



REGULATIONS AND CODE OF PRACTICE FOR TAUGHT PROGRAMMES
Assessment, Progression and the Award of a Qualification

2016-17

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CONTENTS

Pg.

| | | |
|---|---|----|
| A. Preamble | | |
| 1. | Introduction | 7 |
| 2. | Significant changes for 2016-17 | 8 |
| B. All programmes | | |
| 3. | Programme structure and design | 12 |
| <i>Admission and study</i> | | |
| 4. | Recognition of prior learning | 18 |
| 5. | Student absence due to illness or other cause | 20 |
| 6. | Suspension of study | 22 |
| 7. | Supplementary year | 24 |
| <i>Forms and conduct of assessment and the provision of feedback</i> | | |
| 8. | Forms of assessment | 26 |
| 9. | Conduct of assessment | 27 |
| | - Formal unseen written examinations | 27 |
| | - Coursework | 29 |
| | - Online assessment | 30 |
| | - Oral examinations | 30 |
| 10. | Assessment and student circumstances | 31 |
| | - Disability | 31 |
| | - Discrimination by association | 32 |
| | - Religious observances | 33 |
| | - Pregnancy / Maternity and paternity | 33 |
| 11. | Feedback to students | 34 |
| <i>Marking of assessments and the processing of marks</i> | | |
| 12. | Marking criteria and scales | 35 |
| 13. | Treatment of marks | 40 |
| 14. | Anonymity | 41 |
| 15. | Penalties | 41 |

- Academic misconduct 41
- Late submission of summative coursework 42
- Exceeding the size limit in summative coursework 42

Arrangements and processes for determining progress and awards

- | | | |
|-----|--|----|
| 16. | Pass marks | 44 |
| 17. | Extenuating circumstances | 44 |
| 18. | Boards of examiners | 50 |
| 19. | Appeals against decisions of the boards of examiners | 53 |
| 20. | Roles responsible for determining progression and awards | 54 |
| | - Faculty Education Directors | 54 |
| | - Programme Directors | 54 |
| | - Internal Examiners | 54 |
| | - School Examination Officers | 55 |
| | - External Examiners | 55 |
| 21. | Treatment and publication of results | 55 |

C. Undergraduate programmes only

- | | | |
|-----|---|----|
| 22. | Admission and study | 57 |
| 23. | Programme structure and design (incl. Preliminary year and Integrated Masters programmes) | 59 |
| 24. | Study abroad | 62 |
| 25. | Industrial placements | 64 |
| 26. | Intercalation | 65 |
| 27. | Student support | 67 |
| 28. | Processing and recording marks | 69 |
| 29. | Student progression and completion – in modular programmes | 70 |
| 30. | Student progression and completion – in non-modular programmes | 76 |
| 31. | Awards and classification – in modular programmes | 78 |
| 32. | Awards and classification – in non-modular programmes | 79 |

D. Taught postgraduate programmes only

- | | | |
|-----|---|----|
| 33. | Admission and study | 81 |
| 34. | Programme structure and design (incl. the MRes) | 88 |
| 35. | Student support | 88 |
| 36. | Extension of study | 89 |
| 37. | Processing and recording marks | 90 |
| 38. | Student progression and completion | 91 |
| 39. | Awards and classification | 94 |

Annexes

| | | |
|-----|---|-----|
| 1. | Glossary | 98 |
| 2. | Regulations for specific programmes | 104 |
| 3. | University examination regulations | 122 |
| 4. | Student transfer between undergraduate programmes and units of the University of Bristol | 137 |
| 5. | University policy on supporting disabled students | 139 |
| 6. | Guidance on reasonable adjustments to the assessment of disabled students | 142 |
| 7. | University policy for the external examining of taught programmes | 150 |
| 8. | Guidance for faculties on classifying extenuating circumstances | 163 |
| 9. | Guidance on making awards to students who are unable to complete all the necessary assessment | 166 |
| 10. | Flow diagram to show options for progression and completion in taught modular programmes | 167 |
| 11. | Calculating the unit mark, year mark, taught component mark and final programme mark and degree classification in taught programmes | 172 |
| 12. | Agreed weightings, by faculty, to be applied for the purposes of calculating the final programme mark and degree classification in undergraduate programmes | 179 |
| 13. | Applying recognised prior learning to the calculation of the final programme mark and/or the degree classification in modular undergraduate programmes | 181 |
| 14. | Dissertations in taught postgraduate programmes | 182 |

REGULATIONS AND CODE OF PRACTICE FOR TAUGHT PROGRAMMES

Assessment, Progression and the Award of a Qualification

2016-17

A. PREAMBLE

1. Introduction

- 1.1. These Regulations and Code of Practice ('the Code') summarise the University's expectations for the conduct of assessment, progression and the award of a qualification in undergraduate and taught postgraduate programmes.
- 1.2. The expectations of the Code are developed with a fundamental commitment to the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code), and the awards conferred are benchmarked against the Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies (www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/qualifications-frameworks.pdf). Individual disciplines will also refer to relevant subject benchmark statements.
- 1.3. The relevant sections of this Code may apply to the assessment, progression and completion of any taught components in research degree programmes. For further information please see the regulations for specific degrees in the *Regulations and Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes*: www.bris.ac.uk/academic-quality/pg/cop-research-degrees.html.
- 1.4. The Code applies to all taught students, including those who study on a part time basis. For this purpose, where reference is made to 'years of study' the policy must be applied on a pro rata basis and equivalent to the volume of credit that a full-time student would normally undertake in an academic year.
- 1.5. For the purpose of this Code a 'regulation' is defined as: 'a rule set by the University which must be followed'; and a 'policy' as a: 'statement established by common consensus that will be followed, unless there is good and validated reason otherwise.'
- 1.6. **Regulations within the Code may not be varied. They are indicated by boxed text.** The rest of the Code should also be followed. Any requests to depart from the Code must be approved by the relevant Faculty Education Director and must be in accordance with faculty policy. If deemed appropriate, the University Undergraduate or, Graduate, Studies Committee and/or the relevant faculty committees may be consulted by the Education Director. University and faculty committees will ensure consistency of practice university-wide, and will make decisions that take account of the spirit of the Code.

2. Significant Changes to the *Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Programmes* for 2016-17

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| Change | <p>Addition of a new clause (29.15.2) to permit 'conditional progression' in designated slots within undergraduate modular programmes, as an alternative to a student having to take a supplementary year, where they are unable to progress by the end of the academic year due to marginal failure. This enables a student to progress and 'catch-up' on the credit deficit in the subsequent year of study, subject to meeting specific criteria.</p> <p>The option to permit conditional progression is permissive and a programme will need to explicitly introduce it into its structure. Given this will provide an additional progression option, it will apply to both new and current students, where enacted.</p> |
| Rationale | <p>The purpose of this new regulation is to address existing cases where a marginal fail in a unit, potentially outside of the student's home subject, prevents a student from progressing and means they otherwise have to undertake an additional year of study (i.e. normally by way of the supplementary year).</p> |

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| Change | <p>Addition of a new set of Plagiarism and Cheating regulations, as provided in the Examination Regulations (annex 3).</p> |
| Rationale | <p>In order to establish an enhanced and more efficient process for considering cases of plagiarism and cheating which: is compatible with the modular nature of programmes offered by the university and the current processes for considering progress and awards, improves the range of penalties available and gives better guidance on dealing with the academic ramifications of cheating and plagiarism on affected units, and provides timely, fair, and clear outcomes for students.</p> |

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| Change | <p>Addition of new governance for preliminary and foundation (i.e level 3) level programmes by way of common or programme-specific regulation (see 3.14 and section 23) and removal of references to 'Pathway Certificate' or 'Preliminary Certificate' as qualifications of the University.</p> |
| Rationale | <p>These types of programme are not part of the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) and therefore did not fit within the University's regulatory framework; hence the need for new governance.</p> |

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| Change | <p>Addition of a new policy governing industrial placements (section 25) within undergraduate programmes of study.</p> |
| Rationale | <p>The new policy sets out a framework in which industrial placements can be provided to supplement the similar policy on study abroad in undergraduate modular programmes, based upon current practice.</p> |

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| Change | Addition of a new degree classification weighting for Integrated Masters programmes spent entirely at Bristol (annex 12). |
| Rationale | There is presently only provision for a single weighting model for this type of programme, in comparison to the dual weightings available for Bachelor undergraduate degrees. |

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| Change | Addition of a minimum credit and level requirement for integrated masters programmes with a year spent away from the University (3.19) such that its structure is sequenced to allow students to progress and build on their skills and knowledge, with study at the level of the qualification during their final year. To apply from the start of the 2017/18 academic year for new registrations. |
| Rationale | Whilst the credit framework presently records that these programmes should include at least 120 credits at the level of the qualification (i.e. level 7), no restrictions are placed on the year(s) of study in which these credits should be taken. |

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| Change | Removal of the exemption that must-pass units can only be permitted in the final year of modular undergraduate programmes due to professional accreditation reasons (29.20). Where programmes wish to introduce must-pass units into the final year, students will be provided with a re-sit opportunity in designated units, where they previously would not have had the opportunity to do so. |
| Rationale | As a continuation of the introduction of must-pass units, which were initially established to ensure that credit is achieved in those units that are integral to the programme (i.e. they cannot be compensated) when considering progression, such units may now also be identified within the final year of study in modular undergraduate programmes, where appropriate. |

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| Change | Clarification that a board of examiners is responsible for determining whether the requirement to complete and pass an assessment , which was previously missed due to extenuating circumstances, can be waived where the learning outcomes for the unit has already been met (17.24). |
| Rationale | In order to clarify who is responsible for agreeing this course of action. |

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| Change | Clarification that, where applicable, a student may request to withdraw with a classified honours Bachelors degree at any time from the completion of their penultimate year of study until the meeting of the Faculty Board of Examiner where the integrated Masters degree would be awarded (29.31). |
| Rationale | In order to clarify when in a student's study they can elect to withdraw from an integrated Masters degree and receive a classified honours Bachelors degree. |

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| Change | A number of minor refinements to the policy on the Supplementary Year , particularly with regard to the facility to apply a discretion in charging a fee for the supplementary year (section 7). |
| Rationale | As an outcome from an annual review of the policy and process. |

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| Change | Reference to a new common credit conversion process and clarification that a board of examiners may also disregard a mark attained at a partner institution where, once converted to a Bristol mark, it was not an accurate reflection of the student's performance (section 24). |
| Rationale | To ensure that students studying abroad select an appropriate volume of credit that relates to the equivalent overall expected workload for a year of study in Bristol and outline the instances where it is reasonable to apply exceptional action to ensure a fair outcome for a student or students who are subject to a particular conversion. |

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| Change | Clarification that the academic record will normally follow the student when transferring programme , unless the transfer is to the first year of a non-cognate programme, whereas the academic record will not follow and the transfer will be treated as a new registration (22.12). |
| Rationale | In order to distinguish between a transfer of programme to the same point of study in a cognate programme or to the first year of a new programme. |

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| Change | Inclusion of a number of enhancements to the policy and process that governs the consideration of extenuating circumstances have been implemented, including the incorporation of an additional category of classification (section 17). |
| Rationale | As part of an annual review, in liaison with the JustAsk Team in Bristol SU and the University's Student Health Service, a number of enhancements have been made, including increasing the number of categories of classification from three to four to more accurately differentiate between the severity of circumstances. |

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| Change | Removal of the requirement for a 60 credit point dissertation in taught postgraduate programmes: 33.18 "For most postgraduate Masters awards, <u>an extended piece of work, such as a dissertation or project</u> , worth 60 credit points is required." |
| Rationale | To provide more flexibility in the design and provision of taught postgraduate programmes. |

Annexes

- 2: New specific programme regulations for:
 - A new suite of Gateway programmes that prepare students for studying on the Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Sciences degree programmes.
 - MSc in Veterinary Sciences and Postgraduate Diploma in Veterinary Clinical Practice
- 2: Update to the specific programme regulations for the Diploma in Dental Therapy (on the final examination).
- 3: A series of minor revisions in the Examination Regulations with regard to the 'Conduct of examinations and other assessed work', including the replacement of specific references to what items may or may not be taken into an exam in the Regulations with a separate 'Code of conduct for examinations' and the addition of instructions to a marker in cases where a student answers more questions than is specified in an examination.
- 7: The University policy for external examining has been updated.
- 8: The guidance for faculties on classifying extenuating circumstances has been updated to reflect the increase in the number of classifications as to the severity of an extenuating circumstance.

B. ALL TAUGHT PROGRAMMES

3. Programme Structure and Design

The current programmes approved by Senate, governed by the regulations in this section, are provided at www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/assessment/annex/annex-programmelist.html.

The regulations for the specific programmes: MBChB, BDS, BVSc, Gateway to Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Science, Diploma in Dental Therapy, Postgraduate Certificate in Education, the Graduate Diploma, MSc in Social Work and MSc in Veterinary Sciences and Postgraduate Diploma in Veterinary Clinical Practice are available at annex 2.

The Diploma in Dental Hygiene, which is governed by specific regulations, is subject to these Regulations except where the specific regulations in annex 2 indicate otherwise.

The development of taught programmes across the University are underpinned by the expectations of the Quality Assurance Agency's (QAA) UK Quality Code.

- 3.1 Each degree programme is the responsibility of the relevant faculty, subject to approval by Senate. Faculty Boards shall determine the programmes to be offered for each degree, diploma or certificate within the faculty and the units to be taken within each programme.
- 3.2 Every degree programme must be justified on academic grounds and the level of demand for them must be sufficient to merit the use of the resources required for delivery.
- 3.3 Faculties must adhere to the established procedures for the approval of named degree programmes.
- 3.4 Control over entry to any programme or unit rests with faculties (programmes) and schools (units). This includes the evaluation and acceptance of students transferring from other institutions or internally within the University.
- 3.5 All new and existing undergraduate and taught postgraduate programmes must be fully modular in structure, with the exception of the MB,ChB, BDS and BVSc programmes and Gateway variants.
- 3.6 Faculties and schools must specify the constituent units for all existing and any new programmes in the programme specification.
- 3.7 Subject to the approval of Faculty Boards and Senate, schools shall determine: (i) the content and duration of each unit and the criteria for its satisfactory completion; (ii) the value in terms of credit points and level to be assigned to each unit; and (iii) the pre-requisites and co-requisites associated with each unit.
- 3.8 Faculties and schools whose programmes or units are either validated by professional bodies or which are required to adhere to curricular content specified by professional bodies will establish with those organisations what constitutes an acceptable curricular structure.
- 3.9 Where distance learning is required or offered for part of, or whole of, a programme, faculties and schools must consider and fulfil the principles for the design and delivery of programmes by distance learning, available from: www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/approve/approvalguidance/.

Unit sizes and structure of the teaching year

- 3.10 The University's standard unit sizes are 10, 20, 30, 40 and 60 credit points. A single 120 credit point undergraduate unit which encompasses a full academic year where the student is studying abroad or in industry is also permitted.
- 3.11 In postgraduate taught programmes, units of more than 60 credit points are permitted to accommodate projects or dissertations.
- 3.12 Faculties and schools must ensure that programmes and units conform to the structure of the academic year as laid out by Senate (see: www.bristol.ac.uk/academicregistry/office/policies/say).

Units should not span more than one academic year. A unit may only be scheduled to run outside of the agreed structure where there are good pedagogic reasons so to do when approved by the University Education Committee.

Levels of study - programmes

- 3.13 The University of Bristol, in accordance with Ordinance 19 and the national Qualifications Framework, awards the following taught academic qualifications:

- Masters Degree – at level 7
- Integrated Masters Degree – at level 7
- First Degrees in medicine, dentistry and veterinary science – at level 7
- Postgraduate Diploma – at level 7
- Postgraduate Certificate – at level 7
- Postgraduate Certificate in Education – at level 6
- Graduate Diploma – at level 6
- Graduate Certificate – at level 6
- Bachelors Degree (with and without Honours) – at level 6
- Diploma of Higher Education – at level 5
- Certificate of Higher Education – at level 4

- 3.14 The University also provides a number of programmes that prepare students for study at degree level:

At level 4:

- Gateway Year – a year of study that is integrated with and prepares students for studying on an identified non-modular professional degree programme. Such years of study are subject to specific programme regulations (see annex 2).

At the equivalent of level 3 in the national Qualifications and Credit Framework:

- Preliminary Year – a year of study that is integrated with and prepares students for studying on an identified modular degree programme. Such years of study are subject to general regulations (see section 23).
- Foundation Year – a year of study in a stand-alone programme that prepares students for admission to higher education generally. Such years of study are subject to specific programme regulations.

- 3.15 A student who has completed the preliminary or foundation year by passing all the units but who does not proceed onto a University of Bristol programme will receive a University certificate, as specified in the relevant regulations.

Levels of study - units

3.16 The following levels of credit are used by the University, in accordance with the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree Awarding Bodies:

- level 4 units that are normally taken as part of the first year of an undergraduate programme,
- level 5 units that are normally taken as part of the second, third or final year of an undergraduate programme.
- level 6 units that are normally taken as part of the third or final year of an undergraduate programme.
- level 7 units that are normally taken as part of the final year of a masters or integrated masters programme or the year abroad.

Units may be provided that are equivalent to level 3, as established in the UK Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF), where they feature in preliminary year or foundation year programmes.

Credit

3.17 The University's credit framework, which summarises the amount and level of credit required to receive a University award, is reproduced on the following page.

3.18 The amount and level of credit specified in the tables should be regarded as the minimum. If a school wishes to diverge from these amounts, the faculty must seek University level approval, through the University Education Committee.

