University Code of Practice

Boards of Examiners
(Taught Programmes)

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Responsibilities:	Internal and External Examiners Members of Mitigating Circumstances Panel Director of Academic Programmes and Research Academic Quality and Learning Manager Academic Board
Application to collaborative provision:	**Mandatory**
Contacts:	Academic Quality and Learning Manager
Applications for exemptions to:	Academic Quality and Standards Committee
Report Exemptions to:	Academic Board

Summary/ Description:

The Board of Examiners (for taught programmes) is responsible for all aspects of the assessment and progression of students on taught programmes subject to the final decision on the award of credits and qualifications resting with the Academic Board.

The Board of Examiners exercises separate jurisdiction as set out in the Academic Regulations (QH:C1):

- when determining the award of marks for individual modules it will sit as a Module Board and resolve matters for each individual module in turn, without reference to student's performance in other modules
- when determining the progression of students to the next stage of the programme or to the award of the qualification it will sit as a Programme Board. When sitting as a Programme Board the Board has no jurisdiction over matters of the Module Board and **must** not question, review or change any decision made by a Module Board.

The Board also has the authority to convene a Mitigating Circumstances Panel as and when required which determines whether applications for mitigating circumstances and applications for absence/extension for good cause are valid. Decisions of a Panel cannot be questioned, reviewed or changed by the Module Board. There is one specific case where a Panel can refer a mitigating circumstances claim to the Programme Board for the Board to consider those circumstances when determining final classification. The judgement of the validity of the circumstances is still that, and only that, of the Panel, but the Board determines how to make use of the circumstances in determining classification (i.e. whether the student under-performed as a result).

In practice the Module and Programme Boards for each programme will probably complete all the business in one sitting, dealing separately and in the following order with:(i) Mitigating Circumstances Panel (if required) (ii) Module Board (each module considered and concluded in turn) (iii) Programme Board. Where decisions about credits and qualifications need to be approved, an Academic Board should then follow as soon as possible.

This document provides more detail about the workings of the Mitigating Circumstances Panel, Module and Programme Boards (supplementing what is detailed in the Academic Regulations) including such matters as the membership and quoracy of the Boards and the conduct of meetings.

For each of the three bodies it sets out in a series of tables the decisions which each is permitted to make (based on the rules set out in the Academic Regulations), indicating where this involves discretion and the limits of that discretion and also indicating the result which **must** be recorded on the official results sheet.

Further Guidance

See the Introduction to the Quality Handbook (QH:A1) for further guidance and explanations of:

- how the Handbook is designed to work and what it covers and does not cover
- how it is structured
- the 'external reference points' and established practice which have informed each of the Codes
- key concepts and themes
- some suggestions for further reading
- a quick guide to each Code, including definitions and things to watch out for.

This university Code has been written in accordance with the approach approved by the University to enhance clarity involving the following terminology: must = mandatory should = advisable may = desirable. Where these terms are used they are emphasised in bold.

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INTRODUCTION

Authority

1 The Academic Quality and Standards Committee is the final arbiter of the application and interpretation of this code of practice.

Scope of the Code

2 This Code applies to programmes classified by Academic Board as taught and which lead to the award of the University's higher education qualifications (as set out in the Academic Regulations: Taught Programmes (QH:C1)).

3 The University operates a Board of Examiners for all taught programmes exercising powers and responsibilities on behalf of the Academic Board. The final decision on the award of credits and qualifications rests with the Academic Board.

4 This Code must be read as subject to, and supplementing, the Academic Regulations: Taught Programmes (QH:C1).

5 The Board **should** be chaired by the Director of Academic Programmes and Research or a member of the academic team nominated by the Vice Chancellor.

6 The Board of Examiners will exercise separate jurisdiction as follows:

(a) when determining the award of marks for individual modules it will sit as a **Module Board** and resolve matters for each individual module in turn, without reference to student's performance in other modules. When sitting as a Module Board it has no jurisdiction over matters reserved to a Mitigating Circumstances Panel and **must** not question, review or change any decision made by a Module Board

(b) when determining the progression of students to the next stage of the programme or to the award of the qualification it will sit as a **Programme Board**. When sitting as a Programme Board it has no jurisdiction over matters reserved to the Module Board and **must** not question, review or change any decision made by a Module Board. The business of all applicable Module Boards **must** have been concluded before the Programme Board sits.

7 The Board of Examiners also has the authority to convene a Mitigating Circumstances Panel with the same chair but with membership restricted to Programme Coordinators and a representative of the University's professional services.

Application to collaborative provision

8 Unless specified by the Academic Board, this Code applies to all provision referred to in paragraph 2 whether that provision is delivered by the University or another approved provider in accordance with a formal legal agreement.

CHAPTER I: MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES PANEL

9 The Mitigating Circumstances Panel (MCP) is convened by the Board of Examiners as required and is responsible for considering applications by students for mitigating circumstances (including for repeat periods) and for absence/extension for good cause. The purpose of the Panel is to ensure that students' personal circumstances can be considered by as small a number of people as possible consistent with a properly informed decision being made. Each student's details which comprise an application for mitigating circumstances or absence/extension will not be disclosed outside the membership of the Panel other than to provide an outline indication of the nature of the circumstances (e.g. medical, family bereavement) to the Board of Examiners. (See Mitigating Circumstances process flowchart at the end of Chapter I).

Membership

10 The Mitigating Circumstances Panel **should** comprise the following:

(a) the Chair of the Board of Examiners (as Chair)
(b) one or more Programme Coordinators
(c) a representative of professional services.

11 Meetings of the Mitigating Circumstances Panel will be attended by the Registrar (or nominee) who will record the minutes of the meeting but not take part in decision-making.

Quoracy

12 The Mitigating Circumstances Panel is quorate where the Chair and at least two other members are present.

Terms of Reference

13 The Mitigating Circumstances Panel is responsible for:

(a) determining the validity of applications for absence/extensions for good cause and for mitigating circumstances (including applications for repeat periods) submitted by students or referred to the Panel by a Programme Coordinator taking into account the extent to which the circumstances are verified by independent evidence
(b) where an application is judged valid, determining the appropriate course of action in accordance with the rules set out in the Academic Regulations – see further the section on permitted decisions below
(c) for applications submitted after the application deadline, deciding whether there is a compelling case for allowing the application to be considered
(d) determining applications for a repeat module, semester or stage
(e) receiving a report of extensions for good cause granted on behalf of the Panel by Programme Coordinators
(f) reporting its decisions to the Module and/or Programme Board as applicable

(g) monitoring the number and type of applications submitted over time, including by programme, student characteristics and nature of circumstances
(h) keeping under review the effectiveness of the definition of 'good cause' set out in the Academic Regulations.

Conduct of meetings

14 Mitigating circumstances panel will normally convene at least 1 week before the exam board. If necessary additional meetings may be held at the discretion of the chair.

