



University of
Salford
MANCHESTER

Assessment Boards for Taught Programmes Policy

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Author: Quality & Enhancement Manager

Quality & Enhancement Office

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1 Purpose

1.1 Assessment Boards act with delegated authority on behalf of Senate in making decisions on marks, progression and awards for taught programmes. In making such decisions, Assessment Boards operate in line with the University's academic regulations, related policies, and with any relevant course specific regulations and relevant PSRB requirements. This policy provides information about:

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

2 Scope

2.1 This policy applies to all undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes.

3 Module and Programme Assessment Boards

- 3.1 The University operates two-tiered Assessment Boards where each tier has a defined purpose.
- 3.2 The first tier, the Module Assessment Board, is responsible for the ratification of module marks on taught programmes.
- 3.3 The second tier, the Programme Assessment Board, is responsible for making decisions about progression and the award of qualifications.
- 3.4 **Appendix 1** provides further information about the role and membership of each Board.
- 3.5 Schools oversee the operation of Assessment Boards for modules and programmes for which they have administrative responsibility.

4 Chairs and Secretaries of Assessment Boards

- 4.1 Chairs of Assessment Board shall be appointed by the relevant Dean of School (or nominee). Chairs shall be members of academic staff who have significant experience and understanding of programme delivery and academic regulations.
- 4.2 Each Assessment Board shall have an independent 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.
- 4.2 Chairs must undertake training in chairing Assessment Boards before acting in this capacity. All Chairs are expected to attend an annual briefing session.
- 4.3 Secretaries shall be appointed by the School Business Manager (or nominee) and must undertake training in servicing Assessment Boards before acting in this capacity.
- 4.4 The Quality and Enhancement Office shall maintain a list of trained Chairs and Secretaries.

5 Scheduling of Assessment Boards

5.1 Schools shall annually publish a list of Assessment Boards with dates of meetings.

- 5.2 On programmes where students progress automatically from trimester 1 to semester 2 (or equivalent), a formal Module Assessment Boards may be held at the end of trimester 1 to ratify marks but the University does not require a formal Module Assessment Board at this stage. If a Module Assessment Board is not held, the School must ensure that where marks are given to students, they are advised that marks have not yet been ratified and may be subject to change following internal and external moderation.

6 Attendance at Assessment Boards

- 6.1 Attendance at Assessment Boards 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.
- 6.2 External Examiners are expected to attend the relevant Assessment Board. If an External Examiner cannot attend a meeting, they should, where possible, be available for consultation.
- 6.3 An Assessment Board chair may declare any meeting of the Assessment Board to be inquorate should they decide that attendance is such as to jeopardise the soundness of the Assessment Board's decisions.

7 Operation of Assessment Boards

- 7.1 Assessment Boards shall operate with a standard agenda and set of documentation. See **Appendix 2** for details.
- 7.2 All Assessment Boards should:
- operate in an objective and consistent manner in reaching decisions;
 - ensure information presented and considered is dealt with in a sensitive and confidential way;
 - ensure that decisions are correctly recorded and duly communicated.
- 7.3 **Appendix 3** provides a key for codes found on Assessment Board spreadsheets.

8 Roles of Board Members

- 8.1 The role of the Chair is to ensure that:
- the standard agenda is followed and priority modules are given sufficient consideration;
 - regulations/policies/procedures/principles are adhered to;
 - reasons for decisions are clear;
 - business is conducted fairly and efficiently;
 - that all students are considered as part of a cohort (Module Board) or individually (Programme Board).
- 8.2 During a Module Board, for each module under consideration, the Module Leader is required to present a short report which includes the following information:
- any relevant contextual information regarding the module;
 - mark range by component and module mark;
 - pass rates for component/module;
 - any issues affecting the running of the module or the assessment of the module.

8.3 During a Programme Board, the Programme Leader:

- ensure that the Board is aware of any programme specific regulations;
- present each individual student's profile to permit inform decisions about progression, award or reassessment/retake requirements.

8.4 The role of an External Examiner is:

- to provide discipline-specific input at a Module Board;
- to provide oversight of the fair operation of the assessment process at a Programme Board;
- to sign the record of awards endorsing assessment and degree outcomes.

8.5 The role of the Secretary is to:

- make all the administrative arrangements for the effective operation of the board, e.g. the notification of dates and times, room booking;
- ensure appropriate, accurate and complete documentation is available;
- provide support for the Chair in ensuring that University regulations/policies/procedures/principles are adhered to;
- ensure that discussions/decisions are clearly minuted;
- ensure all the necessary administrative actions are carried out following the meeting including production of minutes and circulation of student results.

9 Conflicts of Interest

9.1 All members of an Assessment Board are required to declare any personal interest, involvement or relationship with a student being assessed. This includes where programmes are delivered in collaboration with a partner organisation. 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.

10 Decision Making and Recording of Decisions

10.1 Responsibility for decision making lies with the Board collectively.

10.2 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:

- the chair of the Board;
- all External Examiners present at the meeting of the Board; and
- 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.

10.3 A minute of all meetings of a Board and cases of chair's action shall be kept.

10.4 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 an Academic Misconduct Hearing and/or University Student Misconduct 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.

10.5 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'.