3.19 The University's Credit Framework:

| Qualification | FHEQ Level | Total credits required | Minimum credits required at the highest level* | Equivalent ECTS credits | Additional credit requirements |
|---|------------|------------------------|--|--|--|
| Taught Masters degree | 7 | At least 180 | 150 | The minimum requirement is 60, however, a range of 90-120 is more typical. | |
| Integrated Masters degree | 7 | At least 480 | 120 | | Where the programme includes a year away from the University: at least 60 credit points at level 6 in the year spent away from the University and at least 60 credit points at level 7 in the final year** |
| Postgraduate Diploma | 7 | At least 120 | 90 | | Remaining credits to be at level 4 or higher |
| Postgraduate Certificate (including the Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE)) | 7 | At least 60 | 40 | | |
| Bachelors degree with honours | 6 | At least 360 | 90 | 180 - 240 | Remaining credits to include at least 100 at level 5 or above |
| Bachelors degree (Ordinary degree) | 6 | At least 300 | 60 | | |
| Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) | 6 | At least 60 | 40 | | |
| Graduate Diploma | 6 | At least 80 | 80 | | |
| Graduate Certificate | 6 | At least 40 | 40 | | |
| Foundation Degree | 5 | At least 240 | 90 | | |
| Diploma of Higher Education in (Faculty name) (Subject) | 5 | At least 240 | 90 | Approx. 120 | Remaining credits at level 4 or above. |
| Certificate of Higher Education in (Faculty name) (Subject) | 4 | At least 120 | 120 | | |

* The highest level is the level of the qualification

** To apply to new registrations from the 2017/18 academic year

Notes:

- 1 This table should be read in conjunction with the Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Awarding Bodies. The University's credit framework will apply in cases where the credit requirement is higher than that stated in the national credit framework.
- 2 The MB,ChB (Medicine), BDS (Dentistry), BVSc (Veterinary Science) and Gateway undergraduate programmes are not included in the University's modular structure.
- 3 At the discretion of the faculty joint honours degrees may vary from the minimum of 90 credits at level 6 because of the need for more flexible structures in joint programmes.
- 4 Individual students can take units at a higher level than normally specified during their programme, e.g. a level 7 unit might be substituted for a level 6 unit, or a level 6 unit might replace one at level 5.
- 5 The University's qualifications relate to the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area (FQ-EHEA) as follows:

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Doctoral degrees | Third Cycle Qualifications (Not typically credit rated) |
| Masters degrees | Second Cycle Qualifications (Min. 60 ECTS credits, however a range of 90-120 ECTS credits is typical) |
| Integrated Masters degrees | Second Cycle Qualifications (As above) |
| Bachelors degrees with Honours | First Cycle Qualifications (180-240 ECTS credits) |
| Foundation degrees | Short Cycle Qualifications (120 ECTS credits) |
| Diplomas of Higher Education | As above |

Credit points

- 3.20 In assigning credit points to units, faculties and schools are required to use total student input per normal full-time year of study as a measure. An average of 40 hours per week of total student input in teaching time is suggested as an appropriate measure of the time an average student will need to spend to be able to complete the assessment for a programme successfully. One credit point represents approximately 10 notional hours of student input.
- 3.21 The attainment of additional credit points in any year of study cannot be carried forward in such a way as to reduce the volume of credit that must be taken in any succeeding year, or to accelerate a student's progress towards any award.
- 3.22 A unit shared by students studying on more than one programme must always be allocated the same credit points.
- 3.23 Credit points may be used once only and may not be used towards two or more awards of this University or of another institution and the University, with the exceptions as specified in clauses 22.9 (undergraduate) and 33.5 (taught postgraduate)
- 3.24 It is the responsibility of the relevant Faculty Board of Examiners to determine whether or not a student has satisfied the criteria for the award of credit points.

Shared teaching between undergraduates and postgraduates

- 3.25 Undergraduate and taught postgraduate students may be taught together. If undergraduate and taught postgraduate students undertake the same unit, with the same learning outcomes and assessment, the credit awarded will be at the pre-defined level of the unit. If the learning outcomes and assessment differ for the undergraduate and postgraduate students then they are deemed to be undertaking different units; such units must have been previously approved at the different levels.

ADMISSION AND STUDY

The 'Student Agreement' sets out the terms and conditions that form the basis of the relationship between the student and the University, see:

www.bristol.ac.uk/secretary/studentrulesregs/agreement.html.

4. Recognition of Prior Learning

Guidance for students on the application process for the recognition of prior learning in taught programmes is available at:

www.bristol.ac.uk/university/governance/policies/admissions/prior-learning.html.

Definitions

- 4.1 The Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL – previously known as 'APL') is a process whereby students can be exempt from some parts of their chosen programme of academic study by recognition of their learning from previous experiences or achievements.
- Recognised Prior 'Certified' Learning is the achievement of learning that has been formally assessed and certificated from previous study with a higher education organisation.
 - Recognised Prior 'Experiential' Learning is the non-certified acquisition of relevant skills and knowledge, gained through relevant experience, which is capable of being evaluated.
- 4.2 Some programmes have approved units/periods of study undertaken at another institution or in the workplace. Where this is a recognised part of an approved programme this policy does not apply.
- 4.3 The term 'prior learning' does not include the learning implicit in formal teaching, a work placement, group work or independent study designed as part of a programme of study alone. Recognition of such parallel learning would be expected to occur in the formal assessment practice of the programme.

Principles

- 4.4 It is the achievement of learning, or outcomes of the learning, and not just the experience of the activities that is being accredited. In all cases evidence must be presented to the University that such learning has taken place.
- 4.5 Evidence for acceptance of RPL should demonstrate that the learner has a reasonable expectation of satisfactorily completing the programme for which they are applying.
- 4.6 Students may request to view additional criteria, by which it judges applications for RPL.
- 4.7 All applications for the recognition of prior learning will be considered for approval by the Programme Director and the Faculty Recruitment and Admissions Officer. Prior learning will not normally be accepted if five or more years have elapsed since it occurred unless the applicant can provide evidence that his/her learning has continued in a professional or similar context. In such cases the school may choose to set an assessment to test an applicant's current knowledge.
- 4.8 To complement the University's credit framework (see section 3) the following table shows maximum amounts of credit for each type of programme that can be counted as prior learning.

The maximum amount of certified prior learning can be exceeded where a student is returning to undertake a 'top-up' qualification, provided that the lower award has been made by the University and is still relevant to the higher qualification.

| Award type | Number of credit points for award | Total amount of APL permitted |
|---------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| Postgraduate Level Award | | |
| Masters Degree | 180 | 60 |
| Postgraduate Diploma | 120 | 40 |
| Postgraduate Certificate | 60 | 20 |
| Undergraduate Level Award | | |
| Graduate Diploma | 120 | 40 |
| Graduate Certificate | 60 | 20 |
| Integrated Masters Degree | 480 | 240 |
| Honours Bachelors Degree | 360 | 240 |
| Ordinary Degree | 300 | 180 |
| Undergraduate Diploma | 240 | 120 |
| Undergraduate Certificate | 120 | 0 |

Prior learning in the undergraduate professional programmes of BDS, MBChB and BVSc may be accepted in lieu of an individual unit, at the discretion of the relevant Programme Director.

- 4.9 The conferring of one of the awards listed in the table and the recognition of prior learning within this is complemented by the following:
- a) Sufficient credit at the highest level of the award, as outlined in the University's credit framework, must be taken at the University of Bristol (or, for a Joint Award, one of its partner institutions) in order for the award to be conferred.
 - b) The final 120 credit points of an undergraduate degree programme must be taken and satisfactorily completed at the University of Bristol unless there is a specific agreement to the contrary that has been approved by Senate, therefore it follows that the University will not normally accredit prior learning within the final year of its bachelors and integrated masters programmes.
 - c) The dissertation or research component of a taught postgraduate programme must be taken and satisfactorily completed at the University of Bristol (or, for a Joint Award, one of its partner institutions).

Recognising Prior Certified Learning

- 4.10 Schools should consider the learning which has been accredited and decide, in the best interests of the student, how this can be taken into account. It is at the discretion of the school to decide if: (a) the subject content, and therefore knowledge gained, is sufficiently similar for a student to be exempt from unit(s), and (b) if marks can be transferred.

If a student wishes to recognise learning obtained from online courses, the school should seek advice from the relevant Faculty Education Director and the Academic Registrar.

- 4.11 Therefore, prior credit obtained from another institution can be recognised in one of two ways:
- (a) Exemption from units, the marks of which do not contribute to the final award and need not be transferred (University of Bristol accepts the credit awarded by another institution);
 - (b) Exemption from units, the marks of which do contribute to the final award and are transferred (University of Bristol accepts the credit and marks awarded by another institution towards this award).
- 4.12 The requirement to transfer marks may be waived for students transferring into an undergraduate professional programme if there is still a significant proportion (e.g. 360 or more, out of 600 credit points) of the programme to complete.

Recognising Prior Experiential Learning

- 4.13 Schools should consider each case and decide from which units the student can be exempt. The school should satisfy itself that the applicant has sufficient knowledge and ability to have a reasonable expectation of completing the programme successfully.
- 4.14 If a school is not satisfied that the experiential learning is equivalent to the standard of unit(s), it may require the applicant to undertake an appropriate method of assessment.

See annex 13 on how RPL is applied to the calculation of the final programme mark and/or the degree classification in modular undergraduate programmes.

5. Student Absence due to Illness or Other Cause

During the Teaching Period

- 5.1 If a student is absent due to illness or other cause for **up to and including seven consecutive days** in the teaching period, he or she should inform their home school as soon as possible and complete an absence form (available from: www.bristol.ac.uk/students/services/forms/).
- 5.2 If a student is absent due to illness or other cause for **more than seven consecutive days** in the teaching period, he or she should inform their home school as soon as possible and complete an extenuating circumstances form. Additional evidence for the absence may be required, e.g. if the absence is due to illness the student should also attend an appointment with a Medical Practitioner (e.g. a GP) (with the completed form) to obtain a medical certificate ('sick-note'). Both the form and any documented evidence must then be submitted to the relevant school office.
- 5.3 If an absence from the teaching period means a student is **unable to submit** a summative coursework assignment by the agreed deadline, the student should contact the relevant school and request an extension **before** the assignment deadline as well as complete an extenuating circumstances form. Schools may ask for evidence of the reason for the absence in agreeing an extension to a deadline.

Students who are ill for a period of time during the teaching period, whether close to the deadline or not, must submit work on time unless an extension has been agreed

by the School. Schools will not accept late submission without penalty where no extension has been granted.

During the Examination Period

- 5.4 Students who are unable to attend a summative examination/s must inform the school of their non-attendance as soon as possible and prior to the start of the examination.
- 5.5 Where the absence is due to illness a student should either:
 - i. if providing evidence of the illness, complete the University's extenuating circumstances form (available from www.bristol.ac.uk/students/services/forms/) and submit it along with medical certification to the relevant school office;
 - ii. if self-certifying the illness (i.e. not providing medical evidence), complete the University's self-certification for absence form (available from www.bristol.ac.uk/students/services/forms/) and submit it to the relevant school office. A self-certification of absence from an examination only covers one day in the examination period; students should contact the school and complete the necessary form for each day in which they are absent from examination/s. (see 17.24 for further information on the consequences of self-certification)
- 5.6 Where the absence is due to a reason other than illness, the student should complete the University's extenuating circumstances form and submit it along with any appropriate evidence to the relevant school office.
- 5.7 Students who start but are unable to complete a summative examination due to illness must inform the examination invigilator and attend an appointment with a medical practitioner and obtain a medical note on the same day as the examination. The note and the completed extenuating circumstances form must be submitted to the relevant school office.
- 5.8 For further information on the process for notifying the University of any Extenuating Circumstances during the examination period, see section 17.
- 5.9 Students should also ensure they meet any school or programme requirements concerning notification of absence.
- 5.10 The information provided in the forms will be held by the University and processed by staff in schools and Faculty Offices in order to keep a record of student absence. Schools will monitor the frequency of individual absence and may request that the student provides medical certification in multiple and sustained instances of self-certified illness. Information will be recorded and processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act.
- 5.11 The completed form should be submitted by the student to the student's school, as follows:
 - i. A self-certification for absence form - within TWO working days of the end of the period of absence
 - ii. An extenuating circumstances form - within TWO working days of the end of the period of absence, except in cases of absence from an examination where the form should be submitted as soon as possible, but no later than the meeting of the relevant Board of Examiners.

6. Suspension of Study

- 6.1 Suspension of studies is defined as the formal introduction of a pause in a student's studies during which they are not required to engage with their studies.
- 6.2 On resumption of their studies, students are expected to fulfil the same progression criteria as if they had not suspended their studies.
- 6.3 This policy does not relate to any suspension instigated or mandated by the University due to misconduct, which is covered in the University's Student Disciplinary Rules and Regulations, or due to a mental health difficulty, which is covered by the University's Policy on Fitness to Study.
- 6.4 Students do not have the automatic right to suspend their studies. The University expects students to normally complete their study in a single continuous period. As a suspension of study will interrupt a student's progress on his/her programme, it will only be granted where there are good grounds and supporting documentation (e.g. a report from a registered medical practitioner).

Grounds for Suspension

- 6.5 A suspension may be granted on the grounds that the student is unable to engage effectively with their studies owing to external factors such as serious and persistent health problems, disability, bereavement or additional sole caring responsibilities, serious financial problems, mandatory military service, or where a part-time student's employment pattern has changed.
- 6.6 A suspension may also be granted if it is demonstrated by the student that it would genuinely be in his or her best academic interests to suspend studies, for example in order to take up employment or other activities that will contribute to their academic development or where the student is transferring to another programme.

Request for a suspension

- 6.7 Each request for suspension of study must be considered individually taking into account the particular circumstances of the student.
- 6.8 Suspension must be for a defined period. The length of the period of suspension granted should match, as closely as possible, the time required by the circumstances that necessitate the suspension. The period of suspension will necessarily affect the student's maximum study period by the same duration of time.
- 6.9 A period or periods of suspension should total no more than 12 months throughout a programme of study unless a specific extension to the period of suspension has been agreed (see 6.23).
- 6.10 Suspensions cannot be backdated by more than one month from the date of the request for suspension of studies.
- 6.11 A request for a suspension of study must be made by the student or his or her proxy. The student should notify the School of his or her intention and submit a completed form (generated by the School Office), accompanied by any relevant supporting documents (medical evidence or correspondence as appropriate).
- 6.12 In cases where the accompanying documentation are not comprehensive enough to determine the best course of action for a student, schools may wish to request and consider supporting evidence from medical, counselling or other relevant services before agreeing to recommend a suspension of registration. When doing this,

Schools must consider what is reasonable with respect to a student's particular circumstances.

- 6.13 There may be additional rules on suspensions from a funding body. It is the responsibility of the student to confirm that arrangements and approval for the suspension have been secured with any funding sponsor that is involved. Postgraduate students in receipt of a studentship should note that Research Council or UoB studentship funding will cease during a period of suspension.
- 6.14 Any change to student status, such as a suspension of study, will affect immigration status in the UK. The University is required to report any changes in status to the Home Office. The International Office provides guidance and advice to visa-holding students who are seeking a suspension of study. Please see the website for further information: www.bristol.ac.uk/international-office/visas-immigration/.

- 6.15 The completed form will be considered by the relevant faculty education director for approval; any difficulties with the student's progression that the School might foresee should be reported.
- 6.16 The criteria for a return from suspension of studies and any change in the status of the student, through transfer to another programme for example, must be set out and agreed by relevant parties (the student, the school and a representative of the faculty) at the point of suspension and the agreement formally recorded and sent to the student. If circumstances change during the period of suspension then it may be appropriate for the criteria to be revisited, in consultation with the relevant parties.

- 6.17 The Faculty will write to the student notifying them of the suspension of study and any conditions that need to be fulfilled for return.

Return from suspension

- 6.18 The support arrangements, and the associated responsibilities of the student and the school, should be clarified and agreed by the relevant parties prior to the student's return such that he or she is able to engage with and meet the requirements of the programme.
- 6.19 Faculties may require an accompanying translation where the medical certificate is provided in a language other than English or specify the medical practitioner who should assess the student.
- 6.20 Schools should make suitable arrangements to accommodate the student if there have been significant changes to the programme during the period of suspension that will enable the student to complete his or her studies.
- 6.21 If a student is unable to return on the agreed date, she or he may seek further approval to extend their period of suspension (see 6.23).
- 6.22 A student for whom the agreed period of suspension becomes insufficient should withdraw from the programme and, should they wish, reapply at a later date, requesting that the existing credit points are recognised as prior learning (see section 4).

Extension to a period of suspension

- 6.23 An extension of up to 12 months to the period of suspension may be granted in exceptional circumstances.

- 6.24 Good grounds for an extension to a period of suspension may include: serious and persistent health problems, disability, significant bereavement or additional sole

caring responsibilities, serious financial problems, mandatory military service or where a part-time student's employment pattern has changed.

- 6.25 Requests should be made on the relevant form and be accompanied by any supporting documents, such as medical evidence or correspondence.
- 6.26 If applicable, the school should forward written support for the extension to the relevant education director to agree.

6.27 Extensions to a period of suspension beyond the 12 months in a programme also require the approval of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education and Students).