15 Applications will be considered student by student to enable the Panel to consider the most appropriate outcome taking into account whether the circumstances relate solely to one assessment/module or relate to the full range of assessments in a given semester or year.

16 Members are not advocates of individual students on their programmes but are responsible for ensuring that in making decisions attention is to paid to ensuring, as far as reasonably possible, fairness to the individual student who has made an application and to all students so that applicants do not gain unfair advantage as well as minimising their risk of disadvantage.

17 Decisions are those of the Panel as a whole and therefore **should** be made unanimously unless this is proves impossible. In the event of the Panel resorting to a vote which does not provide a majority, the Chair will have the final decision.

Confidentiality

18 Members are bound to maintain the confidentiality of the circumstances relating to each application for mitigating circumstances and the discussions held during meetings.

Permitted Decisions

19 Mitigating Circumstances Panels are permitted to make the following decisions (Column 3 refers to the applicable paragraph in Academic Regulations: Taught Programmes (QH:C1):

Table 1 – applications for mitigating circumstances

Step	Decision	C1 para
1	Determine whether the evidence is valid: • has the student's assessment activity been seriously impaired by unforeseen, unavoidable and exceptional circumstances • is there independent evidence to verify the circumstances claimed (such as a medical certificate)	94, 96-97
2	Determine whether the application was submitted no later than two days after the assessment event to which it relates	98
3	If the application was submitted later than two days, determine whether it can be validly considered having regard to: • the reasons given by the student for the lateness of the application • the risk of the student gaining, or being perceived to be gaining, an advantage through such late application. (If no reasons are given, reject the application)	99

4	If the application is judged to be valid determine most appropriate course of action: 1) offer fresh attempt at the examination/assessment task affected (usually the best option) 2) based on the marks achieved for the module and its constituent elements, award a 'pass with mitigation' if satisfied there is strong evidence that the student would have achieved a pass in the module overall but for the circumstances 3) refer the matter to the Programme Board (usually only appropriate for a final stage student on a classified degree) NB: a student can waive the offer of a fresh attempt and the offer of pass with mitigation (see C1 paras 102 and 104 and flowchart)	101
5	Advise the Module Board according to the decisions made at steps 1-4: 1) mitigating circumstances accepted and which decision it has made in step 4 2) mitigating circumstances rejected: (a) circumstances insufficiently severe etc and/or (b) not verified by valid evidence 3) application rejected as outside the two day deadline and insufficient justification for lateness	

Table 2 – applications for absence/extension for good cause

NB: applications for extension may be determined by the relevant Programme Coordinator on behalf of the Mitigating Circumstances Panel given the need for a prompt decision for example where an assessment is taking place early on in the semester and an extension will enable the student to complete the assessment.

Step	Decision	QF para
1	Determine whether the evidence is valid: • do the student's circumstances constitute 'good cause' • is there independent evidence to verify the circumstances claimed (such as a medical certificate)	67, 72-3
2	Determine whether the application was submitted no later than two days after the assessment event to which it relates	67
3	If the application was submitted later than two days, determine whether it can be validly considered having regard to: • the reasons given by the student for the lateness of the application • the risk of the student gaining, or being perceived to be gaining, an advantage through such late application. (If no reasons are given, reject the application)	69
4	Advise the Module Board according to the decisions made at steps 1-3: 1) application accepted: for examinations – fresh attempt; for other assessments - extension* 2) application rejected: (a) circumstances insufficiently severe etc and/or (b) not verified by valid evidence 3) application rejected as outside the two day deadline and insufficient justification for lateness *for extensions, the Programme Coordinator sets a new deadline for submission	68, 70

Table 3 – Repeat module or stage

Exceptionally there will be cases where a student's ability to study is affected by extensive circumstances affecting all their modules in a semester or a whole academic year and where granting extensions or fresh attempts will not provide a fair opportunity for the student or enable them to get back on track. In this situation the Mitigating Circumstances Panel is empowered to consider a more extensive remedy involving repeating all the modules in a semester or the whole year. There is no deadline for such an application, and the student is likely to be reliant on advice from a tutor, Programme Coordinator or member of professional services regarding the appropriateness of making an application.

Step	Decision	QF para
1	Determine whether the evidence is valid: • are the student's circumstances sufficiently severe • is there independent evidence to verify the circumstances claimed (such as a medical certificate)	106-7
2	Would allowing a repeat give the student an unfair advantage over other students?	107
3	If satisfied that the application is appropriate determine the extent of the repeat required: • single module • the semester • the entire year	
4	Notify the Board of Examiners of the outcome (affects both Module and Programme Boards)	

Recording decisions

20 The minutes of the meeting **must** record the decision made by the Panel and the reasons for each decision. Decisions are those of the Panel as a whole and therefore minutes **must** not attribute comments or views to individual members.

