

## Assessment, Progression, and Award 2019-20

The principles and policies included in this document were arrived at after careful consideration, paying due regard to Queen Mary's academic quality and standards, the student experience, and the need for institutional consistency. The principles align with external expectations and have been approved on the delegated authority of the Senate. All schools and institutes are expected to follow the procedures set out in this document. If for any reason you do not feel able to do so, please contact [eo-setl@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:eo-setl@qmul.ac.uk) in the first instance before taking any action.

If you have a query that is not covered by the above guidance, please email this to [eo-setl@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:eo-setl@qmul.ac.uk) so that it can be considered and responded to by the Education Support Sub-Group.

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For and on behalf of the Coronavirus Response Education Support Sub-Group,  
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## Glossary

<b>Alternative assessment</b>	An assessment that replaces one or more of the original approved assessments as specified in the module regulations.
<b>Classification Mark</b>	A weighted mark used to determine a student's classification (known as the College Mark for 2018/19 and earlier cohorts)
<b>College Mark</b>	A weighted mark used to determine a student's classification (known as the Classification Mark for 2019/20 and later cohorts)
<b>Core module</b>	A module that must be passed outright for award/progression, and cannot be failed or condoned.
<b>Online assessment</b>	An assessment which is either conducted online, or which is released to students online and for which students submit their work online.
<b>PSRB</b>	Professional, statutory or regulatory body (an accrediting body)
<b>Timed assessment</b>	An assessment that must be completed within a fixed time period, eg an online assessment that is released and must be completed and returned within a 48 hour period. The term does not relate to assessments with a deadline but no fixed period in which they must be completed (eg an essay or dissertation in an ordinary year).

# Assessment

## 1. General principles around assessment

- i. A mark (and corresponding grade) should be produced for each module that a student has completed. All modules and assessments must pay due regard to the relevant subject benchmark statements and to any Professional, Statutory & Regulatory Body (PSRB) requirements.
- ii. Where at least some of a module's assessments have been completed and the module organiser is satisfied that the learning outcomes have been sufficiently tested by those elements of assessment that have been completed, there is no requirement to conduct additional assessment. In most cases, evaluating whether students have demonstrated achievement of the intended learning outcomes will require that they have completed at least 50% of the assessment as originally intended, but there is scope for academic judgement here. In proposing this principle, it is recognised that a single, low-weighted element of assessment may not be reflective of a student's overall ability: they may have put in less effort precisely because of the original weighting, or may have performed much more strongly in an individual element of coursework than in an examination. In arriving at a final module mark that reflects a student's academic ability, it may be appropriate to reweight the completed elements by discounting the non-completed elements.
- iii. In the event that the module organiser cannot be satisfied that any assessed elements provide a reliable evaluation of whether students have met the intended learning outcome, an additional assessment will be required. If there are existing elements due for submission shortly then these may suffice if the requirements of point (ii) can be met. In all other cases, module organisers should set an alternative assessment that can be completed and submitted online (see below for further guidance on alternative assessments). In this event, the module mark will be the weighted average of all assessed elements including the alternative assessment (having determined that the latter was required for the assessors to evaluate whether students on the module could demonstrate achievement of the intended learning outcomes).
- iv. All alternative assessments should be considered and approved by one central person/group in each school/institute, with academic oversight from the relevant Dean for Education. The school/institute group considering any proposals for alternative assessments should comprise one or all of (a) the Chair of the relevant Subject Exam Board (SEB), (b) the Director of Education (DoE) / Education Lead, and/or (c) the Head of School/Director of Institute (though this work can be delegated up until the approval stage). Changes are treated as suspensions of regulations – please [send all details to Alice de Havillan](#) for institutional-level approvals and to make changes in SITS, ideally as mass amendments (eg in spreadsheets).
- v. We do not yet know whether there will be travel restrictions in place for the late summer resit period. Resits will go ahead (slightly later than usual) and colleagues considering those assessments are encouraged to use formats that can be delivered remotely for that sitting, too. Where possible, please use the same format as the original attempt, so that students are familiar with the scheme.

## 2. Design of alternative assessments

Alternative assessments should be designed to provide the module organiser and their fellow assessors with a basis on which to evaluate that the student has achieved the intended learning outcomes.