7. Supplementary Year

- 7.1 The Supplementary Year is an additional year of study within a programme that is provided for eligible students to enable them to meet the criteria for progression whereas otherwise they are not able to progress to the next year or component. The Year may be taken on an 'assessment-only' basis where the teaching has already been received, at the discretion of the relevant board of examiners.
- 7.2 A Faculty Board of Examiners may permit a student to undertake the Supplementary Year if a student does not have sufficient credit points to allow him or her to progress, because of:
- Academic failure: if a student fails a unit and the subsequent re-sit (of up to 20 credit points in an undergraduate modular programme and 30 credit points in a taught postgraduate modular programme), he or she may be permitted a final opportunity for re-assessment. A student is only permitted to take a supplementary year for this reason once during their programme of study.
 - Extenuating circumstances: if a student's ability to fulfil the criteria for the award of credit points has been affected by medical or other circumstances, he or she may be permitted to re-attempt the relevant units without penalty.
- 7.3 The Supplementary Year is available in modular undergraduate programmes, but not in non-modular professional programmes. It is also available in taught postgraduate programmes where there are extenuating circumstances, but only exceptionally because of academic failure.
- 7.4 In cases of (a): students who are placed on a supplementary year are required to undertake the units they have failed or a replacement unit from their programme structure (see 29.16.1) and any additional units appropriate to the programme of study, as determined by the faculty. Marks for units that contribute to the final programme mark will be capped at the minimum pass mark. Where it is necessary for a student to undertake additional units, he or she will be required to engage with the teaching and learning of the unit/s. A student is not required to pass additional units for the purposes of progression, but may undertake the assessment and obtain the credit for the unit. Where this is the case the credit and mark will not count towards the student's programme of study.
- 7.5 In cases of (b): students who are placed on a supplementary year due to extenuating circumstances will undertake the affected units as determined by the Faculty Board of Examiners. Marks will be awarded as normal (i.e. not capped if first attempt).
- 7.6 A student will normally only be able to take a supplementary year due to extenuating circumstances once during their programme of study. Exceptionally, where a student experiences significant extenuating circumstances on two separate occasions such

that they are unable to complete one or more academic years during their programme and therefore exceed the maximum period of study, a request to extend the period of study for an individual student should be made by the student, via the School and Faculty, to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education and Students).

- 7.7 It is the faculty's discretion to determine whether the student is required to engage with the content of the whole unit or a particular component of the unit.
- 7.8 Students undertaking the supplementary year are expected to be in regular contact with the faculty / school / department and to be in attendance at certain components of the unit and to fulfil any specific attendance requirements as determined by the faculty.
- 7.9 An appropriate fee will normally be charged for the supplementary year (including repeat years), except in exceptional circumstances. It is likely that the extenuating circumstance will have been defined as 'severe' by the University in order for this to apply.
- 7.10 Sponsored tier 4 international students are subject to attendance monitoring requirements throughout the whole year on a monthly basis and will be expected to be in regular contact with the faculty / school / department, such that the University's reporting responsibilities can be fulfilled.
- 7.11 In exceptional circumstances, the Faculty Board of Examiners may allow a student to be registered on the supplementary year and the unit/s they have failed but to engage with the content of the failed units and with their academic personal tutor from home.

FORMS AND CONDUCT OF ASSESSMENT AND THE PROVISION OF FEEDBACK

The University has established a number of institutional principles for assessment and feedback in taught programmes. The principles are a statement of the University's approach to assessment and the provision of feedback such that both staff and students share common expectations and are aware of their responsibilities. They are available at: www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/assessment/assessment-and-feedback-principles/.

8. Forms of Assessment

- 8.1 The assessment methods that might be expected in taught programmes are provided at: www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/assessment/annex/annex-formsofassessment.html.
- 8.2 A programme need not employ all of the forms of assessment but the range should be sufficient to enable the full spectrum of knowledge and skills (both subject specific and generic) embodied in the programme and unit intended learning outcomes, to be appropriately assessed individually or cumulatively.
- 8.3 In assessing a unit composed of more than one component, it is the unit as a whole, not each component that needs to be satisfactorily completed, except where it has been designated as 'must-pass'. Components need not be capable of being separately assessed, although programmes may require a component to be satisfactorily completed in order for a unit to be passed and enable the credit points to be awarded.
- 8.4 All assessment should be undertaken in the language in which the material from the unit is taught, unless there is a clear academic rationale for doing otherwise. Where this is the case, the rationale must be approved as part of the normal programme and unit approval process and students informed prior to or on the commencement of their studies. Students may not request assessment to be conducted in an alternative language other than as allowed by this clause.

Assuring assessment criteria and intended learning outcomes at unit level

- 8.5 Faculties are responsible for ensuring that students are given clear guidance on the assessment requirements of their programmes, whilst Schools are responsible for this at the unit level.
- 8.6 Unit specifications must provide sufficient information about the assessment in relation to the intended learning outcomes.
- 8.7 Any significant changes to a unit, at whatever level it is approved, should automatically trigger a review of whether the assessment methods and criteria remain congruent with the unit's intended learning outcomes.
- 8.8 Annual review mechanisms for units (annual unit or programme reviews) must provide appropriate opportunities for evaluating whether the assessments test the stated unit objectives/learning outcomes.

Academic scrutiny of assessment

- 8.9 The Head of School¹ is responsible for ensuring that procedures are in place to assure the quality and standards of assessment. These procedures are normally implemented by one or more School Examinations Officer(s) (see section 20).

¹ For the MBChB programme, this would be the Dean of the Faculty.

- 8.10 All assessment tasks and marking schemes should normally be subject to review by a second person, except in cases where the assessment accounts for the equivalent of 25 percent or less of the overall mark in a 20 credit point unit (e.g. 50 percent in a 10 credit point unit).
- 8.11 External examiners should be asked to scrutinise all examination papers and any summative assessment tasks that accounts to the equivalent of more than 25 percent of the overall mark in a 20 credit point unit and contributes to the final degree result. To facilitate this, external examiners should have access to the relevant information relating to aims and objectives, contents, intended learning outcomes, assessment methods, marking criteria and any model answers.

9. Conduct of Assessment

Formal unseen written examinations

- 9.1 The procedures under which the University requires unseen written examinations to be conducted are set out in the University's Examination Regulations (annex 3). Should any divergence from these procedures be requested, the chair of the relevant School Board of Examiners must be consulted. She or he may act on behalf of the board, but must first consult the undergraduate or graduate Education Director.
- 9.2 The University's Examination Regulations contain detailed provisions concerning the handling of allegations of plagiarism, cheating and other examinations offences (sections 2.9 -11.18). Anyone with responsibility for handling such allegations must be fully familiar with these regulations.

The examination periods

- 9.3 Summative examinations are set within the January and May/June assessment periods and re-sit examinations in the August/September period, unless being taken as a supplementary assessment. Exceptions must be agreed as in 9.5.
- 9.4 The summative assessment of units must take place during or at the end of the teaching block in which the unit is run, except for agreed exceptions.
- 9.5 Where there is good academic reason to request an exemption from 9.3 or 9.4, the programme director must make a case to the relevant Faculty Education Director. If the Faculty Education Director approves the case, it must then be presented to the relevant Academic Director of Studies for final approval.
- 9.6 Examinations within the MBChB, BDS, BVSc and other specified non-modular programmes should be arranged as outlined in 9.3 and 9.4 as far as is possible.

Students requesting to take summative examinations outside of the United Kingdom

Students registered for an award of the University of Bristol

- 9.7 All University of Bristol students taking first-sit or re-sit examinations are expected to take their scheduled examinations in venues arranged by the University of Bristol. In exceptional cases, however, approval may be sought for permission to take an examination at an approved institution outside the United Kingdom (UK).
- 9.8 There is no automatic entitlement to sit an examination outside the UK. Permission to do so will only be given if:
- (i) It is permitted by programme and/or faculty requirements (e.g. 9.9);

- (ii) The student has provided sufficient cause or reason* to not sit the examination at the University of Bristol;
- (iii) The arrangements for examination at the approved institution conform to University regulations;
- (iv) There is not suitable alternative.

This judgement is at the discretion of the home Faculty of the student.

* Holiday or working commitments at the time of the examination will not be considered a sufficient cause or reason for taking the examination outside the UK. Authorisation to sit an examination outside the UK on medical grounds will not normally be granted as students should only be taking examinations when fit to do so. Students who have medical issues should seek advice from their School.

- 9.9 Students on the MBChB, BDS and BVSc programmes are prohibited from taking examinations outside the UK, due to a requirement from professional accrediting bodies.
- 9.10 Any examination scheduled outside the UK must take place in an institution where the conditions for examination have been formally agreed by the University. The relevant Faculty will notify the University's Examinations Office in such instances, which will liaise with the student's home institution with regard to the arrangements for the examination such that it is convened in accordance with the regulations of the University of Bristol.
- 9.11 Any examination arranged outside of the UK must be scheduled to run concurrently or to overlap with same examination at the University of Bristol.
- 9.12 The same procedures apply where the requirements of a distance learning programme necessitate students taking their written summative examinations outside the UK. Consideration should be given during the design stage of distance learning programmes as to whether alternative forms of assessment are more appropriate.

Students whose award is not made by the University of Bristol

- 9.13 A student studying at the University of Bristol, but whose award is not being made by the University (i.e. on a 'Study Abroad' period), will be permitted the opportunity to undertake a summative examination at their home institution, where the student is required to re-engage with his or her studies at the home institution at the same time that examinations are scheduled at Bristol (i.e. in the January examination period). This allowance is subject to:
 - (i) It being permitted by programme requirements;
 - (ii) The arrangements for examination conforming to University regulation, including that it is held concurrently with the examination held in Bristol or, where this is not possible, on the same day.

This judgement is at the discretion of the home Faculty of the student.

- 9.14 In such cases, at the behest of the student, the International Office will inform the relevant School and Faculty in which the Study Abroad student is based at the start of each academic year.
- 9.15 The relevant Faculty will subsequently notify the University's Examinations Office, which will liaise with the student's home institution with regard to the arrangements

for the examination such that it is convened in accordance with the regulations of the University of Bristol.

Coursework and similar forms of written summative assessment

Coursework is defined as any summative assessment based on essays, assignments, creative writing or other tasks that is completed outside timetabled classes in the students' own time.

- 9.16 Students should be informed (e.g. via Blackboard) at the start of each unit when coursework will be set, when it is to be submitted and when it will be returned. Deadlines for coursework should be provided in sufficient time for completion.
- 9.17 A reference to how a student should apply for an extension to the original deadline and the penalties for late submission should also be provided in the faculty handbook (see section 15).
- 9.18 Academic misconduct associated with continuously assessed assignments should be dealt with as a disciplinary offence.
- 9.19 Formative feedback on summative coursework should be provided to students. The work and the feedback should be returned promptly, in sufficient time to help the student's work on subsequent assignments.
- 9.20 External examiner(s) should be supplied with the summative assessment structure for a programme in which the examination and coursework requirements are defined. External examiner(s) must be able to scrutinise examination papers and examples of summative coursework.
- 9.21 The director of a unit that utilises coursework as an assessment method is responsible for ensuring that all those involved in the assessment process are aware of the guidelines for the assessment of the unit, and where the marking of coursework is undertaken by more than one person, procedures must be in place to ensure the uniformity of marking.

e-Submission of coursework

Procedural guidance on the e-submission of coursework is available from:

www.bris.ac.uk/tel/support/tools/e-submission/.

- 9.22 Where employed, the e-submission of work should be consistently applied for all of the students undertaking the assessment and, ideally, to all the appropriate assessments within the unit.
- 9.23 It should be made clear to students (e.g. via Blackboard) that, for each unit, whether any assessment can or must be submitted online and if the work is to be checked using text, code or other matching software.
- 9.24 Students should be given the opportunity to practise submitting work online before the real event.
- 9.25 Students should be made aware (e.g. via Blackboard) of the submission process, for each unit, including that:
 - i. Submitted files must be in the specified file format(s) (e.g. Word, pdf).
 - ii. Submitted files must comply with instructions, including required file naming and coversheet information (if used).

- iii. The deadline relates to the complete and successful submission of the coursework and students must ensure that they begin the submission process in good time before the deadline.
 - iv. Checking the successful submission of the work is the responsibility of the student. Staff should only be contacted if the student has identified or experienced a problem (e.g. submitted the wrong file).
- 9.26 In the event that University systems are not accessible on the deadline date/time, the submission deadline should be extended, and students informed. Students should not use alternative methods to submit work e.g. email.
- 9.27 If a student encounters a problem preventing them from submitting their work that is not caused by a University system failure, he or she must notify their School immediately. Evidence of this technical failure may be required by the School. The act of notification in itself does not annul or extend any deadline.

Online assessment

- 9.28 Arrangements should be made for responding to unexpected technical problems in a way that is fair and efficient and within a reasonable timeframe. This includes technical support in case of server failure. In cases of serious technical failure, students should be offered the examination in paper format.
- 9.29 Suitable arrangements should be made in conjunction with the University's central Information Services for the invigilation of online assessment.
- 9.30 The summative examination should only be accessible by secure password and the performance recorded by university-approved secure management tools suited for the purpose.
- 9.31 Computers used for summative examinations should wherever possible have both internet and communication tools disabled, except as needed for the purpose of the assessment.
- 9.32 The use of a large pool or sub-pools of examination questions from which a randomised sub-set of questions is generated to produce individualised student exams is strongly encouraged as long as the pool/s cover/s all aspects of the examinable material and the sub-sample generated is representative. Pools of questions should be carefully constructed to test the unit's intended learning outcomes.
- 9.33 Information Services is responsible for the technical infrastructure which enables the assessment to occur.
- 9.34 Schools must ensure that the scheduling of online assessment does not conflict with the central examinations timetable.
- 9.35 Online assessment must be conducted under the same processes specified by the Code as for other forms of assessment.

Oral examinations of individual students

- 9.36 Two examiners should be present during all oral examinations. If this is not possible then a procedure for recording the event must be in place.
- 9.37 Oral examinations should only be used when it matches the intended learning outcome being tested e.g. practical or performance skills. Normally this would not include assessment of simple factual knowledge recall.

- 9.38 It is the responsibility of the Programme Director in conjunction with the Unit Directors involved to demonstrate that the oral examination is reliable, fair and appropriate and adds value to the assessment portfolio.
- 9.39 The external examiner must have adequate access to all intended learning outcomes, including those attached to the oral examination, to be able to form a judgement as to the fairness and appropriateness of the assessment and student performance.
- 9.40 If an oral examination is part of the assessment of a unit, it must apply to every student taking that unit.
- 9.41 An oral examination is not permitted as a means of moderating a student's examination result or degree classification.

10. Assessment and Student Circumstances

Disability

- *Guidance for schools working with disabled students, including implementing a Disability Support Summary (DSS), is available at: www.bris.ac.uk/disability-services/documents/dssguide.pdf.*
 - *Guidance for boards of examiners with respect to disability and extenuating circumstances is provided in section 17.*
 - *Please also see 'University policy on supporting disabled students' (Annex 5) and 'Guidance on reasonable adjustments to the assessment of disabled students' (Annex 6).*
 - *The University's policy on Fitness to Study is available at: www.bristol.ac.uk/equalityanddiversity/act/protected/disability/fitnesstostudy/.*
- 10.1 Disability is a protected characteristic that is protected under the Equality Act 2010. Schools should have procedures in place that anticipate the support needs of students with a disability (e.g. a school disability coordinator who will liaise as required if a disability is disclosed).
- 10.2 A competence standard is defined within the Equality Act 2010 as: 'the academic, medical or other standard(s) applied for the purpose of determining whether or not a person has a particular level of competence or ability'. It therefore may not be possible to make reasonable adjustments to aspects of some assessments because they constitute a competence standard.
- 10.3 Schools and Faculties must ensure that competence standards are 'genuine', as defined in annex 6. Competence standards should be the subject of regular review to ensure they remain genuine.
- 10.4 Where the competence standard can be shown to be genuine, the duty to make reasonable adjustments does not apply; however, where competence standards cannot be demonstrated as genuine, the duty to make reasonable adjustments remains.
- 10.5 Where competence standards do not apply, Schools must be prepared to implement reasonable adjustments to teaching and learning such that students with disabilities are not disadvantaged.

- 10.6 Schools must ensure there are mechanisms by which students are able to disclose a disability throughout their programme of study and that students are aware that making a decision not to disclose a disability may adversely impact on the school's ability to make any reasonable adjustments.
- 10.7 Any student who discloses a disability such that additional support may be required, should be signposted to Disability Services. A disabled student is not obliged to make contact with or use Disability Services; in these cases, schools still have a responsibility to make anticipatory and reasonable adjustments.
- 10.8 When a student does contact Disability Services, and there is evidence of a disability, Disability Services will draft a 'Disability Support Summary' (DSS). The DSS is devised in consultation with the student. Where the support required is complex, new or unusual, the student's Faculty/ School will also be consulted. The DSS will state what support the student requires, including adjustments to assessment where appropriate.
- 10.9 For students with a DSS, the 'Examinations, timed assessment and in class tests' section acts in lieu of an Alternative Examination Arrangements (AEA) form and they are not required to submit an AEA form in addition to having a DSS.
- 10.10 Where a student requires an adjustment to his or her assessment and either does not have a DSS or it is not specified in the DSS, they should either: (i) complete and submit an Alternative Examination Arrangements (AEA) form at the earliest opportunity and before the stipulated deadlines; or (ii) contact Disability Services such that a DSS can be created or amended. Students must be made aware that if their application for AEA's (either, the AEA form and supporting evidence or the DSS) is not submitted before the deadline, this may affect the School's decision in terms of what it considers reasonable and practicable to arrange within the time available.
- 10.11 AEA's must be approved by the relevant Faculty Education Director (or nominee). Faculties should keep records of granted AEA's.
- 10.12 Where a disability is not disclosed prior to the assessment, examiners are not obliged to retrospectively consider the effect of a disability on a student's performance.
- 10.13 Programme and unit directors are encouraged to consider the accessibility of assessments on an on-going basis.

