UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

CODE OF PRACTICE ON TAUGHT PROGRAMME AND MODULE ASSESSMENT

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Code of Practice on Taught Programme and Module Assessment

1. Introduction

1.1 This Code of Practice applies to all undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate taught programmes, and the taught elements of postgraduate research programmes, including part-time provision, collaborative provision and distance learning.

1.2 This Code of Practice should be read in conjunction with the University Regulations, Sections 5, 6, 7 and 8 and the following Codes of Practice:

- Code of Practice on the Teaching and Academic Support of Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught Students by Postgraduate Teaching Assistants and Undergraduates
- Code of Practice for Student Development and Support in Principal Academic Units
- Code of Practice for the Conduct of Centrally Co-ordinated Formal Written Examinations
- Code of Practice on Adjusted Regulations and Bachelors Degrees
- Code of Practice on Adjusted Regulations and Undergraduate Masters Degrees
- Code of Practice on the External Examiner System for Taught Programmes
- Code of Practice for Reasonable Diligence
- Code of Practice on Misconduct and Fitness to Practise Committees
- Code of Practice on Primary Appeals Committees
- Code of Practice on Assessment of Research Degree Theses

1.3 This Code of Practice applies to all summative assessments (i.e. those contributing to the module mark) including written examinations, coursework, projects, worksheets, oral presentations or any other form of assessment.

2. Setting of Assessments

2.1 Assessment should be set in accordance with the Code of Practice on the Conduct of Centrally Coordinated Formal Written Examinations.

2.2 The Head of principal academic unit shall have overall responsibility for the management of all assessment. The Head of principal academic unit may choose to delegate this responsibility, as appropriate.

2.3 A single member of academic staff shall have overall responsibility to the Head of principal academic unit, or his/her nominee, for each module and all of the assessments within the module. It shall be the responsibility of the Head of principal academic unit concerned, or his/her nominee, to ensure that examination question papers and other forms of assessment, as appropriate, are submitted to the relevant External Examiner for his/her approval.

2.4 The contribution of all assessments to the determination of the final award should be notified in writing to Registered Students in advance of the assessment.

2.5 When working with an institution or organisation in a collaborative arrangement, principal academic units should ensure that the collaborative organisation understands and follows the University's requirements for the conduct of assessment.

3. Boards of Examiners

3.1 Membership, Meeting and Documentation Requirements

3.1 .1 Membership of Boards of Examiners will be determined by the relevant principal academic unit committee(s) and will normally be as follows:

3.1 .1 (a) Chair - the Head of principal academic unit responsible for the programmes concerned, or his/her nominee.

3.1 .1 (b) The principal academic unit Examinations Officer(s) for the programme(s) concerned, or his/her nominee.

3.1 .1 (c) All internal examiners for the programme(s) concerned.

3.1 .1 (d) All External Examiners for the programme(s) concerned (as a minimum, for meetings where final awards are being considered).

3.1 .2 Principal academic units may delegate responsibility to department level. In such cases, 'department' may be substituted for 'principal academic unit' in the list of members above and in the remainder of this Code of Practice.

3.1 .3 Principal academic units should establish a quoracy for each Board of Examiners. All meetings of Boards of Examiners should have a quoracy (defined at the start of each academic session) in addition to at least one External Examiner. Only academic members of staff (including Honorary Lecturers) may be members of a Board of Examiners, with non-academic staff attending to provide administrative support. A minimum would be 3 (three) members of academic staff and an External Examiner (or a consulting mechanism to the External Examiner if he or she is not physically present). The External Examiner must be informed of any decisions that affect progress or final results.

3.1 .4 All Boards of Examiners should establish written terms of reference, covering the following as a minimum:

3.1 .4 (a) Membership and quoracy.

3.1 .4 (b) Timing and frequency of meetings.

3.1 .4 (c) The authority of the Board in relation to other Boards of Examiners (for instance, in multi-departmental Principal academic units there may be a formal Principal academic unit-level Board that receives the final decisions of Departmental Boards for information only).

3.1 .4 (d) Role of the External Examiners.

3.1 .4 (e) A procedure for Chair’s Action (if required between meetings).

3.1 .5 The terms of reference for each Board of Examiners must be presented to a meeting of the Board once per year.

3.1 .6 All Boards of Examiners should have a written agenda, with at least the following items:

3.1 .6 (a) At the initial meeting of the year, approval of terms of reference and membership.

3.1 .6 (b) Receipt and confirmation of module marks. This should include module marks of postgraduate research students taking taught modules for credit.

3.1 .6 (c) Receipt of report from Extenuating Circumstances Panel.

3.1 .6 (d) Report of any further special factors (e.g. procedural irregularities).

3.1 .6 (e) Determination and confirmation of awards and progress decisions within Regulations.

3.1 .6 (f) Re-consideration of cases referred back to Board by a Primary Appeals Committee.

3.1 .6 (g) Consideration and confirmation of awards and progress decisions made notwithstanding Regulations involving extenuating circumstances, if the criteria detailed in clause 3.2.3 below are met.

3.1 .6 (h) Consideration of all other cases notwithstanding Regulations, to recommend to the University Progress and Awards Board.

3.1 .6 (i) External Examiners' comments on examinations, assessments and programmes (include discussion of any items of interest to External Examiner that may appear in his/her report).

3.1 .7 Boards of Examiners may refer to students by their six or seven digit ID numbers only. Paperwork considered at Boards of Examiners meetings (e.g. mark sheets) and subsequent minutes should also be anonymised. Anonymity may be lifted only once marks, progress decisions and awards have been agreed. Full minutes should be kept of all Boards of Examiners meetings and returned to Academic Services along with the signed Chair of Board of Examiners statement and (if required) appropriate mark sheets. Failure to return full documentation to Academic Services by the deadline will be reported to the University Progress and Awards Board.

3.1 .8 Principal academic units should ensure the provision of adequate notice of meetings of the Board of Examiners, and in particular any reconvened meetings, to all who are expected to attend.

3.1 .9 Consideration should be given to the timing of the Board of Examiners' meetings on a programme-by-programme basis.

3.1 .10 Members of the Board of Examiners should declare personal interest, involvement or relationship with a student either before the meeting to the Chair, or during the meeting and, if appropriate, withdraw from the meeting while that student is being considered.

3.1 .11 When examining collaborative provision, arrangements for Boards of Examiners should be set out in the Memoranda of Agreement covering programmes.

3.1 .12 For Postgraduate Research Students undertaking taught modules, the module marks will be assessed by the Board of Examiners and the final award of the qualification is normally determined when the thesis is examined. However, when a Postgraduate Research Student withdraws without submitting their thesis, but has successfully completed taught modules that provide sufficient credits for a

lower taught award, this will be considered by the Board of Examiners.

3.1 .13 The taught component of a graduate or postgraduate programme must be considered at a meeting of the Board of Examiners. Where no dissertation is involved, the final award of a qualification must be considered at a meeting of the Board of Examiners; where a dissertation is involved, the final award of a qualification must be considered either at a meeting of the Board of Examiners, or according to alternative arrangements which must involve the External Examiner.

3.1 .14 Registered Students should be notified in advance of the Board of Examiner meetings at which the results of their assessments will be considered.

3.2 Roles and Powers of Boards of Examiners

3.2 .1 The Board of Examiners will make decisions on all module marks and the final award. This includes modules provided as part of the programme of study by other principal academic units. Such decisions will be made only on the basis of actual performance in those assessments, which have formally been defined as contributing to the final award. The consequences of such performance should not normally be modified by reference to the Registered Student's record of progress. In all cases, the Board of Examiners must be satisfied that the learning outcomes of the module or programme have been achieved.

3.2 .2 Boards of Examiners have the formal authority, on behalf of Senate, to make final award and progress decisions in all cases where the relevant Regulations and Codes of Practice have been followed.

3.2 .3 The Boards of Examiners have the formal authority, exercised on behalf of Senate to make final progress and award decisions notwithstanding University Regulations, if there are extenuating circumstances and the following criteria are met:

3.2 .3 (a) The principal academic unit provides a written copy of their extenuating circumstances procedure to the University Progress and Awards Board by the end of the Spring Term of the current academic year and can prove in subsequent documentation that this procedure has been followed.

3.2 .3 (b) The principal academic unit provides an anonymised summary of all decisions to the University Progress and Awards Board taken under their extenuating circumstances procedure and approved by the relevant Board of Examiners. This should include decisions taken within Regulations and notwithstanding Regulations.

3.2 .4 All recommendations made notwithstanding the Regulations where clause 3.2.3 does not apply should be passed to the University Progress and Awards Board for consideration and final decision.

3.2 .5 Where, in multi-department principal academic units, there are departmental level Board of Examiners meetings, the principal academic unit's Board of Examiners must ratify the assessment processes and take appropriate measures to review and confirm decisions/recommendations as appropriate.

3.2 .6 Where Registered Students have taken modules outside their principal academic unit or department, the Board of Examiners for the 'home' principal academic unit shall be responsible for considering the Registered Student's overall results for the

programme and recommendations accordingly.

3.2 .7 For Joint Honours, Major/Minor or designated interdisciplinary programmes, academic staff from all of the relevant principal academic units or departments, which contribute modules to the programme, should attend the Board of Examiners as appropriate to the cases under consideration. Responsibility for convening Boards of Examiners for these programmes shall be determined prior to the start of each academic session and communicated to appropriate staff, external and internal examiners, and Registered Students.

3.3 Internal Examiners

3.3 .1 Heads of principal academic unit will appoint internal examiners annually. Internal examiners are responsible for the assessment of the performance of Registered Students and are automatically members of the Board of Examiners that makes recommendations on progression and decisions on module marks and final awards. Actual membership of the Board may vary according to the size of the provision and the cases being considered. All members of the academic staff of a principal academic unit are eligible to serve as internal examiners for programmes of study and modules, which are the responsibility of that principal academic unit.

3.4 Role of the External Examiners

3.4 .1 External Examiners are appointed to provide the University with impartial and independent advice and informed comment on the institution's academic standards and student achievement in relation to those standards, through oversight of the assessment process at the module and programme/award level.