Notifying Outcomes

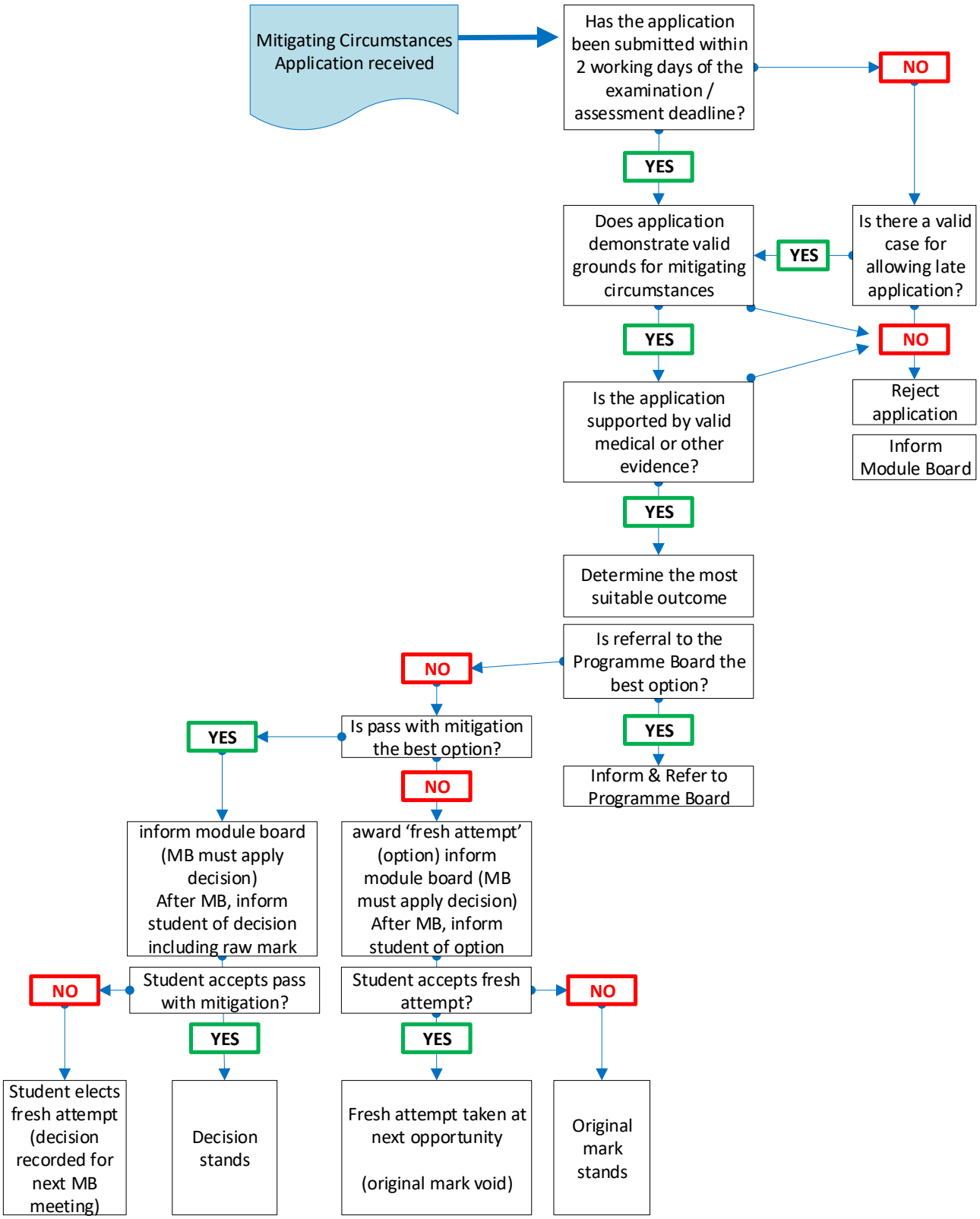
21 Decisions of the Mitigating Circumstances Panel will be notified to students only after the Module and, where applicable, Programme Boards have sat and made their decisions.

22 For each application the student **must** be informed of:

(a) the outcome of the application
(b) the option considered most appropriate
(c) the reasons for the decision; where the application is rejected the notification **must** make clear whether it was rejected because the circumstances were not severe enough, the evidence was not verified and/or the application was out of time.

23 Students have the right to appeal under the University's Code on Academic Appeals (QH:C11).

Mitigating Circumstances decision flowchart



To be applied with reference to Code C1

CHAPTER II: MODULE BOARD OF EXAMINERS

24 When determining the outcomes of assessments at the module level the Board of Examiners will sit as the Module Board of Examiners with jurisdiction over module outcomes. The purpose of the Module Board is to confirm the marks for each student within each module ensuring that the marks are an accurate and fair reflection of each student's achievement and that the assessment process has been 'equitable, valid and reliable'.

25 Module Boards must comply with the rules set out in the Academic Regulations: Taught Programmes (QH:C1).

Membership

26 Membership of the Module Board depends on the specific programme and its constituent modules which are being considered in turn.

27 The Module Board comprises the following:

(a) the Chair of the Board of Examiners
(b) the Programme Coordinator for the programme under consideration
(c) the internal examiners for the modules comprising the programme under consideration
(d) the external examiner(s) for the modules comprising the programme under consideration
(e) the Academic Quality and Learning Manager as monitor and advisor on procedural matters.

28 Meetings of the Module Board **must** be attended by the Registrar (or nominee) who will record the minutes of the meeting but not take part in decision-making.

Conflicts of interest

29 If a member of the Module Board has a personal or professional conflict of interest relating to a student on the programme they **must** discuss that interest with the Chair who will determine (if necessary in consultation with the Chair of Academic Board) whether the member should be allowed to participate in meetings of the Module Board.

Quoracy

30 The Module Board is quorate where the Chair and at least 50% of the remaining members are present.

31 External examiners are expected to attend all Examination Boards, however for logistical reasons, participation and attendance may be conducted via electronic means such as Zoom. In such cases, the external examiner will be given the opportunity to provide written comments in advance of the meeting.

32 All other members of the Module Board are required to attend all meetings, unless permission has been granted by the Chair not to attend, in which case the member will be expected to provide comments to the Chair in advance of the meeting.

Terms of Reference

33 The Module Board, in respect of each module and each assessment attempt, is responsible for:

(a) confirming that the summative assessment tasks were properly internally and externally moderated (as set out in the Academic Regulations QH:C1, para 133 onwards)
(b) confirming that all summative assessment tasks have been first marked and second marked where required (QH:C1, paras 138 onwards) applying the relevant marking criteria
(c) confirming that the marks for each summative assessment task have been internally and externally moderated (as set out in the Academic Regulations QH:C1, para 151 onwards)
(d) confirming that there were no irregularities in the conduct of the assessment process
(e) confirming the final mark for each student for the module based on the aggregation of sub-module assessment tasks combined as set out in the module descriptor and taking account of any specific circumstances relating to mitigating circumstances, academic misconduct or late/non-attendance or submission (as set out below) and applying the University marking scale applicable to the level of the module
(f) monitoring the performance of students in the module (and in the sub-module assessment tasks) including making comparisons with the previous three years (where data are available).

34 The Module Board is not permitted to review, revise or query the decision of a Mitigating Circumstances Panel or an Academic Misconduct Panel.

Conduct of meetings

35 Each module will be considered in turn and separately.

36 The Module Board will have available to it the following information:

(a) notification of students/modules in which allegations of academic misconduct are under investigation
(b) the outcomes of any completed academic misconduct investigations and any penalties imposed
(c) any decisions of the Mitigating Circumstances Panel
(d) a report of any assessment work submitted late but without good cause, indicating work submitted within two working days of the submission deadline – to which the pass mark 'cap' **must** be applied (excluding reassessed work) – and work submitted later than those two days – to which a mark of zero will be applied
(e) a report of any assessment work classified by the examiner as 'over-length' for which a penalty was imposed (or disregarding the over-length element)
(f) the marks awarded for any previous attempt at the module if applicable
(g) the attendance and submission record of each student

(h) the applicable assessment criteria/marking scheme or equivalent for each assessment task
(i) statistical data on the profile of marks for the module and the assessment tasks which comprise the module (including data for the previous three years where available).

37 The Module Board **must** defer the module decision in relation to any student for whom an investigation for academic misconduct has been commenced but not yet resolved.

38 The Module Board **must** receive a report from the examiners and from the external examiner, confirming that the marks have been internally and externally moderated and that the grading criteria for the assessment components have been applied correctly.

