanied at a StAMP panel interview as they do for an academic appeal hearing: see the Academic Appeals procedure for details. Any interview must include at least two members of the StAMP investigatory panel, including the Chair, and the third member should be consulted before any decision is made.

e) Where it is the panel, rather than the student, who determine that an interview is required, all reasonable means should be taken to inform the student, and the student should be asked to acknowledge receipt of this information prior to the date of the interview. If the student does not respond, however, the procedure should not be halted. A panel may make this determination even after a written submission by a student.

Possible action following the submission of a student statement to, or interview with, the StAMP investigatory panel

a) If, on the balance of probabilities, misconduct is established, the StAMP investigatory panel determines the penalty to be applied in accordance with Section 3 of this document, and sends the report and decision to the student, and to the SCA (via academic-misconduct@york.ac.uk) for reporting purposes. The letter informing the student of a decision to apply a penalty should state the appeal procedures and be sent to the student within 7 days of a StAMP investigatory panel decision having been made.

b) The StAMP investigatory panel can request further information from the student and/or the department.

c) The StAMP investigatory panel can decide that on the balance of probabilities misconduct has not occurred, in which case the work is returned to the marker to assign a mark, with or without a recommendation that the mark should be restricted to the 0 to 59 marks range as appropriate for the standard of scholarship.

d) Wherever possible, cases should be resolved prior to departmental Boards of Examiners meeting to ratify marks. It is accepted that the need to allow students to appropriately respond, and to allow the panel to reach a just decision may make this impossible. Where this is the case, the student's marks should be considered by a special ratification panel as soon as possible after the conclusion of the investigation.

24.5   Academic Misconduct penalties

24.5.1   *Plagiarism and collusion that occurs in a probationary module*

	Plagiarism
Penalty menu	Choice of any/all of the following: • Marks cap • Thorough feedback if there is opportunity to submit further work on the module • Academic integrity tutorial to be completed 'as if for first time' • Undertake Turnitin training and use as condition of submission in future • Complete Academic Skills Tutorials on Yorkshare • Consult referencing guidance at www.york.ac.uk/integrity • Correct work (de-anonymised) and show it to module markers for checking of referencing as condition of progression

	Collusion		
	• Marks cap • Academic integrity tutorial to be completed 'as if for first time' • Independent work on a new attempt at the same assessment (de-anonymised), with module markers checking that it is the student's own work, as condition of progression		
Second Offence	Formal Warning		

24.5.2   *Misconduct that occurs in a module which is not probationary*

		UG	PG
Misconduct	Completely or near completely copied from somewhere else, fabricated, or produced as the result of collusion. Work displays little or no independent academic value. In the case of cheating, all cases where the extent of the advantage of the unauthorised material cannot be absolutely determined.	0	0
	A piece of work that suggests that the inclusion of unattributed material is characteristic of the general approach, and/ or where the key ideas central to the assignment are discussed using unattributed material, should normally fail outright.	Upper ceiling of mark set at 29	Upper ceiling of mark set at 39
	The panel may decide, in their academic judgement, to place the work in the compensatable fail range if they judge that there has been an honest attempt to acknowledge source(s) (however imperfectly).	Upper ceiling of mark set at 39	Upper ceiling of mark set at 49

Poor Practice	A 2:1 (UG) or Merit (PG) mark should not normally be awarded to a piece of work where there is any one or a combination of: • repeated minor errors or inconsistencies in referencing or bibliographic accuracy, • inaccurate quotation, • a number of and/ or lengthy incidences of paraphrasing or synthesis of material that is inappropriately close to the wording of the original source, as these suggest a lack of understanding of requirements rather than careless error.	Upper ceiling of mark set at 59	Upper ceiling of mark set at 59
Presentational Errors	A piece of work that features isolated minor referencing/ bibliographic errors or one or two occasions that are suggestive of careless error, and/or where short sections constitute paraphrasing or synthesis of material that is inappropriately close to the wording of the original source, should receive a small identified reduction in marks by the marker but is not otherwise restricted.	Written feedback should refer to a marks reduction having been given, but the student feedback must also guide the student as to the exact error made and the correct format not just say 'referencing needs attention' or similar.	Written feedback should refer to a marks reduction having been given, but the student feedback must also guide the student as to the exact error made and the correct format not just say 'referencing needs attention' or similar.

	Misconduct	Poor practice in attribution	Presentational errors
Second Offence	Where both first and second offence marks are outright fails because of content affected by misconduct – recommendation to the Vice Chancellor to permanently exclude.	Formal Warning of expulsion if further offences. Penalties from the 'first offence' menu may be applied if offence appear to represent 'poor practice'	Feedback warning with or without a marks deduction

The following measures can be taken regardless of the level of culpability, as corrective pedagogic requirements. Their completion can be set as a requirement for progression to the next stage of study or for completion of the award:

- Required to retake academic integrity tutorial
- Required to undertake Turnitin training
- Required to consult referencing guidance at york.ac.uk/integrity
- Required to resubmit corrected work to module leader
- Required to resubmit corrected work to StAMP Chair
- Required to meet with Learning Enhancement Team to discuss the work

24.5.3   *Guidance on the extent of misconduct for StAMP investigatory panel decision making*

What is meant by the 'general approach' to the assessment task?

Problems with the general approach to the assessment task may be indicated by numerous sentences of unattributed source material being found throughout the assignment. Work falling into the serious category *may*, in the view of the StAMP investigatory panel, follow a pattern that suggests an intention to deceive as opposed to errors in referencing or presentation that could reasonably be attributed to misunderstanding. Seriousness and intention is a matter of judgement for the StAMP investigatory panel and it is not the intention of the policy and procedures to set rigid benchmarks re indicating X paragraphs/ X percent of the overall assignment has to be copied for it to count as serious academic misconduct, nor to suggest that a StAMP investigatory panel has to believe the plagiarism is deliberate in order to reach a judgement that the plagiarism is serious. The StAMP investigatory panel is required to act consistently as far as it can in comparing cases across the cluster in order to establish credibility and ensure equity in student cases.

A finding of a serious offence of collusion would be justified by a high level of duplication in work, particularly as regards key concepts, arguments or data in the submitted work. As with plagiarism, the determination of seriousness should not be made based on the total number of duplicate (or colluded) words, but rather the relative value of the colluded material to the submission relative to the work of independent academic value.

In cases of fabrication or commissioning, panels should be considering the value of the material being fabricated or commissioned, and the likelihood that the student could have reasonably believed the fabricated material to be legitimate for inclusion in academic work. It is unlikely that any work containing fabricated or commissioned work, or exams affected by cheating, could justify a mark above the pass mark. Where students are found to have committed these offences, the penalty would normally be a zero in the affected assessment.

What warrants a StAMP investigatory panel recommendation for a mark in the Compensatable Fail (CF) range?

The award of a mark in the compensatable fail range for serious plagiarism requires the student – as an absolute minimum – to have included a bibliographic entry allowing the marker to identify each source used, even if the internal citation is not entirely transparent, is absent or the specified

referencing style has not been followed. Where there is no attempt to acknowledge the source or the referencing is so unsystematic to be ambiguous, then an outright fail mark should be given.

In the case of collusion there would need at least to be reason for the student to believe that they were entitled to use the material they presented in the way they did. This might include unacknowledged interpolation or extrapolation in a case of fabrication, or work produced as the result of authorized collaboration used in an inappropriate manner.

Work produced as the result of commission, fabrication or cheating will rarely, if ever, warrant a mark in the compensatable fail range.

What warrants a StAMP investigatory panel recommendation for a mark in the pass to 59 range?

The phrase 'repeated minor errors or inconsistencies in referencing or bibliographic accuracy' refers to assessed work where the student consistently fails to include page references for direct quotations (where house style would suggest that these should be included), has included the secondary references from primary sources in such a way as to make the extent of their own scholarship unclear, has cited a source within the text that does not appear in the reference list, or does not follow the specified referencing system. The extent to which this is a feature of the assessment and should affect the mark is a matter of academic judgment. However, the principle is that students should not be permitted to score above 59 if 'sloppy referencing' is a feature of their work.

The phrase 'inaccurate quotation' refers to the apparent use of direct quotation, but where quotation marks may be missing, the text of the quotation is incorrectly copied, page references in citations are missing or the quotation has been misattributed.

Marks caps of 59 will rarely be appropriate in cases of collusion, fabrication, commission or cheating.

When is detailed and specific feedback warranted rather than initiating the StAMP procedures?

The phrase 'isolated minor referencing/ bibliographic errors' refers to errors that appear to be the result of oversight e.g. inaccurate or missing dates, the failure to include a page reference in a citation or footnote in a work otherwise correctly referenced or a small error in the reference list. These errors should be taken into account when marking and be mentioned in written feedback. A marks reduction is not mandatory but where it is appropriate to reduce marks for errors then this should be a specific feature of the feedback.

24.5.4   Disciplinary offences

Disciplinary offences are dealt with under Regulation 7, and, following an appropriate investigation by the Head of Department or Registrar, can be punished by a fine, or a temporary or permanent exclusion. In the event that misconduct is discovered or suspected subsequent to the award of a degree, or other award, Ordinance 7 applies.

