

Boards of Examiners for Taught Programmes Policy

Version Number 2.6

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1.0 Purpose

The University is responsible for the standard of its awards. In the case of taught programmes, Senate discharges this responsibility by delegating relevant powers to Boards of Examiners to make decisions on marks, progression and awards. This policy provides information about:

- The role of Module and Programme Boards of Examiners
- Membership of Module and Programme Boards of Examiners
- Conduct of Module and Programme Boards of Examiners
- Ratification of marks and decisions

2.0 Scope

This policy applies to all undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes.

3.0 Policy Statements

3.1 Boards of Examiners Membership and Conduct

- 3.1.1 The University operates two-tiered Boards of Examiners where each tier has a defined purpose. The first tier, the Module Board of Examiners, is responsible for the ratification of module marks on taught programmes. The second tier, the Programme Board of Examiners, is responsible for making decisions about progression and the award of qualifications. Appendix 1 provides further information about the role of each Board.
- 3.1.2 Schools oversee the operation of Boards of Examiners for modules and programmes for which they have administrative responsibility.
- 3.1.3 The standard membership for Module and Programme Boards of Examiners is defined in Appendix 1. Schools shall establish the membership of the Boards by name and role and report it as a standard agenda item (including those present and absent).
- 3.1.4 Schools shall annually publish a list of Boards of Examiners with dates of meetings.
- 3.1.5 Attendance at Boards of Examiners shall be sufficient to be representative of the modules/programmes under consideration and to enable appropriate decisions about marks, progression and awards to be taken.
- 3.1.6 All Boards of Examiners should:
- a) operate in an objective and consistent manner in reaching decisions;
 - b) ensure information presented and considered is dealt with in a sensitive and confidential way
 - c) ensure that decisions are correctly recorded and duly communicated.
- 3.1.7 Chairs and secretaries shall undertake staff development training in chairing and servicing Boards of Examiners before acting in this capacity.
- 3.1.8 On programmes where students progress automatically from trimester 1 to semester 2 (or equivalent), a formal Module Board of Examiners may be held at the end of trimester 1 to ratify marks but the University does not require a formal Module Board at this stage. If a Module Board of Examiners is not held, the School must ensure that feedback is given to students on their performance and that it is made clear that

any marks awarded have not yet been ratified and may be subject to change following internal and external moderation.

- 3.1.9 Boards of Examiners shall operate with a standard agenda and set of documentation. See Appendix 2 for details. Appendix 2 also provides details of the information which should be presented by a Module Leader during the Module Board of Examiners.
- 3.1.10 All parties attending a meeting of the Board of Examiners should be invited to declare any potential conflicts of interest. The chair shall consider if any action is necessary depending on the circumstances. It may be necessary for the relevant member of staff to withdraw from a meeting whilst a particular student is considered. Any declarations of conflicts of interest shall be minuted along with actions taken.
- 3.1.11 For both Module and Programme Boards of Examiners, the full Board of Examiners shall normally take all decisions. Chair's action may be used exceptionally.
- 3.1.12 Chair's action:
- a) shall be mandated in advance by the full Board wherever possible;
 - b) shall not be used as a way of circumventing the full Board;
 - c) shall not be used for matters which are known to be controversial;
 - d) shall be supplemented by wider consultation with a few key members or all members of the Board;
 - e) shall be reported to all members so that they know what action has been taken done;
 - f) shall be appended to the record of the full Board meeting.
- 3.1.13 Responsibility for decision making lies with the Board collectively.
- 3.1.14 A record of all decisions, including the ratification of marks, taken by a Board or by chair's action shall be signed or confirmed in writing by:
- a) the chair of the Board;
 - b) all external examiners present at the meeting of the Board; and
 - c) any external examiner who would normally have been present at the meeting of the Board or who would normally have been present had the decision not been taken by chair's action.
- 3.1.15 A minute of all meetings of a Board and cases of chair's action shall be kept.
- 3.1.16 A minute of the decision for every student should be recorded, for example "120 credits, progress". This may be recorded on the spreadsheet and further detail as required for individual students may be appended to the spreadsheet. Additional information which should also be recorded includes:
- actions taken in response to PMC decisions;
 - implementation of penalties determined by the School Academic Misconduct Panel and/or University Student Disciplinary Panel;
 - award of compensation;

- decisions to permit concurrent study if appropriate criteria have been met;
- assessments taken as replacement attempts;
- a note of any Chair's actions mandated by the Board.