Discrimination by association

- 10.14 It is direct discrimination if an education provider treats a student less favourably because of the student's association with another person, who has a **protected characteristic**². However, this does not apply to pregnancy or maternity. Discrimination by association may occur in various ways, e.g. where the student has the relationship of parent, child, partner, carer or friend of someone with a protected characteristic.
- 10.15 Schools should consider making adjustments for students because of their association with someone who has the protected characteristic of disability. In relation to assessment, this could mean that a student will request an alternative

² The protected characteristics for higher education are: age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation. More information on the protected characteristics can be accessed at: <https://www.bris.ac.uk/equalityanddiversity/secure/act/>.

assessment date due to their role as a carer of a disabled dependent. Consideration to adjustment of an assessment (e.g. timing) would have to be given if the request is due to the student's association with a disabled person.

Religious observances

- 10.16 Where it is practicable, reasonable and fair to all students, assessment tasks should be designed to accommodate the religious observances of the students and staff involved. *The Examinations Office* and schools should work together, with advice from the *Multi-faith Chaplaincy* when necessary, to try to ensure, as far as it is practicable so to do, that the examination timetable does not conflict with the observance of religious festivals and other holy days.
- 10.17 Schools should make clear to prospective applicants and current students, at the outset of their studies, that it is their personal responsibility to inform the faculty office about their religious beliefs where there is potential for conflict with the setting of assessment. Students should be reminded of their obligations through an appropriate entry in school / programme handbooks.
- 10.18 Some programmes include mandatory requirements, often but not exclusively, related to the need to demonstrate certain knowledge, skills and competencies required by professional, statutory or regulatory bodies. These may require students to undertake study and assessments on days associated with religious observance.

Pregnancy/maternity or paternity

- 10.19 If it is likely that a student's pregnancy might affect her ability to meet coursework deadlines or sit examinations, consideration must be given to implementing measures to support her in meeting the requirements of the programme.
- 10.20 If a student is due to give birth near to, or during assessment deadlines, or the examination period, but she wishes to complete her assessed work or sit her examinations, she should not be prevented from so doing.
- 10.21 Schools should ensure that the needs of pregnant students are addressed during assessments, including offering the opportunity to sit the examination in a location separate from other students.
- 10.22 If a pregnant student is concerned about sitting examinations or meeting assessed work deadlines, or if she has a pregnancy-related health condition that is exacerbated by stress, she should be advised to seek medical advice. If her midwife or doctor advises against her sitting an examination or trying to meet the assessed work deadline, an alternative method of assessment should be explored.
- 10.23 If a pregnant student is unable to undertake an alternative method of assessment, or if she experiences significant pregnancy-related problems in the course of an examination or while undertaking assessed work, the school should make arrangements for her to sit the examination, as a first attempt, at the earliest possible opportunity or agree to an extension to the deadline for the submission of coursework.
- 10.24 If a student is likely to be absent due to their partner giving birth, and where the due date conflicts with any scheduled assessments, staff should endeavour to offer flexibility wherever practicable so to do. However, in such circumstances automatic dispensation from examinations will not always be possible. This provision also extends to cover same sex couples.

10.25 Further guidance for staff on student pregnancy, maternity and paternity is available from: <https://www.bris.ac.uk/equalityanddiversity/act/protected/pregandmat/>.

11. Feedback to Students

11.1 Each school must develop and publicise to its students a clear policy on the delivery of feedback on formative and summative work, covering the following points:

- the different ways in which students will receive guidance on their work;
- which assessment tasks students will receive feedback on, and in what form;
- the delivery of feedback on different forms of assessment and how students will be informed if it proves impossible to meet the agreed deadline (formative feedback on work should normally be delivered within three working weeks of the deadline for submission);
- the opportunities students will have to discuss their work and their progress with staff, as well as guidance on how they should make use of feedback.

11.2 Guidance on the provision of formative feedback to students is available at:

www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/assessment/annex/annex-deliveringformativefeedback.html.

Please also see the institutional principles for assessment and feedback in taught programmes, available at: www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/assessment/assessment-and-feedback-principles/

MARKING OF ASSESSMENTS AND THE PROCESSING OF MARKS

12. Marking Criteria and Scales

- 12.1 Marking criteria are designed to help students know what is expected of them. Marking criteria differ from model answers and more prescriptive marking schemes which assign a fixed proportion of the assessment mark to particular knowledge, understanding and/or skills. Annex 1 provides definitions for: marking criteria, marking scheme and model answer.
- 12.2 Where there is more than one marker for a particular assessment task, schools should take steps to ensure consistency of marking. Programme specific assessment criteria must be precise enough to ensure consistency of marking across candidates and markers, compatible with a proper exercise of academic judgement on the part of individual markers.
- 12.3 Markers are encouraged to use pro forma in order to show how they have arrived at their decision. Comments provided on pro forma should help candidates, internal markers and moderators and external examiners to understand why a particular mark has been awarded. Schools should agree, in advance of the assessment, whether internal moderators have access to the pro forma / mark sheets completed by the first marker before or after they mark a candidate's work.
- 12.4 Detailed marking criteria for assessed group work, the assessment of class presentations, and self/peer (student) assessment must be established and made available to students and examiners.
- 12.5 In respect of group work, it is often desirable to award both a group and individual mark, to ensure individuals' contributions to the task are acknowledged. The weighting of the group and individual mark and how the marks are combined should be set out in the unit specification.

University generic marking criteria

- 12.6 The common University generic marking criteria, set out in table 1, represent levels of attainment covering levels 4-7 of study. Establishing and applying criteria for assessment at level 8 should be managed by the school that owns the associated programme, in liaison with the faculty and the Academic Director of Graduate Studies.
- 12.7 The common marking criteria are designed to be used for an individual piece of assessed student work. The descriptors give broad comparability of standards by level of study across all programmes as well as level of performance across the University. They reflect the QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications but need to be benchmarked against subject specific criteria at the programme level.
- 12.8 Faculties, with their constituent schools, must establish appropriately specific and detailed marking criteria which are congruent with the University-level criteria and, if appropriate, the level of study. All forms of programme-specific marking criteria must be approved by the Faculty.

Marking scales

12.9 Assessment must be marked using one of the sanctioned marking scales, as follows:

- 0-100 marking scale
- 0-20 marking scale

A five point A-E marking scale is available for those programmes which already utilise this scale where distinct grades of competence are being measured. Given the complexities in translating a grade in this type of scale to a percentage for the purposes of progression or classification, any new proposals to use the A-E scale requires a pedagogic rationale for doing so and the approval of the relevant Faculty Education Director and Academic Director of Studies.

Any mark on the chosen marking scale can be used.

12.10 Schools should utilise the marking scale that is best suited to the form of assessment. This and the marking criteria for the assessment should be established prior to its commencement.

Exceptions to the sanctioned marking scales

12.11 Neither the 0-20 nor 0-100 point scale is applicable to assessments where marks are not awarded; the student either passes or not. Such assessment may be employed, subject to approval by the faculty, when a student is required to demonstrate a minimum standard of competence for reasons related to professional accreditation requirements.

12.12 Highly structured assessments that are scored out of a total number less than 100 may be utilised where each mark can be justified in relation to those marks neighbouring it. In these cases the mark must be translated onto the 0-100 point scale, mapped against the relevant marking criteria, and students informed of the use of this method in advance of the assessment in the appropriate medium (e.g. on Blackboard).

Reaching the 'Unit Mark' (see also sections 28 and 37)

12.13 Marks gauged on the 0-20 scale should be translated to a point on the 0-100 scale so to calculate the overall unit mark for the purposes of progression and classification (see table 2).

12.14 The 0-20 point scale is a non-linear ordinal scale; for example, a mark on the 0-20 point scale IS NOT equivalent to a percentage arrived at by multiplying the mark by 5. Table 2 provides an equivalence relationship between the scales to enable the aggregation of marks from different assessment events to provide the overall unit mark which will be a percentage. This is illustrated below for a notional unit.

In this example the MCQ uses all points on the 0-100 scale whereas all the other assessments use the 0-20 point scale.

To achieve the final unit mark each component mark needs to be adjusted as shown over the page:

| | Dissertation (25%) | Unseen written exam (35%) | MCQ (25%) | Oral exam (15%) | Total unit mark out of 100 |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|----------------------|----------------------------|---|
| Actual score | 12 on 0-20 scale | 8 on 0-20 scale | 57 on 0-100 scale | 15 on 0-20 scale | |
| Adjusted to 0-100 scale | 62/100 | 48/100 | 57/100 | 72/100 | |
| Final weighted mark | 62 x 25 = 1550 | 48 x 35 = 1680 | 57 x 25 = 1425 | 72 x 15 = 1080 | 5735/100 = 57.35 (57) |

12.15 The overall unit mark must be expressed as a percentage as the University's degree classification methodology is based on the percentage scale.

12.16 The final programme or taught component mark will be calculated by applying the agreed algorithm to the unit marks (see sections 31 and 39).

TABLE 1: Generic Marking Criteria mapped against the three marking scales

| Grade | 0-20 point scale | 0-100 point scale | Criteria to be satisfied |
|-------|------------------|-------------------|---|
| A | 20 19 18 | 100 94 89 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Work would be worthy of dissemination under appropriate conditions. ➤ Mastery of advanced methods and techniques at a level beyond that explicitly taught. ➤ Ability to synthesise and employ in an original way ideas from across the subject. ➤ In group work, there is evidence of an outstanding individual contribution. ➤ Excellent presentation. ➤ Outstanding command of critical analysis and judgement. |
| | 17 16 15 | 83 78 72 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Excellent range and depth of attainment of intended learning outcomes. ➤ Mastery of a wide range of methods and techniques. ➤ Evidence of study and originality clearly beyond the bounds of what has been taught. ➤ In group work, there is evidence of an excellent individual contribution. ➤ Excellent presentation. ➤ Able to display a command of critical analysis and judgement. |
| B | 14 13 12 | 68 65 62 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Attained all the intended learning outcomes for a unit. ➤ Able to use well a range of methods and techniques to come to conclusions. ➤ Evidence of study, comprehension, and synthesis beyond the bounds of what has been explicitly taught. ➤ Very good presentation of material. ➤ Able to employ critical analysis and judgement. ➤ Where group work is involved there is evidence of a productive individual contribution. |
| C | 11 10 9 | 58 55 52 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Some limitations in attainment of learning objectives, but has managed to grasp most of them. ➤ Able to use most of the methods and techniques taught. ➤ Evidence of study and comprehension of what has been taught ➤ Adequate presentation of material. ➤ Some grasp of issues and concepts underlying the techniques and material taught. ➤ Where group work is involved there is evidence of a positive individual contribution. |
| D | 8 7 | 48 45 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Limited attainment of intended learning outcomes. ➤ Able to use a proportion of the basic methods and techniques taught. ➤ Evidence of study and comprehension of what has been taught, but grasp insecure. ➤ Poorly presented. ➤ Some grasp of the issues and concepts underlying the techniques and material taught, but weak and incomplete. |
| E | 6 | 42 | |
| | 5 | 35 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Attainment of only a minority of the learning outcomes. ➤ Able to demonstrate a clear but limited use of some of the basic methods and techniques taught. ➤ Weak and incomplete grasp of what has been taught. ➤ Deficient understanding of the issues and concepts underlying the techniques and material taught. |
| | 1 - 4 | 7 - 29 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Attainment of nearly all the intended learning outcomes deficient. ➤ Lack of ability to use at all or the right methods and techniques taught. ➤ Inadequately and incoherently presented. ➤ Wholly deficient grasp of what has been taught. ➤ Lack of understanding of the issues and concepts underlying the techniques and material taught. |
| 0 | 0 | 0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ No significant assessable material, absent, or assessment missing a "must pass" component. |

TABLE 2: Relationship between the three marking scales

| 0-20 point scale | A-E scale | Equivalent to these fixed points on the 0-100 point scale |
|-------------------------|------------------|--|
| 20 | A | 100 |
| 19 | A | 94 |
| 18 | A | 89 |
| 17 | A | 83 |
| 16 | A | 78 |
| 15 | A | 72 |
| 14 | B | 68 |
| 13 | B | 65 |
| 12 | B | 62 |
| 11 | C | 58 |
| 10 | C | 55 |
| 9 | C | 52 |
| 8 | D | 48 |
| 7 | D | 45 |
| 6 | E | 42 |
| 5 | E | 35 |
| 1 to 4 | E | 7 to 29 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 |

13. Treatment of Marks

- 13.1 The University assures the quality of its marking through moderation. Definitions of the terms used in this section can be found in the glossary of terms at annex 1.
- 13.2 All work assessed for summative purposes should be capable of being independently moderated and made available in case it needs to be moderated by the external examiner(s).
- 13.3 Where coursework is assessed summatively, schools should have a system in place to ensure students' work is available for moderation at a later date, by a means that ensures that the marked work is identical to that originally submitted.
- 13.4 Students should be informed in the faculty handbook that assessed work may be presented for moderation.
- 13.5 Each faculty should ensure that its schools have clear marking and verification procedures, as well as information on the operation of moderation, so that students are treated fairly and consistently across the University.

- 13.6 If a school is prepared to offer a candidate, who has produced an illegible script, the opportunity to dictate or transcribe it, in accordance with the Examination Regulations (2.8) at annex 3, the following procedure must be followed:

A school may invite a candidate to transcribe or dictate an illegible script. Any transcription or dictation must be verbatim, and the student should be asked to sign the transcript to confirm that it is a true copy of the original script. The transcription or dictation will be treated as part of the formal examination process. Schools may also invite the student to undertake an oral examination.

- 13.7 The less prescriptive the assessment (i.e. the lower the expectation of conformity to a model answer), the more necessary it is to ensure an effective moderation strategy. The types of moderation and how they may or may not be applied for assessments within the University of Bristol are outlined below.

- 13.8 Scaling is not normally permitted, except in the following two circumstances:

- a) Where the raw scores for the whole cohort are converted onto an appropriately distributed marking scale as part of the planned design of the assessment. The rationale and mechanism for scaling should be recorded in the unit specification and in the minutes of the relevant board of examiners.
- b) Where the marks of a cohort of students are moderated *post hoc* due to an unintended distribution of marks. When an assessment or a question within an assessment has not performed as intended, scaling may be employed (in this instance the methodology will not have been planned beforehand). This should be an exceptional event. The rationale and mechanism for intended scaling should be recorded in the minutes of the school and faculty boards of examiners.

- 13.9 Before scaling is used, its use and the method that is intended to be employed must be agreed with the relevant Chair of the Faculty Board of Examiners, prior to application, and then approved by the relevant external examiners and the school and faculty boards of examiners.

- 13.10 The use of scaling must also be made transparent to students: in the case of (a), students must be informed of the way in which the raw scores are converted onto the marking scale prior to the assessment; whilst in the case of (b) students must be informed of the process after the assessment.

13.11 **Norm-Referencing** (as defined in annex 1) is not permitted as a means of assessment in the University of Bristol. Criterion-referenced assessment (e.g. marking schemes, marking criteria) is to be used for all assessments.

13.12 **Negative Marking** may be employed in subjects where it is essential that the student should not guess the right answer. If negative marking is employed, this must be with the full knowledge of the student. There must be appropriate rubric, explaining that the assessment will be subject to negative marking on the cover of an examination paper, and the students should be given opportunities to practise such assessments before undertaking a summative assessment marked in this way.

13.13 Schools may choose to adopt double-marking as academically desirable in the case of summative assessment (see annex 1 for a definition of double marking).

13.14 It is recognised that there are particular difficulties in providing the second marking/moderation in some forms of assessment such as a class presentation which contribute to the overall unit mark. In these cases evidence of how the assessment mark was reached should be preserved for moderation.

14. Anonymity

14.1 Summative assessments should be marked anonymously unless it is not practicable (e.g. for an oral examination, or in a small cohort), or there is a clear academic benefit that outweighs those of full anonymity, such as providing personalised feedback to students.

14.2 When full anonymity in marking is not possible or judged to be of less benefit in comparison to the provision of personalised feedback to students, then schools and unit directors are responsible for ensuring that marks are awarded in a fair and equitable manner through the use of specific moderation techniques, by a partial level of anonymity combined with specific moderation techniques, and/or review by an external examiner.

14.3 Anonymity must be preserved insofar as is practicable when marks are considered at school boards of examiners.

14.4 Anonymity must be preserved at faculty board of examiners, unless there is good reason to remove the anonymity for an individual student, which is judged to be in the student's interests. It is at the discretion of the Chair of the board whether the removal of anonymity should be applied, on a case by case basis.

14.5 Students will be given a candidate number for retention until they have completed the programme of study.

15. Penalties

For academic misconduct

The *University's Examination Regulations* (annex 3) contain full details of the regulations and procedures to be followed in respect of academic misconduct, including plagiarism.

15.1 Information on what constitutes academic misconduct in respect of assessment (including clear definitions of plagiarism, collusion, cheating, impersonation and the use of inadmissible material) should be provided, or referenced by a web link, in faculty and/or school handbooks together with specific information about the

consequences of such misconduct. It may be necessary for individual schools to develop additional guidance on what constitutes academic misconduct, to reflect the relevant academic discipline.

- 15.2 When recommending a penalty to a Board of Examiners, an appropriately constituted committee/panel will consider the offence and penalty independently of its potential impact on the student's degree classification. Whether the penalty for offence in question should be reflected in the degree class to be awarded is the judgement of the board. In such cases, Boards of Examiners should take into account any effect on the degree classification that the penalty already has had.

For the late submission of summative coursework

15.3 Students must be made aware of the existence of penalties for not meeting submission deadlines in the relevant school or faculty handbook.