Due to the challenge of students working in different time zones and, even within the UK, with different levels of access to computers and the internet, the exercise should be designed to be completed typically within 24, 48 or 72 hours (as determined by the module organiser). In keeping with the Queen Mary commitment to inclusivity, the intended time required to complete the alternative assessment of up to 72 hours should incorporate sufficient time to accommodate those students with Examination Access Arrangements, e.g. students with disabilities, including specific learning differences (e.g. dyslexia) and mental health diagnoses; the maximum amount of additional time recommended at the university is 100%. If the alternative assessment is in the form of coursework, this may be completed over a period of weeks as is customary.

Where a school/institute does need to set an online assessment of less than 24 hours, they should survey all students on the relevant module(s) and confirm that they will have robust internet access for the duration of the time-limited exam. (This would need to be established before confirming details of the alternative assessments). Students who cannot complete an assessment for these reasons will be able to claim ECs for a first sit, but we should ensure that we are not delaying awards for substantial numbers of students by using particular assessment formats where they are at all avoidable. Where schools/institutes wish to run exams of fixed durations they should follow the requirements of the paper linked below, including a) the ability to set up exam access arrangements for these students and b) a mechanism for dealing with questions about any exam question paper errors/typographical errors within the sitting.

Schools / Institutes are also asked to take account of students on Joint Programmes where a candidate may be required to complete more than one alternative assessment in the same 24-72-hour window. (As for examinations, alternative assessments will need to be coordinated and timetabled across Schools and even across Faculties in order to manage the workload of (a) students and (b) the systems used to receive such a large volume of online submissions, many of which will be simultaneous at the end of each 24-hour submission window).

Guidelines on developing alternative assessments have been developed by the QM Academy, and are available here: <https://elearning.qmul.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/Guidelines-for-Constructing-Alternative-Assessments.docx>

(These principles apply to those alternative assessments set and marked by staff within Queen Mary and cannot extend to any intercollegiate exams set by other universities as part of a Queen Mary degree. While Queen Mary cannot determine the nature of assessments for modules run by partner institutions, the principles for award or progression as defined above will still be applied in considering marks returned for intercollegiate programmes.)

### Setting up of assessment and rubrics

The following guides have been produced by the ELU to explain the setting up, management and marking of online assessments through QMPlus. The guides are intended to give assistance with the most common assessment types, including essay submission using Turnitin, quizzes and video submission. Online training on these topics will also be scheduled during the coming weeks. If you have further queries about setting up assessments and rubrics, please contact the ELU at [elearning@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:elearning@qmul.ac.uk)

- i. [Creating a Turnitin assignment \(assist with detecting plagiarism\)](#)
- ii. [How to create & manage a Quiz](#)
- iii. [Creating and marking a video assignment](#)
- iv. [Creating a standard QMplus assignment](#)

### 3. Conduct of assessment

#### Advice to students on submitting assessments

Details of the alternative assessments will be released to students online and students will make their submissions online (via QMplus). A backup copy of the student's submission for any alternative assessment should also be submitted directly to the email address as directed by the school/institute.

The following guides will be useful to students, especially those who are unfamiliar with QMplus assessments. Different guides will be useful depending on the assessment format planned for each student. A full list of student guides is available [here](#).

1. [How to submit a QMPlus assignment](#)
2. [How to resubmit an assignment \(if allowed\)](#)
3. [Submission receipts for assignments](#)
4. [How to use equations within QMPlus](#)
5. [Uploading a video to your MyMedia area](#)
6. [Submitting a video assignment](#)

#### Draft submissions for timed assessments (not permitted)

Some schools/institutes permit students to upload draft submissions for coursework assessments prior to the final submission, partly to allow them to run the submission through the Turnitin software.

Uploading draft submissions for timed assessments, which take the place of examinations, is not permitted. Students should make only one submission, and that submission will be the final version.

#### Late submission of assessments, including timed assessments

School/institutes have already adjusted submission deadlines by up to two weeks. Where a student does not submit, or submits after that deadline the late work penalty will apply as usual – this ensures that there is still a fixed deadline for submission (though bear in mind the [changes to the EC policy](#)).

Timed assessments including 24/48 hour 'exams'/take-home assessments will cease to be valid measures of attainment after the submission deadline, and rather than deducting five marks a day for seven days, we will apply an immediate mark of zero (which, again, can be waived with ECs). This is provided for by the standard late work penalty (regulation 3.48.ii).