3.4 .2 All University programmes of study, and modules therein, leading to an award of credit at undergraduate or postgraduate (taught) level must have one or more External Examiner(s) appointed to carry out the role of External Examiner as laid out in the Code of Practice on External Examining (Taught Provision).

3.4 .3 External Examiners should be informed, in advance of the meeting of the Board of Examiners, of the recommendations to be made by the Extenuating Circumstances Panel/s, including relevant supporting information where appropriate.

3.4 .4 External Examiners should be considered full members of the relevant Board of Examiners meetings. Schools should agree in advance with their External Examiners the attendance requirements for Board of Examiners meetings, including for supplementary Board of Examiners meetings where appropriate.

3.4 .5 External Examiners are expected to attend Board of Examiners meetings in order to scrutinise and endorse the outcomes of the assessment processes to which they have been appointed, whether confirming a set of results at module-level or the decisions taken (e.g. awards, withdrawals) at programme-level.

3.4 .6 Where a team of External Examiners is appointed to scrutinise different modules within a programme of study and there are separate meetings of Boards of Examiners to consider module-level and programme-level results, a representative from the team may be identified to attend the relevant Board of Examiners to endorse programme-level decisions.

3.4 .7 Where an External Examiner is unable to be present at the relevant Board of

Examiners meeting this should be agreed with the School in advance without contravening 3.4.4-3.4.6. A mechanism should be put in place for obtaining the External Examiner's agreement with the marks and awards confirmed at the meeting. Where possible, telephone or video conferencing may be utilised.

3.4 .8 The endorsement of the decisions taken by the Board of Examiners should be given through the signature of the relevant External Examiner(s) on the mark lists, award lists or similar documents.

3.4 .9 Any instances where an External Examiner does not endorse a decision taken by the Board of Examiners should be recorded and referred to the University Progress and Awards Board (PAB) for consideration. Schools should ensure that where this occurs the final decision of the PAB is communicated back to the External Examiner

3.5 Consideration of extenuating circumstances or other extraneous factors by Boards of Examiners

3.5 .1 Extenuating Circumstances Panels shall be established to consider the possible effects of extraneous circumstances on the qualifications to be awarded to individual candidates. The Extenuating Circumstances Panels should be held at principal academic unit level or at College level and their membership and procedures should be consistent with the principles of best practice contained within the University's Guidelines on Extenuating Circumstances. It shall be the responsibility of the Head of College concerned to ensure that such procedures comply with basic principles of good practice including the need:

3.5 .1 (a) For the Extenuating Circumstances Panel to act on behalf of the University in maintaining the greatest possible level of confidentiality concerning the personal affairs of Registered Students.

3.5 .1 (b) To maintain a clear and permanent record of all cases.

3.5 .1 (c) To define clearly the nature of admissible evidence (which should be provided in writing, where possible with independent third party evidence).

3.5 .1 (d) To provide sufficient publicity for Registered Students about the extenuating circumstances process for them to be aware of the importance of raising extenuating circumstances before the meeting of the Board of Examiners.

3.5 .2 Extenuating Circumstances Panels shall consider detailed written evidence presented for extenuating circumstances and make recommendations to the main Board of Examiners. The Board of Examiners should receive a list of all Registered Students for whom a request for extenuating circumstances has been made and any action already taken on behalf of the Board of Examiners, for approval. The Board of Examiners will not have the right to receive or review any specific details of the extenuating circumstances that have been raised.

3.5 .3 The Board of Examiners will determine marks without reference to any extraneous circumstances. The Board of Examiners will then consider individual cases where it is known that there are extraneous factors, which may have adversely affected a student's performance. In consultation with, and with the full agreement of the External Examiner, the Board of Examiners may then decide to recommend a final award or progress decision which is consistent with the performance which, on the evidence available, the Board of Examiners judges the individual would have

achieved if their performance had not been affected by extraneous factors. In such cases the marks attained should not be adjusted, but a written record of the factors and the action taken by the Board of Examiners should be made available to the University Progress and Awards Board. The original, unamended mark will appear on the Registered Student's transcript.

3.5 .4 If circumstances occur which seem to require a change to the level of an award determined by the Board of Examiners (e.g. submission of late and unexpected medical evidence), any such change should be approved by the Chair of the Board of Examiners on behalf of the Board of Examiners concerned. External Examiners must be consulted on all such changes. However, if it is not possible to contact all External Examiners in the time available, it will be the responsibility of the Board of Examiners to determine whether the change can be made on the basis of whatever consultation has been possible and to report this fact to the University Progress and Awards Board. All such changes should be forwarded to Academic Services as soon as possible, and no later than one month before the beginning of the next academic session.

3.5 .5 Once the Board of Examiners, or University Progress and Awards Board, has approved its recommendations, no changes may be made to module marks, progress decisions or awards, except with reference to Sections 3 and 4 of the Code of Practice on Primary Appeals Procedure.

3.6 Recording decisions made and discussions held at meetings of Boards of Examiners

3.6 .1 All principal academic units will keep a formal record of the attendance at, discussions held and decisions made at the meeting of the Board of Examiners. Heads of principal academic units should ensure that adequate systems are in place in order that they are able to satisfy themselves that appropriate Regulations and Codes of Practice have been adhered to in reaching any such decisions. Heads of principal academic units will be asked to confirm that the appropriate Regulations and Codes of Practice have been adhered to when submitting module marks and recommendations (where relevant) to the University Progress and Awards Board.

3.6 .2 As a minimum, all evidence on which a decision was based should be retained until one year after the student has left the University (see also Section 9 of this Code of Practice).

3.6 .3 For all undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes Examination Boards should consider: Mean, standard deviation and failure/pass rate for each module with corresponding figures for at least 3 and preferably 5 previous years [It is recognised that the historical comparators will need to be built up over time where the history does not exist]. For each cohort mean mark and distribution across classes (1sts, 2.1's etc.), with historical comparators, there should be:

3.6 .3 (a) A standard one page examination report form produced by the internal examiner/Examinations Officer, which provide the data required.

3.6 .3 (b) A brief commentary, for the benefit of the External Examiner and the audit trail, on any unusual events that were relevant (e.g. interruption to the exam by a fire evacuation as an extreme) or any unusual features in the outcome where a question was answered particularly well or badly.

3.6 .3 (c) An endorsement or additional comment from the internal moderator/2nd marker.

4. University Progress and Awards Board

4.1 Cycle of Meetings

4.1 .1 The University's University Progress and Awards Board will normally meet four times a year:

4.1 .1 (a) In March, to review examination processing guidance and requirements to receive annual summary data on progression and award from the previous academic session.

4.1 .1 (b) In June, to consider issues arising from the main summer examination period.

4.1 .1 (c) In September, to consider issues arising from the supplementary examination period.

4.1 .1 (d) In November, to consider issues arising from the examination period for taught postgraduate programmes and the taught elements of postgraduate research programmes.

4.2 Membership of the University Progress and Awards Board

4.2 .1 The University's University Progress and Awards Board is a Sub-Committee of the Academic Policy and Regulations Committee and its membership is published on the University website.

4.3 Role of the University Progress and Awards Board

4.3 .1 For taught programmes, the role of the University Progress and Awards Board is:

4.3 .1 (a) To determine recommendations made notwithstanding Regulations (where special or extenuating circumstances have not been considered by the principal academic unit) received from Boards of Examiners for taught programmes.

4.3 .1 (b) To identify quality issues relating to examination processing, and report as appropriate to the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee.

5. Examination Invigilation Arrangements

5.1 The University provides information on the duties to be undertaken when invigilating examinations. (For further information, please refer to the Code of Practice on the Conduct of Centrally Co-ordinated Formal Written Examinations.)

6. Provision of Marks & Progression Information to Students

6.1 Mark sheets shall be treated as strictly confidential, but the marks awarded to an individual candidate may be disclosed to the candidate in a way which protects the confidential nature of the marks of other candidates. Attention is drawn to the University Data Protection Policy and the implications for storage of Registered Students'

information and provision of information. In particular, the Policy states 'Staff, students and other users of the University have the right to access any personal data being kept about them either on computer or in certain files. Any person who wishes to exercise this right should contact the Director of Academic Services'.

6.2 Registered Students will be entitled to know their marks for both coursework and examinations as part of their tutorial support. This is within the provisions of the Data Protection Act relating to the release of data. For more information, contact the University Data Protection Officer.

6.3 Final lists of results, progress decisions and final awards and module marks will be published by the principal academic unit as soon as possible after the meeting of the Board of Examiners at which they are determined. In the exceptional circumstances where a recommendation is made 'notwithstanding Regulations' and extenuating circumstances are not involved (see clause 3.2.3 above), the provisional list of results should not indicate the result, but should indicate that a decision is 'pending' the meeting of the University Progress and Awards Board

6.4 Following the determination of marks by the Boards of Examiners, where Registered Students are continuing (i.e. they are not finalists), principal academic units will inform individual Registered Students of their module marks, which will be available through the student portal and, where appropriate, through progress review tutorials. Finalists may be given the marks which they have achieved in final level modules, should they require this information.

7. Feedback on Assessment

7.1 Registered Students should be given timely and relevant feedback on assessments, particularly those undertaken during a module and used to inform the Registered Student's learning (e.g. coursework). In accordance with the Code of Practice for Student Development and Support in Principal Academic Units, Registered Students should be informed of the timescale for feedback arrangements. This should be timely (i.e. within three weeks (15 working days)) of the submission date of the assessment/piece of work (or the deadline, whichever is later), including periods when the University is not in session, but excluding University closed days, so that they can adjust their patterns of work before subsequent assessment opportunities. Staff on part year contracts who are responsible for marking assessments should comply with the Code of Practice on the deadline for the return of student work. In exceptional circumstances where this is not possible in respect of marking work during periods when they are otherwise not contracted to work, such staff should discuss this with their Head of School as soon as possible and in any event by the beginning of each term. Where it is not possible for staff on part year contacts to meet a deadline, an agreed date for the return of work should be notified to all affected students when the assessment is set. Principal academic units may wish to provide this feedback in ways other than by provision of actual marks. Where marks are provided in advance of confirmation by the Board of Examiners, it should be emphasised that these marks remain provisional.