- 3.1.17 The minutes shall be confirmed by the chair and retained in the School Office as the definitive record of the Board. The minutes should also be circulated to members of the Board marked as 'confidential'.
- 3.1.18 The minutes shall be available in Schools and made available to the Quality and Enhancement Office for processing academic appeals if required.
- 3.1.19 The following information shall be recorded in the minutes following consideration of student results and decisions taken on progression/award:

For each **module** the following information shall be ratified for a student:

- a. percentage mark achieved (0 – 100), grade achieved (Pass or Fail) or NS (non submission/absence);
- b. assessment status (first, reassessment, retake attempt);
- c. if APL has been approved for any modules;
- d. any PMCs submitted, the outcome and action taken by the Board;
- e. the award of compensation.

At each **level or stage of a programme** the following information shall be ratified for a student:

- a. the number of credits undertaken;
- b. the number of credits accumulated;
- c. where appropriate, the level mark;
- d. progression to the next level/stage;
- e. confirmation of repeat assessment attempts;
- f. awards confirmed;
- g. confirmation of withdrawal.

The following decisions shall be available to a **Programme Board of Examiners**:

- a. progress to the next level or stage;
- b. progress to the next level or stage with compensation;
- c. progress to the next level or stage with (re) assessment opportunity/ies offered;
- d. offer reassessment in failed module(s);
- e. offer a combination of reassessment in failed module(s) and replacement opportunity/ies as appropriate;
- f. offer retake in failed module(s)
- g. offer retake in failed module(s) and replacement reassessment opportunity/ies as appropriate
- h. requirement to withdraw with/without intermediate terminating qualification;
- i. award intermediate terminating qualification with compensation;
- j. award final qualification;
- k. award final qualification with compensation;
- l. defer decision.

3.2 Student Debtors and Students whose Registration is Cancelled

- 3.2.1 The University expects all student debts to the University to be paid. In relation to the assessment process, the University differentiates in arrangements between monies owed for tuition fees and other monies owed such as Library/IT fines.
- 3.2.2 Boards may consider results of any assessments taken by students up to the point of cancellation of their registration.
- 3.2.3 Additional information about processes to follow in relation to student debtors and students whose registration is cancelled can be found in **Appendix 3**.

4.0 Related Documentation

The following documents can be found on the University Policy & Procedure pages <http://www.salford.ac.uk/policies> or under 'P' via the Staff Channel A-Z index.

- [Academic Regulations for Taught Programmes](#)
- [Academic Staff Roles Manual](#)
- [Personal Mitigating Circumstances Procedure](#)
- [External Examining for Taught Programmes](#)

Appendices

Appendix 1: Responsibilities and membership of Module and Programme Boards of Examiners

Appendix 2: Standard agendas and documentation for Module and Programme Boards of Examiners

Appendix 3: Processes to follow in respect of student debtors and students whose registration has been cancelled