## General matters

### 4. Application of award rules to different groups

- i. Students currently in the final year (including those who first took it in a previous year, eg resitters and those returning from interruption) will be considered under the alternative [award rules](#) in this document. The rules will carry forward for these students if they do not complete this year due to, eg, ECs or resits.

The alternative rules apply to those who first took the final year in a previous year in recognition of the fact that all students being assessed in 2020 have been impacted. In some cases, this will mean that students who narrowly failed to meet the progression/award requirements last year will now meet them without additional work, though they have the opportunity to complete them to improve their profiles and are recommended to do so where they can.

- ii. Part-time and variable mode students are treated as above in point 4.i – these are effectively in the final developmental year for the whole duration of their studies, even where this spans multiple academic or calendar years. When discounting the weakest credits for these students, those credits do not have to come from 2019/20 (this maintains parity with discounting semester A modules for full time students, which were equally unaffected by the impact of Covid-19).
- iii. Students not currently in the final year will be considered for progression/award in subsequent years on the standard regulations that they entered under, not the alternative provisions. It is therefore important to advise students where it is mathematically impossible for them to ever reach the eventual award thresholds (though bear in mind that many will have trailing resits/first sits that they can take in late summer 2019/20 or in 2020/21 to make good the deficits. In some cases that may result in a considerable study load on top of the 2020/21 diet – these students can choose to resit out of attendance in 2020/21). Please note that the final bullet point may have to be reassessed depending on national circumstances at the start of the 2020/21 academic year – if that is the case, any amendments would only be to a student's advantage.

### 5. Core modules

Core modules (those that must be taken and passed – distinct from compulsory modules which must be taken but can be failed and/or condoned) must still be passed, as they are, by nature, fundamental to their respective programmes. However, the marks can still be excluded for the purpose of classification (see above) where core modules are among those with the lowest marks.

### 6. 2019-20 year-average mark

The year-average mark for 2019-20, for finalists and for continuing students, will exclude the marks from the 30 credits-worth of modules with the lowest marks (15 credits for awards with total credit values of 60 credits or less, such as the PgCert). Where a module has the lowest mark due to an assessment offence penalty, that module will not be excluded and we will look at the next lowest module.

\*\*\*update\*\*\*

Queen Mary agreed previously that modules with academic misconduct penalty marks could not form part of the 30 credits discounted from the 2019-20 year average. However, this means that (depending on the penalty) the impact of the penalty could be increased (as it will be, eg, one module among 90 credits rather than one among 120).

The Education Support Group agreed an amendment, which will see a 'best of two' calculation for the 2019-20 year average where students have committed academic misconduct:

- a. The calculation as above (excluding the worst 30 credits, but the excluded credits can't be assessment offence modules); or,
- b. The regular calculation across the entire developmental year (with no discounting).

NB this should only be applied to 'active' assessment offences, ie where the penalty was part of the current module mark. (Where a student has failed at the first attempt, as a result of academic misconduct but the penalty allowed a regular resit opportunity, the mark for that resit would be treated like any other module and would, therefore, be eligible for discounting.)

Where the lowest 30 credits do not fit within two 15 or one 30 credit modules (eg a 15 credit is lowest, then a 30 credit second lowest), the weighting of modules will be amended for the purpose of classification only (e.g. in that case, the 30 credit module would count only 15 credits towards classification).

In some cases, students with high grades for modules sat in the Semester A exams in January and from a final year research project will already have 90 credits with grades on the basis of which they can be recommended for a 'good degree' (first or upper second class honours). Such students may elect not to complete the alternative assessments for the remaining 30 credits in Semester B modules. To ensure that students are able to make informed decisions, finalists should be advised where the School/Institute is already in a position to recommend a degree classification based on 90 credits of assessed modules. (This should hopefully reduce avoidable stress and anxiety among the maximum number of students). Given the commitment to discount marks from the lowest 30 credits, completing all available assessments will always give students the best chance at the best possible outcomes, and it is recommended that students be reminded of this; completing the minimum available assessments may allow the student to achieve an award but the classification will be badly impacted as all but 30 credits of marks (15 for PgCert) will still be used in calculating the College Mark (and the requirement to achieve a minimum College Mark to qualify for award remains in place).

## 7. Transcripts

It is expected that a general statement will be added to the transcripts of all students taking assessments this academic year. This text is being developed in conjunction with a number of other Russell Group universities, and is likely to read: "During 2019/20 all UK universities were affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, this seriously affected assessment methods and the delivery of teaching. This should be taken into account when considering student outcomes for the 2019/20 academic year."