8. Feedback on Examinations

8.1 Following the main examination period, registered students, who are not in their final year of study, should be provided with generic feedback on each examination question within an assessment (e.g. essay style or numerical problems) or for the assessment as a whole (e.g. MCQ-based examinations). Generic feedback should be provided within ten working days of the publication of results.

8.2 The requirement to provide generic feedback applies primarily to undergraduate students, but it is considered good practice also to provide generic feedback to postgraduate taught students, particularly part-time students or other students who may be undertaking assessments in subsequent years.

8.3 Schools may provide individual feedback in place of generic feedback, where it is considered practicable and helpful to do so (e.g. for small cohorts of students). In such cases individual feedback should be provided to all students who have undertaken the assessment, not only to those who have requested individual feedback.

8.4 Registered students who have failed modules in the main examination period should be offered additional feedback as soon as practicable after the publication of the examination results.

8.5 Feedback on examination performance should not allow any challenge to academic judgement.

9. Retention of Examination Scripts

9.1 Principal academic units shall ensure that, with the exception of dissertations, all written examination answer books and other papers shall normally remain confidential to the examiners and shall be destroyed after a period of not less than twelve months after the declaration of the results of the examinations.

9.2 Principal academic units may, at their discretion, allow Registered Students to view their examination scripts. This right may be applied to whole cohorts of students and not solely to any individual Registered Student. Viewing must take place in a strictly controlled environment with at least two members of academic staff present.

10. Marking

10.1 Preparation for Marking

10.1 .1 It is recommended that principal academic units have in place staff development and guidance procedures for all marking processes in use within the principal academic unit. All staff involved in marking should be required to familiarise themselves with relevant material and practices and attend formal or informal briefing sessions.

10.1 .2 Assessment arrangements within Principal Academic Units should be made in accordance with the Code of Practice on the Teaching and Academic Support of Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught Students by Postgraduate Teaching Assistants and Undergraduates.

10.1 .3 Where inexperienced internal examiners and postgraduate students undertake marking of work, which contributes towards the module mark, this should be under the guidance of an experienced internal examiner.

10.1 .4 With reference to the information provided to External Examiners, Principal academic units must adhere to the Code of Practice on the External Examiner System for First Degrees and Taught Masters Programmes.

10.1 .5 The Head of principal academic unit (or nominee) shall establish a formal timetable to ensure that External Examiners have scripts in their possession sufficiently in advance of examiners' meetings to enable the External Examiner to

express an informed opinion on them and shall make this timetable known to all examiners, internal and external normally at the start of the session.

10.2 Assessment Information

10.2 .1 To ensure consistency and transparency, principal academic units should publish assessment criteria appropriate to the module being assessed and the method of assessment and should make this information available to internal and External Examiners and Registered Students. For some subject disciplines this may include the provision of model answers to internal and External Examiners. Criterion (not norm) referencing should be used for all assessments.

10.2 .2 Principal academic units should refer to the Code of Practice on Plagiarism and publish guidelines on the conduct of assessment (for example on plagiarism or late submission of work) for modules and should make this information available to internal and External Examiners and Registered Students. Any amendments to programme and module assessments should also be made available to all internal and External Examiners and students. Where Registered Students are required to pass specific assessments within a module ('internal hurdles'), module descriptions should specify whether the assessment has to be passed to achieve overall modular credit.

10.3 Marking Practices

Principal academic units should ensure that:

10.3 .1 All written examinations that contribute to the final award are marked anonymously, with anonymity extending to the second marker stage and to the stage at which the scripts are considered by the External Examiner.

10.3 .2 Where possible, anonymous marking of assessed work is undertaken for course work, with the exception of practical assessments and projects.

10.3 .3 A technical check of assessment marks is carried out (i.e., to ensure that simple arithmetic errors or omissions have not been made).

10.3 .4 Moderation of marks and subsequent adjustment and scaling of marks are carried out according to best academic practice as set out in the appendix to this Code of Practice.

10.3 .5 For undergraduate programmes, the rounding of marks for classification purposes is as follows:

(a) For degree classification purposes the average mean mark should be rounded to one decimal point.
(b) In determining class on the basis of weighted arithmetic mean, marks between 39.5-40.0, 49.5-50.0, 59.5-60.0 and 69.5-70.0 will be rounded to 40, 50, 60 and 70, respectively.

10.3 .6 Average marks for use with the Distribution of Module Class (DMC) Scheme should remain corrected to one decimal point. (Thus, for example 37.9, 47.9, 56.9 and 66.9 are insufficient average mean marks to allow a student to be considered for the Distribution of Module Class Scheme).

10.4 The academic judgement of the examiners is paramount.

11. Progression

11.1 Submission

11.1 .1 The principal academic unit should have clear submission procedures for assignments that form part of the assessment for a module. These procedures should be made clear to Registered Students, in writing, at the beginning of the academic year and again at the beginning of each module.

11.1 .2 Subject to Clause 11.1.3, each Registered Student should be issued with a receipt for submitted coursework that either indicates clearly that the work was submitted before the deadline, or shows the time and date of submission for any work submitted after the deadline. Receipts should be signed by a designated member of principal academic unit staff.

11.1 .3 If principal academic units believe they have justifiable reasons for not issuing receipts to Registered Students they should liaise with the relevant Head of College to devise an alternative. If electronic or postal submission of coursework is permitted, principal academic units should have a receipt mechanism in place that ensures that the student has positive evidence that the assignment has been received. Registered Students should be made aware of what they can expect to receive. If Registered Students submit work by post they should ensure that they obtain proof that the assignment has been posted.

11.2 Deadlines

11.2 .1 Registered Students should be made aware, in writing, at the beginning of a module, how the module is to be assessed, the deadlines, where and to whom assignments should be submitted, and the penalties for late submission (see below).

11.2 .2 Deadlines should be set taking into account, where possible, revision and examination periods and student workload, for example submission dates for other assignments in Joint Honours programmes.

11.3 Extensions

11.3 .1 The principal academic unit should have a clear procedure for granting extensions including guidance on circumstances that will and will not be considered acceptable. Valid circumstances must normally involve both substantial and unforeseeable disruption, but each case should be considered on its merits. Examples of acceptable and unacceptable circumstances are provided below.

11.3 .1 (a) Examples of acceptable circumstances include: major computer problems (e.g. failure of university IT systems, such as network or server failure), significant medical problems, personal problems and compassionate matters (for example, family bereavement).

11.3 .1 (b) Examples of unacceptable circumstances include: minor computer problems (e.g. lost or damaged disks, printer breakdown), lost assignments, desired books not in library, unverifiable travel difficulties and failing to plan properly for a deadline.

11.3 2 In addition to the acceptable circumstances under 11.3.1 (a), Registered Students who are standing for election to Guild Officer posts during the main

Officer Elections (which are normally held in March, as notified to the Head of School by the Guild of Students) will be eligible for extensions to their coursework deadlines (where coursework is understood as work being submitted where the question paper has been set in advance. This does not include class tests or presentations or preparation for seminars or online multiple choice questions or equivalent). Registered Students acting as campaigners for candidates will not be eligible.

11.3 2 (a) Under these circumstances, extension to coursework deadlines will be for the purpose of replacing lost time through election commitments. Therefore, the extension period will relate to the deadline and not to the size of the piece of coursework.

11.3 2 (b) The campaigning period for Guild elections is two weeks, with dates confirmed by January of each year. Extension to coursework deadline will not be granted to Registered Students whose deadline for submission falls before or in the first seven days of campaigning. If the deadline falls within the final seven days of campaigning, the Registered Student is entitled to a two week extension from the expected date of submission for each piece of work. If the deadline falls between one week and two weeks after the end of the voting, the candidate is entitled to an extension of one week from the expected date of submission for each piece of work.

11.3 .3 Registered Students should be required to apply in writing for an extension (this could be on a standard Principal academic unit form) explaining the reasons why they require an extension. Appropriate evidence should be attached.

11.3 .4 To ensure equity of treatment for all Registered Students, extensions should normally be granted by one person from the principal academic unit or Department that owns the module, or authorised nominee, such as the Year Tutor, who has oversight of the Registered Student's programme of study.

11.3 .5 The Head of principal academic unit (or nominee) should be responsible for ensuring that appropriate staff are informed of extensions that have been granted.

11.4 Late Submission of Work

11.4 .1 Where Registered Students are required to submit coursework (e.g. essays, practical reports, projects, problem sheets) that contributes to the module mark, principal academic units should have in place published arrangements for the applying of penalties for the late submission of such work. Coursework that is not submitted by the initial deadline given, shall be subject to a penalty applied to the mark achieved for that piece of work.

11.4 .2 The following are standard University procedures, which should normally be used for the submission of assessed work that will count towards a final programme mark. It may be necessary, in circumstances where there are good academic reasons, to adopt other procedures, for example, where assessed work is to be discussed in class shortly after the deadline. In such cases the Chair of the Board of Examiners should be notified.

11.5 Penalties for Late Submission of Work

11.5 .1 It is recommended that if work is submitted late and no extension has been granted, then a penalty of 5% on the mark actually achieved should be imposed for each day that the assignment is late until 0 is reached, for example, a mark of 67% would become 62% on day one, 57% on day two, and so on. The days counted should not include weekends, public and University closed days. When setting deadlines, weekends and closed days should be borne in mind to minimise student manipulation of penalties.

11.5 .2 Those principle academic units that wish to adopt a different penalty from that as set out in 9.5.1 above must seek the approval of the College Learning & Teaching Committee. This may be appropriate for those programmes of study where Registered Students are required to complete assessed work on a regular basis, for example, the weekly exercise or problem sheets in numerical disciplines, and when the smaller contribution of the overall module mark of this work would mean that a 5% penalty would not sufficiently discourage the late submission of the assessed work.

11.5 .3 Assignments should be marked in the normal way and penalties applied afterwards.

11.5 .4 The original mark and the penalty should be clearly indicated in documentation submitted to Boards of Examiners. In exceptional circumstances, Boards of Examiners may modify decisions that have been implemented in accordance with standard procedures, but which seem excessively harsh or generous.