24.6   Composition, responsibilities and procedures relating to Standing Academic Misconduct Panels (StAMPs)

24.6.1   Departmental and unit responsibilities to provide staff to a StAMP

Each department (and centre/unit wherever possible), should nominate two to three members of academic staff to act as their representatives on the StAMP relevant to their programmes of study. Supplementary programmes will normally be members of the StAMP appropriate to the department to which they are affiliated or to the most relevant discipline to the award in question.

24.6.2   Minimum numbers needed for a StAMP investigatory panel to be quorate

A StAMP investigatory panel is quorate with 3 members for decision-making, including the Chair, who is drawn from the department or unit reporting the academic misconduct. A departmental representative should not serve on the StAMP investigatory panel if the case of a personal supervisee is being considered or there is an obvious conflict of interest. At least two members of the StAMP investigatory panel, including the chair, are to be present if a student is interviewed.

24.6.3   How a StAMP investigatory panel considers cases

The Chair circulates material relevant to the case(s) to the other members of the StAMP investigatory panel for their initial decisions. This can be done electronically at the discretion of the StAMP investigatory panel members. Where there is electronic sharing of documentation and email discussion the SCA contact must be included.

The Chairing department is required to supply the administrator for any meetings that are called to consider cases that are judged, after the initial consideration, to be serious. Meetings must be minuted and these minutes must be circulated amongst the investigating panel, including the SCA contact. The department that chairs the StAMP investigatory panel is responsible for sending out letters to students and for concluding the procedures, using standard template letters and forms. Departmental administrative resources are also expected to be used for this work.

24.6.4   Concluding the procedures

All decisions made by the investigatory panels of each StAMP, must be recorded by the Chair of the relevant case(s) in the form designed for this purpose. The SCA representative on each case must be informed of the decision and agree that they are fair. Minutes of meetings of the investigatory

panels should be forwarded to academic-misconduct@york.ac.uk for retention against the student record. Investigatory panels can ask to see minutes of previous meetings as an aid to their decision-making and to support consistency in their judgements.

Where the investigatory panel makes a decision regarding academic misconduct, a copy of the decision is also forwarded to the Chair of Board of Examiners in the reporting department/centre, and to the module co-ordinator and the departmental administrator in the student's department. Where the investigatory panel makes a decision regarding a disciplinary offence a copy of the decision is also forwarded to the Head of Department or Centre.

24.6.5 Sample documents

Examples of letters to students and a report template have been developed to ensure that such letters cover all necessary points. Retention of such letters is particularly important if academic misconduct is found in pieces of work subsequently submitted by students. These letters can be accessed through the StAMP folder in the Google drive to which all StAMP members have access.

24.7 Fitness to Practise and other disciplinary action

Where an academic misconduct offence has been established and this raises concerns about a student's fitness to practise, or if other disciplinary offences are related to the incident of misconduct, then the University's Fitness to Practise or Disciplinary procedures should also be consulted and invoked where necessary.

24.8 Appeals and hearings

24.8.1 Grounds for appeal

When a student is informed of the outcome of the StAMP investigatory panel consideration of their case they must be advised that they have a right to appeal that can be applied for using the forms and guidance at http://www.york.ac.uk/about/departments/supportandadmin/registry-services/appeals/

A student may appeal the decision of a StAMP investigatory panel.

The reasons for appeal are restricted to the following:

a) procedural irregularities on the part of the StAMP investigatory panel;
b) a defence of the psychological inability to distinguish the morally right from the morally wrong, which for good reason was not raised at the time of the original investigation.

The student will be offered the opportunity to appeal the decision under University regulations 2.8 or 6.7, as appropriate.

24.8.2 The right for the SCA contact to instigate a Special Cases Committee hearing

A hearing will always take place if recommended by the SCA contact advising the StAMP investigatory panel on an investigation. The SCA contact will not normally be a member of any Board of Studies, Graduate School Board or department represented on the StAMP investigatory panel.

24.8.3 The Appeal Hearing

The Secretary to the Special Cases Committee will arrange the hearing if necessary. The Special Cases Committee may decide to approve the recommended penalty, to set aside the recommended penalty, or to impose an alternative penalty.

A student who is dissatisfied with the outcome of an appeal or hearing conducted by the Special Cases Committee may make a complaint to the

Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (see http://www.oiahe.org.uk/).

24.8.4 Appeals and research students

Option to replace the examiner or supervisor where academic misconduct is alleged, but not proven in the case of research students

If an internal examiner, external examiner or supervisor initiates the academic misconduct procedures in respect of a research student, and the student is subsequently found not to have committed academic misconduct by the StAMP investigatory panel or by Special Cases Committee, the examiner or supervisor should, where practicable, be replaced, unless both the student and the examiner or supervisor agree otherwise.

Academic misconduct alleged after the examination has taken place

If academic misconduct is alleged or suspected after the examination has taken place, but before the qualification has been awarded or conferred, the award or conferment process shall be suspended pending the outcome of an investigation conducted in accordance with Section 2 above. If the StAMP investigatory panel decides that the academic misconduct warrants it, it may decide that a re-examination of the student is necessary. A re-examination under these circumstances shall be subject to the approval of Special Cases Committee.

If academic misconduct is alleged or suspected after the degree has been conferred, the Senate shall determine the procedures to be followed.

25.   Guidance – General advice and training for students

25.1   Establishing understanding

25.1.1   Induction and handbook entries

Departments and units are required to advise all new students of the various forms of academic misconduct and to warn them of the consequences of committing an offence. In particular, there should be clear advice on the forms of academic misconduct, written in clear and accessible language and with examples appropriate to the department, in student handbooks. Department should encourage students to complete the Academic Integrity Tutorial as early as possible in the programme.

Departments must direct students' attention to this entry and to similar material in the general University handbook at an early stage in their programme of study, as well as at appropriate stages throughout the programme. Departments may require students to sign a statement confirming that they have read and understood this entry. Supervisors should check that their students are aware of the nature of academic misconduct and of the consequences of academic misconduct.

It is good practice to remind students of the expectations regarding academic integrity, and any specific instructions e.g. in relation to group-work, help from family members or what materials can be taken into a closed examination, when they are approaching assessments, so as to leave no room for doubt about their familiarity with the University's requirements.

25.1.2   Induction of postgraduate taught students

Taught postgraduate students may undertake significant components of assessment relatively early in their programme. Programme organisers and supervisors must ensure that students are made aware of the nature of academic misconduct in all its forms prior to any assessment or preparation by the student of work for assessment. Programme organisers and supervisors should pay particular attention to the needs of students who may be studying in the UK for the first time.

25.1.3   Conventions of academic writing

Departments must advise students of the rationale and procedures for the full and accurate acknowledgment of sources in their academic writing (essays, projects, etc.). In particular, departments must advise students on the correct method for citing sources from the Internet for the specific discipline (see, for example, the advice at: http://www.york.ac.uk/integrity).

Students must be informed of the level of acknowledgment appropriate to particular forms of assessment and of the conventions of academic writing, for example, the appropriate use of quotation marks, footnotes and bibliographies, and the dangers of 'near-paraphrasing'.

25.1.4   Specific guidance to students by discipline

Programme and module organisers should ensure that students receive subject, or discipline, specific advice that may not be covered in generic academic integrity guides published by the University e.g. copying code, equations, stylistic aspects of performance.

Where relevant, students must be warned that some common workplace practices (e.g. 'cutting and pasting' unacknowledged material into technical specifications or briefing documents) constitute plagiarism in the context of academic assessment. Similarly, students should be made aware that sharing conventions on social media are different to those in academic work.

25.2   Requirement to complete the online Academic Integrity Tutorial

It is compulsory for all students to complete the Academic Integrity Tutorial on the Yorkshare VLE (virtual learning environment) on each programme of study they enrol on, in order to progress to the next stage of their programme or to receive their award, whichever occurs first. It is recommended that students are required to complete this tutorial successfully during the first term of their programme of study, particularly those on postgraduate programmes.

25.3   Specific instructions to students in relation to working in groups

Departments should ensure that students undertaking group work receive clear guidance on the boundary between legitimate collaboration and misconduct involving collusion. Where academic staff use module specific forms of collaboration and group working in support of the learning outcomes of their module it is their responsibility to clearly define what legitimate collaborative learning is in the context of the module or assessment. This should be reinforced regularly throughout the module.

25.4   Distance learning programmes

Departments offering distance-learning programmes should ensure that issues of academic misconduct are brought to the attention of students studying on these programmes at an early stage, with regular reminders provided over the course of the programme. It is recommended that the usual departmental procedures for delivering information about academic misconduct issues are reviewed regularly in the light of the particular features of this type of study.

25.5   Practical and research projects

Students engaged in practical, laboratory work and/or empirical research projects should be required to maintain appropriate, verifiable records of progress (e.g. a bound lab book), which a party other than the student can verify. These records should be able to be made available at any point for verification.

Departments are required to determine what constitutes verifiable, sustainable and authentic data in their particular discipline.

26. Guidance – General advice to departments and examiners

26.1 Establishing understanding

26.1.1 Induction

Departments and units are required to advise all academic and PGWT appointments about the various forms of academic misconduct that are offences under the University of York policy, procedures and guidelines and to fully explain their responsibilities as module tutors and assessment designers and examiners.

There should be clear advice on the forms of academic misconduct, written in clear and accessible language and with examples appropriate to the department, available to all staff.