A Covid-19 specific grade/code will be developed for those modules where students had elected not to complete the alternative assessments for up to 30 credits in Semester B. The new code will be displayed against the modules on the transcript, alongside the general statement. Further details on this will follow.

## 2019-20 final year students

Alternative award rules are in place for 2019/20. This section describes those rules. See [here](#) for details of the applicability of the regulations to different student groups.

### 8. Minimum requirements for award (2019/20 finalists)

This section details the amended minimum award requirements for 2019/20 finalists, as they relate to requirements to pass credits and achieve minimum College Marks. The requirements, including level requirements, on credits to be taken (rather than passed) have not changed in any case. To qualify for award a student must also meet any programme specific rules, for example passing core modules. The requirements of accrediting bodies (PSRBs) may mean that requirements are higher than this for specific programmes.

#### Foundation Certificate (FdCert)

Take 120 credits and pass a minimum 90 credits including a minimum 30 at or above level 3. Achieve a minimum College Mark of 40.0.

#### Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE)

Take 120 credits and pass a minimum 90 credits including a minimum 30 at or above level 4. Achieve a minimum College Mark of 40.0.

#### Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE)

Take 240 credits and pass a minimum 180 credits including a minimum 30 at or above level 5. Achieve a minimum College Mark of 40.0.

#### Ordinary Degree

Take a minimum 360 credits and pass a minimum 270 credits including a minimum 30 at or above level 6. Achieve a minimum College Mark of 40.0 (calculated as a flat average of all 360 credits).

#### Standard three-year bachelors' awards (BA, BSc, BSc (Econ), BSc (Eng), BEng)

Take 360 credits and pass a minimum 270 credits including a minimum 30 at or above level 6. Achieve a minimum College Mark of 40.0.

#### Intercalated Bachelor of Science or Bachelor of Medical Sciences (iBSc/iBMedSci)

Take 120 credits and pass a minimum 90 credits including a minimum 30 at or above the level 6. Achieve a minimum College Mark of 40.0.

#### Bachelor of Law (LLB)

Refer to [this document](#).

#### Standard four-year integrated masters' awards (MEng, MSci)

Take 480 credits and pass a minimum 360 credits including a minimum 30 at or above level 7. Achieve a minimum College Mark of 40.0.

#### Graduate Certificate (GradCert)

Take 60 credits and pass a minimum 45 credits including a minimum 30 at or above level 6. Achieve a minimum College Mark of 40.0.

#### Graduate Diploma (GradDip)

Take 120 credits and pass a minimum 90 credits including a minimum 30 at or above level 6. Achieve a minimum College Mark of 40.0.

#### Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MBBS)

No changes from the standard regulations for award.

Bachelor of Dentistry

Please refer to the Institute of Dentistry.

All postgraduate taught awards (CILT, PgCert, PgDip, MA, MSc, MRes, MBA, MPA, MClintDent)

No changes to the standard requirements except that – where condoned failure is permitted – failure can be condoned from a mark of zero where the other requirements are met.

## 9. Classification (2019-20 finalists)

The mark for classification (the ‘College Mark’) will be derived using all marks available from preceding years of study plus the [year average mark for 2019-20](#). The standard year weightings (‘degree algorithms’) will apply, eg 1:3:6 for most three year bachelors degrees.

In all cases, note that the final year still counts for a high proportion of the degree even with [the marks for some credits discounted](#). While it is mathematically possible for a student who passed 240 credits across years one and two to pass just 30 credits in the final year in order to receive a Bachelor’s award, the low marks for the other, uncompleted, final year modules would have a severe negative impact on classification and might mean the student does not meet the minimum College Mark requirement for award. Students are encouraged to complete alternative assessments where they can, to give themselves the greatest number of opportunities for success.

### Borderline classification policy

The borderline classification policy has been amended. All students within 1.5% of a classification borderline will now fall into the zone of consideration. Those of them with at least half of the final year credits being used in classification at the higher level will be raised to the next level (eg, for a BA/BSc/BEng, 45 of the best 90 final year credits would need to be at the higher level, rather than the usual 60 of 120). A student with fewer than half of those credits at the higher level cannot be raised to the next classification band, even if they are within 1% of the border as this would not represent adequate evidence of attainment at that level.