10.6 The minutes shall be available in Schools and made available to the Quality and Enhancement Office for processing academic appeals if required.

10.7 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:

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

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

- the number of credits undertaken;
- the number of credits accumulated;
- where appropriate, the level mark;
- progression to the next level/stage;
- confirmation of repeat assessment attempts;
- awards confirmed;
- confirmation of withdrawal.

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

- progress to the next level or stage;
- progress to the next level or stage with compensation;
- progress to the next level or stage with (re) assessment opportunity/ies offered;
- offer reassessment in failed module(s);
- offer a combination of reassessment in failed module(s) and replacement opportunity/ies as appropriate;
- offer retake in failed module(s)
- offer retake in failed module(s) and replacement reassessment opportunity/ies as appropriate
- requirement to withdraw with/without intermediate terminating qualification;
- award intermediate terminating qualification with compensation;
- award final qualification;

- award final qualification with compensation;
- defer decision.

11 Chair's Action

11.1 For both Module and Programme Assessment Boards, the full Board shall normally take all decisions. Chair's action should be used exceptionally.

11.2 Chair's action:

- shall be mandated in advance by the full Board wherever possible;
- shall not be used as a way of circumventing the full Board;
- shall not be used for matters which are known to be controversial;
- shall be supplemented by wider consultation with a few key members or all members of the Board;
- shall be reported to all members so that they know what action has been taken done;
- shall be appended to the record of the full Board meeting.

12 Student Debtors and Students whose Registration is Cancelled

12.1 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.

12.2 Boards may consider results of any assessments taken by students up to the point of cancellation of their registration.

12.3 Additional information about processes to follow in relation to student debtors and students whose registration is cancelled can be found in **Appendix 4**.

13 Related Documentation

- [Academic Regulations for Taught Programmes](#)
- [Assessment and Feedback Policy](#)
- [Academic Appeals Procedure](#)
- [Personal Mitigating Circumstances Procedure](#)
- [External Examining for Taught Programmes](#)

Appendices

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

Appendix 2: Standard agendas and documentation for Module and Programme Assessment Boards

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

Appendix 4: Key for codes found on Assessment Board spreadsheets

Appendix 1: Responsibilities and Membership of Assessment Boards

	Responsible for:	Core members (expected to attend)	Optional members (have the right to attend)	Invited members (Board may invite)
Module Assessment Boards	<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 Assessment Boards	<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 At least one External Examiner. If the External Examiner, for good reason, is unavailable, they 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 Assessment Boards

Agenda templates are available at: <https://testlivesalfordac.sharepoint.com/sites/QEO/SitePages/AssessmentPolicy.aspx>

	Standard Agenda items	Documentation to be made available
Module Assessment Boards	<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 Hearings and/or University Student Disciplinary Panels • Report of debtors and students with cancelled registrations
Programme Assessment Boards	<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 	<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 Hearings and/or the University Student Disciplinary Panel • Report of debtors and students with cancelled registrations

Appendix 3: Assessment Board Module and Programme Spreadsheets – Key

Registration Statuses

The registration status which appears on module/programme reports is a student's overall registration status.

RE	Registered	Student is registered
EL	Eligible to Register	Student is eligible to register but has not registered in this academic session.
WN	Withdrawn-no reg this session	Student has withdrawn/been withdrawn prior to registration
RP	Repeat with attendance	Student is registered as repeating one or more modules
WU	Writing up	Student is registered as 'Writing Up' i.e. extension for PGR or Taught Dissertation
IN	Interrupting Study	Student is currently on interruption of study
WD	Withdrawn after reg this academic session	Student has withdrawn following registration in this term.
EA	Early Leaver	Student has withdrawn within the first 2 weeks of this term.
RR	Cancelled Registration	Student registration revoked.
RX	At Collaborative College	Student is registered at a collaborative partner institution
RS	Reinstated	Student is registered after previously being revoked

Codes within the Marking Grid

MM	Missing mark
NS	Non Submission
(mark displayed in bold red)	Failed mark
t	Transfer credit
*	Mark from academic history for the current term
**	Mark from academic history for a term other than current term
r	Mark achieved after reassessment
X	Academic misconduct
P	PMC Accepted - Offer Replacement Attempt
(as a prefix)	
L	PMC Accepted - Late Penalty Removed
R	PMC rejected
A	PMC not yet considered
P (or Pass)	Pass - Graded Mark
F (or Fail)	Fail - Graded Mark
C (as a suffix)	Compensated Mark
#	Final Component

Appendix 4: 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	Additional information about conflicts of interest provided, inclusion of information about roles and /re-organisation of material.	V2.9	Signed off by Chair's Action on behalf of ASQAC 16 August 2021
A Cooke	Addition of appendix 3 (key for Assessment Board spreadsheets) and an update to requirements for Chairs and Secretaries (section 3.1.7)	V2.8	Editorial amendment 9 September 2020
A Cooke	Title of Boards of Examiners changes to Assessment Boards	V2.7	Approved by Senate 12 June 2019
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 4 July 2017
A.Cooke	Annual update. Updated to reflect changes in Academic Regulations.	V2.4	minor revision by Policy Owner 6 September 2016
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Others with responsibilities (please specify):	Chairs/members of Assessment Boards including External Examiners, Secretaries of Assessment Boards		
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>		
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