26.1.2 Conventions of academic writing and marking

Departments and units are required to advise, guide and support all academic and PGWT staff involved in teaching and assessment in the conventions of academic writing in operation in the department. This should cover the rationale and format of the full and accurate acknowledgment of sources in their academic writing (essays, projects, etc.). Programme organisers should not assume that incoming staff and PGWTs are aware of the academic writing and referencing conventions in use, or their responsibilities as module tutors in respect to the handling of academic misconduct.

26.2 Probationary modules

Full details of the support and development of students who are found to have plagiarised and/or colluded in probationary modules should be supplied to academic-misconduct@york.ac.uk.

26.3 Grade descriptors

It is good practice to ensure that grade descriptors contain clear statements regarding academic integrity measures, especially in relation to referencing of sources. Departments can, if they prefer, add a general statement appended to their grade descriptors that indicates to students that notwithstanding the general qualities of the work, a mark may be awarded outside of the grade band for poor or insufficient acknowledgement of sources. A statement to this effect is also included in the University's Guide to Assessment.

26.4 Detection

It is important that markers are vigilant for academic misconduct in all forms of assessment. Markers are encouraged to carry out random checks on assessed work using internet search engines (such as Advanced Google Search or Google Books) or to employ text matching software such as SafeAssign or Turnitin (see guidance on Yorkshare for the appropriate use of SafeAssign and Turnitin). This advice applies equally to work that does not count towards the final award.
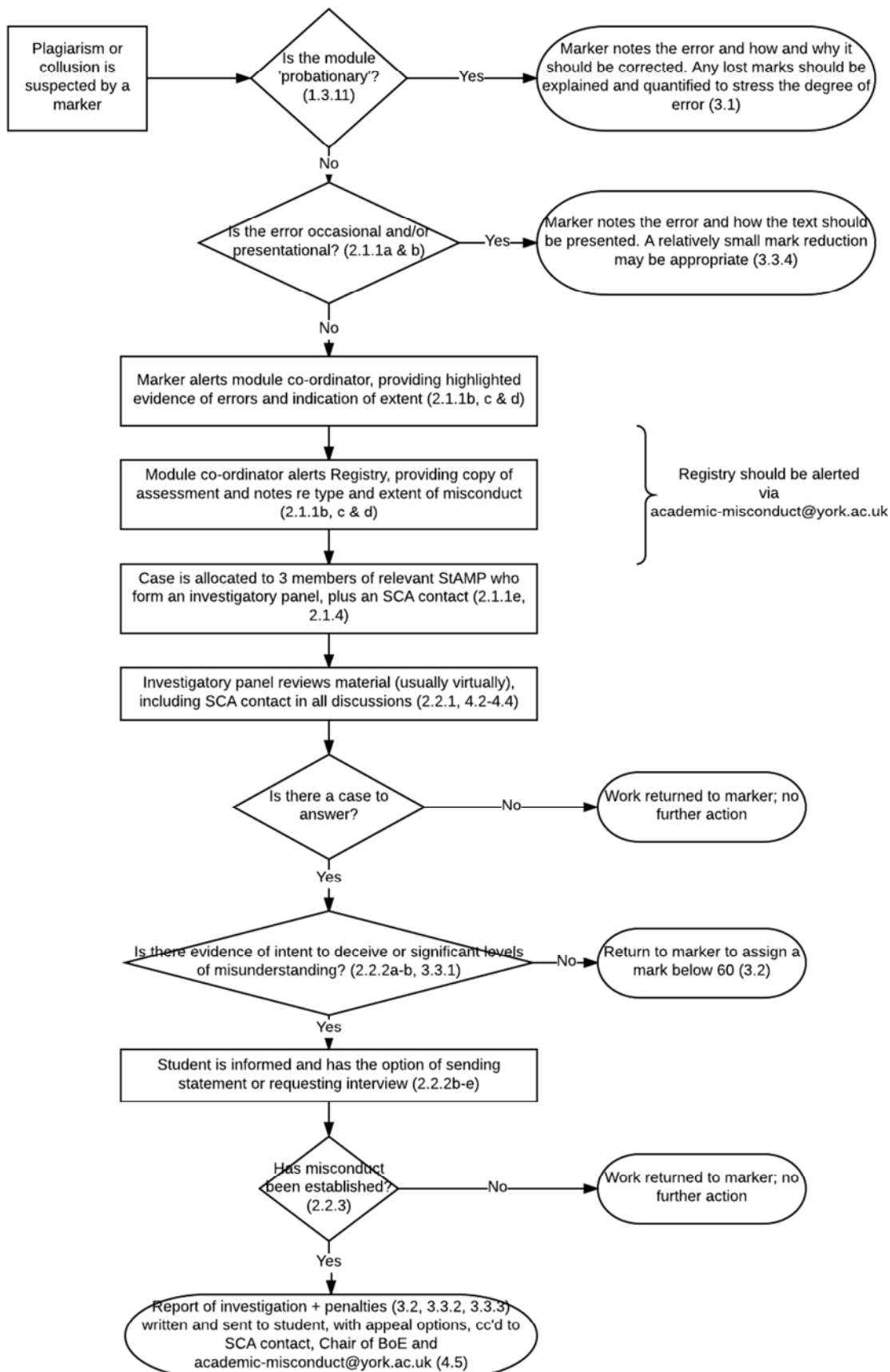
26.5   Appropriate support for students in open assessments

Departments should discuss and agree conventions for the type and extent of formative comments made on students' work, especially where that same piece of work will subsequently be submitted for summative assessment. Staff should be aware that where they have made extensive improving comments and/or amendments directly to the text of formative work this can represent an unfair advantage to students in directly improving their submission. These agreed conventions should be regularly revisited and staff reminded of the departmental conventions re formative feedback and the boundary between feedback and direct improvements that can be incorporated by students in summative work, as opposed to developmental comments on the work.

26.6   Feedback from StAMP members to their departments

The intention of the StAMP system is to encourage intra- and inter-departmental sharing of good practice, expertise and pedagogical approaches to the development of high standards of academic integrity. StAMP representatives are encouraged to report back on at least an annual basis to their Board of Studies comparing the types of cases their own department refers to investigatory panels to other departments in their cluster i.e. not revealing the names of individual students but noting if there are discernible patterns emerging, and recommending changes in practice that would help avoid the common errors and reportable offences.

Appendix 1: Flowchart of procedure for plagiarism or collusion

Plagiarism or collusion is suspected by a marker

Is the module 'probationary'? (1.3.11)

Yes → Marker notes the error and how and why it should be corrected. Any lost marks should be explained and quantified to stress the degree of error (3.1)

No

Is the error occasional and/or presentational? (2.1.1a & b)

Yes → Marker notes the error and how the text should be presented. A relatively small mark reduction may be appropriate (3.3.4)

No

Marker alerts module co-ordinator, providing highlighted evidence of errors and indication of extent (2.1.1b, c & d)

Module co-ordinator alerts Registry, providing copy of assessment and notes re type and extent of misconduct (2.1.1b, c & d)

Registry should be alerted via academic-misconduct@york.ac.uk

Case is allocated to 3 members of relevant StAMP who form an investigatory panel, plus an SCA contact (2.1.1e, 2.1.4)

Investigatory panel reviews material (usually virtually), including SCA contact in all discussions (2.2.1, 4.2-4.4)

Is there a case to answer?

No → Work returned to marker; no further action

Yes

Is there evidence of intent to deceive or significant levels of misunderstanding? (2.2.2a-b, 3.3.1)

No → Return to marker to assign a mark below 60 (3.2)

Yes

Student is informed and has the option of sending statement or requesting interview (2.2.2b-e)

Has misconduct been established? (2.2.3)

No → Work returned to marker; no further action

Yes

Report of investigation + penalties (3.2, 3.3.2, 3.3.3) written and sent to student, with appeal options, cc'd to SCA contact, Chair of BoE and academic-misconduct@york.ac.uk (4.5)

160

Appendix 2: The process for students required to undertake additional training as part of the penalty for academic misconduct

The StAMP believe that a student who has committed academic misconduct requires further training

Should the training be in their home department or by the Learning Enhancement Team?

Home → Home Department oversees the following possible training options: (1) completing the academic integrity tutorial 'as if for the first time', (2) complete the academic skills tutorials on Yorkshare, (3) consult referencing resources on the Academic Integrity website

L.E.T → Learning Enhancement Team undertakes diagnostic discussion with student. An action plan is agreed with the student, which may involve: (1) attending a general, scheduled workshop on academic integrity, (2) specific one-to-one session(s) with LET staff member, (3) Turnitin training.

Supervisor monitors the student's progress and discusses it during supervision meetings/emails

A further action plan is agreed between student, L.E.T and supervisor

Does the student improve sufficiently?

No → Student is referred to Learning Enhancement Team

Does the student improve sufficiently?

No

Yes → No further action

Yes → No further action

Old Modular Scheme – Category 1 Students – Rules for Assessment, Progression and Award

Undergraduate students who enrolled at the University prior to Autumn 2010 and taught postgraduate students who enrolled prior to Autumn 2011 are Category 1 students (also called transitional students) and are not subject to all of the current assessment, progression and award rules. Category 1 students, who are studying on programmes in the previous assessment scheme, have modules codes (e.g. 2010015) that carry a 35% pass mark. Programme specifications for these programmes are available from the relevant departments.