### Regulation 3.56.vi (2019/20)

Previously regulation 3.82ii, this allows the discounting of up to 30 credits of final year modules from the calculation of the classifying mark, for certain UG awards. We have in effect applied this to all students this year by discounting the weakest 30 credits. Regulation 3.56.vi cannot be used on top of that (and other additional provisions, including ECs and the borderline policy) as this would place an extremely high weighting on extremely small group of assessments.

## 2019-20 continuing students

### 10. Progression rules (excludes LLB, MBBS and BDS)

All non-final year students (including students on an integrated “with foundation” degree programme) will be permitted to progress, irrespective of the number of credits passed. However, students will be advised that they may have passed insufficient credits to receive an award and should be advised to take resit assessments in the ‘late summer’ period. (this will begin on 17 August).

Schools/institutes may be aware that some students were on track not to progress irrespective of the impact of the coronavirus (e.g. they had failed more than 30 credits in the Semester A exams). We should avoid setting these students up to fail, and schools/institutes are advised to discuss these students’ situations with them individually, noting issues such as the additional costs they will accrue in 2020/21 with potentially little realistic chance of ultimately completing the degree. Where possible, please record that in writing and retain that written record. If such a student nonetheless wishes to continue, they can do so.

#### MSci/MEng progression and change of programme

MEng and MSci programmes require students to achieve a weighted aggregate mark of 60.0+ to progress to year four on top of the credit requirements. That threshold has been waived, but schools should communicate with students who they think would struggle at level 7 to discuss their options, and whether they might be better choosing to withdraw with a bachelor’s award.

Where a student currently on a bachelor’s degree wishes to change programme to the associated MSci/MEng, the usual requirements remain in place. There is no automatic right to transfer.

### 11. Classification for continuing students

When continuing students complete (ie no earlier than the summer of 2021), their final mark (‘College Mark’ or ‘Classification Mark’ will be calculated both including and excluding 2019-20, and, consistent with the ‘no detriment’ principle, the student will receive the higher of those two marks.

For a bachelor’s student currently in Year 1, this would mean calculating their final mark based on a weighting of 1:3:6 and of 0:3:6, and taking the better of the two outcomes. For a bachelor’s student currently in Year 2, this would mean calculating their final mark based on a weight of 1:3:6 and of 1:0:6, and taking the better of the two outcomes. (For students on undergraduate masters degrees, we would use the best outcome from 1:3:6:6 and either 0:3:6:6 or 1:0:6:6 or 1:3:0:6, depending on which developmental year corresponds to the academic year 2019/20).

This is, in effect, a double no-detriment approach. The marks for the weakest credits from the year will be excluded in all cases; where the recalculated year average would still bring the College Mark down, the whole year will be excluded from classification. Note that this only applies to UG programmes, not part-time/multi-year PGT programmes.

Amended rules for 2019-20 LLB finalists are online [here](#).

### 12. Extramural years

Students on extramural years (abroad, in industry, on placement) in 2019/20 will suffer no detriment in progression and award. Excepting cases where professional accreditation requirements are attached to the year, these students will:

- i. be deemed to have met the progression requirements to the subsequent year of study and remain registered on the ‘with year abroad/placement (etc.)’ route; and,
- ii. Either:
  - a. Where the year has not been completed, or where it has been completed but including it would bring down the student’s eventual College Mark, the student will receive a pass (on

- a pass/fail basis) with credit awarded for the year, treating it as experiential learning. The year will not count towards classification even where it would normally have done so.
- b. Where the year has been successfully completed with results that would increase the student's eventual College Mark and where the year would normally count towards classification, the year will count in the usual way.

These students may therefore choose to continue, or not, with any outstanding assessments and activities on a no detriment basis. Note that all marks must be recorded (and, where appropriate, converted) in the usual way as we will not know whether they will increase or decrease the College Mark until the students complete their final years of study.

Where there are specific PSRB requirements, Schools / Institutes must inform students of these and of any consequences of non-completion.

#### Progression to a year abroad (other than BA Modern Languages)

The usual regulations apply. A student must not have failed any modules, and must have a weighted average of at least 60.0 to be eligible. However, the 2019/20 year average that contributes to that weighted mark will exclude the poorest 30 credits worth of marks. Please note that we may find externally imposed limitations on whether students are able to go overseas in 2020/21.