11.6 Marking and Feedback

11.6 .1 Principal academic unit staff should ensure that assignments are marked and feedback given to Registered Students in accordance with Section 3.2 of the Code of Practice on Student Development and Support in Principal Academic Units.

11.7 Recording of Marks

11.7 .1 A module is a coherent and identifiable unit of learning and teaching with defined learning outcomes. A module is passed if its specified learning outcomes have been achieved. The assessment of each module shall be designed so as to assess the achievement of the learning outcomes of the module. The assessment of each module shall generate a single integer mark between 0 and 100. A number of different assessments may be combined within a module to generate the single mark.

11.7 .1 (a) **Calculation of Sub Component/ Component Marks**

i. Aggregated marks at component or subcomponent level should be calculated with the maximum available precision.

ii. BIRMS should provide for the entry of aggregated component or

subcomponent marks with up to *four* decimal places. Where a mark of greater precision is entered into BIRMS then it should be *rounded* to four decimal places. Marks of *less than n.nnnn5* (unrounded) should be rounded *down*.

11.7 .1 (b) **Calculation of the Module Mark**

The module mark is an integer. It is achieved by *rounding* the result of the aggregation of component marks. A (module) mark of *less than n.5* (unrounded) is rounded *down*.

11.7 .1 (c) **Calculation of the Stage Mark**

i. The stage mark is the mean mark, weighted for credits, for a stage of a student's degree programme. For UG programmes this applies to the stage 2 and stage 3 weighted mean marks. For PGT this applies to the taught weighted mean mark and the dissertation mark.

ii. The stage mark is calculated with the maximum available precision.

11.7 .1 (d) **Calculation of the Overall Mark**

i. The overall mark is the mark calculated from the stage marks that contribute to the student's degree result using the appropriate stage weightings.

ii. The overall mark is calculated with the maximum available precision and then rounded to an integer. An (overall) mark of *less than n.5* (unrounded) is rounded *down*.

iii. Where a more precise mark is needed, a Display Overall Mark should be provided. This should be the overall mark before rounding, *truncated* (not rounded) to *three* decimal places. Truncation ensures that there is no visible discrepancy between the Display Overall Mark and the Overall Mark. Thus a mark of 59.4995 would *not* be displayed as 59.500 but as 59.499, as it is below the unrounded 59.50 required for rounding to 60.

iv. Overall marks for use with the Distribution of Module Class (DMC) scheme should be the overall mark before rounding. Therefore marks between 37.5 and 37.999 inclusive, between 47.5 and 47.999, between 56.5 and 56.999 inclusive, and between 66.5 and 66.999 inclusive are insufficient overall marks to allow a student to be considered for the Distribution of Module Class Scheme.

11.7 .2 Where there is more than one assessment contributing to the module mark, principal academic units may specify that particular assessments must be passed in order to pass the module (known as 'internal hurdles'). The weighting of each assessment, or the requirement to pass a particular assessment, must be clearly stated as a percentage of the module mark in the approved module descriptions, as published on the Academic Services website. The website is updated to take into account approved late changes to module content or assessment. Within a

single module or pair of linked modules, principal academic units may permit poor performance in one assessment to be compensated by strong performance in another assessment. Where this is applied, a set of guidelines should be agreed by the Board of Examiners, and the guidelines applied to all Registered Students taking the module. There is no compensation between unlinked modules.

11.7 .3 The pass mark for all Level M modules is normally 50 and the pass mark for Level C, I and H modules is normally 40. Pass marks may alter according to specific programme requirements.

11.7 .4 Marks should be entered into the Banner Interface Records Management System (BIRMS) by the date specified each year in guidance issued by Academic Services. All module marks and progression and award decisions must entered by BIRMS. Principal academic units not using BIRMS will be reported to the University Progress and Awards Board.

11.8 Absence from Teaching Sessions and Assignments

11.8 .1 A Registered Student who does not attend teaching and assessment, as required by the principal academic unit or Department, will be investigated in accordance with the Code of Practice Student Attendance and Reasonable Diligence. Reasonable Diligence is defined by Regulations 5.1 to 7.6.

11.8 .2 Where there is unexplained absence from all assessments that contribute to the module mark the Registered Student will be awarded a mark of 0 for the module and will not achieve credit. Where the unexplained absence is for an assessment that contributes less than 100 to the module mark, the mark of 0 for the assessment will be combined with the marks for the other assessments as for all other Registered Students. This may result in the Registered Student not achieving the pass mark for the module and failing the module.

11.8 .3 Registered Students may apply for leave from assessments or part of their programme exceptionally, and for good reason, as outlined below.

11.8 .4 Guidelines for provision of single (1-14 days) absence:

11.8 .4 (a) In the first instance, the relative importance of the event in question should be determined. The member of staff involved (this would usually be the Personal Tutor) should establish this either through internal consultation or through direct contact with the organisers or other relevant bodies. As a general rule, events should be national in character as an absolute minimum. Another related keynote would be the level of prestige involved in participation: this should be significant.

11.8 .4 (b) It should not be seen as essential that there is any direct relevance to the student's course of study, although any link would clearly strengthen the case.

11.8 .4 (c) If the member of staff considers that the application merits further consideration, the matter should be referred either to the Head of Department/principal academic unit or the relevant Programme Director or nominee and (if any examinations are involved) to the relevant Examinations Officer for a joint decision as to whether the application should be granted in full or in part. As part of this process, the Personal Tutor should, in consultation with the student, submit with the application an indication of how

missed teaching would be covered through additional study or by other means.

11.8 .4 (d) If the proposed absence clashes with scheduled examinations, it would not normally be possible to allow the Registered Student to undertake the paper(s) in question at alternative times within the series in question, unless the principal academic unit/ Department can arrange full chaperone cover covering the entire period of potential examination security risk. The use of 'honour letters' where students undertake not to communicate the contents of papers does not provide a sufficient level of assurance. Where it is not possible to arrange for the Registered Student to sit examinations within a time scale, which makes inclusive chaperoning viable, the Registered Student should be permitted to sit the missing examination(s) during the Supplementary Assessments held in late August/early September each year. In such cases:

11.8 .4 (d) (i) The sitting should be deemed a first sit and the possible mark not capped.

11.8 .4 (d) (ii) If the examination is subsequently failed, the programme requirements should apply in respect of reassessment. Regulations should apply in respect of progression and, therefore, progression may not be possible.

11.8 .4 (d) (iii) Where an examination has been re-scheduled because of exceptional leave absence, this method of assessment must be retained throughout the process. Replacement of formal examining by alternative means of assessment (such as projects or additional coursework) is not permissible under these circumstances.

11.8 .4 (d) (iv) In all cases, the Registered Student must be reminded that their primary commitment must be to their University studies and that it is their responsibility to weigh with extreme care the implications in terms of study and progression of any exceptional leave allowance that the University may be able to offer. In particular, it must be made clear that any exceptional arrangement granted by the University cannot subsequently constitute the basis of a student appeal.

11.9 Extended Leave of Absence

11.9 .1 In situations where absence of longer than 14 days is being considered, the following points should be noted:

11.9 .1 (a) Part-time registration may be an option. This might be useful if one or two days per week have to be given over to training or other commitments. Part-time status may be for a single year only or may be extended to cover all three levels if necessary. Requests to study part-time must be supported by the Principal academic unit and be subject to approval by the University Progress and Awards Board.

11.9 .1 (b) The taking of a year out once the First Year has been completed may be appropriate for some Registered Students. The existence of clear rules for progression from level to level should assist flexibility in this area.

11.9 .2 Registered Students who are absent from assessments or part of their programmes for medical reasons should comply with the procedures and policy

regarding provision and completion of medical certificates.

11.10 Reasonable Diligence

11.10 .1 The Reasonable Diligence Procedure is contained within the Code of Practice Student Attendance and Reasonable Diligence.

11.11 Opportunities for Re-assessment

11.11 .1 A student who provides adequate reason or extenuating circumstances for failure to complete an assessment or attend an examination may be permitted to 'sit' the module again as if for the first time, or 'sit' the assessment(s) again as if for the first time. The decision on whether a Registered Student should be allowed to 'sit' should be made by the Board of Examiners.

11.11 .2 In accordance with Regulation 7.2.6 (a), all Registered Students who fail a module (other than, subject to Regulations, modules taken in the final stage of a programme) shall have one opportunity to retrieve the failure, either by re-assessment or by repeating. The decision on whether a Registered Student should be allowed to be reassessed or repeat should be made by the Board of Examiners. The normal expectation is that Registered Students will retrieve the failure by re-assessment.

11.11 .3 In accordance with Regulation 7.2.6 (b), for re-assessment a Registered Student is required to complete such further assessments as specified by the Board of Examiners as being necessary to demonstrate achievement of the stated learning outcomes. This re-assessment may take the form of additional or re-submitted coursework or an examination. For full-time students the re-assessment should normally be by or at the time of the August/September supplementary examinations.

11.11 .4 In accordance with Regulation 7.2.6 (c), with the support of the principal academic unit, Registered Students may apply to take their reassessment at the next available opportunity (normally the next main summer examination period).

11.11 .5 Registered Students should be notified of their performance in the taught component of the programme and whether they are required to be re-assessed. In the case of students whose programme is spread across several academic sessions, the recommendation relating to re-assessment can normally only be made once all the assessment of the taught elements are completed. Where it is known that the module needs to be reassessed, reassessment should take place at the first opportunity. Registered Students on part-time programmes may be given the chance to retrieve the failure at the first opportunity at the discretion of the Board of Examiners. Boards of Examiners should inform Academic Services through BIRMS which modules it has decided are to be re-assessed.

11.11 .6 Registered Students who have already achieved the requisite number of credits to progress to the next stage may progress 'carrying' the outstanding reassessment, except for Registered Students who have successfully completed the requirements for progression from year zero of a Foundation Year programme who shall not be recorded as ‘carrying’ the outstanding reassessments. For example, a student who achieves 100 credits in stage 1 at the first attempt, and who is permitted to re-sit the failed 20 credits at the next available opportunity rather than in August/ September, may proceed 'carrying' the 20 credits. Registered Students who have not achieved the requisite number of credits to progress to the next stage may not

progress and will be required to achieve the requisite number of credits before being permitted to progress. For example, a Registered Student who achieves 80 credits in stage 1 at the first attempt, and is permitted to re-sit the failed 40 credits at the next available opportunity rather than in August/September, cannot proceed to stage 2 until the re-sits have been passed. In effect they will take an additional year to complete stage 1.