Details of the Rules for Assessment, Progression and Awards for these programmes are available in the 2014/15 Guide to Assessment, Standards, Marking and Feedback.

Appendices

Appendix A

Departmental Policy on Assessment

The University policies on assessment, progression and awards define the majority of practice with regards to student assessment on order to ensure consistency across the institution. There is some allowable variation between disciplines and departments, however, and where institutional policies are not defined, departments are responsible for clearly publishing any policies and practices which affect its students.

Departmental policies must be presented in a durable format (such as a PDF) which forms part of the contract with the students, and which makes clear how assessments will be treated for all students on a given programme. This can take the form of a department or programme handbook, module specifications, or can exist as a stand-alone statement on assessment. These policies should be made easily available to students, and be stored until one year after all students from the affected cohort have completed their programme with the University. Departments are responsible for drawing students' attention to these policies as part of their induction process, and at relevant points in the programme (such as when an unfamiliar assessment format is encountered for the first time, or in the run-up to an assessment period).

Departments are encouraged to include explicit statements documenting the treatment of the following:

  a. An overview of the different types of assessment used in each component of the programme (diagnostic, procedural, formative and summative), their timing, and how they contribute to progression requirements and/or the final award. Any attendance requirements should be stipulated. Approaches to assessment should be explained, particularly if a variety of styles is not used. It is not necessary to include detailed module--by-module descriptions of assessment where these are covered in handbooks or module synopses that are available to students before they embark on each module.

  b. If applicable, a description of how the department will treat assessment of study away from York within the University's study abroad rules.

  c. A description of the marking procedures used by the department, including:

    i.   any assessment which is not based on written or recorded work;

    ii.   arrangements for any non-anonymous marking;

iii.   procedures for double marking, or for alternative arrangements (for example, single marking against specimen answers);

iv.   arrangements for blind double marking where this is practised;

v.   other relevant instructions and guidance to markers; including the treatment of scripts that deviate from the rubric;

vi.   an explanation of how differences in marks between first and second markers are resolved;

vii.   the weightings for different components within modules;

viii.   moderation procedures for individual assessments or modules;

ix.   the involvement of External Examiners in the setting, vetting or approving of marks of individual assessments.

d.   Conventions governing feedback to students on performance (including timing and nature of feedback) and the release of provisional marks. Where work is returned to students, this should be indicated together with procedures for ensuring its future availability to External Examiners. Where specimen assessments and answers are available to students, information should be given in the Written Statement. Where students are allowed supervised access to closed examination scripts details of departmental procedures should be given.

e.   Class descriptors (where appropriate) of expected standards of student attainment for each type of assessment, presented as positive achievements in the framework of intended learning outcomes (including transferable skills). It assists markers to use the full range of the scale if separate descriptors are included for marks in the 70s, 80s and 90s, and similarly for the low end of the scale. Levels of achievement should be calibrated, where appropriate, against Benchmark Statements and/or the FHEQ. Note that undergraduate criteria (e.g. upper second) must not be used to describe postgraduate performance standards. Differentiation by outcome in the context of appropriate assessment criteria may be necessary where undergraduates and postgraduates are taught and assessed together.

f.   The criteria for the recommendation of starred firsts.

g.   A description of examination procedures, including:

i.   guidance for students who seek special arrangements (e.g. dyslexia, medical, disability or other personal reasons);

ii.   procedures for publishing deadlines for submissions;

iii.   procedures for students submitting assessments and for departments issuing receipts;

iv.   policies on penalties (e.g. exceeding word-limits) etc;

v.   arrangements for assessments administered by departments;

vi.   mitigating circumstances procedure.

Departments should also draw students' attention to the relevant university policies regarding assessments, progression, awards, and mitigating circumstances, including the existence of this guide, which also forms part of the student contract.

Appendix B: Glossary

Anonymous marking: the practise of marking a piece of work without knowledge of the identity of the student concerned.

Answer key: A previously agreed list of all the possible correct answers for an exam. To be used by single markers to guide marking.

Assessment and degree classification policies: the general basis and principles upon which a department assesses the performance of its students and determines degree classification.

Assessment and degree classification practices: the general means by which a department assesses the performance of its students and determines degree classification.

Assessment criteria: descriptions of the knowledge, skills and attributes that the learner is expected to demonstrate in order to confirm that learning outcomes have been achieved.

Assessment method: the means of assessing student performance in a component of a programme of study.

Blind marking: the practise of marking a piece of work without knowledge of the mark already assigned to it by another marker.

Credit: A quantified means of expressing equivalence of learning. Credit is awarded to a learner in recognition of the verified achievement of designated learning outcomes at a specified level. One credit corresponds to a notional workload of 10 hours (including all classes, private study and assessment). Definition taken (or modified) from Credit and HE Qualifications: Credit guidelines for HE qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (November 2001).

Credit Level: Indicates the module's relative intellectual demand, complexity and depth of learning and of learner autonomy. Definition taken (or modified) from Credit and HE Qualifications: Credit guidelines for HE qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (November 2001) University guidance on level descriptors is available at: www.york.ac.uk/media/staffhome/ learningandteaching/documents/programme development/Guidance%20 on%20Credit%20Level%20Descriptors.PDF

Compensation: the process by which an assessment board, in consideration of a student's overall performance, recommends that credit be awarded for part of a programme in which a student has failed to satisfy the assessment criteria, on the grounds that positive aspects of the overall performance outweigh the area of failure.

Condonation: the process by which an assessment board, in consideration of a student's performance, recommends that failure in part of the programme does not need to be redeemed in order for the student to progress or to gain the award for which s/he is registered.

Continuous assessment: the practice of assessing students on the basis of programme work undertaken while a module is in progress.

Closed examination: a timed, invigilated examination conducted under traditional examination conditions.

Departmental assessment: assessment administered at departmental level that does not contribute to the final award or to progression from one stage to the next of a programme (see also University assessment).

Diagnostic assessment: is used to show a learner's preparedness for a module or programme and identifies, for the learner and the teacher, any strengths and potential gaps in knowledge, understanding and skills expected at the start of the programme, or other possible problems. Particular strengths may lead to a formal consideration of accreditation of prior learning.

Double marking: the practice of two examiners marking the same piece of work.

Exceptional circumstances: unexpected or disruptive events which are beyond a student's control and are significant enough to adversely affect their academic performance during module work or an examination period.

FHEQ: the QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (see: www.qaa. ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Documents/FHEQ08.pdf).

Formative assessment: has a developmental purpose and is designed to help learners learn more effectively by giving them feedback on their performance and on how it can be improved and/or maintained. Reflective practice by students sometimes contributes to formative assessment.

Foundation Degree: These are programmes designed to be of two years duration full-time or the equivalent part-time, created with an employer's needs in mind and led in conjunction with employers.

Learning outcomes: statements of the knowledge, skills and attributes that a learner is expected to have acquired after completion of a process of learning.

Marking scale: the numerical, alphabetical or other scale used by a department to assign a mark to student work.

Module: A self-contained, formally structured, learning opportunity with a coherent and explicit set of learning outcomes and assessment criteria. A module may comprise elements taught by different departments and its function may vary from one programme to another.

- Core module: a module required for a programme.

- Optional module: a module chosen from a prescribed list of modules within the approved programme (but see D.21).

- Elective module: a free-choice module chosen by a student from across the University and from outside their prescribed programme of study. The primary aim of electives is to enable students to develop skills and knowledge outside their main area(s) of study.

- Pre-requisite module: a module which must be satisfactorily completed prior to embarking on another defined module.

- Co-requisite modules: module(s) which are mutually dependent. Both/all of which must be studied within a particular programme.

- Mutually exclusive modules: modules both/all of which cannot be studied within the same programme. Definitions taken (or modified) from.

- Credit and HE Qualifications: Credit guidelines for HE qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (November 2001).

Open assessment: the practice of assessing students through means other than closed examinations, e.g. through the writing of essays, reports and dissertations, or through non-written or non-recorded work.

PGWT: Postgraduates who teach.

Programme: The set of modules studied for a named award (this may include modules (core or optional) from outside the main department). These are set out in the Programme Specifications and approved by University Teaching Committee.

Programme Specification: Govern a programme of study as an approved pathway leading to a particular named award of the University (for example, BA in Archaeology, BSc in Biology, BA in English and Philosophy). They consist of a defined combination of modules, at an appropriate level, and set out the learning outcomes. These specifications are developed and maintained by Boards of Studies/Combined Boards of Studies/Graduate School Boards and approved by University Teaching Committee. A template /guidance on Programme Specifications will be available soon.

SCA: Standing Committee on Assessment (see: www.york.ac.uk/about/ organisation/governance/sub-committees/sca).

SCC: Special Cases Committee (see: www.york.ac.uk/about/organisation/ governance/sub-committees/special-cases).

Summative assessment: is used to indicate the extent of a learner's success in meeting the assessment criteria used to gauge the intended learning outcomes of a module or programme.

University assessment: assessment contributing to progression from one stage to the next of a programme or to the final award (see also Departmental assessment).

UTC: University Teaching Committee (see: www.york.ac.uk/about/ organisation/governance/sub-committees/teaching-committee).