15.4 Faculties' policies on the penalties for the late submission of undergraduate summative coursework, should be in accordance with the following:

- a) Faculties should adopt an approach to the late submission of coursework within the framework provided and their schools should ensure that the policy is communicated to students at the outset of their studies, stated in student handbooks and re-iterated at the start of teaching of each unit;
- b) Schools should ensure that students from other schools or faculties who register for their units are made explicitly aware of the faculty policy on the late submission of coursework;
- c) Coursework that is submitted after a deadline should be subject to some penalty, unless an extension has been agreed by the School, prior to the deadline, or late submission is justified by reason of illness or other validated extenuating circumstance (see section 17);
- d) For work submitted up to 24 hours after the agreed submission deadline, a penalty of 10 marks out of 100 (or 3 marks out of 20) from the actual mark the student would have received applies (e.g. coursework that is marked at 60/100 would become 50/100 or a mark of 10/20 would become 7/20) once the penalty is applied);
- e) For work submitted seven calendar days after the submission deadline the student will receive a mark of 0, although schools may still require work of a satisfactory standard to be submitted in order for credit to be awarded;
- f) Faculties should decide on the rate of reduction, by day or at specific thresholds, for late submissions made after the 24 hour period but within 7 days. In setting the rate by which the mark is reduced the weighting of the assessment may be taken into account;
- g) Any penalty applied should be in the form of a mark reduction from the mark the student would have achieved.

For exceeding the size limit in summative coursework

15.5 Faculties' policies for defining the size limit of summative coursework, by assessment type, and the penalty for exceeding the defined limit, for its taught programmes, should be in accordance with the following:

- a) That it includes:

- Whether specific forms of coursework are subject to a size limit, and if so:
 - Whether the size limit is defined by reference to the number of pages (with font size, line spacing, margin size, and page orientation requirements), by a word / character limit or other defined limit.
 - The penalty where the defined limit is exceeded.
- b) Students must be informed in writing, at or before the date of issue of the coursework, the size limit and the penalty for exceeding the limit, if any, which shall accord with the approved unit specification. This information should also be provided on the cover sheet for the submission of the coursework.
- c) The policy of the faculty that owns the unit will apply. It is important for students whose home programme is based in a different faculty are made fully aware that the policy applied in the submission of coursework for a unit may be different than the policy of their home faculty.
- d) It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that the work complies with the defined size limit prior to submission and to certify the size (word or page length or other defined limit) on the front cover sheet when submitting the work.
- e) The student in question must be informed of the decision to apply the penalty for exceeding the defined size limit.

ARRANGEMENTS AND PROCESSES FOR DETERMINING PROGRESS AND AWARDS

16. Pass Mark

- | | |
|------|---|
| 16.1 | Within modular honours programmes, students must achieve at least 40 out of 100 to pass undergraduate (level 4-6) units. |
| 16.2 | Within the professional programmes in the Faculty of Health Sciences, students must achieve at least 50 out of 100 to pass at the unit/element level. |
| 16.3 | The pass mark set by the University for any level 7 (M) unit is 50 out of 100. |
| 16.4 | Where taught postgraduate programmes include units at level 6 (H) or lower the pass mark for those units remains 40 out of 100. Marks for these units must be taken into account in the calculation of the final programme mark and cannot be adjusted. |

17. Extenuating Circumstances

Guidance on student absence during the teaching period due to illness or other cause is provided at section 5. The regulatory procedure for consideration of extenuating circumstances is provided in the Examination Regulations (section 10, annex 3).

A student guide to extenuating circumstances is also available from:

www.bristolsu.org.uk/justask/academic/

- 17.1 Extenuating circumstances are circumstances external to study within the university that a student believes has affected their performance in assessment.
- 17.2 The effects that properly reported extenuating circumstances have on a student's performance must be considered by boards of examiners when making progression, completion or classification decisions.

The reporting of extenuating circumstances

- 17.3 The reporting of extenuating circumstances and their effects is the responsibility of the student.
- 17.4 A student must use the university's extenuating circumstances form (available from: www.bristol.ac.uk/students/services/forms/) in order to notify the University of any extenuating circumstances that may have affected his or her ability to fulfil the criteria for the award of credit points or to perform to the best of his or her ability in assessment events.
- 17.5 If a student wishes a board of examiners to take any extenuating circumstances into account, the completed extenuating circumstances form must be submitted to the relevant school office before the meeting of the board of examiners at which the student's performance in assessment is considered. A written record must be kept of such matters.

As referenced in section 5, if an extenuating circumstance has meant that a student is unable to submit a summative coursework assignment by the agreed deadline, the student should request an extension before the assignment deadline and may need to complete and submit an extenuating circumstances form. Schools may ask for evidence of the circumstance before agreeing to an extension.

Information on the process for submitting requests for extensions due to extenuating circumstances, including responsibilities in considering the requests, will be made available to students. All authorised extensions will be recorded and available to the ECC and the Boards of Examiners.

- 17.6 Extenuating circumstances that could have been raised before the meeting of the relevant board of examiners, but without good reason were not raised, will not be considered in the event of an appeal.
- 17.7 Schools should ensure that advice to students is available about the nature of the evidence that they will need to provide to supplement the information supplied in the University's form for extenuating circumstances.
- 17.8 Information must be provided to students by schools and faculties in the relevant student handbook/s on the procedure for the treatment of medical and other extenuating circumstances. This information should include:
- the procedure that should be followed;
 - the importance of informing the school about medical or other extenuating circumstances prior to the meeting of the relevant extenuating circumstances committee
 - the date of the relevant board of examiners meeting;
 - the correct person in the school to be provided with documentation of evidence and how it will be stored.
- 17.9 Schools should ensure that their procedures are arranged so the number of copies of papers detailing extenuating circumstances is kept to a minimum.

Extenuating Circumstances Committees

17.10 A small extenuating circumstances committee shall be established to consider the extenuating circumstances that may have affected a student's performance in assessment.

17.11 An Extenuating Circumstances Committee (previously known as the Special Circumstances Committee) for each programme must be established at a level determined by the relevant Faculty Board.

17.12 The composition of an Extenuating Circumstances Committee will be subject to the approval of the chair of the relevant Faculty Board of Examiners. It may include the chair of the School Board of Examiners, to which it reports, and the relevant examinations officer and senior tutor.

17.13 The Extenuating Circumstances Committee will meet as soon as is convenient before each meeting of the School Board of Examiners to which it reports.

17.14 The role of the Extenuating Circumstances Committee is to evaluate whether or not extenuating circumstances may have affected the candidate's capacity to perform. It shall determine:

- which (if any) assessments or units may have been affected by the circumstances drawn to its attention;
- whether the circumstance is deemed to have been reasonably within the student's control, evidenced and/or sufficiently serious to warrant an allowance;

- the period of time over which the student's performance was impaired and whether the extenuating circumstance was acute (of short duration and only likely to have had a negative impact upon the student's performance in the assessment) or chronic (over a significant period of time and therefore likely to have had an impact upon their learning as well as their performance in the assessment);
- whether the impact on the student's capacity to perform is likely to have been mild, moderate, serious or severe;
- whether sufficient allowance for the circumstances has already been made, for example, by making special arrangements for examinations or by granting extensions to deadlines.

The committee may also wish to comment upon the degree of confidence that it has on the impact of the reported circumstances given the evidence available, if it feels it is necessary to do so.

- 17.15 It is not the role of the extenuating circumstances committee to determine the effect, if any, on the candidate's results. All decisions on the accommodation of the effects of extenuating circumstances on progression and awards will be made by the board of examiners.
- 17.16 The extenuating circumstances committee should use its discretion and judgement in deciding on the severity and impact in any particular case.
- 17.17 If the committee is unable to classify the circumstance, particularly in complex cases, it should flag and recommend to the relevant Board of Examiners that professional advice is sought to help in the interpretation of existing evidence and/or supplementary evidence.
- 17.18 The committee must note the reasons underlying its decisions and these notes, along with information on the period of time in which the circumstances affected the student and the assessments / forms of learning that were affected, should form its report to the Board of Examiners. All cases where a student has self-certified absence from an examination due to illness should be recorded by the School.
- 17.19 The relevant minute of the extenuating circumstances committee should be made available to a student on request.
- 17.20 Information about the precise medical or other extenuating circumstances of the candidate must remain confidential to the extenuating circumstances committee.
- 17.21 The Faculty or School should establish a procedure for ensuring that judgements are as consistent and robust as possible, in-year and year-on-year.

Consideration of extenuating circumstances by boards of examiners

17.22 The School Board of Examiners will receive the report provided by the Extenuating Circumstances Committee and consider the case of each student who has presented extenuating circumstances, and then determine the effect, if any, on the candidate's results.

17.23 The School Board of Examiners will determine whether a student's performance has been substantially affected by extenuating circumstances beyond their control and what action, if any, is required to take into account these circumstances, as is fair and reasonable.

17.24 The options that will normally be considered by a Board of Examiners are outlined in 17.25-17.29, subject to the following caveats, where applicable:

- i. Students who are absent from an examination due to illness and who self-certificate, will be required to undertake the examination at the next scheduled time the examination is run, normally in the August / September 're-sit' period, without penalty.
- ii. Where a summative assessment has not been completed because of validated extenuating circumstances (not including self-certified absence on its own), a Faculty Board of Examiners may, in light of the report by the Extenuating Circumstances Committee, waive the requirement for the student to successfully complete the assessment on the basis of the extenuating circumstances, if it is satisfied that the intended learning outcomes for the unit are fulfilled by the successful completion of other assessments. In such situations, a Faculty Board of Examiners may disregard the assessment in considering whether to award credit for the unit. The Chair of the Faculty Board of Examiners may agree to the waiving of assessments on a case-by-case basis in-year.

17.25 In the case of non-final year undergraduate students on modular programmes, if a student has extenuating circumstances which have been accepted, the School Board of Examiners may decide to (but not exclusively):

- take no action;
- permit the student to repeat the assessment without penalty (i.e. as for the first attempt) where a fail mark prevents the credit points being awarded for the unit;
- award credit for the affected unit(s), notwithstanding a fail mark, on the basis of performance in other contexts within the unit(s);
- permit the student to repeat the entire year of study again or undertake a supplementary year (depending upon the amount of credit in the year of study the student has already achieved) without penalty;
- place the report on the extenuating circumstances on file for consideration by the board of examiners when they make an award to the student.

17.26 In the case of final year undergraduate students on modular programmes, if a student has extenuating circumstances which have been accepted, the School Board of Examiners may decide to (but not exclusively):

- take no action;
- permit the student to repeat the assessment without penalty (i.e. as for the first attempt) where a fail mark prevents the credit points being awarded for the unit;
- award credit for the affected unit(s), notwithstanding a fail mark, on the basis of performance in other contexts;
- disregard the affected mark for the purposes of calculating the final programme mark and degree classification
- permit the student to repeat the entire year of study or undertake a supplementary year (depending upon the amount of credit in the year of study the student has already achieved) without penalty;
- award a classified degree, under Ordinance 18, where a student is prevented by illness or other substantial cause from completing a minor part of

assessment and the Board is unable to make an academic award under any other of the University's regulations.

- award an Aegrotat degree, under Ordinance 18.

17.27 In the case of undergraduates on non-modular undergraduate programmes, if a student has extenuating circumstances which have been accepted, the Board of Examiners may decide to (but not exclusively):

- take no action;
- permit the student to repeat the assessment without penalty (i.e. as for the first attempt) where a fail mark prevents the unit being passed;
- permit the student to repeat the entire year of study again as for the first time (although the School Board of Examiners may also apply supplementary conditions for progression).

17.28 For taught postgraduate students in the taught component of the programme, if a student has extenuating circumstances which have been accepted, the Board of Examiners may decide to (but not exclusively):

- take no action;
- permit the student to repeat the assessment without penalty (i.e. as for the first attempt) where a fail mark prevents the credit points being awarded for the unit;
- award credit for the affected unit(s), notwithstanding a fail mark, on the basis of performance in other contexts within the unit(s);
- disregard the affected mark for the purposes of progression;
- permit the student to repeat the entire taught component or undertake a supplementary year (depending upon the amount of credit the student has already achieved) without penalty;
- award an Aegrotat degree, under Ordinance 18;
- place the report on the extenuating circumstances on file for consideration by the board of examiners when they make an award to the student.

17.29 For taught postgraduate students in the dissertation component of the programme, if a student has extenuating circumstances which have been accepted, the Board of Examiners may, depending upon the categorised impact of the circumstance, decide to:

- Take no action;
- Allow the re-submission of the dissertation where the student has achieved a mark of less than 45 out of 100 without penalty.

17.30 The manipulation of the mark itself should be considered only as a last resort and applied in exceptional acute circumstances by a higher mark being awarded on the basis of performance in other contexts.

17.31 Where a student has successfully completed a unit but the board of examiners considers that their performance was impaired by extenuating circumstances, then this will be put on file for consideration by the relevant board of examiners at a future point.

17.32 A Board of Examiners must consider the effect of extenuating circumstances from previous years, if applicable, on its decision-making (e.g. the application of the secondary rule for classification).

17.33 Each recommended allowance made by School Boards of Examiners with respect to extenuating circumstances will be presented to the Faculty Board of Examiners for approval.

17.34 The Faculty Board of Examiners will ensure:

- that students are being treated consistently across the faculty;
- that decisions are consistent with respect to the Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Programmes;
- that a fair outcome is achieved, particularly with respect to complex cases.

17.35 Faculty Boards of Examiners may wish to seek professional advice e.g. medical opinion prior to making a decision, particularly if chronic circumstances are involved.

17.36 The chair of the Faculty Board of Examiners may appoint committees to advise the Board on the treatment of students with extenuating circumstances as he or she thinks fit. All decisions are reserved to the Faculty Board of Examiners itself.

17.37 Boards of Examiners must keep a written record of the decisions made with respect to extenuating circumstances and the basis on which they were made. The relevant record must be made available to a student to which it applies on request.

Disability and extenuating circumstances

17.38 The University has a legal obligation to make reasonable adjustment where a provision, criterion or practice, including those for the consideration of extenuating circumstances, places disabled students at a substantial disadvantage.

17.39 A person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment, and the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. This includes specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia and dyspraxia, developmental disorders such as Asperger syndrome and attention deficit conditions, long-term health conditions and mental health difficulties such as depression / anxiety.

17.40 Disability is diagnosed by a suitable professional, such as a GP/consultant, psychiatrist or psychologist. All evidence from a professional must be accepted at face value; where the evidence provided is felt to be unclear or ambiguous, Disability Services are able to advise.

17.41 Boards of examiners are obliged to consider the effects of a disability and make reasonable adjustments such that the student is not disadvantaged by his or her disability.

17.42 The duty of making a reasonable adjustment for the effects of a disability may require relaxing or setting aside the provisions of the Regulations and Code of Practice both directly with respect to the effects of the disability, and indirectly through the capacity of the student to follow its requirements in other matters.

17.43 Boards of examiners are not under any obligation to relax or make reasonable adjustments to any academic, medical or other standard applied by the University for the purpose of determining whether or not a student meets a particular competence standard. On this basis, a board will not normally raise the marks of a

student or award credit for a unit which a student has failed (although each case needs to be assessed individually).

- 17.44 Each case must be considered on its own merits, taking into account the individual circumstances of the student and any supporting evidence, as well as the nature of the programme and the related competence standards.
- 17.45 Where a student has a Disability Support Summary, the nature of the disability has not changed since the Summary was drawn up, and the provisions of that Summary have been carried out, a Board of Examiners will not treat the effects of a disability on an assessment as an 'extenuating circumstance' since a reasonable adjustment to the assessment will have already been made.
- 17.46 Boards of Examiners must make reasonable adjustments that accommodate changes in the disability with time either because it is unsteady in nature, or its effects fluctuate, or the student receives a diagnosis and treatment over an assessment period.
- 17.47 Previous attendance at an examination or any other assessment is not a deciding factor when subsequently considering whether a reasonable adjustment for disability should be made.
- 17.48 Students should report adverse effects of their disability on their study or assessment that are not present on their Disability Support Summary using the University's extenuating circumstances form, unless the nature of their disability prevents them doing so.
- 17.49 In all cases, where there is any doubt about how evidence of a disability should be treated and it is unclear what course of action should be taken, advice should be sought from the University's Equality and Diversity Manager.

18. Boards of Examiners

School (or 'initial') board of examiners

- 18.1 The board of examiners may convene at a school, departmental or programme level.
- 18.2 The board of examiners may be convened for one or more of the purposes outlined below at any time during the year.
- 18.3 Anonymity must be preserved insofar as is practicable when marks are considered at school boards of examiners.
- 18.4 Discussions held at the Board of Examiners are confidential, although students may request to see the minute relating to consideration of their individual circumstance.
- 18.5 A Board may be convened virtually, by correspondence, under the same auspices, but a quorate number of replies must be received for any decision to be enacted. The decision should subsequently be confirmed and recorded in the minutes of the next meeting of the Board.
- 18.6 Chair's powers may be granted with the explicit agreement of a Board to enact a specific and defined action, subsequent to the meeting.

Membership and quorum

- 18.7 As stated in Ordinance 17, a board comprising of at least three people shall be convened to approve each undergraduate and taught postgraduate academic award of the University.

- 18.8 The board should be chaired by the Head of School or Department (or equivalent), or his or her nominee.
- 18.9 The membership of boards of examiners will normally comprise the internal and external examiners for each subject or group of subjects in the programme of study.
- 18.10 Internal examiners are invited to attend each meeting of the board of examiners, although a School will have discretion as to which of its members is required to attend.
- 18.11 External examiners are required to be notified of all meetings of the Board of Examiners for programmes which lead to a University award, to which they have been appointed as external examiner, and their right to attend them. The external examiner should attend at least one meeting of the Board in each academic year, as specified by the School. Where the School and External Examiner both agree that they need not attend a particular meeting, the External Examiner should be sent the minutes from the meeting.
- 18.12 A Faculty Education Director, or nominee, may attend School board of examiners in order to aid interpretation of any new policy and provide insight on particularly complex cases.