#### Deferral of an optional year abroad

A student scheduled to study abroad in 2020/21 may choose to defer that until 2021/22, including where that would come after the 'final' year at Queen Mary (the year abroad will be weighted in classification as if it took place at the usual point). Requests will be managed on a case-by-case basis by the Global Opportunities Office. The School of Languages, Linguistics and Film has discretion to set its own policy on this point for the BA Modern Languages and associated programmes. Please note that we may find externally imposed limitations on whether students are able to go overseas in 2020/21.

## Extenuating circumstances

Several changes have been made to the extenuating circumstances regulations in light of the Covid-19 pandemic. Students should continue to submit extenuating circumstances in the normal way through the completion of the extenuating circumstances form and submission to the relevant School. The potential outcomes for extenuating circumstances are the same as listed in the academic regulations with the exception of the time limit scenario listed below. **As always we cannot give additional marks for extenuating circumstances.**

**\*\*Update\*\***

The following extenuating circumstances provisions will be in place for the remainder of the 2019/20 academic year and will, therefore, apply to the late summer period.

### 13. Documentary evidence

Students do not need to submit any documentary evidence for any extenuating circumstances that have taken place since mid-March 2020. The removal of the documentary evidence requirement covers all forms of evidence including, but not limited to, medical certificates and death certificates.

### 14. Types of extenuating circumstances

The types of acceptable extenuating circumstances are broadened to include circumstances related to the Covid-19 pandemic. Students may claim extenuating circumstances for living conditions (such as being unable to study due to lack of study space), caring responsibilities, IT problems including lack of access to suitable IT, and financial hardship. Students may also make extenuating circumstances claims for undiagnosed medical issues relating to Covid-19.

### 15. Non-submission of assessment

If a student does not submit an assessment from mid-March 2020 they will be treated as having extenuating circumstances and awarded a first sit without penalty at the next opportunity. What would normally be recorded at ONS (non-submission) should therefore be recorded as ONA (certified absence) even if the student has not submitted extenuating circumstances. This change recognises that some students will be unable to either complete assessments or submit extenuating circumstances, and should reduce the burden on SEBs, and help to reduce the number of late extenuating circumstances claims and appeals requiring consideration from schools/institutes. **This only applies only to assessments taking place in the affected period, not to assessments from earlier in the year, where ONS marks will stand.**

### 16. Fit-to-sit

The fit-to-sit rules have been partially lifted and students can now submit extenuating circumstances even if they have attempted the assessment. A student who has attempted an assessment may submit a claim for extenuating circumstances up to the SEB's deadline for extenuating circumstances or the point at which feedback is given. Students cannot submit extenuating circumstances if they have been given the marks, or any indication of their performance, for the assessment. Feedback for coursework assessments should be given as usual; feedback for assessments replacing exams such as timed online assessments should not be given until after the exam board (as would be the case for exams in a usual year). **This change to the fit to sit policy applies only to assessments taking place in the affected period, not to assessments from earlier in the year;** in most cases that will mean assessments from March 2020 onwards. The provision applies only to submissions for the June/July SEBs for now, and will be reviewed at that point.

### 17. Exceeding examination/timed assessment time limits

(see also [Late submission of assessments, including timed assessments](#))

Students who go over the time limit for their examination/timed assessment are permitted to submit extenuating circumstances claims for consideration by the SEB. Some examples of potential extenuating circumstances for 'going over time' could include technical issues preventing the student from uploading the assessment at the stipulated time or disruption in their residence such as a fire alarm going off in halls at the time of submission, or urgent medical attention required by someone within their house.

## Marking, external examiners, and examination boards

### 18. Marking, double-marking, and moderation of assessment

With many adjustments to our assessments this year, it is vital that we are able to demonstrate fair and consistent marking. This means that we should aim to apply Code of Practice on Double-Marking and Moderation as usual where we can, with the following exception to its normal provisions: where moderation is used, in cases where the normal minimum sample size is 25% this can be decreased to a minimum of 20%. Where the normal minimum sample size is 10%, there is no change. Samples can never contain fewer than ten students' submissions (as usual).