39 In the event that the internal examiners, or the external examiner, recommend that the marking criteria have been applied too harshly or too generously, or there has been some other problem with a component of the assessment, the Module Board **must** consider whether the marks should be scaled upwards or downwards. If marks are scaled, the Module Board **must** be satisfied that there is evidence that students who receive a pass mark have met the learning outcomes of the module, and that marking reflects the published assessment criteria and marking scheme. The method used for scaling marks **must** be determined by the Module Board and **must** be applied to all students within the cohort being considered.

40 The Chair of the Module Board will invite the external examiner to provide any observations or feedback (in advance or at the meeting) regarding the modules for which they are responsible, including offering constructive comment, criticism or suggestion for enhancement of the module.

41 Decisions are those of the Module Board as a whole and therefore **should** be made unanimously unless this is proves impossible. In the event of the Board resorting to a vote which does not provide a majority, the Chair will have the final decision. The external examiner is one member of the Module Board; their view is significant but can be overridden where the Board considers this justifiable.

42 The Module Board **must not** use an oral (*viva voce*) examination as a means to help it make any decision under this Framework.

Confidentiality

43 Members are bound to maintain the confidentiality of the discussions which take place within the Module Board. Results will be notified as set out below and not by individual members of the Module Board.

Chair's Action

44 Exceptionally it may be necessary to make a decision in respect of an individual student without being able to convene the full Module Board. Where the Chair judges this to be the case they will attempt to consult with as many members of the Module Board as possible, including the external examiner, before making a decision.

45 The decision, and the reasons for needing to take Chair's Action, **must** be reported to the next meeting of the Module Board.

Permitted decisions

46 The following tables set out the decisions which the Module Board is permitted to make to ensure compliance with the rules in the Academic Regulations. The table should be followed for each module in turn.

47 Final module marks are the combination of the sub-module elements weighted according to the weightings set out in the module specification (including any scaling applied by the Module Board). Marks are positive integers applying the relevant University marking scale according to the level of the module (NOT the level of the programme):

- Levels 4-6: 0-100 with pass mark at 40
- Level 7: 0-100 with pass mark at 50
- For any module specified as 'pass/fail' enter either 'pass' or 'fail only'.

Table 4 - Following First Attempts

48 If none of the scenarios set out below apply, enter final module mark on the official results sheet.

49 Where students are permitted new first attempts by the Mitigating Circumstances Panel they must be reconsidered by the Module Board at the next opportunity using table 4 once the first attempt has been completed.

Table 4

No	Scenario	Decision of Module Board	Mandatory/ Discretion	Para	Recorded on official results sheet*
1	Allegation of academic misconduct (in one or more assessment tasks) being investigated but not resolved	Defer decision (assessment task marks not affected should be recorded and carried forward)	Mandatory	QH:C7	DD (AMP)
2	Allegation of academic misconduct proven and penalty imposed	Apply penalty as prescribed by the AM Panel	Mandatory	QH:C7	Enter final module mark (according to penalty) (AMR)
3	Valid application for mitigating circumstances - Decision of MCP: fresh attempt (at one or more assessment tasks)	Fresh attempt: new **first** attempt (assessment task marks not affected should be recorded and carried forward)	Mandatory	101	DDI (FA 1st)

No	Scenario	Decision of Module Board	Mandatory/ Discretion	Para	Recorded on official results sheet*
4	Valid application for mitigating circumstances - Decision of MCP: 'pass with mitigation'	Pass with mitigation	Mandatory	101	40 (PWM) or 50 (PWM)
5	Valid application for mitigating circumstances - Decision of MCP: 'refer to Programme Board'	Confirm final module mark (ignoring the MCP issue)	Mandatory	101	Enter final module mark (and record in minutes)
6	Extension granted by Mitigating Circumstances Panel – extension period not yet expired	Defer decision (assessment task marks not affected should be recorded and carried forward)	Mandatory	70	DDI (EXT)
7	Absence with good cause granted by Mitigating Circumstances Panel (examination not yet sat)	Defer decision (assessment task marks not affected should be recorded and carried forward)	Mandatory	70	DDI (AGC)
8	Over-length assessment	Confirm the final module mark using the sub-module element with the penalty imposed	Mandatory	75	Enter final module mark (OLA)
9	Assessment submitted after deadline but within two days without good cause	Award maximum of pass mark for the sub-module element then calculate final module mark	Mandatory	77	Enter final module mark (ABS) **
10	Assessment submitted more than two days after deadline without good cause	Award zero for the sub-module element then calculate final module mark	Mandatory	78	Enter final module mark (ABS) **
11	Absent from examination without good cause	Award zero for the examination then calculate final module mark	Mandatory	81	Enter final module mark (ABS) **
12	Final module mark < pass mark and scenarios 9, 10 or 11 apply	Consider whether to deny student the right to be reassessed in the module	Discretionary	89	Enter final module mark If reassessment denied also enter RNP**
13	Final module mark < pass mark and student has not met attendance/submission (including formative assessment) requirements for the module	Consider whether to deny student the right to be reassessed in the module	Discretionary	89	Enter final module mark If reassessment denied also enter RNP**

** record in minutes that penalty imposed and reasons for the decision

Table 5 – Following Reassessment (2nd attempts)

50 When the Module Board is sitting to consider reassessments (2nd attempts) table 4 applies with the following changes:

3	Valid application for mitigating circumstances - Decision of MCP: fresh attempt (at one or more assessment tasks)	Fresh attempt: new **second** attempt (assessment task marks not affected should be recorded and carried forward)	Mandatory	101	DDI (FA 2nd)

Scenarios 12 and 13 in Table 3 do not apply.

51 All final module marks **must** be capped at the pass mark for the module (40 or 50) and the mark recorded on the official results sheet as 40R or 50R to indicate that it is a second attempt. No further assessment attempts are permitted.

Abbreviations used in the tables 4-5

ABS	Assessment submitted late without good cause/absent from examination without good cause
AGC	Absence with good cause granted by Mitigating Circumstances Panel
AMP	Allegation of academic misconduct – decision pending
AMR	Allegation of academic misconduct – decision resolved (penalty notified to Module Board)
DD	Decision Deferred
DDI	Decision Deferred Assessment Incomplete
EXT	Extension granted by Mitigating Circumstances Panel
FA	Fresh attempt (1st = new first attempt) (2nd = new second attempt)
OA	Penalty imposed for over-length assessment
PWM	Pass with mitigation
RNP	Reassessment not permitted

Recording decisions

52 Decisions will be recorded by the Registrar as follows – for each module in turn:

(a) the final mark for each student **must** be recorded on the official results sheet provided for the purpose and/or the alternative or additional entry (as specified in the above tables) where applicable
(b) any exercise of discretion or decision other than the simple awarding of the final mark **must** be recorded in the minutes, including the Board's reasons for the decision.

53 Decisions are those of the Board as a whole and therefore minutes **must not** attribute comments or views to individual members.