11.11 .7 Registered Students whose programme are spread across several academic sessions and who fail a module can exercise the right for one reassessment at an appropriate time up to the final opportunity specified by the Board of Examiners.

11.11 .8 For full-time student re-assessment should normally be by, or at the time of, the August/ September supplementary examinations. The results should be considered by the September Board of Examiners. For part-time Registered Students the re-assessment should normally be within one calendar year. The nature of the re-assessment should be made clear in the approved module description as published on Academic Services website.

11.11 .9 A Registered Student who is required to repeat a module is required to attend teaching sessions as specified by the principal academic unit or Department and to complete all the assessment requirements associated with the module in order to achieve the stated learning outcomes. Repeat Registered Students should normally complete the repeat of the module within one calendar year of the initial failure. If a Registered Student does not attend teaching sessions as specified by the principal academic unit or Department, they may be debarred from the assessment of the module. Students may repeat some or all modules from a stage of a programme as determined by the Board of Examiners

11.11 .10 In some modules the nature of the module will be such that retrieval of failure can only be by means of repeat (e.g. laboratory-based modules). Such modules should be designated as repeat only in module descriptions.

11.11 .11 With the agreement of the Head of principal academic unit, a Registered Student required to sit or be re-assessed in or repeat a module may be allowed to choose a substitute module, subject to programme requirements and availability. In such cases, the Registered Student shall normally be required to attend the teaching sessions and to complete all the assessments.

11.11 .12 Registered Students who have not submitted coursework or been examined for a module due to illness or other reason accepted by the Board of Examiners may be permitted to repeat a module or be re-assessed in a module or a number of modules as though they were taking the module for the first time. They will retain the right to an opportunity for re-assessment should they fail the module/modules. If repeating the module as if for the first time, the Registered Student is required to attend teaching sessions as specified by the principal academic unit or Department and to complete all the assessment requirements associated with the module in order to achieve the stated learning outcomes. If being re-assessed as if for the first time, the Registered Student is required to complete such further assessments specified by the Progress Board as necessary to demonstrate achievement of the stated learning outcomes. The re-assessment should normally be by or at the time of the August/ September supplementary examinations.

11.12 Recording of Marks Following Re-assessment or Repeat

11.12 .1 Following successful re-assessment or repeat of a failed module, the mark used

for the purpose of arriving at decisions on progress or the final award will be the pass mark for the module. The mark actually achieved in any re-assessment or repeat will however be recorded in the BIRMS, the student records system and on the Registered Student's transcript with an indication of the number of sits taken.

11.12 .2 Where a Registered Student following a Foundation Year programme has been reassessed in a module for which credit had already been achieved, except when recommended as a result of extenuating circumstances, the mark used for calculating the Registered Student's weighted mean mark and progress decision shall be higher of the marks achieved.

The mark actually achieved in any re-assessment or repeat will however be recorded in the student records system and on the Registered Student's transcript with an indication of the number of sits taken.

11.12 .3 Following unsuccessful re-assessment or repeat of a failed module, the mark used for arriving at decisions on progress or the final award shall be the higher of the two fail marks achieved, at initial assessment and at reassessment.

11.12 .4 Where a Registered Student has failed to attend a re-examination or not submitted re-assessed work, without adequate cause, the mark recorded for the module will be 0.

11.12 .5 Where the Registered Student has been permitted to substitute a module the mark achieved will be recorded and used on the transcript. The mark used for the purpose of arriving at decisions on the final award will be the pass mark.

11.13 Standardisation or Adjustment of Marks

11.13 .1 Where the marks for a module fall outside of the normal range (on the basis of historical data) or where concerns or issues have been raised about the module or its assessment before or during moderation, an investigation should be made into the reasons why this might have happened. Where the reasons are identified as being due to an error in the assessment process (i.e. the format/content of the assessment, marking or assessment criteria) or to some factor, which would have affected Registered Students (such as unavailability of essential research equipment), the marks for all Registered Students may be adjusted. The extent of adjustment should be agreed with the external examiner.

11.13 .2 Where marks are adjusted, the rank order of affected Registered Students for the assessment must be maintained and the mark distributions should normally be preserved. The normal method of mark adjustment might be a simple addition or subtraction of an agreed percentage; however, principal academic units may use more sophisticated methods within the above constraints.

11.13 .3 There should be no adjustment to marks if they accurately reflect the achievement or otherwise of the learning outcomes and have not resulted from an error in the assessment process or some other factor which would have affected students.

11.13 .4 All adjustments to marks must be recorded in the minutes of the principal academic unit Board of Examiners and reported to the University Progress and Awards Board.

11.13 .5 Principal academic unit quality assurance mechanisms should ensure that any concerns identified in the assessment process or other aspects of the module

result in a review of that module.

11.13 .6 Scaling of marks within a single (or linked pair of) module(s) to a previously agreed distribution is not permitted. The marks for one module should not be normalised against the marks for other modules.

11.13 .7 Scaling of marks within a single assessment (for example, when an assessment is available at more than one level) is not permitted. The marks should not be scaled depending on the level, and should reflect the "actual" mark achieved in the assessment.

11.14 Aggregation of Marks

11.14 .1 Marks should be aggregated for the purposes of determining the final award according to the credit weighting of the module and in accordance with the relevant University Regulation. For example, a mark for a 20 credit module would be weighted one sixth of the overall mark for the 120 credit taught component of the programme. Marks for the taught and research components of a programme must be aggregated separately.

11.15 Academic Failure and Withdrawal

11.15 .1 Registered Students who do not achieve the required number of credits and/or the required module marks to proceed to the next stage of their programme, as set out in the Academic Regulations, or in programme requirements, following re-assessment or repeat shall be required to withdraw. Such Registered Students will be informed of their right of appeal (see the Code of Practice on Academic Appeals). Registered Students who have achieved the requisite number of credits may be eligible for the award of an alternative qualification, e.g. a Certificate of Higher Education or a Diploma of Higher Education, a Graduate Certificate or Graduate Diploma, or a Postgraduate Certificate or Postgraduate Diploma.

11.16 Transfer of a Student to a Different Programme

11.16 .1 Registered Students may transfer to a different programme of study within the principal academic unit or in another principal academic unit, subject to procedures and deadlines available from Registry. Principal academic units are required to support the application by the Registered Student and to identify clearly, within the Academic Regulations, which modules (if any) Registered Students may be exempted from in the new programme of study.

11.16 .2 Registered Students may transfer to a part-time version of a full-time programme with the support of the principal academic unit. Attention is drawn to the financial implications of transfer for Registered Students and for the principal academic unit. It is expected that Registered Students will follow the same programme of study as full-time Registered Students, but on a part time basis. Where provision for part-time Registered Students may be different, or where a principal academic unit wishes to admit Registered Students on a part-time basis, approval must be sought from the University Progress and Awards Board.

12. Awards

12.1 Undergraduate Awards: Classified Degrees

12.1 .1 The class of degree of each Registered Student shall be determined in

accordance with the agreed University classification scheme.

12.1 .2 In order to be awarded a classified honours degree, Registered Students are required to:

12.1 .2 (a) Achieve the minimum number of credits at each level; and

12.1 .2 (b) To have achieved an overall mark of at least 40 from a combination of module marks in the proportions as specified in the Academic Regulations.

12.1 .3 There is provision for Registered Students on Undergraduate Masters programmes to be awarded a Bachelors (Honours) degree.

12.1 .4 Registered Students in identified Principal academic units may be subject to Adjusted Regulations. The classification system for Adjusted Regulations is detailed in the Code of Practice on Adjusted Regulations and Bachelors Degrees and the Code of Practice on Adjusted Regulations and Undergraduate Masters Degrees. Principal academic units operating Adjusted Regulations must obtain permission to do so from the Academic Policy and Regulations Committee and ensure that all affected Registered Students are informed.

12.1 .5 Where a year of study abroad or in industry between stages 2 and 3 is included as a requirement of the programme of study to which a Registered Student has been admitted, the achievement of the learning outcomes shall be assessed and used, in a proportion stated in the programme requirements, towards the overall stage 2 contribution to the degree classification.

12.1 .6 Where a year of study abroad is an equivalent alternative to study that would otherwise have been taken within the University, it must be assessed and contribute to the classification in the same way as the equivalent study undertaken within the University.

12.1 .7 Where a Registered Student was previously registered on an Honours degree programme, the Certificate or Diploma awarded will normally have the same title as that programme. The title of the award should reflect the content. In some circumstances (particularly where specialisms reflected in the programme title are not taught until the final stage) it may be more appropriate to award a Certificate or Diploma with the name of the principal academic unit or Department.

12.2 Graduate and postgraduate Awards

12.2 .1 The class of award of each Registered Student shall be determined in accordance with the Academic Regulations.

12.2 .2 In order to be achieve the award of Postgraduate Certificate, Postgraduate Diploma or Masters Degree, students are required to:

12.2 .2 (a) achieve the minimum number of credits as specified in Regulation 7.3.2 (a); and

12.2 .2 (b) have gained the weighted mean marks as specified in Regulation 7.3.2 (a); and

12.2 .2 (c) have achieved a mark of at least 40 in the specified number of credits

12.2 .3 To pass with Merit, a Registered Student must

12.2 .3 (a) achieve the mark stated in Regulation 7.3.2 (a)

12.2 .3 (b) pass all modules taken as part of the programme achieve the weighted mean marks as stated in Regulation 7.3.2 (a)

12.2 .4 To pass with Distinction, a Registered Student must pass all modules taken as part of the programme and achieve the weighted mean marks as stated in Academic Regulation 7.3.2 (b)

12.2 5 For postgraduate research students taking taught modules as part of their research programme, the satisfactory completion and achievement of credit in those modules before being recommended for the award of the qualification for which they are registered.