Weight: the proportional contribution of an assessment (irrespective of module credit rating) to the aggregate mark on which progression or an award is decided.

Appendix C

Assessing individual contributions to group work

Individual mark – based on records / observation of process

Each individual group member's contribution (as defined by pre-determined criteria) is assessed using evidence from:

- team log books
- minutes sheets and / or
- direct observation of process.

They are awarded an individual mark based on this evidence.

Individual mark – for paper analysing process

Marks are awarded for an individual paper from each student analysing the group process, including their own contribution and that of student colleagues.

Student distribution of a pool of marks

The lecturer/tutor awards a set number of marks and lets the group decide how to distribute them.

For example, the product is marked 80 (out of a possible 100) by the lecturer. There are four members of the group. Four by 80 = 240 so there are 240 marks to distribute to the four members. No one student can be given less than zero or more than 100. If members decide that they all contributed equally to the product, then each member would receive a mark of 80. If they decided that some of the group had made a bigger contribution, then those members might get 85 or 90 marks and those who contributed less would get a lesser mark.

Students allocate individual weightings

The lecture/tutor gives a shared group mark, which is adjusted according to a peer assessment factor. The individual student's mark comes from the group mark multiplied by the peer assessment factor (e.g. X 0.5 for 'half' contribution or X 1 for 'full' contribution).

Peer Evaluation – average mark, using predetermined criteria

Students in a group individually evaluate each other's contribution using a predetermined list of criteria. The final mark is an average of all marks awarded by members of the group.

Appendix D

Definitions of Marking Processes

Process	Definition	Conditions
Single Marking	• Single marker marks to criteria/ key	• Formative assessments - any level • Seminary performance - to specified criteria - any level
Electronic assessment and marking	• Absolute right/wrong item tests (true/false; matching; multiple choice) • Delivered and marked on the VLE	• Formative assessments - any level • Small student group (dependent on the capacity of a computer lab) • VLE programme has been piloted and tested for reliability
Answer Key Marking	• Single marker or multiple single markers marking to a single specific answer key	• Exam-type assessments where items lead to limited possible answers (e.g. mathematics, facts, information) • Answer key has been piloted or used before • Moderator appointed to oversee marking procedures, address problems, update answer key and update the marking team
Standardised marking	• Marking is divided between a team of single markers following a standardisation session in which sample papers are marked and discussed to establish a shared understanding of acceptable answers/ unacceptable answers	• Test-type assessment which involves answers which cannot be covered sufficiently by an answer key (eg. longer written answers to specific questions) • Moderator appointed to run standardisation session, oversee marking procedures, be available for consultation re: problematic answers • Marking is completed within a very limited time to ensure consistency
Moderated Marking	• Initial marking completed by experienced single markers, followed by sample marking by appointed moderator. Sample might include, for example, 10% of all marked papers including all failing papers and a cross section of other grade bands	• Any form of assessment where a clear standard has been established through stringent assessment design, criteria design, departmental marking activities and sample building • If a particular set of marking is judged to be too harsh/ too lenient, the set must be checked and potentially remarked or scaled

Second Marking	• 1st markers mark and comment/ 2nd markers see the marks and comments and confirm or challenge. Markers agree on a final mark based on criteria and reasoned discussion based on evidence	• Stage 2 or 3 medium to high stakes assessment where a clear standard has *not* been established or inexperienced markers are involved. • Moderator, prior to marking commencing, has the responsibility for marking a sample of assessments. This sample should be used for a moderation meeting with tall the markers (or all the inexperienced markers) to establish he standard that is expected/ acceptable • Moderator deals with borderline of contentious cases and sample checks 10% of all new markers papers • Samples of work at each criteria level are retained to provide an example of standards of subsequent offering so the module
Blind, double marking	• Two markers mark the work without access to each other's marks or comments. Markers meet to discuss and agree on a final mark through reference to the criteria and reasoned argument based on evidence	• Very high stakes assessment where the anonymity of the student may be lost or the lecturer of the student has to be a marker (e.g. Independent Study Modules) • Very clear criteria are published beforehand to students and staff
Joint Marking	Marking is completed by two (or more) markers at the same time	• Particularly high-stakes performance based assessment where student anonymity is lost and a written or recorded record is kept • Student and staff have very clear criteria well beforehand • Markers have time following each performance to make reasoned judgements with reference to the criteria • All agreed marks and comments are recorded for each performance within the same day • A percentage of performance is always recorded for later standards development and moderation • To single mark performance based assessment, a recording MUST be made to allow for later moderation

Appendix E

The Implications vs Risk Graph – for deciding appropriate marking procedures
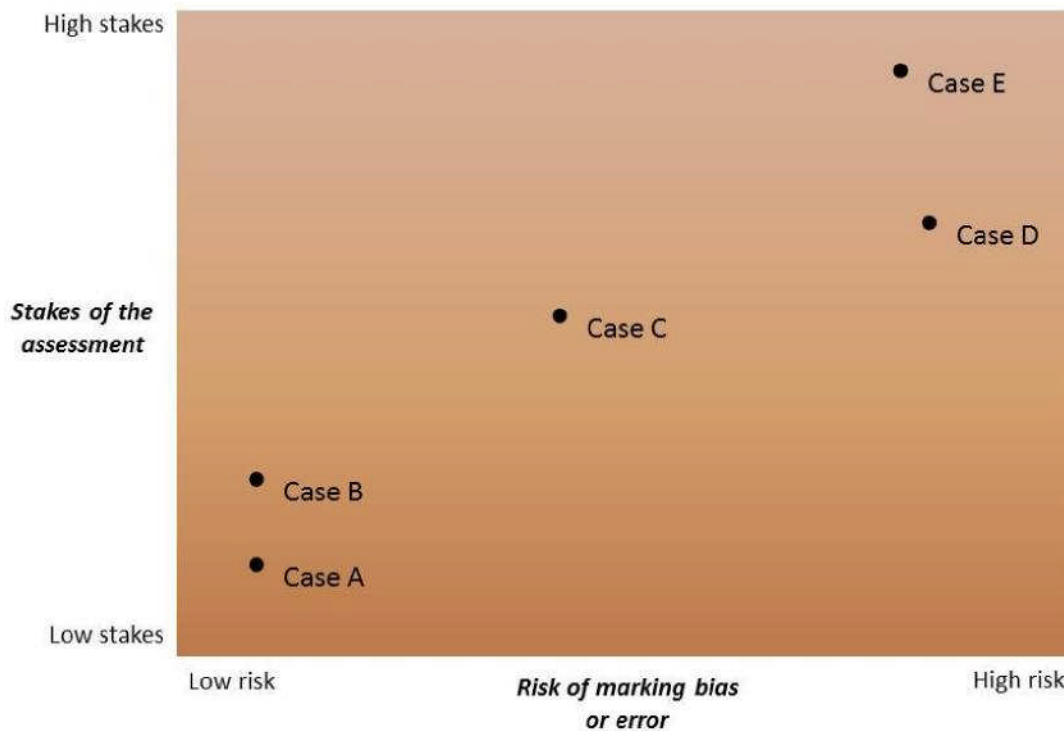
The X axis considers degree of risk of possible error. Areas which could contribute to increasing risk include:

- markers – the number of markers / ensuring consistency between markers / expertise or inexperience of markers;
- clarity of standards – availability of detailed criteria / agreed standard across markers / use of the answer key or criteria before;
- objectivity – the degree of anonymity of the student / the risk of possible bias / the degree of personal judgement involved;
- checking procedures – record kept of the assessment / checks in place.

The V axis considers the implications of the mark for the student. This can range from the mark not affecting their module mark or degree award (e.g. formative assessment), to the mark having a significant effect on whether they pass their degree (i.e. due to the size of the module or the weighting given to a particular assessment task).

Case A = a VLE, multiple choice, formative language test for second year students. Very low degree of possible error + very low implication= machine marking acceptable.

Case B = a summative, first year Maths exam (run for the 10th time with 4 experienced markers). Low degree of possible error + low implication= single marking acceptable.

Case C = a summative second year Politics exam (50% of a 20 credit module – well established module with very clear criteria and several experienced markers). Medium degree of possible error + medium implication= moderated marking.

Case D = summative third year Management project presentation (50% of a 20 credit module – no anonymity – no record kept of presentation) High degree of possibility of error + medium implication = joint marking.

Case E = summative third year History dissertation (80% of a 40 credit module – questionable anonymity – high degree of judgement needed) High possibility of error + high implication = blind, double marking.

Appendix F

Forms of feedback and good practice

The form feedback takes can be very varied. For example: Whole class / In class

- Discussion which includes responses to student input / queries;
- Provision of answers to formative exercises or discussion of formative exercises in class;
- Comments on areas that could be improved or that were particularly successful following a formative or summative assessment;
- Comments on presentations or on student participation;
- Outline or Model answers to exercises or examinations.

Individual – spoken

- Individual, face-to-face guidance (comments on work, discussion of exercises, comments on individual performance);
- Discussion in office hours.

Individual – written

- Written comments on individual formative work;
- Written corrections on exercises;
- Summative Assessment Feedback sheets (for examinations , essays, presentations);
- Supervised access to written comments on examinations.

Peer

- Feedback provided by students on each other's individual work;
- Feedback provided by seminar groups to an individual or other groups;
- Feedback provided by a whole class to each other via the VLE.