54 The completed official results sheet **must** be signed by the Chair of the Module Board and the external examiner to indicate that the results recorded on the List are an accurate record of

the decisions made by the Board, that the Board has been conducted has been conducted fairly and rigorously and in accordance with the University's published procedures, and that the academic standards achieved are broadly comparable. Signature does not necessarily indicate agreement with each and every individual decision.

Notifying outcomes

55 Decisions of the Module Board will be notified to each individual student. At the end of each programme stage, and following the reassessment period, results will be notified following the meeting of the Programme Board.

56 Where a student has received a fail mark at both the first and second attempt, the higher of the two marks will be recorded on the Official Transcript.

57 Members of the Module Board are not permitted to notify students directly. Once results have been released the Programme Coordinator or other members of staff can counsel students regarding the implications of their results especially where decisions require students to make choices (for example whether to accept a fresh attempt/pass with mitigation) or the consequences for progression (for example of a 'Reassessment not permitted'.

58 Students have the right to appeal decisions of the Module Board under the Code on Academic Appeals (QH:C11).

CHAPTER III: PROGRAMME BOARD OF EXAMINERS

59 When determining progression at the programme level the Board of Examiners will sit as the Programme Board with jurisdiction over programme outcomes. The Programme Board is responsible for determining the progression of students through their programme and to the award of the qualification, including making a decision about classification where the award in question is classified.

60 The Programme Board must comply with the rules set out in the Academic Regulations applicable to the qualification it is considering. In very exceptional circumstances it is possible that the Board may consider that a decision is required outside the scope of the Regulations. In that case the Board **must** apply to the Academic Quality and Standards Committee for a decision as a 'special case'.

Membership

61 The Programme Board comprises the following:

(a) the Chair of the Board of Examiners
(b) the Programme Coordinator for the programme under consideration
(c) the external examiner(s) appointed to the programme under consideration
(d) the external examiner(s) for the modules comprising the programme under consideration

(e) the Academic Quality and Learning Manager as monitor and advisor on procedural matters.

62 Meetings of the Programme Board **must** be attended by the Registrar (or nominee) who will record the minutes of the meeting but not take part in decision-making.

Conflicts of interest

63 If a member of the Programme Board has a personal or professional conflict of interest relating to a student on the programme they **must** discuss that interest with the Chair who will determine (if necessary in consultation with the Chair of Academic Board) whether the member should be allowed to participate in meetings of the Programme Board.

Quoracy

64 The Programme Board is quorate where all members are present.

65 For Programme Boards meeting following the reassessment period, the external examiner is not expected to attend but will be invited to provide written comments in advance of the meeting.

66 All other members of the Programme Board are required to attend all meetings, unless permission has been granted by the Chair not to attend, in which case the member will be expected to provide comments to the Chair in advance of the meeting.

Terms of Reference

67 The Programme Board is responsible for:

(a) determining the progression of students to the next stage of the programme including making appropriate decisions where the student is not eligible to progress
(b) determining the progression of students to the award of the qualification to which the programme leads or to an alternative award where this is permitted or required
(c) determining the classification where the student has progressed to the award and the award is specified as classified
(d) taking into account and determining the appropriate decision where mitigating circumstances have been referred to the Board by a Module Board
(e) excluding students from assessment or terminating their programme of study on grounds of non-attendance/non submission
(f) ensuring that all decisions are fair to individual students and to the student body as a whole
(g) safeguarding the academic standards of the University's awards
(h) monitoring the performance of students across each stage of the programme and the programme as a whole, including making comparisons with the previous three years (where available) and with comparable programmes at other universities.

68 The Programme Board is not permitted to review, revise or query the decision of the Mitigating Circumstances Panel, the Module Board or an Academic Misconduct Panel.

69 Decisions of the Programme Board regarding the award of credits and qualifications are subject to the approval of the Academic Board.

Conduct of meetings

70 Each programme will be considered in turn and separately, taking each stage of the programme in order. Where a student has not completed a stage prior to the one they are currently on, the Programme Board **must** reconsider their progression from the previous to the current stage before considering their progression from the current stage.

71 The Programme Board will have available to it the following information:

(a) the profile of marks for each student for the current stage of the programme, and any previous stage, as confirmed by the Module Boards, making explicit whether the marks are the result of first or second attempts, or 'pass with mitigation'
(b) notification of any decisions to allow a student a new first, or a new second, attempt as a result of an application for extension/absence for good cause
(c) confirmation that individual mitigating circumstances have been taken into account and either accepted or rejected in relation to one or more modules (without the details of the circumstances)
(d) notification of any cases where the Module Board has been required to defer a decision
(e) the profile of marks from all previous stages undertaken by each student including a full record of any previous award of compensation or any modules allowed to be taken as outstanding or repeated
(f) data showing the distribution of marks and comparisons with the previous three years (where available).

Confidentiality

72 Members are bound to maintain the confidentiality of the discussions which take place within the Programme Board. Results will be notified as set out below and not by individual members of the Board.

Chair's Action

73 Exceptionally it may be necessary to make a decision in respect of an individual student without being able to convene the full board. Where the Chair judges this to be the case they will attempt to consult with as many members of the Programme Board as possible, including the external examiner, before making a decision. Chair's Action may be used in cases where a student has permanently withdrawn from their programme part way through the year and is entitled to an Exit award.

74 The decision, and the reasons for needing to take Chair's Action, **must** be reported to the next meeting of the Programme Board.

Concepts for the Programme Board to be aware of

75 Members of Programme Board's **should** be familiar with the following matters before conducting their business.

Exercising Discretion

76 The majority of Programme Board decisions are 'mandatory' – that is they are enforced through the application of the rules set out in the Academic Regulations. As a general principle examiners should not be exercising discretion at the Programme Board stage; examiners exercise discretion (their academic judgement) at the assessment stage: when setting assessment tasks, marking and moderating student work.

77 The limited examples where discretion is provided for in the Academic Regulations are designed to enable the Programme Board to make appropriate decisions in individual cases; for example where a student's conduct (attendance/submission) is not of the expected standard and the Board considers there is no merit in allowing the student the full benefits of the progression rules.

78 Where discretion is applicable (indicated in column 5 in tables 6-13) the Programme Board **must** consider whether the discretion should be exercised in favour or not in favour of the student (applying any criteria indicated in the relevant paragraph). The reasons for the decision **must** be recorded in the minutes of the meeting and be provided to the student with their results. The student will have a right of appeal under the Code on Academic Appeals (QH:C11). Failing to consider **whether** to exercise the discretion might constitute the basis for an appeal.