12.3 Other Awards

12.3 .1 Where a Registered Student does not fulfil the requirements for the Postgraduate Diploma or Masters degree; the modules the Registered Student has undertaken may be reviewed against the module learning outcomes for a Graduate Diploma or Graduate Certificate to ascertain whether it meets the requirements of these awards. If a Registered Student does not fulfil the requirements for a Postgraduate Certificate, the modules may be reviewed against the learning outcomes for a Graduate Certificate. These provisions will require that learning outcomes and assessment requirements for a related Graduate Diploma and/or Graduate Certificate have been specified in programme specifications and approved by Senate or delegated authority.

12.3 .2 Where a Registered Student was previously registered on a Masters programme, the Postgraduate/Graduate Certificate or Postgraduate/Graduate Diploma awarded will normally have the same title as that programme. The title of the award should reflect the content. In some circumstances particularly where specialisms reflected in the programme title are not taught until the final stage) it may be more appropriate to award a Certificate or Diploma with the name of the principal academic unit or Department.

12.4 Oral Examinations and Final Awards

12.4 .1 Decisions on degree classification or on the achievement of an award are based on credit accumulation and aggregation of individual module marks according to the University scheme. All assessment is related to the learning outcomes of a specific module. Consequently all assessment that may affect degree classification or the achievement of an award must be related to a specific module and the mark included in the module mark. This is described in more detail in the University Regulations which are available to staff and Registered Students.

12.4 .2 Oral examinations are permitted as one of a range of assessment methods available within modules. Where such oral examinations are used, they should be used where the competences/ achievements of the stated learning outcomes for the module may only be demonstrated through these means, or where the oral examination is an integral part of the assessment of a module (e.g. in relation to the project or dissertation, or language skills). All Registered Students taking a module should be subject to the same form of assessment.

12.4 .3 Generic additional oral examinations as previously used in some sections of the University for a subsection of Registered Students when determining the final degree classification or the achievement of an award are not permitted. Examples of where this type of additional examination has previously been used include:

12.4 .3 (a) As a means of calibrating the overall performance of Registered Students or the standard of a cohort of Registered Students.

12.4 .3 (b) Assessing Registered Students' competence across a range of modules.

12.4 .3 (c) In determining the degree classification of a borderline candidate.

12.4 .4 Exceptionally, an additional oral examination may be used to check the authorship of assessed work in case of doubt, provided that this does not conflict with any formal investigation of examination irregularity or alleged plagiarism, or where there are extenuating circumstances for poor performance.

12.4 .5 Exceptionally, where there are professional validation reasons, or as a 'reasonable adjustment' for Registered Students with a disability, other forms of oral examination may be permitted subject to the approval of the University Progress and Awards Board. The criteria against which the Registered Students' performance at the oral examination will be judged should be made available to the Registered Students and examiners in advance of the oral examination. Registered Students should also be provided with written information and guidance should be provided in advance to students.

12.5 Absence from Assessment and Final Awards

12.5 .1 Registered Students who are ill for a significant period during the academic session (i.e. have missed key elements of their learning experience), or are otherwise prevented from following their programme of study may apply for leave of absence, returning to study once circumstances allow. Registered Students should be made aware that when they return to study, the principal academic unit might not be able to guarantee exactly the same programme of study. Applications to the University Progress and Awards Board would normally be for only one academic session at a time and must be endorsed by the principal academic unit

12.5 .2 All Registered Students, including those in their final stage of their programme, who miss assessments on individual modules through illness, or for other good reason as determined by the Board of Examiners/ Extenuating Circumstances Panel, should take the assessment at the earliest reasonable time (normally at the next available opportunity).

12.5 .3 In cases where Registered Students miss only part of the assessment for a module for reasons or illness, or other good reason, as determined by the Board of Examiners/Extenuating Circumstances Panel, the Board of Examiners should consider whether there is enough material evidence to show that the Registered Students has satisfied the learning outcomes of the module. The mark awarded should be based on the completed work, e.g. if one of three equally weighted assessments was missed, then the mark awarded would be based on the two completed assessments equally weighted.

12.5 .4 Where a Registered Student is prevented by illness or other cause from attending all or part of the final assessments for an award, and sufficient evidence of achievement (normally consisting of the majority of assessed work and evidence

that the main learning outcomes of the programme have been achieved) exists, the Board of Examiners may either:

12.5 .4 (a) For undergraduate programmes, recommend the award of the degree (classified or unclassified/aegrotat), Diploma of Higher Education or Certificate of Higher Education.

12.5 .4 (b) For graduate programmes, recommend the award of the Graduate Diploma or Graduate Certificate.

12.5 .4 (c) For postgraduate programmes, recommend the award of the degree, Postgraduate Diploma or Postgraduate Certificate.

12.5 .5 Where a Registered Student is prevented by illness or other cause from attending all or part of the final assessments for an award, and insufficient evidence exists, the Board of Examiners may recommend that the Registered Student be provided with a further opportunity to complete the requirements of the qualification concerned.

12.5 .6 Where there is no prospect that a Registered Student will be able to complete their programme of study, for example because of death or significant illness, the Board of Examiners may recommend to the Progress and Awards Board the award of either a Certificate of Higher Education; a Diploma of Higher Education; an aegrotat degree; or a classified degree. For the award of a classified degree the Registered Student must have achieved both:

(a) For a Bachelors degree:

(i) Successful completion of stages 1 and 2 of their programme, and any additional stages which form part of the programme requirements, for example a year abroad; and

(ii) At least 40 credits in the final stage of the programme.

Or

(b) For an Undergraduate Masters degree:

(i) Successful completion of stages 1 and 2 of their programme, and any additional stages which form part of the programme requirements, for example a year abroad; and

(ii) At least 160 stage 3 credits, including at least 40 credits at Level M.

The weighted mean mark for the final stage will be determined by using the total number of credits achieved in the final stage as the “sum total of the credit values of the modules required” for that stage (Regulation 7).

Work that has been completed but not submitted may be submitted on the student’s behalf.

These circumstances are likely to be rare and exceptional such that the Extenuating Circumstances procedure will not apply. The Head of School will make an appropriate recommendation to the Board of Examiners after receiving independent, third-party evidence confirming the circumstances. The Board of Examiners, having endorsed the recommendation, will further recommend the

award to the Progress and Awards Board which has final authority on the matter.

13. Bachelors Degree Classification: 'Profiling' – The Distribution of Module Classes (DMC) Procedure

13.1 Basic Principles

13.1 .1 The system of DMC operates under the following conditions:

13.1 .1 (a) The starting point of the system is the credit-weighted arithmetic mean mark, for each relevant stage of study, averaged with the same mark for other relevant stages of study in a prescribed proportion, and truncated (not rounded) to 3 decimal points;

13.1 .1 (b) When the final average falls within a prescribed band below the minimum for achieving a given classification on average alone (the 'borderline'), attention is given to the profile of the relevant marks. (This principle ensures that consideration can only be given to the median when the less successful module outcomes do not fall below an acceptable level.)

13.1 .1 (c) Where there are marks available for all modules required to be attempted under the programme requirements.

13.1 .1 (d) Where there is a preponderance, after credit-weighting, of marks in the class above the relevant borderline. (The purpose of the DMC system is to recognise the prevailing character of a candidate's performance on the basis of judgements of the class to which each module outcome belongs. In this way, recognition is given to the fact that a Registered Student may have more weighted module marks, which lie above the degree classification indicated by the arithmetic mean.)

13.1 .1 (e) A limited measure of failure to gain credit is allowable subject to achieving additional credits in or above the higher class.

13.2 Step One: The Arithmetic Mean

13.2 In accordance with Regulation 7.3.1 (d),where candidates are eligible for the award of a classified first degree, the class will be determined initially on the basis of the weighted arithmetic mean (to take account of the credit rating of a module) using the weighting between stages:

70+ = 1st;
60-69 = 2i;
50-59 = 2ii;
40-49 = 3rd.

13.3 Step Two: Identifying Borderline Cases

13.3 .1 Those candidates with weighted arithmetic means that are within predetermined margins less than the degree classification hurdle values provided above, will be borderline cases and eligible for classification on the DMC basis as set out below. This profiling system makes use of the class band in which each module mark falls. In order to obtain a relative weighting of final year to second year, credits are transformed into units, as follows:

13.3 .2

	3 yr programme credits = units	4 yr Mod Langs programme credits = units	4 yr Undergraduate Masters programme credits = units
Proportions between years/ stages	25:75	12.5:12.5:75	20:40:40
	Credits ⇔ Units	**Credits ⇔ Units**	**Credits ⇔ Units**
Year 2	120 = 120	120 = 60	120 = 120
Year 3	120 = 360	120 = 60	120 = 240
Year 4		120 = 360	120 = 240
Total of units	**480**	**480**	**600**

13.3 .3 A candidate will be eligible for classification according to the DMC system only if all the following conditions are met:

13.3 .3 (a) The candidate has attempted all credits on which the classification is based.

13.3 .3 (b) The candidate has failed not more than 60 units for a classified honours degree and 70 units for an Undergraduate Masters degree

13.3 .3 (c) The candidate has a weighted arithmetic mean in the ranges as follows:

≥ 67.0 and < 69.5 - for consideration for a 1st
≥ 57.0 and < 59.5 - for consideration for a 2i
≥ 48.0 and < 49.5 - for consideration for a 2ii
≥ 38.0 and < 39.5 - for consideration for a 3rd

13.4 Step Three: Determination of the Degree Class for Borderline Cases

13.4 .1 As explained above, the Distribution of module classes (DMC) system makes use of the class band in which each module mark falls. The candidate will achieve one class higher than indicated by the arithmetic mean, if the following conditions are met:

13.4 .2 Classified Bachelors Degree, with more than 240 units in the classification band above the degree class indicated by the calculation of the arithmetic mean:

13.4 .2 (a) Where a Registered Student has achieved more than 240 units above the degree classification indicated by the calculation of the arithmetic mean and has no fails.

13.4 .2 (b) Where a Registered Student has achieved more than 240 units above the degree classification indicated by the calculation of the arithmetic mean, but there are failed units up to a maximum of 60 units. The failed units should be compensated by an equal number of additional units in the degree classes above that indicated by the arithmetic mean (e.g. if 20 units are failed, then more than 260 units are required in the degree classes above that which is achieved).