Web-based

- Answers provided or commentary given on completed on-line formative exercises;
- Email answers to individual queries;
- Comments in response to discussion in an electronic forum.

Audio

- comments on work spoken onto a recording device / computer and provided to students as a digital file.

Practices which support a better understanding of feedback

- Small, frequent assessment and feedback. Making assessment, and therefore feedback, an integral, regular part of a module from Day One can mean that students develop a better understanding of what is expected of them and how feedback connects to their learning progression.
- Clarity of Information. Students and staff should be very clear about how feedback is approached in the department. Information should be made available and discussed with students specifically. In addition, staff should consider if the written feedback that they provide is legible, clear and understandable.
- Working with criteria. Raising awareness of the assessment criteria being used in a module can help students to understand what is required and to identify where they can improve their performance. For example, allowing students to use the criteria to critique past student work / answers in lectures or seminars can be illuminating.
- Increasing student engagement with feedback. Students can be asked to fill in cover sheets for assignments on which they assess their own work according to criteria or on which they make specific requests for feedback on certain areas. Students can also be involved in peer feedback. For example, asking students to do small, frequent tasks that are shared and discussed in pairs or groups can help to increase student engagement and increase student understanding of expectations and standards.
- Turn feedback into feed forward: Students may pay less attention to feedback which only refers to an assignment or module which is considered finished. A student's major interest and need often relates more to what they can do next time to get better results. Feedback which points toward improvements and learning for the future may demand more of the students' attention.

This list is by no means definitive. If you would like to contribute other forms of feedback to be added to the list, please contact Cecilia Lowe at cecilia.lowe@york.ac.uk

Appendix G

Model for Departmental Statements on Feedback

A department's Statement on Feedback should be an explicit expression of the department's attitude toward learning and its students and should serve as a useful document for students. As such, the Statement should not be too long, should be easily readable, accessible to students and discussed by supervisors so that the ethos of the department can be understood.

Information that could be included in a 'Statement on Feedback' includes:

1.   The University's principles underlying the provision of feedback and / or a statement of the department's commitment to those principles.

2.   A brief statement outlining the department's approach to teaching, learning and assessment and how feedback relates to these. This statement could include a definition of feedback and an explanation of its role in effective academic learning. The statement could also include a description of the roles of academics and students in the learning process, their responsibilities relating to feedback and how their roles change as the degree progresses.

3.   A timetable of assessments and feedback deadlines. A rationale should be included for feedback deadlines, especially ones longer than four weeks, in order to clarify procedures.

4.   A statement clarifying the formative / summative assessment balance in the department and how this relates to student learning and the purposes of feedback.

5.   An explanation of formative feedback methods – specifying the nature and extent of feedback that students can expect in class, in seminars, via websites and in relation to particular types and units of formative assessment. Any specific pro-formas or criteria to be used should be attached as appendices.

6.   An explanation of summative feedback methods – specifying the nature and extent of feedback that students can expect following submissions of essays / projects / dissertations; following examinations; following presentations. Any specific pro-formas or criteria to be used should be attached as appendices.

7.   A statement clearly specifying who is responsible for feedback and from whom the students will receive feedback for particular types and units of assessment e.g. GTAs, peers, module leaders, supervisors. The statement should clarify how students can find out when these people are available and clarify how students can find further guidance or support if necessary i.e. websites / library / resources.

8. Statement clarifying constraints / requirements which relate to feedback – e.g. feedback and release of provisional marks; the future availability of work to External Examiners; degree of support available from tutors on coursework.

9. Appendices.

Appendix H

Improving feedback on closed examinations and final assessments

Providing useful feedback on closed examinations and final assessments is particularly important in departments / modules where the majority of the student mark is reliant on an exam or final assessment AND / OR formative assessments and summative assessments assess different skills.

Here are some suggestions about how feedback can be provided on closed examinations, final essays, dissertations or projects.

Cohort exam feedback – general feedback to a group or cohort providing correct or model answers, highlighting common misconceptions, errors and technical deficiencies and offering advice on how these may be remedied.

- make markers' / examiners' reports available on the department website;
- introduce a policy that all examinations submitted by the designer have a completed answer sheet / model answer sheet that can be published immediately after the exam;
- provision of answer sheets to students;
- provision of model answers to students;
- arranging cohort feedback meetings immediately after examinations, whilst marking is continuing, to give immediate impression of performance;
- feedback on exam performance to a cohort via a module VLE site following final examinations.

Individual feedback – personal feedback to an individual highlighting positive elements and areas for improvement.

- arranging feedback meetings for specific students i.e. developing a system whereby borderline and fail students are offered an individual consultation;
- arranging "surgeries" after marking for students to ask questions;
- provision of feedback coversheets with two good points and two areas for improvement;
- provision of feedback coversheets with grading according to criteria + comments;
- provision of opportunity for students to view their exam scripts under supervision.

Timely feedback

- investigate ways to shorten turnaround times for feedback on assessments to within four weeks;
- provide cohort feedback before marks are finalised.

Appendix I

Legal issues related to feedback

1. In relation to giving feedback on examinations, departments are reminded of the University's policy on the annotation of examination scripts and disclosure of examiners' comments under the Data Protection Act.

2. Where feedback is provided electronically (e.g. via email), departments should ensure that feedback which falls under the definition of personal data is secure. Departments should further note the University Teaching Committee's decision that departments should be encouraged to require their students and staff to use the internal email system or VLE as opposed to private email accounts (not Yahoo, Hotmail etc.) when communicating about formal academic matters.

3. Where feedback is provided electronically or in hard copy, academic staff are advised to keep copies until the year after the meeting of Senate at which the student's award is confirmed, in the event that the quality of feedback becomes an issue within the appeals procedure.

4. The University has adopted a policy of disclosure of assessment marks and marks, whether or not they are held in a 'relevant filing system' within the Data Protection Act. This information is the minimum feedback to students that should be provided by departments and it should not therefore be necessary for students to make formal access enquiries under the Act.

5. Boards of Examiners are encouraged to keep records of the reasons for their grading decisions and are required to do so in cases where special considerations have been applied.

6. Departments are responsible for ensuring that all written or recorded work contributing to the final award is available for external examination or comment. Where such work has been returned to students, students are responsible for retaining it in a portfolio for possible future external scrutiny and departments are responsible for alerting students to this requirement.

Appendix J

Increasing feedback to large groups

Providing regular feedback to large groups of students can prove difficult. To address such situations, the following approaches can be helpful.

1. Peer feedback

Involving students in assessment and feedback matters such as:

- defining criteria for assessment;
- discussing course standards and expectations;
- assessing past papers and peer assessments;
- providing feedback to each other on regular, formative work is an ideal way to engage students more fully in the learning. See
  - Gibbs G and Simpson C (2004) Conditions under which assessment supports student learning. Learning and Teaching in Higher Education 1, pp3-31.
  - Brown, S. Rust, C. and Gibbs, G. Strategies for Diversifying Assessment in Higher Education Oxford: Oxford Centre for Staff Development (1994).

2. Marking and providing feedback on samples of work:

For a large cohort in which regular (e.g. weekly) work is seen to be necessary for effective learning, students can be asked to produce several pieces of work during the module, however only a sample need be marked e.g.:

a. Students produce 5 lab reports and they can choose their two best to be marked;

b. A module requires students to complete three case studies, one of which will be chosen, at random, to be marked;

c. Students keep a collection of work completed during the course and they choose what is to be included in a limited portfolio to be marked.

3. Group work

Group assessment may prove an effective means of ensuring that students learn from each other while at the same time reducing the amount of marking. Group work is no guarantee of a reduced assessment load, but it may save time if students work in groups and submit fewer pieces of work. The key considerations in planning group work assessment are:

- Deciding what is to be assessed – the process, the product, or both;
- Selecting criteria, particularly if the group process is to be assessed;

- Deciding who is to 'do' the assessing – staff, students or both; and
- Deciding how marks are to be assigned – collectively, individually, or a mixture.

The most obvious tension that can arise from group work assessment is the perception that some students are marked unfairly, due to "group" marks being given that do not reflect differences in individual student effort. For advice concerning addressing such tension and other maters related to group work and assessment, please see:

- Habeshaw S, Gibbs G & Habeshaw T (1992) 53 problems with large classes: making the best of a bad job Bristol: Technical and Educational Services;
- Race P, Brown S & Smith B (2005) (2nd ed) 500 tips on assessment London: Routledge Falmer;
- Rust C (2001) A briefing on the assessment of large groups York: LTSN Generic Centre.

This list is by no means definitive. If you would like to suggest other forms of feedback to be added to the list, please contact Cecilia Lowe at cecilia.lowe@york.ac.uk

Appendix K

An example to illustrate procedures for rescaling marks

This appendix illustrates the procedure for recalibrating marks when it there is reason to believe that the raw marks do not adequately reflect performance on the University mark scale.

For the purposes of illustration we suppose that a taught postgraduate module, initially marked out of 100, has resulted in a set of marks which do not appear to be correctly calibrated to the taught postgraduate mark scale. The first step in the recalibration process is to identify a number of points of correspondence (at least three) between the original mark scale and the University mark scale. This is done by reference to descriptors, and using academic judgement. The lowest and highest marks on the two scales must be identified. For example, the following points of correspondence might be identified:

Original mark scale	University postgraduate mark scale
0	0
44.5	49.5
60.5	69.5
100	100

Effectively, this sets the borderline pass mark as 44.5 for this paper, and the borderline distinction mark at 60.5. More points might be needed if the distribution of original marks is particularly irregular.