Mitigating circumstances

79 There are only two cases where the Programme Board will be concerned with mitigating circumstances; otherwise mitigating circumstances are matters for the Module Board applying the decisions of the Mitigating Circumstances Panel. These are where:

(a) a student has not completed all the assessments for their current stage by reason of being allowed a fresh attempt at a later date (by the Module Board). In this case the Programme Board has the discretion to allow the student to progress to the next stage of the programme and complete those outstanding assessments in parallel
(b) the Mitigating Circumstances Panel has determined that there are valid mitigating circumstances, not taken any action in relation to them but referred them to the Programme Board for consideration in relation to classification. When the classification decision is being made the Programme Board **must** therefore determine whether the student would have achieved the higher classification but for the mitigating circumstances. (see C1: paras 339 and 398.)

80 In both cases the Programme Board **must** only consider the circumstances where the application has been accepted by the Mitigating Circumstances Panel. In all cases the same mitigating circumstances must never be considered twice.

Re-consideration of an incomplete stage

81 Where a Programme Board allows a student to progress with modules outstanding (such as mitigating circumstances explained above, or a repeat of a module) the Programme Board will need to consider the student's progression from that stage for a second time at a later Programme Board. For example: Student A at the end of the Certificate stage (Bachelor's degree) is allowed to progress to the Diploma stage and to repeat a failed module at the same time as undertaking the Diploma stage. At the Programme Board (usually at the end of the following year) the Programme Board **must first** reconsider the student's progression *from the Certificate to the Diploma* stage. If the student has not met the requirements for that progression they must be failed and be transferred to the Ordinary degree (in this scenario). Only if progression to the Diploma stage is confirmed, does the Programme Board then consider progression at the end of the Diploma stage.

Consequences of failure

82 Results that include the word 'fail' are designed to indicate that the student's studies on that programme are at an end and the student is not permitted to be re-admitted to the same programme or a closely related programme for the same or a lower qualification (see Academic Regulations: Taught Programmes (QH:C1), para. 26). In other words, students cannot 'go round again' if they fail.

83 Equally if a student's programme is terminated for repeated non-compliance with attendance/submission requirements (under Academic Regulations: Taught Programmes (QH:C1) para. 82) or for academic misconduct (under the Code on Academic Misconduct (QH:C7)), or for lack of fitness to practise (Code on Fitness to Practise (QH:C8)) re-admission is not permitted.

Exclusion from assessments/termination of programmes

84 Applications by a Programme Coordinator to exclude a student from assessments or to terminate their programme of study **must** be considered by the Programme Board. If the timing of the application does not coincide with the timing of a scheduled Programme Board meeting, an ad hoc meeting of the Board **should** be convened, provided that members are given no fewer than 14 days' notice.

85 An application for exclusion or termination may be approved provided that:

(a) the student has previously been issued a University Warning for non-attendance/non submission
(b) the student has continued to not attend/not submit assessed work and the Programme Board considers that the student is insufficiently committed to their studies to merit being allowed to continue.

86 The Programme Coordinator who has made the application **must** not take part in the decision whether to approve the application. The criteria for judging the quoracy of the meeting is modified to exclude the specific Programme Coordinator. (The external examiner is not expected to attend).

87 University Warnings will be issued by the Chair of the Programme Board following an application by the Programme Coordinator.

88 A student has the right to appeal on procedural grounds against the issue of University Warning and the exclusion from assessment or the termination of their programme under the Code on Academic Appeals (QH:C11).

Rounding

89 To avoid the 'double' rounding of marks, where the Programme Board is required to calculate the stage weighted average (for progression or classification purposes) it must use the raw module marks – that is the marks recorded to two decimal places. (Module marks are reported to students as rounded marks).

Permitted decisions by the Programme Board

90 This section is designed to help Programme Boards in making progression decisions when applying the progression rules set out in the Academic Regulations: Taught Programmes (QH:C1). It **must** be used in conjunction with those rules - (column 6 – 'para') gives the relevant paragraph reference for each decision.

Table 6 - Certificates of Higher Education (CertHE)

Stage	Outcome	Before/After Reassessment	Programme Board decision	Mandatory/Discretion	Para	Recorded on official results sheet
Certificate	Assessment incomplete due to mit circs	Both	Decision deferred until assessments completed	Mandatory		DDI
	120 credits passed	Both	Award Certificate	Mandatory	260	CertHE
	105 credits passed 15 credits 35-39 (av. 40+)	Both *3	Award Certificate with 15 credits compensated	Mandatory	262-4	CertHE (PC)
	105 credits passed 15 credits mark <35	Before	Reassessment in failed module	Mandatory *1	47	REAS (specify module code)
	105 credits passed 15 credits mark <35	After	Fail award credits	Mandatory	267	FAIL-CREDIT
	15-105 credits passed	After	Fail award credits	Mandatory	267	FAIL-CREDIT
	0 credits passed	After	Fail	Mandatory	267	FAIL

Table 7 - Diplomas of Higher Education (DipHE)

Stage	Outcome	Before/After Reassessment	Programme Board decision	Mandatory/Discretion		Recorded on official results sheet
Certificate stage	Assessment incomplete due to mit circs		Continuation by reason of mitigating circumstances	Discretion (if refused student must suspend studies)	271-3	P (CONT) or SUSP
	120 credits passed	Both	Progress (to the Diploma stage)	Mandatory	269	P
	105 credits passed 15 credits 35-39 (av. 40+)	Both *3	Progress (to the Diploma stage) with 15 credits compensated	Mandatory	269 274-6	PC
	105 credits passed 15 credits mark <35	Before	Reassessment in failed module	Mandatory *1	47	REAS (specify module code)

Stage	Outcome	Before/After Reassessment	Programme Board decision	Mandatory/Discretion		Recorded on official results sheet
Certificate stage (cont'd)	105 credits passed 15 credits mark <35	After	PB can exercise discretion to allow progression with fail outstanding (student repeats entire failed module) OR Fail award credits	If discretion not exercised then Mandatory	277-82	P (RPT) or CREDIT
	15-90 credits passed	After	Fail award credits	Mandatory	285	CREDIT
	<60 credits passed	Before	Failed and not allowed to undertake any reassessment but discretion to allow entire stage to be repeated	If discretion not exercised then Mandatory	283-4	FAIL (RPT-STAGE) or CREDIT
	0 credits passed	After	Fail	Mandatory	285	FAIL
Diploma stage	120 credits passed	Both	Award Diploma	Mandatory	269	DipHE
	105 credits passed 15 credits 35-39 (av. 40+)	Both *3	Award Diploma with 15 credits compensated	Mandatory	269 274-6	DipHE (PC)
	105 credits passed 15 credits mark <35	Before	Reassessment in failed module	Mandatory *1	47	REAS (specify module code)
	105 credits passed 15 credits mark <35	After	Fail award Certificate	Mandatory	286	FAIL-CertHE
	15-90 credits passed	After	Fail award Certificate	Mandatory	286	FAIL-CertHE