However, we recognise that in some cases it will be impossible to apply the Code in full. The following are the absolute minimum requirements; where possible higher thresholds should be applied, and an exam board should not adopt the minimum requirements for every one of their modules without good cause:

- i. Double marking is still an absolute requirement for dissertations and projects. For other modules moderation can be adopted in favour of double marking (where either is possible).
- ii. Where the first marker is a new or inexperienced member of staff, double marking or moderation is an absolute requirement.
- iii. In other cases, where double marking/moderation is not possible single-marking will be accepted. However, module organisers must be paired with an experienced colleague in the field who can provide advice on any marking issue. Module organisers on team taught modules must take particular care to ensure calibration between markers.
- iv. Module grade averages must be checked against those from the last iteration of that module to provide a check on consistency over time. Any significant anomalies should be reviewed and – if warranted - addressed and external examiners provided with a spreadsheet containing all revised module averages. The externals should look at this as a whole and agree whether grade averages are in line with those of previous years and whether any anomalies have been explained.
- v. A module impact report (see section 3, below) must be completed for every module, and this should include what was done in terms of marking.

### 19. Module impact reports

In line with advice from the Quality Assurance Agency, Subject Examination Boards are asked to create module impact reports for consideration at their meetings. This will normally be a sentence or two for each module, perhaps in a table or spreadsheet, noting:

- i. Whether and how the module was affected by the impact of Covid-19.
- ii. If so, what action was taken in respect of:
  - a. Adjustments to delivery.
  - b. Adjustments to assessment.
  - c. Adjustments to marking, double-marking/moderation, and external examiner review.

This will be an important document in justifying our approaches and marking to regulators and students, including academic appeals, especially given the changes that will apply to some modules for marking and review under points [18](#) and [20](#).

### 20. External examiners

External examiners should be used as much as possible and wherever possible. External input is more important than ever in these extraordinary times, and guidance from the Quality Assurance Agency indicates an expectation of business as usual, here. Some externals will be unable to act, or unable to cover as much material as usual. Please review external sample sizes where possible, ensuring that you still provide enough

material for them to make an informed judgement. Where external review proves impossible, make a note of this in the module impact report (below); if this applies to a significant number of modules, please raise this with your Faculty Dean for Education as a concern. The absolute minimum level for involvement of external examiners is described in the penultimate bullet-point under '[Marking, double-marking and moderation of assessment](#)', but this should not be unilaterally adopted for all modules without good reason.

## 21. Subject and Degree Examination Boards

To accommodate the submission extensions already granted to students, the dates of the DEB meetings will be deferred by 3 weeks. By reducing the SEB-DEB interval by a week, this will allow us to extend the final date for SEBs to ratify module marks / grades and upload to SITS by four weeks, as below. However, it is vital that all SEBs adhered to the revised dates for submission of SEB paperwork prior to the DEBs.

Revised dates for Degree Examination Boards and for Subject Examination Board submissions were communicated previously, and these have not changed. However, please note that the SEB deadline is for submission of all paperwork and marks to ARCS – it is strongly recommended that you do not schedule SEBs close to that deadline as you are likely to need several days for post-SEB checks, amendments, and the writing and checking of minutes and reports. Paperwork must be submitted by 12 noon on the day of the deadline, and the deadline is absolute – it has been set to give as much time as possible to SEBs, and this has meant a reduction in the time available for DEB preparation. If the 12 noon deadline is not met we cannot guarantee consideration of your recommendations at the DEB. ARCS would be very grateful to receive submissions ahead of that deadline where that is possible.

There is a longer SEB window this year. The additional SEB time is intended to allow for extra checks and reviews, particularly around the amended regulations; it is very strongly recommended that you use some of that time to hold a pre-board to carry out records checks prior to your main SEB. It is essential that if you will be entering any late marks beyond that date that you keep other SEBs updated, especially where there are joint honours programmes – the other SEB otherwise risks making incorrect recommendations based on partial data (this is not a situation particular to 2020, but we should be particularly careful).

### Undergraduate SEBs (except MBBS and BDS, where dates are set locally)

- ◆ Mark entry deadline/TMR is run for the first time: Friday 3 July, 5pm
- ◆ SEBs can be held: 6-14 July (you can meet before or very slightly after this, but bear in mind that marks from other schools will not be final before 3 July, and that you need to allow time for post meeting actions and paperwork before 17 July.
- ◆ Deadline for submission of paperwork and post-SEB changes in SITS: Friday 17 July, 12 noon
- ◆ DEB: Friday 24 July (excluding MBBS, BDS and all TNE programmes)

### Postgraduate SEBs

- ◆ Mark entry deadline/TMR is run for the first time: Friday 3 July, 5pm
- ◆ SEBs can be held: 6-27 July (you can meet before or very slightly after this, but bear in mind that marks from other schools will not be final before 3 July, and that you need to allow time for post meeting actions and paperwork before 31 July.
- ◆ Deadline for submission of paperwork and post-SEB changes in SITS: Friday 31 July, 12 noon
- ◆ DEB: Tuesday 4 August

Please inform ARCS of your SEB date, once set, by [emailing Alice de Havillan](#). If you wish to meet before 3 July please make that clear, as TMR will need to be run to allow reports to function.