Next, the points of correspondence are used to divide the two mark scales into intervals:

Original mark scale	University postgraduate mark scale
0 to 44.5	0 to 49.5
44.5 to 60.5	49.5 to 69.5
60.5 to 100	49.5 to 69.5

The rule for rescaling an original mark M depends on the interval in which it lies. If the lowest and highest values in the interval on the original mark scale are LO and HO, and the lowest and highest

values on the corresponding interval on the University scale are LU and HU then the rescaled mark (R) is given by

$$R = L_u + (M - L_o) \times \frac{H_u - L_u}{H_o - L_o}$$

which divides the interval between LU and HU in the same ratio as M divides the interval between LO and HO. In our example, an original mark of 52 lies in the interval between 44.5 and 60.5, which corresponds to the interval between 49.5 and 69.5 on the University scale. Thus M = 52 is rescaled to

$$R = 49.5 + (52 - 44.5) \times \frac{69.5 - 49.5}{60.5 - 44.5} = 58.89$$

Similarly, an original mark of M = 75 is rescaled to

$$R = 69.5 + (75 - 60.5) \times \frac{100 - 69.5}{100 - 60.5} = 80.70$$

The mapping between the original mark scale and the University mark scale in the example may be represented by the following graph:

Important features of this procedure are that the rank ordering of original marks is maintained, that it preserves minimum and maximum marks, and that it maps the points mark of correspondence on the original University scale to their partners on the University mark scale. The procedure can also be automated, e.g., using spreadsheets.
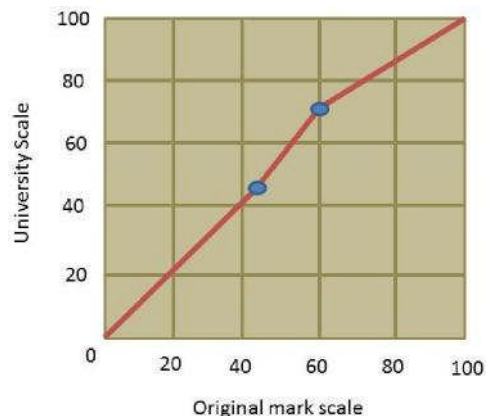
Appendix L

Writing clear examination instructions and questions

1. Keep instruction sentences short and to the point. Avoid overcomplicated or ambiguous instructions i.e. multiple clause or multiple part questions, unless absolutely necessary.

2. Express questions as precisely, clearly and simply as possible – extraneous material or sloppy construction of a question will only serve to hold up students, act as a distraction and possibly adversely affect student performance.

3. In writing questions, try to avoid

    *   colloquialisms
    *   slang
    *   negative or double negative questions
    *   highly specialist language (unless necessary to the assessment)
    *   wording which has a national, regional or cultural bias.

4. Ask a colleague to proof-read all examination instructions and questions and highlight any punctuation errors, grammatical errors and any possible areas of confusion caused by language.

5. Following the examination, conduct basic item analysis – if more than the average number of students get an item wrong, review the design and wording of the item as well as considering possible problems with learning.

Appendix M

Progression flowchart: undergraduate awards

Bachelor's Programmes: Stage 1

Start Here

Stage 1: Register for 120 Credits

Pass 120 credits?

Apply compensation criteria:
Student can still get credit if
1. failed no more than 40 credits
2. no marks lower than 30
3. rounded credit weighted mean for stage is at least 40

Achieved 120 credits? — No

Apply reassessment criteria:
Student can be reassessed if:
1. failed no more than 90 credits
2. no more than 50 credits with marks below 30 or non-compensatable failures

Eligible for resits?

No

Yes

Student chooses and completes resits.
Details on choosing resits can be found here:
http://www.york.ac.uk/media/studenthome/studying/examsandassessments/studentofReassessments.pdf

Apply compensation criteria against marks incl. resit marks:
Student can still get credit if
1. failed no more than 40 credits
2. no marks lower than 30
3. rounded credit weighted mean for stage is at least 40

Achieved 120 credits?

Yes — No

Student fails programme

Student Progresses to Stage 2

Yes

Bachelor's Programmes: Stage 2

Start Here

Stage 2: Register for 120 Credits

Pass 120 credits?

No →

Apply compensation criteria:
Student can still get credit if
1. failed no more than 40 credits
2. no marks lower than 30
3. rounded credit weighted mean for stage is at least 40

Achieved 120 credits?

No →

Apply reassessment criteria:
Student can be reassessed if:
1. failed no more than 90 credits
2. no more than 50 credits with marks below 30 or non-compensatable failures

Eligible for resits?

No →

Yes →

Student chooses and completes resits.
Details on choosing resits can be found here: http://www.york.ac.uk/media/studenthome/studying/examsandassessments/student/Reassessments.pdf

Apply compensation criteria against marks incl. resit marks:
Student can still get credit if
1. failed no more than 40 credits
2. no marks lower than 30
3. rounded credit weighted mean for stage is at least 40

Achieved 120 credits?

No → Student exits with CertHE based on first year performance

Yes →

Yes →

Student Progresses to Stage 3

Bachelor's Programmes: Stage 3

Start Here → **Stage 3: Register for 120 Credits** → **Pass 120 credits?**

Pass 120 credits?
- Yes → **Student awarded Honours Degree**
- No → Apply compensation criteria

Apply compensation criteria:
Student can still get credit if
1. failed no more than 40 credits
2. no marks lower than 10
3. rounded credit weighted mean for stage is at least 40

→ **Achieved 120 credits?**
- Yes → **Student awarded Honours Degree**
- No → **Apply reassessment criteria:**
Student can be reassessed if:
1. failed no more than 40 credits

→ **Eligible for resits?**
- No →
- Yes → **Student chooses and completes resits.**
Details on choosing resits can be found here: http://www.york.ac.uk/media/studenthome/stu dying/examsandassessments/student/Reasse sments.pdf

→ **Apply compensation criteria against marks incl. resit marks:**
Student can still get credit if
1. failed no more than 40 credits
2. no marks lower than 10
3. rounded credit weighted mean for stage is at least 40

→ **Achieved 120 credits?**
- Yes → **Student awarded Honours Degree**

Apply criteria for Ordinary Degree:
Student can be awarded an ordinary degree if:
1. The student achieved at least 60 credits in stage 3
2. No more than 20 of the 60 credits required compensation

→ **Achieved 60 credits?**
- Yes → **Student awarded an Ordinary Degree**
- No → **Student exits with DipHE based on second year performance**

Integrated Master's Programmes: Stage 1

Start Here

Stage 1: Register for 120 Credits

Pass 120 credits?

No →

Yes →

Apply compensation criteria:
Student can still get credit if
1. failed no more than 40 credits
2. no marks lower than 30
3. rounded credit weighted mean for stage is at least 40

Achieved 120 credits?

No →

Yes →

Apply reassessment criteria:
Student can be reassessed if:
1. failed no more than 90 credits
2. no more than 50 credits with marks below 30 or non-compensatable failures

Eligible for resits?

No

Yes →

Student chooses and completes resits.
Details on choosing resits can be found here:
http://www.york.ac.uk/media/studenthome/studying/examsandassessments/student/Reassessments.pdf

Apply compensation criteria against marks incl. resit marks:
Student can still get credit if
1. failed no more than 40 credits
2. no marks lower than 30
3. rounded credit weighted mean for stage is at least 40

Achieved 120 credits?

No →

Yes →

Student fails programme

Student Progresses to Stage 2

Integrated Master's Programmes: Stage 2

Start Here → **Stage 2: Register for 120 Credits** → **Pass 120 credits?**

Pass 120 credits?
- No → **Apply compensation criteria:**
  Student can still get credit if:
  1. failed no more than 40 credits
  2. no marks lower than 30
  3. rounded credit weighted mean for stage is at least 40.
  → **Achieved 120 credits?**
    - No → **Apply reassessment criteria:**
      Student can be reassessed if:
      1. failed no more than 90 credits
      2. no more than 50 credits with marks below 30 or non-compensatable failures
      → **Eligible for resits?**
        - Yes → **Student chooses and completes resits.**
          Details on choosing resits can be found here: http://www.york.ac.uk/media/studenthome/studying/examsandassessments/student/Reassessments.pdf
          → **Apply compensation criteria against marks incl. resit marks:**
          Student can still get credit if:
          1. failed no more than 40 credits
          2. no marks lower than 30
          3. rounded credit weighted mean for stage is at least 40
          → **Achieved 120 credits?**
            - Yes → **Stage average of first attempts at least 55?**
            - No → **Student exits with CertHE based on first year performance**
        - No → **Student exits with CertHE based on first year performance**
    - Yes → **Stage average of first attempts at least 55?**
- Yes → **Stage average of first attempts at least 55?**

Stage average of first attempts at least 55?
- Yes → **Progress to Stage 3 of IM**
- No → **Progress to Stage 3 of Bachelor's**

Integrated Master's Programmes: Stage 3

Start Here

Stage 3: Register for 120 Credits

Pass 120 credits?