13.4 .3 Classified Bachelors Degree, with exactly 240 units in the classification band above the degree class indicated by the calculation of the arithmetic mean and no fails:

13.4 .3 (a) A Registered Student whose arithmetic mean mark lies between of 67.0 and 69.45, inclusive should be awarded a 1st class degree if they have achieved 240 units in class I, with not less than 80 units in class 2i and they have no fails.

13.4 .3 (b) A Registered Student whose arithmetic mean mark falls in the following ranges should be awarded a higher class of degree if they meet the following requirements:

13.4 .3 (b) (i) A Registered Student whose arithmetic mean mark lies between 57.0 and 59.45 inclusive, should be awarded a 2i class degree if they have achieved 240 units in the 2i class or above, but have at least 40 units in 1st class.

13.4 .3 (b) (ii) A Registered Student whose arithmetic mean mark lies between 48.0 and 49.45 inclusive, should be awarded a 2ii class degree if they have achieved 240 units in the 2ii class or above, but have at least 40 units in the 2i class or above.

13.4 .3 (b) (iii) A Registered Student whose arithmetic mean mark lies between 38.00 and 39.45 inclusive, should be awarded a 3rd class degree if they have achieved 240 units in the 3rd class or above, but have at least 40 units in the 2ii class or above.

13.4 .4 Undergraduate Masters Degree, with more than 300 units in the classification band above the degree class indicated by the calculation of the arithmetic mean.

13.4 .4 (a) Where a Registered Student has achieved more than 300 units above the degree classification indicated by the calculation of the arithmetic mean and has no fails.

13.4 .4 (b) Where a Registered Student has achieved more than 300 units above the degree classification indicated by the calculation of the arithmetic mean, but there are failed units, up to a maximum of 70 failed units. The failed units should be compensated by an equal number of additional units in the degree classes above that indicated by the arithmetic mean (e.g. if 20 units are failed, then more than 320 units are required in the degree classes above that which is achieved).

13.4 .5 Undergraduate Masters Degree, with exactly 300 units in the classification band above the degree class indicated by the calculation of the arithmetic mean and no fails:

13.4 .5 (a) A Registered Student whose arithmetic mean mark lies between 67.0 and 69.45, inclusive, should be awarded a 1st class degree if they have achieved 300 units in class I, with not less than 100 units in class 2i and have no fails.

13.4 .5 (b) A Registered Student whose arithmetic mean mark lies in the following ranges should be awarded a higher class of degree if they meet the following requirements: A student whose arithmetic mean mark lies between 57.0 and 59.45 inclusive, should be awarded a 2i class degree if they have achieved

300 units in the 2i range, but have at least 50 units in 1st class.

13.4 .5 (c) A Registered Student whose arithmetic mean mark lies between 48.0 and 49.45 inclusive, should be awarded a 2ii class degree if they have achieved 300 units in the 2ii range, but have at least 50 units in the 2i class or above.

13.4 .5 (d) A Registered Student whose arithmetic mean mark lies between 38.00 and 39.45 inclusive, should be awarded a 3rd class degree if they have achieved 300 units in the 3rd class or above, but have at least 50 units in the 2ii class or above.

14. Accreditation of Prior (Experiential) Learning

14.1 Credit should be awarded only for achievement of designated learning outcomes. Therefore AP(E)L should be awarded only against specific modules where through prior qualification or experience it can be confirmed that Registered Students have achieved equivalent learning outcomes. Where this is not academically possible due to differing curriculum or (in particular) accreditation of prior experiential learning, principal academic units should identify which modules the students are not required to complete by studying at Birmingham. AP(E)L will be awarded against these modules. Registered Students will be registered for these modules so that their total credit load is as for other Registered Students, as appropriate to the programme and award.

14.2 Transcripts should only reflect credit achieved at the University of Birmingham. Consequently 'direct entry' students (i.e. those who join the University at a later stage of the programme) would receive transcripts containing only marks achieved while at the University. For Registered Students who receive AP(E)L, all modules should be reflected on the transcript, so that the total number of credits matched that required for the award. In such cases, the AP(E)L module should be clearly marked.

14.3 Progression should be determined as for other students, and AP(E)L modules should be considered as equivalent to other modules. For example, an undergraduate student who received AP(E)L for 20 credits would be required to achieve an additional 80 credits for progression (Registered Students take 120 credits and need 100 credits to proceed). An undergraduate Registered Student who received AP(E)L for 40 credits would be required to achieve an additional 60 credits for progression.

14.4 Degree classification should be determined pro rata. Only credit gained through study at the University of Birmingham should be included in the calculation.

14.5 Registered Students who apply for AP(E)L once they are already registered for a programme should be required to complete the AP(E)L procedures, and pay the appropriate fee(s).

15. Contribution of Year Abroad/in Industry

15.1 Where the year abroad/in industry is either an integral part of the programme to which the student has been admitted, or recognised in the title of the degree awarded it must be assessed and produce a mark or marks which contribute to the stage 2 contribution to the degree classification. It must be passed (at least 100 credits) for the purpose of progression within that programme. The proportion of the contribution to the overall stage 2 contribution to the classification shall be subject to approval by the Programme Approval and Review Committee on the basis of a recommendation from the principal academic unit concerned.

15.2 Where the year abroad is an equivalent alternative to study that would otherwise have been taken within the University, it must be assessed and contribute to the classification in the same way as equivalent study undertaken within the University in accordance with the agreed University-wide classification scheme.

15.3 Where the year abroad/in industry is assessed and contributes to the final classification, principal academic units shall recommend for approval by the Programme Approval and Review Committee assessment arrangements (which must be carried out either by this University or the 'host' institution) that will produce a mark or marks which can be used with confidence in degree classification.

Appendix 1: Moderation

The purpose of moderation

This Code of Practice sets out a number of parameters and minimum requirements with regard to moderation, which must be followed by all Schools. However, it allows Schools discretion to determine the most appropriate approach in certain areas, provided this is recorded in a School Policy on Moderation (see below).

What is moderation?

Moderation refers to a range of processes conducted by an academic member of staff (i.e. an Internal Examiner) to ensure that assessment tasks and marking are accurate, appropriate to the level of the assessment and comparable with equivalent assessments. It is additional to the checking of the accuracy of marks recorded.
It is necessary to have a process of internal moderation carried out by academic staff of the University[1], and a subsequent process of external moderation carried out by External Examiners.

When is moderation needed?

All work submitted for assessment must be marked by an internal examiner[1]. All assessment that contributes to the weighted mean mark used to calculate the final award must be internally moderated where the individual component of assessment contributes more than 10% to the module mark. Where individual components of assessment are excluded from moderation on the basis that they do not contribute more than 10% to the module mark, Schools must ensure that at least 60% of the assessment for the module is moderated (See also 'Which pieces of work should be moderated', below). It is not necessary to moderate undergraduate first year work, although Schools should check and confirm any fail marks between 30 and 39 awarded for assessed work by first year undergraduates (whether that assessed work is a first attempt or a resit attempt).

Where undergraduates in the second year or above are studying a module at Certificate level which contributes to the final award, the assessment for those students should be moderated in line with this Code of Practice.

What forms of moderation are required in different circumstances?

There are three methods of moderation used by Internal Examiners, defined and used as follows:

Method of moderation	Definition	Application
Single marking plus non-blind sampling	Where a specified sample of the range of assessed work is reviewed by a member of academic staff other than the first marker (or team of markers) to assess the standard and consistency of the marks allocated by the markers, with reference to the	Sampling is likely to be used for the majority of types of assessment.

[1] Or other appropriately qualified individuals, e.g. Part-Time Visiting Lecturers or Honorary Teaching Staff

	marking criteria.	
Non-blind double marking	Where ALL pieces of work are marked by two or more markers, and the marks and annotations of the first marker are available to the second marker/s.	**Required** for all undergraduate and Master's level projects and dissertations and other substantial, individualised pieces of work. **Recommended:** • for modules at levels I, H and M which are assessed by a single piece of assessment*. • where first markers are less experienced, or where there are several first markers and consistency may be an issue.
Blind double-marking	Where ALL pieces of work are marked by two or more markers, but the marks and comments of the first marker are not available to the second marker/s.	**Not required in any circumstances** but strongly **recommended** for assessments where it might be difficult to ensure the anonymity of the candidate (e.g. projects).

* Where the only assessment for the module is an examination composed of multiple essay questions, moderation can be by sampling (see below).

Apart from the requirements noted above, for all other assessments, Schools should determine the most appropriate form of moderation, taking into account the nature of the assessment, the contribution made to the module mark and the overall contribution of the assessment to the degree classification or to the achievement of the award (determined by the level and credit value of the module).

Which pieces of work should be moderated?

Subject to the requirements set out in the paragraph above ('When is moderation needed?'), Schools should define which components of assessment within modules should be subject to moderation, in consultation with the External Examiner/s. In some circumstances it may be appropriate to moderate marks for components of assessment which fall below the minimum threshold requirement of 10%.

Examinations
When moderating marks from examinations, Schools should determine whether moderation should be carried out either:

a) at the level of individual questions within an examination paper (i.e. the mark awarded for each separate, substantive question); or
b) at the level of the paper as a whole (i.e. the overall mark for the examination).

Where different questions within an examination paper are marked by different markers, it is necessary for moderation to take place at the level of the question. Where there is a single marker for the examination paper, it may be appropriate to moderate the marking for the paper as a whole.

Coursework

The same principles apply to moderation of coursework assessment: if the overall mark for the coursework element of a module is derived from the aggregation of marks for a number of different, distinct components which have been marked by different markers, it is **recommended** that each component mark be moderated separately, unless each individual component of assessment does not contribute more than 10% of the mark for the coursework element and provided that at least 60% of the assessment for the module is moderated. If the components of the coursework assessment are all marked by the same marker, it may be appropriate to moderate the overall mark for the coursework element.

Practical assessments

For practical assessments such as presentations, oral examinations, musical or dramatic performances etc which individually contribute more than 10% to the overall module mark and where marking takes place at the time of the assessment, it is **recommended** that moderation takes place at the time of the assessment, by having more than one Internal Examiner present, and, where appropriate, the External Examiner/s. Where this is not feasible, there should be a formal record of how the mark was arrived at, with reference to the marking criteria, and also, wherever possible, an audio/visual recording of the assessment, which can be used for moderation purposes.