Purpose

- 18.13 The purpose of the School Board of Examiners is to:
- i. Review the rigour and appropriateness of assessment and, where necessary, agree any recommendations in order to remedy anomalies in the mark distribution for each unit under the jurisdiction of the Board. This includes the scaling of marks where an assessment has not resulted in the intended outcome, which requires the explicit approval of the relevant Faculty Education Director, in accordance with the Taught Code.
 - ii. Accept and approve the marks that are under its jurisdiction.
 - iii. Consider the report from the relevant Extenuating Circumstances Committees, in cases of students who have presented extenuating circumstances, in order to determine the effect, if any, on an individual student's performance in assessment.
 - iv. Consider any recommended penalties in cases of academic misconduct, including plagiarism.
 - v. Consider whether the student has fulfilled any additional requirements for progression or completion, as specified by the programme.
 - vi. On the basis of the marks provided for each student and the outcome from points iii-v, if applicable, make a recommendation to the Faculty Board of Examiners of the faculty in which the degree is awarded with regard to:
 - Progression;
 - Completion; and/or,
 - Classification of an award.

Information for consideration

- 18.14 The Board shall receive and consider:
- The mark profile of each student being considered
 - Reports from the Extenuating Circumstances Committees

- Any recommendations from the relevant panel with regard to cases of academic misconduct
- Any additional information that has a bearing on a student's progression or completion of an award

Output from the meeting

- 18.15 The written record of the meeting will include: the explicit approval of the marks received, any changes to them and the reasons for doing so and the details of any recommended course of action in cases of extenuating circumstances.
- 18.16 A report will be made to the Faculty Board of Examiners drawing attention to the issues it wishes to raise, including recommendations with regard to progression, the award of a qualification and/or degree classification for each student and any proposed penalties for academic misconduct, extenuating circumstances (with the report from the extenuating circumstances committee appended) and the details of any complex cases.

Faculty board of examiners

- 18.17 Where a Faculty has decided that a committee other than the Board of Examiners is constituted to make decisions about the progression of students, this committee will have the same responsibilities as that of a Faculty Board of Examiners.
- 18.18 Anonymity must be preserved at Faculty Board of Examiners, unless there is good reason to remove the anonymity for an individual student, which is judged to be in the student's interests. It is at the discretion of the Chair of the board whether the removal of anonymity should be applied, on a case by case basis.
- 18.19 Discussions held at the Faculty Board of Examiners are confidential, subject to where the relevant record of discussion of an individual student is requested and provided to the student in question.
- 18.20 A Board may be convened virtually, by correspondence, under the same auspices, but a quorate number of replies must be received for any decision to be enacted. The decision should subsequently be confirmed and recorded in the minutes of the next meeting of the Board.
- 18.21 Chair's powers may be granted with the explicit agreement of a Board to enact a specific and defined action, subsequent to the meeting.

Membership and quorum

- 18.22 As stated in Ordinance 17, the faculty board of examiners shall be chaired by the dean or his or her nominee and its composition shall be determined by the faculty board.
- 18.23 Each faculty should have a policy on the quoracy of its boards of examiners.

Purpose

- 18.24 The purpose of the Faculty Board of Examiners is to:
- Approve the marks, as presented to it by the School.
 - Approve any action to mitigate the effect of extenuating circumstances on a student's performance in assessment (including the conferring of an Aegrotat award).

- Agree penalties for alleged cases of cheating or plagiarism, in accordance with the Examination Regulations.
- Ensure that the proper procedures have been carried out and decisions are consistent with respect to the Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Programmes, such that fair and consistent outcomes are achieved, particularly with respect to complex cases, across all schools. In this, the faculty board of examiners shall not question the academic judgement of the initial examination board, but shall ensure the proper procedures are carried out, in accordance with Ordinance 17.
- Monitor trends and any major deviations from norms faculty-wide.
- Approve progression outcomes and award results and confer students.
- Consider any 'exceptional' action, as recommended to it, in respect of progression or award outcomes.

18.25 A meeting of the Board should be held shortly after the January examination period to agree the marks in each unit from the first teaching block such that they can be released to students, prior to their formal confirmation by an external examiner/s. The Board may also undertake any of the other purposes listed above, where it is possible to do so.

Information for consideration

18.26 The Board shall receive and consider:

- A report from the School board of examiners containing the provisional recommendation for progression, the award of a qualification and/or degree classification for each student presented for consideration. The Board can accept or amend recommendations made by the School.
- Reports from schools on any proposed penalties for academic misconduct, extenuating circumstances and complex issues that it would like to bring to the attention of the Board.

18.27 The Board should also consider any new information that has come to light, which has not been previously considered.

Output from the meeting

18.28 A written record (minutes) of the meeting must be kept, including the reasons for decisions and the basis on which they were made. The record must also contain adequate details of where extenuating circumstances have been taken into account and any discretionary decision made by the Board – and its reason for doing so. The definitive version of any such documentation will be held at the Faculty level.

19. Appeals against decisions of the Boards of Examiners

19.1 All information concerning the University's regulations for appeals against the decisions of Boards of examiners is contained in annex 3, the *University's Examination Regulations*.

19.2 It is essential to address a student's representation against a decision of a board of examiners as early as possible, and initially within the respective school and faculty. Students must be made aware of section 11 of the *Examination Regulations* governing appeals, with particular attention drawn to the 15 working day deadline

from the date of notification of the decision for submitting a formal appeal. Students should also be reminded that a degree cannot be conferred whilst an appeal is ongoing.

- 19.3 The student's eligibility to graduate at a degree congregation will depend on the degree being confirmed by a specific date, normally two weeks prior to the start of the degree congregation (the precise deadline date is set by the examinations and degree congregation offices annually). Appeals that have not been resolved by this date will result in the student being offered the opportunity to graduate at the next available ceremony.
- 19.4 Information on the University's student complaints procedure can be found at www.bristol.ac.uk/secretary/studentrulesregs/complaints.html.

20. Roles Responsible for Determining Progression and Awards

Faculty Education Directors

- 20.1 It is the responsibility of the Faculty Education Directors to ensure that university and faculty regulations, policies and procedures with respect to these Regulations and Code are implemented in their faculties. In doing this they will work closely with schools, Faculty Education Managers and each Faculty Quality Team (FQT).

The Faculty Education Director job description is available at:
www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/contact/eddirectors.html

Programme Directors

- 20.2 Programme Directors must be familiar with all regulations that relate to their programme including this Code.
- 20.3 The Programme Director is responsible for the quality assurance of the programme for which he or she is responsible, including Annual Programme Review arrangements and feedback on the programme.

Internal examiners

- 20.4 Heads of School should nominate an individual to be responsible for liaising with the External Examiner. This would normally be the Programme Director or the Examinations Officer. It must be clear to all concerned who will undertake this role.
- 20.5 A list of all internal examiners, including anyone not holding academic status at the University, should be submitted annually by the school for approval by the relevant faculty board.
- 20.6 An internal examiner should take academic responsibility for the unit's summative assessment. This person should ensure that the following tasks are completed satisfactorily: the setting of papers, liaising with external examiners, preparing any relevant assessment and marking criteria, leading teams of markers (where appropriate), ensuring a proper process of internal verification and agreeing sets of marks. The nominated internal examiner is responsible to the school board of examiners.
- 20.7 The nominated internal examiner is responsible for establishing procedures at school level to enter and check the marks for each individual piece of assessed work which forms the basis for examiners' meetings.

School examinations officer(s)

- 20.8 School examinations officer(s) will be appointed by the Head of School. Their role is to organise and co-ordinate the school's assessment processes, from the preparation of examination papers provided by internal examiners to the accurate recording of assessment marks and their presentation to the School and Faculty Boards of Examiners.
- 20.9 School examinations officer(s) are the principal line of communication of the School with the Faculty and to the University Examinations Office (Academic Registry).

External examiners

- 20.10 The University's Policy for the External Examining of Taught Programmes provides full details of the role of external examiners and the University's external examining processes (see annex 7).

21. Treatment and Publication of Results

Disclosure of marks and results

- 21.1 There is no general requirement to return examination scripts to candidates but schools should share examination results with students wherever this would make a useful contribution to formative feedback. Faculties should adopt a consistent policy on this matter. Staff should be aware that any comments made by examiners, in relation to a specific candidate, with respect to any assessment, including coursework, must be disclosed to the candidate, if she or he makes a formal request under the Data Protection Act 1998. However, this should not inhibit markers from making appropriate comments to indicate why, in their judgement, a script or piece of work merits the mark awarded.

21.2 No marks that contribute to examination results should be disclosed to students until they have been agreed by the Faculty Board of Examiners unless they are clearly identified as being provisional.

21.3 A detailed breakdown of results should only be disclosed to the individual receiving the award. Faculties must have clear procedures for such disclosure of marks.

21.4 Degree results may be published on school notice boards or websites at the discretion of the relevant school(s). The identity of the student must be protected when publishing these results (e.g. by using the students' University of Bristol numbers not names).

21.5 Schools should ensure that there are arrangements following the meeting of the Faculty Board of Examiners for appropriate members of staff to be available to advise students of the results agreed by the board of examiners for individual papers or units and, where appropriate, to advise whether the board of examiners took account of any recommendation regarding extenuating circumstances. In disclosing marks to students, staff should take care not to enter into discussion about the apparent fairness or otherwise of the mark(s) agreed by the board of examiners.

21.6 Students making representations to staff, a Faculty Education Director or the Dean regarding any disputed decision of a Board of Examiners should be informed of their right to make a formal appeal under section 11 of the Examination Regulations.

21.7 Faculties and schools must bear in mind the need to comply with the Data Protection

Transcripts

- 21.8 The transcript is intended to provide useful information to potential employers or to other universities (in the case of credit transfer) and to facilitate better understanding of the student's level of attainment overall and in individual units.
- 21.9 For the purpose of transcripts and credit transfer, the University will make it clear how the student has performed in assessments relating both to the achievement of credit points and to overall performance.
- 21.10 The transcript in the approved format will show a single mark for each unit, which represents the mark agreed by the Board of Examiners. This might be a combined mark to take into account different elements of assessment such as written work, practicals, coursework etc.
- 21.11 A copy of the transcript, in the approved format, will be provided automatically to students on completion of their studies. Subsequently, a charge will be levied for the provision of transcripts to graduated students.

Retention of student work

- 21.12 Schools should judge what summatively-assessed work needs to be retained so to ensure that such work is available in the case of appeal. For this reason, the work of a student would not normally be retained for longer than a year following graduation.
- 21.13 Schools should also take into account the requirements of professional, statutory and regulatory bodies, where relevant.

C. UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES ONLY

22. Admission and Study

22.1 To be eligible for admission to a programme of study candidates shall have such qualifications as Senate shall determine.

Most candidates for admission to the University will be at least 18 years old on entry. If a candidate is selected who will be under 18 years of age on admission, such admission shall be conditional on a declaration by the Academic Registrar or nominee that satisfactory arrangements have been made for the student's accommodation and pastoral care, in accordance with the *University's Policy on Safeguarding* (see www.bristol.ac.uk/secretary/legal/safeguarding/).

22.2 No student shall be permitted to register and be admitted to any programme of study at the start of any academic year if that student:

- a) has failed to satisfy the academic requirements of the programme for the previous year of study, as outlined in the regulations for the progression of students on taught programmes; or
- b) is in debt to the University in respect of tuition or other ancillary fees, accommodation fees or fines properly imposed for breach of any University regulation, unless specific arrangements have been agreed with the University for the settlement of the debt; or
- c) is suspended.

22.3 The consent of the Faculty Board shall be necessary for the admission of a student to any assessment and to each part of a programme. Each programme is governed by the University Examination Regulations (see annex 3).

22.4 Each student shall attend such lectures, discussion periods, tutorials, practical classes, design classes, fieldwork, vacation courses and any other educational activities, as described in the unit and programme specification, and shall undertake such written and other work as may be required. Each student shall also attend, as an integral part of the programme, such work placements, vacation courses and fieldwork as are defined in the programme and are required of her/him. Each student shall also undertake any professional requirements, as described in the programme specification. Each student shall undertake such assessments as are arranged.

22.5 The failure of any student to show satisfactory progress on the programme, including failure in summative assessment, failure to obtain credit points or to attend regularly any prescribed part of a programme (including such lectures, discussion periods, tutorial and practical classes, fieldwork, design classes and vacation courses as may be required) or to undertake prescribed written or other work or to present himself or herself for any examination or to reach a satisfactory standard in any assessment or any part or parts of an assessment, shall be reported to the Faculty Board which may at any time, if it thinks fit, require the student concerned to repeat part of a programme or to retake an assessment or to withdraw from a unit or units or the whole programme in accordance with the University regulations on student progression.

Any student who has been required to withdraw shall be informed in writing of the decision and of the University procedures for making representations against the decision.

22.6 The Faculty Board of Examiners shall determine whether a candidate, on completion of the programme including the final assessment, has obtained the required number of credit points for the award of a degree, diploma or certificate. The class of the degree will be determined in accordance with the University regulations on degree classification.

22.7 A student who has obtained 120 credit points at level 4 or above but who either does not proceed to undertake further units or does not satisfactorily complete further units may, if his or her faculty has made provision, be awarded a Certificate of Higher Education. Similarly, a candidate registered for a higher award who has obtained 240 credit points at appropriate levels may, if his or her faculty has made provision, be awarded a Diploma of Higher Education (see the University's Credit Framework in section 3 for more details).

For the purposes of the Intercalated Degree of BSc in the Faculty of Health Sciences, or the BA in Medical Humanities in the Faculty of Arts, the first two years of the MB,ChB, BDS or BVSc programme shall each be deemed to be each worth 120 credit points.

22.8 Study and assessment carried out under the supervision of the University, or in another institution approved by Senate, and the credit points obtained from there may be accepted towards the fulfilment of the requirements of a particular programme.

In every case, except where there is a specific agreement with another institution that has been approved by Senate or in the case of the BSc (Hons) in Social Work with Children and Young People or the BSc (Hons) in Professional Practice with Children and Young People, a candidate for a degree programme must take and satisfactorily complete University of Bristol units which comprise the final 120 credit points of the programme.

22.9 Save as specified below credit points may be used once only and may not be used towards two or more undergraduate awards of this University or of another institution and this University. The exceptions are:

- a) where an award at one level may be subsumed into an award at a higher level;
- b) where a University award or award of another institution has independent standing as a professional qualification and is accredited by a professional body;
- c) where a medical, dental or veterinary student of this University intercalates a year of study for the degree of BSc or BA in this University or elsewhere, or where a medical, dental or veterinary student from another institution intercalates a year of study for the degree of BSc or BA in this University.

22.10 No student who is registered for a programme of full-time study leading to a qualification of the University of Bristol may concurrently be registered on a programme of full-time study leading to the award of a qualification of another institution.

22.11 The University does not encourage students to take more than the required units for any programme. However, if a student chooses to do so they will be required to pay a fee for the additional units and neither the credit nor the marks accumulated will count towards their final award.

22.12 Students may be permitted to transfer between programmes subject to approval, but there is no automatic right of transfer between programmes. The academic record of the student (i.e. the credit and marks for any relevant units and the time

they have already spent studying in relation to the maximum period of study), will normally follow when transferring programme. Where students wish to transfer to the first year of a non-cognate programme, and their academic record does not follow, the transfer will be treated as a new registration and the period of study re-set. Transfer is subject to sufficient space being available and the applicant meeting the academic criteria and requirements for the new programme and any visa requirements, should they apply. See annex 4 for the University's policy on student transfer between undergraduate programmes and units of the University.

22.13 Subject to Ordinance 15, the following table shows the normal and maximum periods of study for full-time undergraduate awards covered by these regulations. These periods of study include extensions but exclude suspensions of study. Periods of study for part-time students shall be calculated pro-rata to the periods of full-time study.

| Title of Award | Period of Study | |
|--|-------------------|------------------|
| | Normal | Maximum |
| Professional degrees (BDS, BVSc, MB,ChB) | 5 academic years* | 7 academic years |
| Integrated (5-year) Masters degree (e.g. with a Year Abroad/in Industry) | 5 academic years | 6 academic years |
| Integrated 4-year Masters Degree | 4 academic years | 5 academic years |
| Honours Bachelors (4-year) Degree | 4 academic years | 5 academic years |
| Honours Bachelors (3-year) Degree | 3 academic years | 4 academic years |
| Honours Bachelors Degree that requires study abroad or in industry (i.e. away from the University) for one academic year | 4 academic years | 5 academic years |
| Honours Bachelors Degree by Intercalation | 1 academic year | 1 academic year |
| Foundation Degree | 2 academic years | 4 academic years |
| Undergraduate Diploma of Higher Education | 2 academic years | 3 academic years |
| Undergraduate Certificate of Higher Education | 1 academic year | 1 academic year |

23. Programme Structure and Design

23.1 Undergraduate programmes may be a single honours unitary degree or a joint honours degree devoting approximately equal time to two subjects or a major/minor combination where the minor subject accounts for at least a quarter of the programme.

23.2 Where a programme crosses faculty or school boundaries, one of the contributing schools or faculties must own the programme and apply the relevant regulations as set out in this document. For programmes that span faculties the programme

committee must decide the 'owning' school or faculty, guided by the balance of the programme and the home school / faculty of the academic lead.