### Late summer SEBs (and late summer resits)

Further information on these dates will be circulated in due course, but these will be held later than the dates published at the start of the 2019/21 academic year. The above revised deadlines require the Late

Summer Exam period to be deferred from the first two weeks of August to the last two weeks of August<sup>1</sup> and assume that Schools / Institutes will advise students who may have failed modules in July that they will need to resit in August.

\*\*\*Update\*\*\*

A revised calendar can now be found on the ARCS [webpages](#)

- Late Summer Resit period – 17 August – 4 September
- Mark Deadline/TMR – 18 September 5pm
- UG SEB window (excluding MBBS and BDS) -21 – 28 September
- DEB Paperwork deadline/deadline to amend late summer marks – 2 October, 12pm
- UG S&E/SMD (non clinical) DEB - 12 October
- UG HSS DEB – 14 October
- Official Release of Results: continuing students 5 October and finalists 21 October

### Autumn PGT SEBs

The original dates will still apply. However, we aim to have an additional set of SEBs and DEBs in January/February 2021 to make awards to students who suffered delays and were granted extensions for PGT students unable to complete their degrees in 2019/20(see below).

\*\*\*Update\*\*\*

### PGT Dates as per those approved at the joint meeting in August

A revised calendar can now be found on the ARCS [webpages](#)

- Late Summer Resit period – 17 August – 4 September
- Mark Deadline/TMR – 23 September 5pm
- PG SEB window - 24 September – 2 October
- DEB Paperwork deadline/deadline to amend marks – 7 October, 12pm
- PG S&E DEB - 16 October, 1-3pm
- PG HSS DEB – 16 October, 10am – 12pm
- PG SMD DEB – 20 October, 10am -12pm
- Official Release of Results: 28 October

### Postgraduate students unable to complete their degree in 2019/20

It is probable that an unusually high number of postgraduate students may be unable to complete their degree in 2020 due to circumstances beyond their control. In particular in SMD, many of our postgraduate students are themselves healthcare workers directly involved in the national response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Their ability to complete their awards in the current academic year may be severely compromised. Normally such students would have to wait until July 2021 to be considered for award, with consequent impact on their career trajectories.

Where significant numbers of students on a programme are affected, it has been agreed that an exceptional round of Subject and Degree Exam Boards can be scheduled for January/February 2021 to minimise the delay in awards to these students. (Where individual students on a programme are affected, e.g. by illness, the same result can be achieved by Chair's Action and would not require additional Boards to be convened.)

The additional Boards are intended to accommodate the following situations:

- i. Assessment first sits were delayed from May to August due to extenuating circumstances, with second attempts to be offered following the October/November Boards
- ii. Students were unable to sit in either May or August, with first sits to be offered following the October/November Boards
- iii. Project/dissertation submissions were delayed due to extenuating circumstances and were unable to be considered at the October/November Boards

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<sup>1</sup> The precise duration of the Late Summer Exam period will depend on the number of assessments that will need to be scheduled. It is possible that it will need to extend into September if necessary.

The provision of additional exam boards is not intended to provide an opportunity for students to complete laboratory-based projects rather than alternatives that have been arranged for completion by August. It is not envisaged that students will have access to laboratories by autumn to enable this to happen.

Institutes/Schools/Programmes should take account of the following considerations:

- i. Suspension of regulation may be required to extend the maximum duration of study (seek ARCS advice) Fees will not be payable. However, for part-time students it will be necessary to send a list of affected students to the Fees Office to prevent automatic invoicing
- ii. Visas normally allow for students to remain until January (there is a 4-month grace period on a 12-month visa), although it is not envisaged that face-to-face attendance will be required – delayed assessments should be in the same format as assessments offered to students earlier in the year

Institutes/Schools likely to convene exceptional Boards should [contact Alice de Havillan](#) to discuss dates and further details.

\*\*\*Update\*\*\*

DEB date will be 24<sup>th</sup> Feb at 1-2pm

(PGT student consideration can form part of the Associate student SEBs.)