

University of Birmingham

Request for exemption for the BNurs from Regulations governing progress

Topic and Purpose of the Paper

1. APRC is asked to **consider** and, if thought appropriate, **approve** an exemption to Regulation 7.3.1 (a) (i), governing progression from one stage of a programme to the next, for the BNurs to reflect the distributed nature of assessment on this programme.

Consultation

2. The exemption was requested by the Student Records team within Academic and Student Administration in order to regularise an identified irregularity in the BNurs programme.
3. The proposed exemption has been approved within the School of Health and Population Sciences.

Proposals/Recommendations

4. That the BNurs be exempt from Regulation 7.3.1 (a) (i), which reads as follows:
Registered Students are required to pass 100 credits at a given stage of a programme in order to progress to the subsequent stage. Where programmes have different requirements in terms of credits passed, this shall be agreed by the Senate or under delegated authority and shall be specified in the programme requirements.
5. That students on the BNurs programme be allowed to progress to the subsequent stage carrying more than 20 credits which have been failed at the first attempt only. A student who has failed more than 20 non-clinical credits or any clinical module credits after reassessment may not progress to the next stage of the programme of study.
6. That any student upon the BNurs programme who has progressed with more than 20 credits outstanding must be reassessed on any outstanding credits, which have not already been reassessed, prior to the first board of examiner's meeting of a session. If a student should then have more than 20 credits outstanding from any stage, they shall be compelled to withdraw from the programme with immediate effect, subject to the normal right of appeal (please see Appendix A for more details).

Background

7. The BNurs (Bachelor of Nursing) leads to qualification as an accredited nursing practitioner. It is a programme with a large amount of teaching on placement in various health care settings.

8. As a result of the length of time required on placement, not all modules are assessed prior to or during the examination period at the end of the regular University Session. Some modules involving placement work do not conclude till the end of August, and the marks are therefore not confirmed until the Board of Examiners convened in September. If a student is allowed to progress to the next stage, but is required to undertake supplementary assessment to ensure that they have attained the minimum 100 credits required, the next meeting of the Board of Examiners able to consider the supplementary assessment would be the meeting in December.
9. The first Board of Examiners each Session is convened in December.
10. Students on the BNurs are funded by the NHS on the basis of a census of students on the programme.

Arguments to Support Proposals/Recommendations

11. By the nature of a programme with a strong element of clinical placement, it is not possible to undertake assessment and reassessment of all students prior to the start of the next University session.
12. It would be disadvantageous to students who had not had the chance to undertake reassessment to be required to suspend their studies for a year whilst they are reassessed in modules not yet passed, purely in order to comply with a regulatory model designed for programmes taught within the normal 30 week session.
13. The NHS funds all students on the BNurs, meaning that neither students nor the University will be required to cover tuition costs for any students who undertake study whilst carrying more than 20 credits until reassessment can be completed. The NHS is fully aware of and content with this arrangement.

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Appendix A: Examples of how Exemption would affect different students

The following table illustrates how the process works for three different students:

- Student A passes 100 credits worth of modules prior to the end of the Academic Session and the September Board of Examiners, and therefore progresses to the next stage unconditionally having attained the necessary 100 credits for progress as set out in Regulation 7.3.1 (a) (i).
- Student B passes 90 credits worth of modules prior to the end of the Academic Session and the September Board of Examiners, and therefore progresses to the next stage with continued study conditional on attaining a combined total of 100 or more credits after supplementary assessment as set out in this exemption request. Student B achieves another 10 credits worth of modules after supplementary assessment, for a total of 100 credits, and has his or her progress to the next stage confirmed
- Student C passes 90 credits worth of modules prior to the end of the Academic Session and the September Board of Examiners, and therefore progresses to the next stage with continued study conditional on attaining a combined total of 100 or more credits after supplementary assessment. Student C fails to achieve any more credits after supplementary assessment, and therefore is withdrawn from the programme.

Student	Number of Credits prior to end of Academic Session	Board of Examiners Decision (September)	Number of Credits Achieved After Supplementary Assessment	Board of Examiners Decision (December)
A	100	Progress to next stage	100	N/a
B	90	Progress to next stage (conditional on achieving more credits on resit)	100	Progress to next stage confirmed
C	90	Progress to next stage (conditional on achieving more credits on resit)	90	Withdraw