Table 8 - Bachelor's with Honours

Stage	Outcome	Before/After Reassessment	Programme Board decision	Mandatory/Discretion	Para	Recorded on official results sheet
Certificate stage	Assessment incomplete due to mit circs		Continuation by reason of mitigating circumstances	Discretion (if refused student must suspend studies)	300-302	P (CONT) or SUSP
	120 credits passed	Both	Progress (to the Diploma stage)	Mandatory	297	P

Stage	Outcome	Before/After Reassessment	Programme Board decision	Mandatory/Discretion	Para	Recorded on official results sheet
Certificate stage (cont'd)	105 credits passed 15 credits 35-39 (av. 40+)	Both *3	Progress (to the Diploma stage) with 15 credits compensated	Mandatory	297 303-5	PC
	105 credits passed 15 credits mark 0-34	Before	Reassessment in failed module	Mandatory *1	46	REAS (specify module code)
	60-105 credits passed 15-60 credits mark 0-40	Before	Reassessment in failed module (compensatable limit exceeded)	Mandatory *1	46	REAS (specify module codes)
	105 credits passed 15 credits mark <35	After	PB can exercise discretion to allow progression with fail outstanding (student repeats entire failed module) OR Transfer to the Ordinary degree	If discretion not exercised then Mandatory	306-11	P (RPT) or TRO
	75-90 credits passed	After	Transfer to the Ordinary degree	Mandatory	315	TRO
	15-60 credits passed	After	Fail award credits	Mandatory	315	CREDIT
	<60 credits passed	Before	Failed and not allowed to undertake any reassessment but discretion to allow entire stage to be repeated	If discretion not exercised then Mandatory	312-14	FAIL (RPT-STAGE) or CREDIT
	0 credits passed	After	Fail	Mandatory	315	FAIL
Diploma stage	Assessment incomplete due to mit circs		Continuation by reason of mitigating circumstances	Discretion (if refused student must suspend studies)	300-302	P (CONT) or SUSP
	120 credits passed	Both	Progress (to the Honours stage)	Mandatory	297	P
	105 credits passed 15 credits 35-39 (av. 40+)	Both *3	Progress (to the Honours stage) with 15 credits compensated	Mandatory	297 303-5	PC
	105 credits passed	Before	Reassessment in failed module	Mandatory *1	47	REAS (specify module code)

Stage	Outcome	Before/After Reassessment	Programme Board decision	Mandatory/Discretion	Para	Recorded on official results sheet
	15 credits mark <35					
	60-105 credits passed 15-60 credits mark <40	Before	Reassessment in failed module (compensatable limit exceeded)	Mandatory *1	47	REAS (specify module codes)
Diploma stage (cont'd)	105 credits passed 15 credits mark <35	After	Transfer to the Ordinary degree	Mandatory	316	TRO
	60-90 credits passed	After	Transfer to the Ordinary degree	Mandatory	316	TRO
	0-45 credits passed	After	Fail award Certificate	Mandatory	316	FAIL-CertHE
Honours stage	Assessment incomplete due to mit circs		Decision deferred until assessments completed	Mandatory		DDI
	120 credits passed	Both	Progress to the award of the degree and classification (PB then determines classification)	Mandatory	297, 333-9	Enter classification 1/2-1/2-2/3
	105 credits passed 15 credits 35-39 (av. 40+)	Both *3	Progress to the award and classification with 15 credits compensated	Mandatory	297, 303-5, 333-9	Enter classification 1/2-1/2-2/3
	105 credits passed 15 credits mark <35	Before	Reassessment in failed module	Mandatory *1	47	REAS (specify module code)
	105 credits passed 15 credits mark <35	After	Award the Ordinary degree (no classification)	Mandatory	317	FAIL-ORD
	60-90 credits passed	After	Award the Ordinary degree (no classification)	Mandatory	317	FAIL-ORD
	0-45 credits passed	After	Fail award Diploma	Mandatory	317	FAIL-DipHE

Table 9 - Ordinary degree

NB: There is no direct entry to the Ordinary degree

Stage	Outcome	Before/After Reassessment	Programme Board decision	Mandatory/Discretion	Para	Recorded on official results sheet
Intermediate stage	Assessment incomplete due to mit circs		Continuation by reason of mitigating circumstances	Discretion (if refused student must suspend studies)	323	P (CONT) or SUSP
Intermediate stage (cont'd)	180 credits passed (including Certificate & Diploma stage) *4 *5	Both	Progress to the Final Stage	Mandatory	322	P
	120-175 credits passed (including Certificate & Diploma stage)	After	Fail award Certificate	Mandatory	328	FAIL-CertHE
Final stage	300 credits passed with weighted average of 60+ in final stage	Both	Transfer to the Honours stage of the Associated Honours degree	Mandatory *6	330	TRAH
	300 credits passed with weighted average of 40-59 in final stage	Both	Programme Board has the discretion to allow the student to transfer to the Honours stage of the Associated Honours degree	Discretionary *6 If Programme Board declines to allow transfer then **must** award Ordinary degree	331	TRAH or ORD
	285 credits passed with 15 credits 35-39 (av.40+)	Both *3	Progress to the Award of the Ordinary degree	Mandatory	325-7	ORD
	240-295 credits passed	After	Fail Award Diploma	Mandatory	329	FAIL-DipHE
	180-235 credits passed	After	Fail Award Certificate	Mandatory	329	FAIL - CertHE

Table 10 - Postgraduate Certificates (PGCert) includes PGCE

Stage	Outcome	Before/After Reassessment	Programme Board decision	Mandatory/Discretion	Para	Recorded on official results sheet
Certificate	60 credits passed	Both	Award PG Certificate	Mandatory	353	PGCert
	<60 credits passed	After	Fail award credits	Mandatory	355	CREDIT

	0 credits passed	After	Fail	Mandatory	355	FAIL
PGCE only	60 credits passed	Both	Award PGCE PB determines classification	Mandatory	335	Distinction/ Pass

Table 11 - Postgraduate Diplomas (PGDip)

Stage	Outcome	Before/After Reassessment	Programme Board decision	Mandatory/Discretion	Para	Recorded on official results sheet
Diploma	120 credits passed	Both	Award PG Diploma	Mandatory	356	PGDip
	90/105 credits passed 15/30 credits 45-49 (av. 50+)	Before *3	Award PG Diploma with 15/30 credits compensated	Mandatory	358-60	PGDip (PC)
	90/105 credits passed 15/30 credits <45 or av.<50	Before	Reassessment in failed module(s)	Mandatory *1	47	REAS (specify module code)
	90/105 credits passed 15/30 credits <45 or av.<50	After	Fail award PG Certificate	Mandatory	361	FAIL-PGCert
	60-105 credits passed	After	Fail award PG Certificate	Mandatory	361	FAIL-PGCert
	<60 credits passed	After	Fail award Credits	Mandatory	361	FAIL-CREDIT
	0 credits passed	After	Fail	Mandatory	361	FAIL