Apply compensation criteria:
Student can still get credit if
1. failed no more than 40 credits
2. no marks lower than the compensation threshold for the module
3. rounded credit weighted mean for stage is at least 40
4. The credit weighted mean of stage 2 and 3 is at least 50

Achieved 120 credits?

Apply reassessment criteria:
Student can be reassessed if:
1. failed no more than 40 credits

Eligible for resits?

Student chooses and completes resits.
Details on choosing resits can be found here:
http://www.york.ac.uk/media/studenthome/studying/examsandassessments/student/Reassessments.pdf

Apply compensation criteria:
Student can still get credit if
1. failed no more than 40 credits
2. no marks lower than the compensation threshold for the module
3. rounded credit weighted mean for stage is at least 40
4. The credit weighted mean of stage 2 and 3 is at least 50

Achieved 120 credits?

Measure student against Stage 3 Bachelor's criteria for eligibility for Bachelor's degree

Student exits with DipHE based on second year performance

Stage average at least 50?

Student awarded Bachelor's

Progress to Stage 4 of IM

Integrated Master's Programmes: Stage 4

Apply reassessment criteria:
Student can be reassessed if:
1. failed no more than 40 credits

Apply compensation criteria:
Student can still get credit if
1. failed no more than 40 credits
2. no marks lower than 10
3. rounded credit weighted mean for stage is at least 50

Apply compensation criteria:
Student can still get credit if
1. failed no more than 40 credits
2. no marks lower than 10
3. rounded credit weighted mean for stage is at least 50

Student chooses and completes resits.
Details on choosing resits can be found here:
http://www.york.ac.uk/media/studenthome/stu
dying/examsandassessments/student/Reassie
ssments.pdf

Student exits with Bachelor's based on third year performance

Student awarded Integrated Master's

Start Here

Stage 4: Register for 120 Credits

Pass 120 credits?

Achieved 120 credits?

Eligible for resits?

Achieved 120 credits?

Stage average at least 50?

No

Yes

No

Yes

No

Yes

Yes

No

No

Yes

Appendix N

Independent study module (ISM): 'marginal fail'

Where a student has failed a Masters' ISM with a mark below 40 there will be no opportunity for reassessment. However, where a student has been awarded a 'marginal fail' mark of between 40 and 49 they will have an opportunity to make amendments which would enable a passing threshold to be reached. The overall ISM module mark after resubmission will be capped at 50.

When awarding a 'marginal fail', the guiding principle that markers should use is that the student should be able to undertake the work required to bring this up to pass level:

- without access to the University's physical facilities
- without further supervision
- with no more than two weeks full-time equivalent effort.

The sort of revisions that are likely to be considered suitable would include:

a. editorial corrections, for example

    i. use of English

    ii. style

    iii. spelling

    iv. grammar

    v. word limit

    vi. restructuring

    vii. referencing.

b. further theoretical analysis/better argumentation

c. better critical reflection on the work itself (e.g. research methods)

d. better use of literature.

If it is thought that the work required to bring this up to a pass would require more time or support, taking into consideration the above requirements, then an outright fail should be awarded (i.e. a mark below 40).

In awarding a marginal fail there is no expectation that there will be further:

a. data collection

b. experiments

c. extended literature reviews.

—

If a student is required to undertake any of the above in order to pass, then an outright fail should be awarded (i.e. a mark below 40).

For ISMs with component assessments, e.g. a dissertation, practical and viva, reassessment is only possible if the original mark for the dissertation is 40 or above. Only the dissertation component can be reassessed. The (uncapped) mark for the reassessed dissertation replaces the original mark for the dissertation and the ISM mark is re-calculated. If a pass is achieved, the overall module mark is capped at 50 as stated above.

When resubmitting their ISM students will be required to include a cover sheet detailing the changes they have made.

Departments should set a firm deadline for resubmission, taking into account the variation in personal circumstances. It is expected that no more than two weeks' full time effort will be required, and all resubmissions should be submitted within two months at the latest. Students must be informed of the resubmission date when they receive their feedback.

Appendix 0

Marking to the Full Range

a. In examination-based assessments, marking to the full range is more evident where the examination is designed to allow for performance across a range of ability, i.e. parts of the exam include some very high level, challenging items (to allow student to perform at their best) and some more basic, straightforward items (to test core knowledge any standard student should have grasped). Such a mixture of items ensures an examination differentiates student performance more clearly and allows for a greater range of marks.

b. In open assessments (module essays, projects, presentations, posters, dissertations) using the full range of marks is more likely to occur where colleagues have a shared understanding of what candidates must produce to merit particular levels of achievement across the full range of performance. This agreed range of performance should also be clarified in published criteria and/or clear information regarding performance which is available to students.

To achieve a consistent level of shared understanding, programme or module teams could:

- make regular time to discuss expectations of student at different levels in a programme, review organisation of criteria/ descriptors and share experience of areas which may cause problems with marking high level and low level students;
- compile a 'band book' for reference by new staff (this is a compilation of several 1sts/ 2:1s/ 2:2s/ 3rds/Fail assignments including the mark allocated and the reasoning for the mark). The process of putting such a guide together and maintaining it can promote valuable discussions within the department;
- divide broad marking bands (1st/2:1/2:2/ 3rd/Fail) into sub-bands with clear descriptors;
- engage in table marking (all markers marking the scripts for one assessment together in the same room- usually in one or two days). this type of exercise allows time for colleagues to discuss standards/ expectations;
- agree to the moderation of all 3rd/fail assessments and all borderline 1st and 1st assignments by an agreed moderation who should confirm the marks allocated;
- contact relevant colleagues (from departments with good practice, the Academic Support Office or the Standing Committee on Assessment) for assistance.

Appendix P

Guidance on Proofreading and Editing

Preamble

The University acknowledges that students (from undergraduate to PhD) may access a variety of forms of support to help them in the preparation and production of written assessed work beyond that provided by their teachers or supervisors, such as:

a) *peer support:* collaboration and mutual support between students on the same programme (group members of a project group, classmates in a particular module, higher level students supporting lower level students)

b) *informal support*: friends and family checking a student's work for them, providing an audience's reaction, commenting on a piece of work

c) *professional proof-reader* : an external, paid person or company employed by the student to proofread their work prior to submission

The purpose of this guidance is to set out, for students and staff, what is and is not acceptable support.

The default position is that this Guidance applies to all assessed work. However, departments may opt to specify that, for certain assessments, students should not be allowed any assistance at all in terms of proofreading or editing. This is permitted only if the purpose of the assessment is to determine students' abilities in linguistic areas such as grammar or syntax, making proofreading inappropriate. In this case, the rubric for the assessment should state clearly that this standard Guidance does not apply and that no proofreading assistance is permitted.

For students on taught programmes (undergraduate and postgraduate)

Acceptable support

The amount of support that is required or appropriate, from peers, friends and family or professionals, may vary in relation to the student's level of expertise and familiarity with academic conventions. However, regardless of level or familiarity, in the above situations the University defines support which is acceptable as:

The identification and correction of errors related to:

- Word usage (excluding specific terminology).

- Spelling, punctuation, capitalization, italics, abbreviations, headings, quotations, metrification, numbering, citations, referencing, tables, illustrations, footnotes and appendices.

The identification (but not correction) of issues related to:

- Grammar and syntax
- Clarity of expression
- Voice and tone
- Issues with logical sequencing and linkage between sentences and paragraphs
- Ambiguity
- Repetition

For students on postgraduate research programmes Acceptable support

The amount of support that is required or appropriate, from peers, friends and family or professionals, may vary in relation to the student's level of expertise and familiarity with academic conventions. However, regardless of level or familiarity, in the above situations the University defines support which is acceptable as:

The identification and correction of errors related to:

- Word usage (excluding specific terminology)
- Spelling, punctuation, capitalization, italics, abbreviations, headings, quotations, metrification, numbering, citations, referencing, tables, illustrations, footnotes and appendices
- Grammar and syntax

The identification (but not correction) of issues related to:

- Clarity of expression
- Voice and tone
- Issues with logical sequencing and linkage between sentences and paragraphs
- Ambiguity
- Repetition

For issues listed above where identification but not correction by a third party is appropriate, students (taught or research) should be directed to correct these issues themselves following feedback. Self-correction will aid students in recognising their weaker areas and encourage more independence from the tutor.

Students with a contemporary formal diagnosis of relevant disabilities should consult Disability Services about appropriate support.

Unacceptable support for taught *or* research students

For summative work, undertaking the following tasks for a student is inappropriate.

- adding or re-writing any of the student's sentences or sections of work
- rearranging passages of text, sequences of code or sections of other material for the student
- reformatting the material for the student
- contributing additional material to the original
- checking calculations or formulae
- rewriting formulae, equations or computer code
- re-labelling figures or diagrams

Acknowledgement

If a student receives assistance with proofreading or editing, whether paid or not, an acknowledgement should be inserted in the final submission. This should explain the sort of person providing the assistance (for example, the name of professional proof-reader but not the name of a friend or family member which might lead to the breaking of anonymity), and a statement that the assistance has been in accordance with the University's Guidance on Proofreading and Editing. The student should also accept full responsibility for the authorship and standard of the submitted work.

University of York
Standing Committee on Assessment November 2013

Index