- 23.3 The degrees of BA, BSc, BEng, LLB, may be awarded with honours or as ordinary degrees. Names of successful candidates for honours shall be arranged as follows: first class honours; second class honours in two divisions and third class honours. The names of successful candidates for the ordinary degrees shall be listed separately.
- 23.4 The degrees of MSci, MArts, MLibArts and MEng may be awarded with honours, as follows: first class honours and second class honours in two divisions.
- 23.5 The normal requirement for each full-time year of undergraduate study is not less than 120 credit points and not more than 130.

Preliminary Year programmes (see annex 1 for definition)

Programme structure

- 23.6 The normal period of study for programmes that include a preliminary year will be four years for Bachelors and five years for Integrated Masters. The maximum period of study for programmes that contain a preliminary year is six years for a Bachelors degree and seven years for an Integrated Masters degree. Within this, the normal period of study for the preliminary year is one year and the maximum is two years on a full-time basis.
- 23.7 The preliminary year will normally consist of units taught at the equivalent of level 3 and exceptionally level 4 units where there is a good academic reason to do so.
- 23.8 No unit should be identical to those taught in the undergraduate programmes onto which successful students would progress.
- 23.9 Schools must ensure that the preliminary year is sufficiently rigorous to prepare students for successful study at degree level.
- 23.10 The standard of units that are taught at the equivalent of level 3 should be broadly equivalent to A- level standard where that is applicable. Schools may adapt the University Marking Criteria for these units.
- 23.11 A mark of at least 40 out of 100 must be achieved for a student to pass a unit.
- 23.12 Whilst credit points may be associated with a unit to indicate the notional amount of input required by a student, credit is not awarded for units taught at the equivalent of level 3.

Progression

- 23.13 The progression criteria for the preliminary year will be the same as for all modular programmes, unless stated below.
- 23.14 Students who successfully pass all the units in the preliminary year will have been deemed to have completed the year and will progress onto the first year of the degree programme.
- 23.15 Where compensated progression is undesirable, all units should be designated as 'must pass'.
- 23.16 Second attempt resit examinations shall be permitted.
- 23.17 Supplementary years (other than for extenuating circumstances) shall not be permitted.

23.18 Schools may allow transfer to other programmes at the end of the preliminary year. Higher requirements for such a transfer than just successfully completing the year may be specified for such a transfer.

Awards

23.19 On completion of the programme, the student should be awarded the title of the named degree programme (i.e. without reference to the preliminary year).

23.20 A student who has completed the preliminary year by passing all the units but who does not proceed onto a University of Bristol programme will receive a certificate. The certificate will be a record of achievement rather than a distinct award, and so shall not indicate an overall pass or fail.

Integrated Masters degree

23.21 Integrated Masters degrees must state in their programme specifications whether they are of the advanced study type (type II as defined by the QAA), professional type (type III) and/or has a formal period of study abroad / in industry.

23.22 Integrated Masters degrees without a period of study abroad or in industry will have an exit award of a Bachelors Honours degree at the end of the third year of study, in accordance with the University's credit framework. Where the exit award for the integrated masters has the same title as a free-standing degree also awarded by the University, students leaving with the exit award must have completed the same or directly equivalent programme learning outcomes as graduates from the free-standing programme.

23.23 If independent study (e.g. project or dissertation) is a faculty requirement for the award of a degree, schools should ensure that any students who graduate with an exit award of a Bachelors Honours degree have completed the designated independent study, constituting a unit of at least 20 credits units at level 6.

23.24 Where exit awards are not professionally accredited, this must be set out in the programme specification and reiterated to students prior to the start of the second year of study.

Student choice

23.25 Full time students on undergraduate degree programmes will normally have the opportunity to broaden their education by taking units outside of their subject discipline (i.e. 'open units') worth at least 20 credit points across the programme, except where this is not practicable, for example, due to professional accreditation reasons.

23.26 Faculties and schools will determine the point during a student's career at which open units may be taken.

23.27 Students do not have a right to take any particular unit as an open unit and should not undertake an open unit in which they are already proficient. The availability of any particular unit is subject to practical constraints such as space in teaching rooms or laboratories and timetabling. Subject to these constraints, students may also seek to take a unit (or units), which has not been flagged as being an 'open unit'.

23.28 Students are not required to take open units. If they wish, and subject to the programme structure and practical constraints described in 23.27, they can take the 20 credit points set aside for open units in their honours subject(s).

24. Study Abroad

24.1 The common University policy on the study abroad period applies to those undergraduate modular programmes where either:

- a. An identified requisite of the programme is for a student to study abroad for an academic year for the award of credit, hereafter known as the 'Year Abroad'. The accomplishment of the study abroad element is reflected in the title of the programme (e.g. MSci Chemistry with Study Abroad or MSci Chemistry with Study in Continental Europe).
- b. A student is permitted to study at another institution for credit in lieu of the units that the student would normally have taken at Bristol (i.e. a 'Teaching Block Abroad'). Such arrangements are not an integral part of a programme but are recognised in the student's transcript.

All other arrangements, where students study abroad for experiential reasons (i.e. not for credit), are not covered by this policy.

Principles for the studying abroad process

All formal arrangements for studying abroad

24.2 Where the learning from any period of formal study undertaken outside of the UK is a required part of the programme, how the intended learning outcomes of the programme are met must be identified.

24.3 Any formal period of study abroad must be credit-bearing and contribute to the award of the programme and consequently the degree classification (i.e. and therefore not pass/fail).

24.4 Any mark(s) from a period of study abroad may be reached, solely or in combination, by assessment set by the University of Bristol (i.e. by assessing what a student has learnt during their experience) or by the translation of marks that have been gained at the partner institution.

24.5 Where the mark is obtained by a combination of assessments set by Bristol and the partner institution, the weighting of the constituent marks and the expected input of the student to each component must be agreed and set out in the specification for the study abroad unit.

24.6 Schools should ensure that students are fully aware of the requirements of their University of Bristol programme of study whilst undertaking any period of study abroad prior to the student committing him or herself to it.

24.7 A tutor within each School must maintain regular contact with a student undertaking a study abroad arrangement, whilst they are away from the University (see 27.12)

'Year Abroad' only

24.8 The Year Abroad should only be undertaken in the third year of a four-year (Bachelors or Integrated Masters) programme. It is not expected that students will undertake an entire year of study away from the University as part of a three-year Bachelors programme.

24.9 The Year Abroad must be set at the level of study appropriate to the programme and in alignment with the University's credit framework.

24.10 The Year Abroad equates to 60 ECTS and 120 credit points at the University of Bristol.

- 24.11 A common credit conversion process is available to ensure that students undertake an appropriate workload whilst studying abroad. Students must undertake at least the equivalent of 100, and no more than 120, credit points of units during the Year Abroad. All the marks gained in these units will count towards the mark for the Year Abroad, unless there is a specific rationale for an alternative approach, which must be applied to the entire cohort of students. Any further study may be in units unrelated to the subject and, in such cases, will not count towards the mark for the Year Abroad.
- 24.12 A student's performance will be reflected by a single overall mark for the learning undertaken across the year, unless the programme is structured so that students are assessed at differing levels of study during their Year Abroad. Only the overall unit mark should be considered when determining progression from year to year at the University of Bristol.
- 24.13 The Study Abroad year will be weighted as 10% of the overall programme mark for the purposes of degree classification (see annex 12).

'Teaching Block Abroad' only

- 24.14 Studying abroad for a teaching block must not be undertaken in the student's first or final year of their programme of study.
- 24.15 Normally a teaching block undertaken at a partner institution outside of the UK will equate to 30 ECTS and 60 credit points at the University of Bristol. A common credit conversion process is available to ensure that students undertake an appropriate workload whilst studying abroad that is consonant with the volume of credit they otherwise would have taken at Bristol.
- 24.16 A student's performance should be reflected by individual marks, equivalent to the units a student would have undertaken in their registered programme of study at the University of Bristol. These unit marks will contribute to the calculation of the year mark, final programme mark and degree classification, as normal.
- 24.17 If a student fails a 'must-pass' unit (i.e. deemed by the faculty to be a core part of the programme) during a Teaching Block Abroad, a re-sit should be arranged at the University of Bristol.

Process for the translation of marks gained from study abroad

- 24.18 Given the variation in structures and standards in the marking process in institutions and across countries outside of the UK, some translation or mapping of the marks to the equivalent standards of the University, as a UK higher education institution, may be required.

The University has adopted an evidence-based approach for converting marks gained from studying abroad, in the form of a common mark conversion table (available from: <https://www.bris.ac.uk/esu/assessment/study-abroad-mark-conversion/>), based upon the following principles:

- A single translation for each country, unless evidence indicates this is not appropriate, using the ECTS translation tables.
- Where there is evidence a country-based approach is not appropriate, an institution wide approach should be adopted, i.e. presume that the institution is internally consistent, unless there is actual evidence this is not the case.

- Only where there is actual evidence of inconsistency in marking should we have different disciplinary rules within a single institution.
- Variation from that table should only occur where there are extenuating circumstances in particular cases, although extenuating circumstances may be contextualised differently when students are studying in another country.

- 24.19 For the **Year Abroad** - the overall mark will be calculated by averaging all the contributing weighted marks from the host institution and, if necessary, any weighted marks awarded by the University of Bristol. If the partner institution uses a linear marking scale, the translation provided in the Reference Table is then applied to the overall mark. If the partner institution does not use a linear marking scale, each of the individual marks should be translated before being averaged.
- 24.20 The translation of the overall mark must be mapped onto the 0-100 scale, so to conform to the University's procedures for determining student progression and degree classification, unless it is necessary to use a different marking scale, whereby the processing of marks from the study abroad period will be conducted using the 0-100 scale and then translated to the nearest point on the alternative marking scale.
- 24.21 The mark(s) awarded, following translation, for the study abroad period should be reviewed to ensure that it is robust.
- 24.22 The translation and subsequent review of the marks are the responsibility of the School Study Abroad Co-ordinator, or equivalent.
- 24.23 The relevant Board of Examiners that considers the marks retains discretion to disregard any relevant marks from units taken at the host institution or adjust the marks from those shown in the Conversion Table where there is evidence that the marks gained from the host institution is not an accurate reflection of the student's performance.
- 24.24 The translation algorithm of marks for any new partnership arrangement for study abroad should be checked against those provided in the Conversion Table and confirmed before the agreement is signed.
- 24.25 The University's official transcript will show the University of Bristol translated mark from the study abroad period.

Exceptions

- 24.26 Where there is a good academic reason to request an exception from one or more of the principles, the programme director should make a case to the relevant Faculty Education Director well in advance of the commencement of any arrangements for a student to study abroad. If the Faculty Education Director approves the case, it will be presented to the University Undergraduate Studies Committee for incorporation into the Conversion Table.

25. Industrial placements

The following principles cover the formal component of 'study in industry', 'industrial experience' or 'research placement' where an identified aim of a programme is for a student to study in industrial placement, for part of or an entire academic year for the award of credit. The form of the study will be reflected in the title of the programme (e.g. BSc Biochemistry with Study in Industry) where the study covers an entire academic year.

All other arrangements, whereby students undertake a placement in industry for experiential reasons (i.e. not for credit) or a research project with an external partner, are not covered by these principles.

- 25.1 Where the learning from any period of formal study in industry is a required part of the programme, how the intended learning outcomes of the programme are met must be identified and stated in the programme specification.
- 25.2 Any formal period of study in industry must be credit-bearing and contribute to the award of the programme and consequently the degree classification (i.e. and therefore not pass/fail). The student will undertake units designated, run and assessed by the University of Bristol during their time in industry.
- 25.3 Schools should ensure that students are fully aware of the requirements of their University of Bristol programme of study in undertaking any period of study in industry prior to the student committing him or herself to it.
- 25.4 Schools should establish with the placement provider in advance that the placement content will fulfil the student's learning needs and that it is appropriate.
- 25.5 Each School must maintain regular contact with the student and an industrial contact when undertaking a study in industry arrangement (as detailed in the University Guidelines on Student Placements), with the academic tutor maintaining support for the student (as referenced in the University policy on undergraduate student support).
- 25.6 The units associated with any study in industry must be set at the level of study appropriate to the programme and in alignment with the University's credit framework.
- 25.7 The study in industry should only be undertaken in the third year of a Bachelors or Integrated Masters programme. It is not expected that students will undertake an entire year of study away from the University as part of a three-year Bachelors programme.
- 25.8 An entire year of study in Industry will be weighted as 10% of the overall programme mark for the purposes of degree classification.
- 25.9 A student who completes and is awarded the credit for the year in industry but withdraws before completing the programme on which he or she is registered will receive an exit award as outlined in 29.34.

26. Intercalation

- 26.1 'Intercalation' is defined as the circumstance in which a student takes up the opportunity to pause his or her study on a registered programme to study for a degree in a different programme of study. The student resumes, as normal, on their registered programme following the intercalation.
- 26.2 Only students registered at the University of Bristol on the following programmes are eligible to intercalate:
 - Dentistry (BDS)
 - Medicine (MBChB)
 - Veterinary Science (BVSc)

- 26.3 Only those taught degree programmes of the University of Bristol that have been specifically designated and approved can accept intercalating students. A register of the designated programmes will be held centrally.
- 26.4 Any programme that wishes to start to accept intercalating students should follow the normal procedure for a change to a programme, explicitly stating the rationale for accepting intercalating students in the approval documentation.
- 26.5 Requests for intercalation from students of the University will be at the discretion of both the director of the programme from which the student is intercalating (i.e. whether intercalation is suitable for a particular student) and the director of the programme onto which the student wishes to intercalate (i.e. whether a student meets the requirements of the programme and there is sufficient space to accommodate them).
- 26.6 Requests for intercalation from students of other institutions will be at the discretion of the programme director onto which the student wishes to intercalate.
- 26.7 A student may be permitted to intercalate onto a programme at a different institution provided there is a good academic reason for doing so.
- 26.8 Intercalation is normally undertaken subsequent to year 2 for entry onto the final year of a bachelors degree programme and subsequent to year 3 for entry onto a taught masters degree programme.
- 26.9 The maximum period of study for an intercalating programme is one academic year; intercalation will be completed within the same academic year that it has commenced unless a student suspends studies and/or due to other accepted extenuating circumstances.
- 26.10 As stated (see 22.9), credit can be used towards the award of a student's registered programme and the degree programme on which the student intercalates.
- 26.11 For the purposes of the Intercalated Bachelors Degree, the first two years of the MBChB, BDS or BVSc programme shall each be deemed to be each worth 120 credit points (see 22.7).
- 26.12 The final programme mark and degree classification of the Intercalated Degree, where appropriate, will be calculated purely on the marks achieved during the intercalated year of study (see annex 12).
- 26.13 The award of an intercalated bachelors degree will be conferred at the next graduation ceremony following successful completion of the programme, except for an intercalated taught postgraduate degree programme where the award will be conferred at the same time as the completion of the registered programme.
- 26.14 Whilst undertaking an intercalated programme, the student will be subject to the relevant regulations for that programme.
- 26.15 The Academic Personal Tutor, or equivalent, from the home programme will continue to provide support whilst a student from the University of Bristol is intercalating (as referenced in 27.14). An Academic Personal Tutor will be assigned from the school within which the intercalating programme is based, if the student is intercalating from another institution.

27. Student Support

The policy applies to the support of undergraduate students on modular programmes. The spirit of this policy also applies for students on the undergraduate non-modular programmes (BVSc, BDS, MBChB) where the support requirements for students on these programmes may differ due to accrediting body requirements.

27.1 The aim of the University's model for undergraduate student support is to provide students with a productive, predictable and meaningful support experience, which also allows for the distinctive disciplinary traditions in the University to provide this support in a manner appropriate to their discipline. The key principles of the model are:

- That support is provided by those colleagues and in those forms which are best suited for their purpose;
- That the adopted support structure is efficient in terms of impact and delivery;
- That it enables staff and students to meet regularly and in conducive circumstances;
- That it is visible to all;
- That it forms a coherent and comprehensive whole.

27.2 The University, through its schools, specialist central services and Students' Union, will provide undergraduate students with an overall framework of support throughout their University lives, within which there are three elements:

- academic subject tutoring;
- academic personal tutoring;
- welfare support.

All three elements of the student support process should be viewed holistically and is principally the responsibility of academic members of staff in Schools. Heads of Schools are responsible for the process and the quality of the support provided.

27.3 Schools will ensure that the identified elements of support are fulfilled as a coherent whole. The support structure will be based upon the following defined functions:

- Academic Subject Tutor (i.e. the provision of subject-specific support within disciplinary teaching);
- Academic Personal Tutor* (see 27.4);
- Senior Tutor* (see 27.5).

** In the professional non-modular programmes, an alternative title may be appropriate.*

These roles do not necessarily have to be provided by different people and need not map directly onto the different elements of support, for example a Subject Tutor may also be a student's Personal Tutor.

27.4 The Academic Personal Tutor role will ensure there is someone who: knows the individual student by name; has a holistic view of his or her academic development; monitors their progress; and, provides access to appropriate individual advice at critical points in the student's University life to enable them to benefit from a liberal education. In order to fulfil these functions, there will be a regular programme of face-to-face contact between Academic Personal Tutors and their tutees.

27.5 The Senior Tutor role in each School will act as a focal point for School expertise in the process of supporting students and a person from whom the Academic Personal Tutor can consult and seek advice in particularly difficult cases. The role will provide an academic link with the central Student Support services, the International Office, the Students' Union and other agencies, such that students are appropriately referred onto expert services, where necessary. A 'Senior Tutor Network' will enable good practice across Schools and act as a conduit to the central Professional Services.

The Senior Tutor role will also lead upon the provision and quality assurance of student support in his or her School, including the operation of academic personal tutoring and will report annually on the operation of student support in their School.

27.6 As far as is possible, a student should have one Academic Personal Tutor providing the overview of his or her academic progress, throughout his or her studies. Where this is not possible, Schools should ensure that a change in Tutor is managed carefully and any disruption is kept to a minimum.