Appendix 1 - Responsibilities and Membership of Boards of Examiners

| | Responsible for: | Core members (expected to attend) | Optional members (have the right to attend) | Invited members (Board may invite) |
|--------------------------------------|---|--|---|--|
| Module Boards of Examiners | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> giving due consideration to profile of component marks and overall module marks; averages and standard deviations of component marks and overall module marks; pass rates; % of marks falling in each grade band the ratification of module marks on taught programmes ensuring marks awarded are accurately recorded and ratified where relevant, making formulaic across the board changes to sets of marks or asking internal/external examiners to revisit scripts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chair (from outside the home Directorate and who must not be one of the Schools nominated PMC Reviewers/Adjudicators nor involved in making decisions about academic misconduct cases). If a School only has one Directorate, the School should appoint a member of staff who is independent of the programme. Module leaders for the modules under consideration External examiners (as appropriate for the module(s) under consideration). If absent, be available for consultation. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vice-Chancellor Dean of Schools Associate Dean (Academic) Members of staff teaching on the modules under consideration | Members who assist the Board for specific purposes (e.g. practitioners) but who do not have decision-making and voting powers |
| Programme Boards of Examiners | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> making decisions on progression and the award of qualifications on a named programme/suite of programmes on the basis of ratified marks from relevant module boards ensuring regulations on progression and award are operated correctly ensuring operation of principle of fairness for the whole group of students (not just individuals) ensuring marks and awards from the University are appropriate for qualifications at the level and subject discretionary qualification, if any, is correctly awarded | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chair (from outside the home Directorate and who must not be the Programme Leader nor one of the School's nominated PMC Reviewers/Adjudicators nor involved in making decisions about academic misconduct cases) Programme Leader(s) or nominee(s) Director(s) of Directorate Link Tutor(s) for programmes involving collaborative provision External examiner(s) (as appropriate). If absent, must be available for consultation. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vice-Chancellor Dean of School Associate Dean (Academic) Module Leaders | Members who assist the Board for specific purposes (e.g. practitioners) but who do not have decision-making and voting powers |

Appendix 2 Standard agendas and documentation for Boards of Examiners

Agenda templates are available at: <http://www.salford.ac.uk/geo/AssessmentPolicy>

| | Standard Agenda items | Documentation to be made available |
|-------------------------------|---|---|
| Module Boards of Examiners | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome and introductions • Confirmation of membership • Apologies for absence • Declaration of conflicts of interest • Confirmation of the minutes of the previous meeting • Report of documentation presented to the Board • Notification of key regulatory changes • Consideration and ratification of module results including reports from Module Leaders covering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ profile of component marks/overall module marks achieved ○ median and standard deviations of component marks/overall module marks achieved ○ pass rates • Consideration and ratification of APL requests • Issues affecting assessment including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Senior Invigilator reports • Oral reports from External Examiners | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Module mark profiles, reports from module leaders on any matter impinging on the assessment of a module (although such reports may be presented orally to the Board) • Module results spreadsheets annotated to reflect any PMC decisions made by the PMC Reviewers • Current Academic Regulations for Taught Programmes • Matters arising from previous minutes such as Chair's actions taken or report of any other actions indicated in the minutes • Decisions of School Academic Misconduct Panel and/or University Student Disciplinary Panel • Report of debtors and students with cancelled registrations |
| Programme Boards of Examiners | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome and introductions • Confirmation of membership • Apologies for absence • Declaration of conflicts of interest • Confirmation of the minutes of the previous meeting • Report of documentation presented to the Board • Notification of key regulatory changes • Notification of student debtors • Consideration of results by students - progression/award decisions • Oral reports from External Examiners • Recommendations for award of prizes (where appropriate) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme results spreadsheets annotated to reflect any PMC decisions made by the PMC Reviewers • Module spreadsheets (may be consulted to determine outstanding assessment requirements) • Current Academic Regulations for Taught Programmes • Programme Specification • Matters arising from previous minutes such as Chair's actions taken or report of any other actions indicated in the minutes • Decisions of School Academic Misconduct Panel and/or University Student Discipline Panel • Report of debtors and students with cancelled registrations • Details of any prizes available to the Exam Board to award |

Appendix 2 – Report from Module Leader to Module Board of Examiners

For each module under consideration by a Module Board of Examiners, the Module Leader is required to present a short report which includes the following information:

- Any relevant contextual information
- Mark range by assessment component and overall module mark achieved
- Averages and standard deviations of component marks/overall module marks achieved
- Pass rate for the module
- Any issues affecting the running of the module or the assessment of the module

Module leaders are reminded that discussions should focus on the student cohort, not individual students.