Table 12 - Master's

Stage	Outcome	Before/After Reassessment	Programme Board decision	Mandatory/Discretion	Para	Recorded on official results sheet
Diploma	Assessment incomplete due to mit circs		Continuation by reason of mitigating circumstances	Discretion (if refused student must suspend studies)	369-71	P (CONT) or SUSP
	120 credits passed	Both	Progress (to the Master's stage)	Mandatory	368	P
	90/105 credits passed 15/30 credits 45-49 (av. 50+)	Before *3	Progress (to the Master's stage) with 15/30 credits compensated	Mandatory	368, 372-4	P (PC)

Stage	Outcome	Before/After Reassessment	Programme Board decision	Mandatory/Discretion	Para	Recorded on official results sheet
	90/105 credits passed 15/30 credits <45 (or av. <50)	Before	Reassessment in failed module(s) AND allowed to commence the master's stage	Discretionary If discretion not granted student must pass reassessments before can commence Master's stage	375	COMM-REAS (specify module code) or NOCOMM-REAS (specify module code)
Diploma (cont'd)	105 credits passed 15 credits <45	After	PB can exercise discretion to allow progression with fail outstanding (student repeats entire failed module) OR Fail award PG Certificate	If discretion not exercised then Mandatory	377-81	P (RPT) (specify module code) or FAIL-PGCert
	90/105 credits passed 15/30 credits <45 (or av. <50)	After	Fail Award PG Certificate	Mandatory	382	FAIL-PGCert
	0-75 credits passed	Before	Reassessment in all failed modules Student NOT permitted to commence Master's stage	Mandatory	47, 375-6	NOCOMM-REAS (specify module codes)
	60-105 credits passed	After	Fail Award PG Certificate	Mandatory	382	FAIL-PGCert
	<60 credits passed	After	Fail award Credit	Mandatory	382	FAIL-CREDIT
	0 credits passed	After	Fail	Mandatory	382	FAIL
Master's	Non submission of dissertation	Before	Module Board may deny further opportunity to submit – if denied student fails dissertation – award Diploma	Discretion	388-89, 399	FAIL-PGDip Or RESUB
	Dissertation failed	Before	Resubmit within 6 months	Mandatory	390-1	RESUB
	Dissertation failed (inc. non-submission)	After	Fail award based on total credits 120+ = PGDip 60-115 = PGCert		399	FAIL-PGDip Or FAIL-PGCert

Stage	Outcome	Before/After Reassessment	Programme Board decision	Mandatory/Discretion	Para	Recorded on official results sheet
	Dissertation passed (& 180 credits in total)	Both	Progress (to the award of the Master's and the classification) PB determines classification	Mandatory	393-7	Distinction/ Merit/ Pass

Notes

*1 – where the student has failed the module and not complied with attendance and submission requirements the Module Board has discretion to deny reassessment
*2 – provided the compensation limit of 45 credits for the award is not thereby exceeded; a student who cannot be compensated because of that limit should be reassessed
*3 – if the student is eligible for compensation after the first attempt, then compensation is mandatory, but the student may elect reassessment, for example to reduce the risk of running out of compensation opportunities later in the programme. The Programme Board **must** not anticipate the student's decision
*4 – the intermediate stage of the Ordinary comprises all credits earned at the Certificate stage of the Honours degree (75-105) plus sufficient credits to achieve 180
*5 – no compensation at the intermediate stage of the Ordinary degree
*6 – the student may decline the transfer and accept the award of the Ordinary degree. If the student accepts the transfer they register for 60 credits at level 6 (being modules not previously taken in the degree); they are then reconsidered for the award – reference should be made to the table for the Honours stage

Abbreviations used in tables 6-13

AH	Award the Associated Honours degree (i.e. in the same subject)
CertHE	Award Certificate of Higher Education
CertHE (PC)	Award Certificate of Higher Education (with maximum 15 credits compensated)
COMM-REAS	Student to be reassessed in failed modules but permitted to commence the master's stage pending those reassessments
CREDIT	Student failed but awarded the credits for all modules passed
DDI	Decision Deferred – Assessment Incomplete (due to mitigating circumstances, absence/extension for good cause)
DipHE	Award Diploma of Higher Education
FAIL-ORD	Student failed but awarded the Ordinary degree in the same subject (unclassified)
FAIL (RPT-STAGE)	Student failed and not allowed to undertake reassessment in the failed modules but Programme Board permitting student to repeat the entire stage from scratch
NOCOMM-REAS	Student not permitted to commence master's stage – but successfully complete reassessments before can do so

ORD	Award the Ordinary degree in the same subject (unclassified)
P	Progress to the next stage of the programme
PC	Progress to the next stage of the programme with 15 credits compensated
P (CONT)	Continuation by reason of mitigating circumstances
P (RPT)	Progress with outstanding fail (student repeats entire failed module)
REAS	Reassessment in failed module (specify which)
RESUB	Student permitted to resubmit master's dissertation
SUSP	Continuation not permitted – student required to interrupt their studies to complete outstanding assessments
TRAH	Student transfers back to the Honours degree from the Ordinary degree
TRO	Student transferred to the Ordinary degree (in the same subject)

Recording decisions

91 Decisions will be recorded by the Registrar as follows – for each stage in turn:

(a) the final progression decision for each student **must** be recorded on the official results sheet provided for the purpose (see tables above)
(b) any exercise of discretion **must** be recorded in the minutes, including the Board's reasons for the decision.

92 Decisions are those of the Board as a whole and therefore minutes **must not** attribute comments or views to individual members.

93 The completed official results sheet **must** be signed by the Chair of the Programme Board and the external examiner to indicate that the results recorded on the List are an accurate record of the decisions made by the Board, that the Board has been conducted has been conducted fairly and rigorously and in accordance with the University's published procedures, and that the academic standards achieved are broadly comparable. Signature does not necessarily indicate agreement with each and every individual decision.

Notifying outcomes

94 Decisions of the Programme Board regarding progression to the next stage of the programme, or involving non-progression, will be notified to each individual student following the meeting of the Board.

95 Decisions of the Programme Board regarding progression to the award, including the classification where applicable, and decisions to award an alternative qualification, such as an exit award following a 'Fail' decision are formally recommendations to the Academic Board and are therefore not valid or communicated to students until approved by the Academic Board. Outcomes following the meeting of the Academic Board will be notified to each individual student and students will thereafter be sent an Official Transcript.

96 Students in debt to the University for payment of tuition fees involving a sum of more than £50 will be refused an Official Transcript or any other formal confirmation of their award until the debt is settled.

97 Members of the Board are not permitted to notify students directly. Once results have been released the Programme Coordinator or other members of staff can counsel students regarding the implications of their results especially where decisions require students to make choices or regarding the consequences of not being allowed to progress.

98 Students have the right to appeal decisions of the Programme Board under the Code on Academic Appeals (QH:C11).

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