Allocation of moderation duties

Moderation can be carried by a team of staff, or by an individual. The allocation of moderation duties will be approved by the Head of School/Department, or nominee.

The moderator/s should have a good understanding of the general discipline, but may not necessarily be an expert in the subject of the assessment being moderated.

For all types of moderation, the moderator/s must be provided with the relevant marking criteria and statistical data and may also be provided with a model/outline answer, in order that s/he can fulfil the role properly.

How to carry out sampling

Although only a sample of work will be reviewed, it is necessary that the moderator has access to ALL the pieces of assessment from the cohort.[2]

In order to select a sample for review:

Stage 1

a) Review the range of marks provisionally awarded for the assessment.

[2] Within this context, a ‘cohort’ is defined as ‘a group of students who have taken the assessment in question for a particular module’, thus ensuring that students who take the same assessment but are registered on different modules, and are therefore subject to different learning outcomes, are not regarded as a single homogeneous cohort.

(*Other relevant statistical information may also be considered, if available, such as the mean mark, some indication of variation (e.g. standard deviation), and comparative data for previous years and for other similar types of assessment at the same level within the programme*).

b) Determine the total number of pieces of work submitted for the assessment which is subject to moderation.

c) Determine the level of the assessment (e.g. Undergraduate Certificate, Intermediate, Honours, or Master's level).

Stage 2

Determine the sample for review in accordance with the following criteria:

a) The sample must be representative of the full range of marks, including some fails, where they occur.

b) The sample must meet the minimum sample size, as follows :

Number of pieces of work in the cohort	Minimum sample to be reviewed
100 or more	Square root of the total number, rounded up
Between 10-99	10 pieces of work
Below 10	All pieces of work

Note: **a greater sample size than the minimum may be appropriate** in the following circumstances:

- If the statistical information indicates a significant disparity between the marks awarded by different markers for a particular assessment or within a module, or where the marks awarded by a single marker appear to be unusual in any way (e.g. a particularly high or low mean mark; marks out of line with the normal distribution for the assessment / module etc.)
- Where there is a large number of first markers
- Where the marker is a new or inexperienced member of staff
- If the assessment is taken by students from a range of programmes, in order to include examples from students on the full range of programmes

Stage 3 – what to look for

When reviewing the sample of work, the moderator should be looking for trends or anomalies in how the marker has marked and should not make adjustments to the marks awarded for individual pieces of work. It is inequitable to change the marks for only the sample reviewed.

Outcomes of all methods of moderation:

When all the pieces of work subject to moderation have been awarded marks by the first and second marker or moderator/s, the marks should be reviewed by both markers.

Markers are unlikely always to agree exactly on the appropriate mark to be awarded for a piece of work, particularly in discursive subjects. Therefore, it is necessary to

decide when the difference between the marks awarded by the first and second markers, or moderator/s, is considered to be of sufficient significance to warrant further action.

The outcomes of the review of marks awarded by the first and second marker or moderator/s, and the action which should be taken, will fall into one of the following categories:

Outcome of moderation	**Action to be taken**
a) The marks of the first and second marker/moderator/s are consistently in agreement, differing by no more than 5% for all of the reviewed work; or by no more than 5% for the large majority of the reviewed work and by no more than 10% for a small number of pieces of assessment (e.g. 1-2 in a sample of 20).	Where **sampling** has been carried out: No further action is required and the marks of the first marker are approved as the confirmed marks for the sample and the rest of the cohort Where **double-marking** has been carried out: The marker and second marker / moderator/s should discuss the reasons for the marks they have awarded, and agree that the confirmed marks will be: (a) the full set of marks awarded by the first marker; (b) the full set of marks awarded by the second marker; or (c) an agreed set of alternative marks (e.g. the average or a weighted average of the two marks).
b) The marks of the first and second marker/moderator/s differ by 10% or more for a larger number of the pieces of assessment which have been reviewed (e.g. 5 or more in a sample of 20).	Where **sampling** has been carried out: The marker and moderator/s should discuss the reasons for the marks they have awarded, with reference to the marking criteria. This may lead to one of the following outcomes: (a) If the marks of the first marker are agreed to be appropriate, they may be adopted as the confirmed marks for the whole cohort; (b) If the differences between the marks of the first marker and moderator are consistently in the same direction and of a similar amount, it may be decided to *adjust* the marks of the whole cohort by an agreed proportion or number of marks; (c) If the first marker and moderator are unable to reach an agreement on the marks to be awarded, or if the scale and direction of differences of marks awarded by first marker and moderator vary across the sample the full set of work should be

	marked by the moderator, and the marks then agreed via the process for agreeing the outcomes of double-marking (below). Where **double-marking** has been carried out: The first marker and second marker should discuss the reasons for the marks they have awarded, with reference to the marking criteria, and agree one of the following outcomes: (a) that the full set of marks awarded by the first marker be adopted as the confirmed marks; or (b) the full set of marks awarded by the second marker be adopted as the confirmed marks; (c) that the average or a weighted average of the marks awarded by the first and second marker be adopted as the confirmed marks; or (d) the marks of the whole cohort may be *adjusted* by an agreed proportion or number of marks; or (e) a mark is agreed for each piece of assessment. Exceptionally, if the first and second marker are unable to agree on a course of action, then a third (internal) marker or moderator should be consulted. Only in very rare circumstances should an External Examiner be invited to consider the issue.

As part of the moderation process, marks may under certain circumstances be *adjusted* or *scaled*.

<u>Adjustment of marks</u>
Adjustment is the process applied to assessments within modules in the following circumstances:

1. When the marks awarded by a first and second marker/moderator differ by broadly the same number and most or all of the differences are in the same direction.

2. Where an error has been identified with one particular question in an assessment; this problem can be overcome by modifying the marking scheme for the question or by excluding the question from the assessment, with the mean mark for the assessment and for the module calculated on the basis of the remaining components of the assessment.

3. Where a mean mark for an optional component of a module differs by more than an agreed level from the mean of all the optional components taken together; the agreed level will be determined by the module team.

Adjustment of marks **cannot** be applied when the same assessment is taken by students at more than one level (e.g. level H and level M) by adjusting the marks according to the level of the student; the marks awarded should be the actual marks achieved in the assessment. Adjustment can be applied to the awarded marks within a level of assessment.

The adjustment of marks can take place for work where either sampling or double-marking has been carried out. An agreed adjustment of marks is applied to all students for the assessment. All instances of mark adjustment should be reported to the External Examiner(s) and recorded in the minutes of the Board of Examiners' meeting. Any concerns identified regarding the assessment process or other aspects of the module should be investigated as part of the annual module review process.

Scaling of marks

Scaling is a process which may be employed, on an exceptional basis, to enable the mean mark for a given module to fall within expected ranges derived from:

(i) previous student performance over an appropriate time period (e.g. 3-5 years); and/or
(ii) the range of mean marks in that particular year for all modules taken by a given cohort of students.

After completion of the moderation process for each module, and any resulting adjustments to marks have been made, the range of mean marks for all modules within a year of study that contribute to the final award should be reviewed. As part of this review process, Schools may determine expected ranges within which all mean module marks for a year of study should lie, derived from (i) and/or (ii) above.

The range of expected mean module marks may differ between degree programmes, Departments and Schools but in each case will be based on the evidence of student performance.

After investigation of any module with a mean outside the expected range derived from (i) and/or (ii) above, the marks can be either:

(a) confirmed, if the marks awarded are deemed to be a fair and accurate reflection of student performance on the module in comparison with performance on other modules in the same year of study; or
(b) Scaled, if the marks awarded are deemed not to be a fair and accurate reflection of student performance in comparison with performance on other modules in the same year of study. Scaling should take place using an appropriate algorithm, agreed with the External Examiners, such that the mean is changed by the least amount to lie within the expected range.

The key principles of any scaling of module marks are that the process is transparent, triggered only when the mean mark for a module lies outside of the expected range, and that the algorithm then applied is the minimum required to bring the mean within the expected range. As such, scaling is envisaged to be a rare event.

Instances of scaling should be discussed with, and approved by, the External Examiner(s); full justification on academic grounds must be provided. Where used, scaling should be recorded in the School's annual review report, along with actions taken to address underlying issues.

Recording evidence of moderation

It is necessary for Schools to provide and retain evidence to demonstrate that internal moderation has taken place e.g. recording details of the particular pieces of assessment which have been selected within the sample for review; recording comments on the script/piece of work, or separately. N.B. Schools should note that the Data Protection Act 1998 enables students to access any comments on their assessed work made by Internal or External Examiners. Comments should be professional and constructive.

School Policies on Moderation and Scaling

Schools may choose to implement a more comprehensive approach to moderation than the specified minimum requirements, for example with respect to the size of a sample to be reviewed, or with respect to the types of work which should be subject to non-blind or blind double marking. All such decisions should be clearly set out in a School Policy on moderation. If it is deemed necessary, separate Policies may be introduced at departmental, or programme level. All School/Department/Programme Policies on moderation must be approved by a College committee with responsibility for learning and teaching matters and be reviewed at regular intervals.

If a School wishes to depart from the University policy on scaling outlined above, and apply an alternative model that conforms with accepted good practice in the relevant discipline, a request for an exemption may be sought from the University Education Committee, via the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education).

Information for Students

Students should be provided with an explanation of the purpose of moderation of assessment, for example in a School / Programme Handbook, with details of the School / Department / Programme Policy on Moderation and with reference to this University Code of Practice. The School / Department / Programme Policy on Moderation should be made available as a matter of course to all External Examiners.

Students should not normally be provided with evidence of the moderation process applied to their own work submitted for assessment (e.g. comments of moderators, or provisional marks awarded); they should only receive the final agreed mark for their piece of work. However, students do have a right under the Data Protection Act 1998 to request to see the details of how the moderation process was applied to their piece/s of work by Submitting a Subject Access Request; any moderator's comments and provisional marks awarded will be disclosed, although students are not entitled to receive copies of actual examination scripts or texts.