Appendix 3: Student Debtors and Students Whose Registration Has Been Cancelled

1. Students on taught programmes who have University debts of any kind, but whose registration has not been cancelled, are permitted to complete assessments, including examinations. Assessments should be marked and marks and awards considered at the Module Board of Examiners and Programme Board of Examiners, respectively.
2. Where students have been permitted to progress to the next level or stage of a programme or where awards have been made, including decisions relating to debtors, these should be recorded in the student records system.
3. The University withholds results of assessments from students who owe tuition fees and those students are not permitted to graduate. These sanctions apply until the debt is fully discharged. If such students are required to be re-assessed, they should be informed only about the components which they need to undertake in order that they may prepare for their reassessment.
4. The University does not withhold results of assessments and examinations from students who owe monies other than tuition fees to the University. Although these students may receive an award certificate, they are not allowed to attend the graduation ceremony. This sanction applies until the debt is completely discharged. The University reserves its rights to continue to pursue any outstanding debt, if necessary by legal action.
5. Where students have already had their registrations cancelled because of tuition fee debt, they are not permitted to take examinations or submit assessments. Cancellation of registration includes withdrawal of IT access. This will mean that former students will not normally be able to submit assessments. Former students presenting for examination or attempting to submit assessments should be advised that such examinations or assessments will not be marked but will be disregarded and disposed of and that contact should be made with Finance Division to discuss clearing the debt and then possible reinstatement of their student status.
6. Under no circumstances should any results or requirements to be reassessed be given to former students who have had their registrations cancelled.

| Document Control Information | | | |
|---|--|----------------|--|
| Revision History incl. Authorisation: (most recent first) | | | |
| Author | Summary of changes | Version | Authorised & Date |
| A Cooke | Update for 2018/19 and inclusion of a requirement to consider APL requests at module boards | V2.6 | Editorial amendment 22 August 2018 |
| A.Cooke | Annual update. Changes to terminology; clarification provided about declarations of conflicts of interest. | V2.5 | minor revision by Policy Owner 4 July 2017 |
| A.Cooke | Annual update. Updated to reflect changes in Academic Regulations. | V2.4 | minor revision by Policy Owner 6 September 2016 |
| A.Cooke | Update to membership of Programme Boards, standard agendas for Boards, removal of references to discretionary compensation. Addition of Programme Specification to the documents which should be taken to a Programme Exam Board. Annual update. | V2.1-2.3 | minor revision by Policy Owner September 2015 |
| A.Cooke | Appendix 4 amended to take account of OFT advice to universities. Appendix 4 amended to remove drafting errors | V1.2-13 | Senate: 11 Dec 2014 |
| Policy Management and Responsibilities: | | | |
| Owner: | The Policy is owned by the Head of the Quality and Enhancement Unit. Responsibility for authorship, communication and advice of the policy has been delegated to Annette Cooke, Quality and Enhancement Manager, Quality and Enhancement Office | | |
| Others with responsibilities (please specify): | Chairs/members of Exam Boards, Secretaries of Exam Boards and External Examiners are all required to engage with and adhere to this policy. | | |
| Author to complete formal assessment with the following advisory teams: | | | |
| Equality Analysis (E&D, HR) Equality Assessment form | 1. <i>This is mandatory. Specify date completed and brief outcome. Completed EA to be attached to document as Appendix.</i> | | |
| Legal implications (LPG) | 2. <i>N/A</i> | | |
| Information Governance (LPG) | 3. <i>7 September 2016</i> | | |
| Student facing procedures (QEO) | 4. <i>QEO involved throughout update process</i> | | |
| UKVI Compliance (Student Admin) | 5. <i>N/A</i> | | |
| Consultation: | | | |
| Staff Trades Unions via HR Students via USSU Relevant external bodies (specify) | 1. <i>N/A</i> | | |
| Review: | | | |
| Review due: | 2017/18 | | |
| Document location: | University Policy & Procedure Pages | | |
| http://www.salford.ac.uk/policies | | | |
| The owner and author are responsible for publicising this policy document. | | | |
| Chairs and Secretaries of Exam Boards via ADAs and School Operations Managers. | | | |

Training sessions are offered to Chairs and Secretaries of Exam Boards and to External Examiners