27.7 The role of Academic Personal Tutor can only be undertaken by a member of University staff and is considered a core responsibility for an academic member of University of Bristol staff on pathways 1 and 3.

27.8 In the case of students who may find it inappropriate or uncomfortable sharing problems with individuals they feel may be assessing their work or forming academic judgements of them, Schools should designate and provide the contact details of an alternative pathway for advice that offer students a choice of how to raise and discuss personal issues, such as: a designated member or members of support staff within the School, in addition to the Students' Union's JustAsk service and/or one of the University's central Student Support services.

For this purpose, Schools will identify a member or members of support staff in each School as an alternate point of contact.

27.9 Schools must have a procedure to facilitate any request from a student to change their Personal Tutor, which is sensitive to the problems that this can create.

27.10 Schools will describe the structure of student support including the support opportunities that are available to students in the relevant student handbook. A system of recording the attendance of both Tutors and tutees should be established.

27.11 Whilst the University will ensure that students are aware of and have access to the support opportunities that are available, the onus is upon the student to engage with these opportunities, as necessary.

Support arrangements in 'non-standard' programmes

27.12 The School, in liaison with central Professional Services (i.e. the International Office), must have arrangements in place to support students who are registered but studying outside of the University, such as those students who undertake a formal study abroad period, placements in industry or if they have been granted a suspension of studies.

A tutor within each School must maintain regular contact with students that study abroad or undertake a placement, whilst they are away from the University.

27.13 Students undertaking a joint honours programme must have an Academic Personal Tutor from the School that 'hosts' the programme to provide personal tutoring

specifically relevant to the joint honours programme, who will liaise with the other School involved.

27.14 In the case of students who are 'intercalating', the 'host school' will provide subject tutoring for the intercalating period, whilst the home school will continue to offer support via the student's existing Academic Personal Tutor.

28. Processing and Recording Marks

The unit mark

28.1 The mark for each individual unit or element is calculated as the weighted average of the marks for each of its constituent assessments.

28.2 For the purposes of awarding credit for, or in non-modular programmes 'passing', an individual unit the mark for each unit is rounded to the nearest integer.

28.3 For the purposes of determining whether a must-pass element has been passed, the mark is rounded to the nearest integer.

28.4 For the purposes of determining progression from year to year, the actual unit mark is used to calculate the average year mark.

28.5 For the purposes of determining the final programme mark and degree classification, the actual unit mark is used to calculate the final programme mark.

28.6 Programmes may weight the different assessments within a unit and may permit compensation across assessments within a unit, as prescribed within the appropriate unit specifications, unless the assessment has been designated as 'must-pass'.

28.7 The final unit mark should be displayed as the calculated rounded integer, unless required by a board of examiners for the purposes of calculating the year mark/taught component mark (so to determine progression) or the final programme mark (so to determine degree classification).

28.8 Students should receive the scores for each assessment, as well as their overall rounded unit mark.

The year mark in undergraduate programmes

28.9 For the purposes of determining progression, specifically for the application of 29.12, the overall mark achieved for the year in undergraduate programmes is calculated by averaging the weighted unit marks and rounding the result to the nearest integer.

28.10 Units that are pass/fail do not contribute towards the calculation of the year mark, but must be passed for the purposes of progression / completion.

28.11 The weighting given to the unit mark will correspond to the credit point value of the unit, e.g. the mark for a 20 credit point unit would be a 1/6 of the whole year mark, if the student has to achieve 120 credit points during the year.

See annex 11 for an example of this calculation.

29. Student Progression and Completion - in Modular Programmes

The regulations in this section are based upon a set of summary principles by which modular undergraduate degrees are awarded at the University of Bristol; available at: www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/facultyadvice/policy/principles-award-of-modular-ug-degrees/.

A flow diagram of the options available for the progression of students on an undergraduate modular programme is available at annex 10.

29.1 For the purposes of **awarding credit** for an individual unit, the actual mark for each unit is rounded to the nearest integer.

29.2 For the purposes of **determining progression** from year to year, the actual unit mark is used to calculate the year mark. The result of the calculation of the overall average mark achieved for the year should be rounded to the nearest integer for the purpose of applying 29.12.

29.3 If a student fails to achieve the credit points, but there is evidence that their performance at the time of the assessment is likely to have been affected by extenuating circumstances, the provisions in section 17 'Extenuating Circumstances', will apply.

29.4 Schools will make suitable arrangements to implement the regulations for the award of credit for students who are studying a programme on a part-time basis such that the students are aware of the arrangements (e.g. the timing and status of any re-sits) and are not disadvantaged by the point in their studies in which their progression is formally considered.

The award of credit for the purposes of progression in undergraduate modular programmes

29.5 Students must achieve the pass mark for the unit (normally a mark of 40 out of 100 at levels 4-6 and 50 out of 100 at level 7) and meet any additional criteria³, if applicable, to be awarded the associated credit. The criteria for the award of credit points, and an explanation of how the award of credit may be affected by criteria additional to marks in an examination or other formal assessment, must be explicitly described in the relevant unit specification and communicated to the students in advance of the commencement of their study of the unit.

29.6 By reaching a satisfactory standard, students thereby acquire the necessary credit points to progress, *except as specified below*.

29.7 A student who is not in the final year of their undergraduate programme (see 29.18-21) nor registered at another institution but studying at Bristol, will be permitted a second attempt in a unit to achieve a satisfactory standard to progress (i.e. a re-sit) or to achieve any specified additional criteria, subject to 29.8, where the credit is not achieved at the first attempt. A re-sit need not be in the same form as the original assessment, as long as it tests the same learning outcomes, does not compromise any competence standards, and applies to the entire cohort of students who are undertaking the re-assessment. A Board of Examiners, at its September meeting,

³ Additional criteria may include: reaching a satisfactory standard in the completion of a report, other form of written work, or practical work which is deemed essential to understanding the academic discipline the student is studying; a sufficient record of attendance at teaching sessions; or, the acquisition of professional skills.

may permit a re-sit to be undertaken in the next year of study as a second or third attempt (see 29.15.2).

A re-sit should normally be completed prior to progression to the following year of study, within the University's recognised examination periods, except as permitted under 29.15.2.

- 29.8 In order to be permitted a second attempt (i.e. re-sit) in any failed unit(s), undergraduate students must gain at least 40 credit points for the year of study by achieving the pass mark at the first attempt AND must have satisfied any additional criteria at the time they are considered by a board of examiners, or equivalent. Any such additional criteria must be specified in the programme and/or unit specification.
- 29.9 A student will not be permitted a re-sit where he or she has already fulfilled the criteria for the award of credit points for the unit. As detailed in section 17, a Board of Examiners must consider the effect of previous extenuating circumstances, if applicable, on its decision-making (e.g. the application of the secondary rule for classification).
- 29.10 A student must acquire the necessary credit before progressing to the next year of study, except as permitted under 29.15.2. Where it has not been possible for the relevant board of examiners to consider the student's formal progress prior to a student commencing an industrial placement or a formal period of study at another institution as required by the programme structure, the Chair of the Faculty Board of Examiners may permit the student to register for the next year of study without the necessary credit, pending and subject to the decision of the board of examiners.
- 29.11 If a student does not achieve the criteria set out in 29.8, she or he will be required to withdraw from the programme with an exit award, if appropriate; unless there are validated extenuating circumstances (see section 17).
- 29.12 Notwithstanding 29.7, the relevant Board of Examiners will award credit to an undergraduate student to permit progression, despite failure to achieve a pass mark associated with taught unit(s) at the first attempt (i.e. a 'compensated pass'), provided conditions (a)-(f) are satisfied.
- a) The total of the units failed in the year of study does not exceed 20 credit points.
 - b) The relevant unit mark is within the specified range (35-39 out of 100 for level 4-6 units or 45-49 out of 100 for level 7 units) at the first attempt.
 - c) The student has a year mark from all the taught units in the year of study of at least 40 out of 100.
 - d) The student has not failed a unit that is deemed by the faculty or a professional body as being 'must pass' (see annex 1 for definition).
 - e) Fulfils all other requirements for the award of credit, as stated in the programme and/or unit specification, such as:
 - *completion of practical work, e.g. field courses, laboratory sessions, language tuition, etc, deemed essential to understanding the academic discipline the student is studying;*
 - *a combination of coursework and practical work, supplemented by a record of attendance at teaching sessions, e.g. tutorials or laboratory sessions;*
 - *the acquisition of professional skills and attributes required in disciplines such as education, the health professions or the performing arts.*

- f) Satisfactorily completes any additional work deemed necessary, as determined by the relevant Board of Examiners, so as to enable the student to achieve the learning outcomes in the assessment(s) that they had failed.

29.13 Students who are permitted to progress as described in 29.12 (i.e. *notwithstanding a failed unit mark*) will be awarded and carry forward the actual unit mark they achieved at their first attempt (not the unit pass mark) and will only receive the credit for these unit/s upon final completion of the programme for which they are registered (i.e. at graduation).

29.14 A Faculty Board of Examiners, or equivalent faculty committee, may propose that a student who has not achieved sufficient credit points or other requirements for progression in one programme the opportunity to transfer to a cognate programme (see annex 4), particularly in cases where the student is unable to achieve the credit points in a discrete part of a programme (e.g. in a single unit or in half of a joint honours programme). The decision to accept or reject the proposed transfer will be at the discretion of the 'receiving' school.

29.15 If any student fails to achieve the unit pass mark following a re-sit of the unit or units equating to 20 credit points or less, she or he will be permitted a final opportunity to be re-assessed, either as part of a 'supplementary year', in order to obtain the necessary credit points to progress, or, where applicable, as part of the next year of study where the student has been permitted to 'conditionally progress'.

29.15.1 Students who are placed on a **supplementary year** will be registered on the unit(s) they have failed. A board of examiners has the discretion to: (i) permit students to undertake a replacement unit listed in their programme structure in lieu of a failed optional or open unit from outside of their honours subject as a third and final attempt, and (ii) require students to register for additional units, appropriate to their programme of study (see section 7 for information on the supplementary year). A student will only be permitted to undertake the supplementary year **once** for this reason during their programme of study.

29.15.2 Students may be permitted to **conditionally progress** to the next year of study and make up a credit deficit in identified programmes where they have failed a particular unit or units, provided conditions (a-e) are satisfied. Schools and faculties are not under any obligation to allow conditional progress on their programmes.

- a) The failed unit is not "must-pass", fundamental to the programme objectives, being discontinued with no available alternative, and/or is a prerequisite for units in the subsequent year.
- b) The total of the failed unit/s does not exceed twenty credit points.
- c) The student has achieved at least the pass mark for the year.
- d) The student has not elected to undertake the supplementary year. Where applicable, conditional progression will be automatically applied by a board of examiners; however a student may elect to instead take the supplementary year by them notifying their home school by the end of the second week of the first teaching block.
- e) The programme specification explicitly sets out where in the structure conditional progression may be employed.

Conditional progression will only be available as a potential outcome from the September Board of Examiners and subsequent to considering whether a

failed unit may be compensated for the purposes of progression (see 29.12). Where permitted and the conditions are satisfied, a student will progress into the next year of study and, in addition to the requirements for that year of study, either:

- Re-take the failed unit/s (units may be undertaken on an exams-only basis where a student has already received and engaged in the teaching of the unit/s) or;
- Undertake a different unit/s in lieu of the one the student has failed by engaging with the teaching, as outlined in 29.15.1.

The board of examiners will subsequently consider the award of credit for the outstanding failed unit/s before considering progression from the year of study into which they have conditionally progressed.

Where a student is unable to achieve the credit points for the failed unit on which their conditional progress is based, following three attempts, the board will not be able to consider the other units for the year and the student must withdraw from the university.

29.16 If any student fails to achieve the unit pass mark following a re-sit of the unit or units equating to more than 20 credit points, he or she will be required to withdraw from the programme, with an exit award, if appropriate.

29.17 For any unit which is passed by re-assessment, the student will receive the awarded mark for the re-assessment, however the unit mark will be capped at the minimum pass mark (40 out of 100 for units at levels 4, 5 and 6, and 50 out of 100 for units at level 7), even if the student achieves a higher mark in the re-assessment. The marks recorded when repeating the whole year or undertaking the supplementary year will also be capped at the minimum pass mark regardless of what marks are actually achieved, unless the student is being permitted to repeat the year or undertake a supplementary year “*as for the first time*” due to validated extenuating circumstances.

The award of credit in the final year of undergraduate study for the purposes of completion

29.18 Students must achieve the pass mark (normally a mark of 40 out of 100 at levels 4-6 and 50 out of 100 at level 7) and meet any additional criteria, as described in 29.5, if applicable for the unit, to be awarded the associated credit. By achieving this, students thereby acquire the necessary credit points in their final year to complete the programme of study, except as specified below.

29.19 Re-assessment of units within the final year of undergraduate modular programmes is permitted, where, a failed unit is deemed to be ‘must-pass’ (e.g. for professional accreditation reasons), in which case the Faculty Board of Examiners will offer the student a final re-assessment opportunity.

29.20 A Faculty Board of Examiners may choose to permit the award of 120 credit points for the final year of ***undergraduate*** study on the basis of a pass overall in assessments undertaken in the final year. This may only be enacted in respect of a particular programme or group of programmes, and not in respect of individual students, and not after the event. A Faculty Board of Examiners may, likewise, choose to award 60 credit points in the final year of undergraduate study for the award of an Ordinary Degree on the basis of a pass overall in assessments from units comprising at least 60 credit points, or award 120 credit points for a full time

year of study (or part time equivalent) in an Undergraduate Certificate or Diploma programme on the basis of a pass overall in the final assessment.

- 29.21 If a student does not obtain the necessary credit points in units that contribute to the final programme mark and/or degree classification, the degree may not be awarded and the student will receive a lower award, as determined by the University's credit framework (see section 3), unless the failure is due to certified illness or other validated extenuating circumstances, as detailed in section 17 and the associated '*Guidance on making awards to students who are unable to complete all the necessary assessment*' (annex 9).

Additional requirements for progression within an Integrated Masters Degree

The requirements for progression within Integrated Masters degrees have been revised for 2014/15. Where a higher progression requirement is being applied, this requirement will only apply to students who have newly registered on the programme from 2014/15. Existing students will continue to be subject to the regulations that were in place in the academic year in which they first registered on the programme.

- 29.22 Students studying on Integrated Masters degrees will have the same progression requirements as students on other modular degree programmes at the end of the first year.
- 29.23 At the end of the second year of study, students on an integrated masters degree are required to achieve a year mark of 60 or more out of one hundred if their programme has been designated an 'advanced study' type or 50 or more out of one hundred if their programme has been designated as a 'professional' type of programme (see 23.5).
- 29.24 Students who do not qualify for progression on an integrated masters degree at the end of the second year will be automatically transferred onto an equivalent bachelors degree provided that they meet the progression requirements for that programme.
- 29.25 At the end of the third year students on an integrated masters degree are required to achieve a year mark of 50 or more out of 100.
- 29.26 When a third year student does not qualify for progression on an integrated masters programme at the end of the third year, the Faculty Board of Examiners may award an Ordinary Degree or an equivalent Honours degree (on the basis of the mark achieved at the first attempt if a re-sit of a unit was required) where the student has successfully met all the criteria, as described in the programme specification.
- 29.27 In order to progress within the five-year Integrated Masters programme, "Engineering Design with Study in Industry" students must achieve a year mark of 50 or more out of 100 in years 2, 3, and 4 in order to progress. Those students who are awarded 120 credit points for the year but do not achieve a year mark of 50 or more out of 100: will either be automatically transferred onto an equivalent Bachelors Honours degree or, following completion of Year 4, the Faculty Board of Examiners may award an Ordinary Degree or an equivalent Honours degree (on the basis of the mark achieved at the first attempt if a re-sit of a unit was required) where the student has successfully met all the criteria, as described in the programme specification.
- 29.28 Where a student is permitted to transfer onto the final year of an integrated masters programme, the school must be satisfied that he or she is capable of performing at

the standard required for the integrated masters degree by having satisfied the same requirements for progression that are in place for integrated masters programmes.

29.29 Students on integrated masters degree programmes without a year abroad or in industry who wish to withdraw during their fourth year of study (fifth year for “Engineering Design with Study in Industry” students) should be considered by boards of examiners for the award of a bachelors honours degree in the usual manner.

29.30 Students who wish to withdraw from an integrated masters degree programme following the completion of the penultimate year of study and exit with a classified bachelors honours degree must inform their home school no later than the day prior to the meeting of the relevant faculty board of examiners where the Integrated Masters degree would otherwise have been awarded.

Progression within a Bachelors Honours Degree to undertake the Study Abroad or Year in Industry

29.31 In order to progress within an Honours Bachelors degree programme to the ‘Study Abroad’, ‘Study in Continental Europe’ or ‘Study in Industry’ year, students must satisfy any additional criteria (which may include a higher threshold for the year mark or a specified mark in a particular unit or units) as required by a specific programme in order to ensure that students are well equipped for this period. The location of the document that sets out the additional criteria must be publicised to students at the outset of their studies.

Progression within an Integrated Masters Degree to undertake the Study Abroad or Year in Industry

29.32 In order to progress, within an Integrated Masters programme, onto the “Study Abroad” or “Year in Industry”, students must achieve at least a year mark of 50 or more out of 100 in Year 1 and/or in Year 2 and must satisfy any additional criteria (which may include a higher threshold for the year mark or a specified mark in a particular unit or units) as required by a specific programme in order to ensure that students are well equipped for the year abroad or in industry. The location of the additional criteria must be publicised to students at the outset of their studies. Those students who are awarded 120 credit points for the year but do not achieve a year mark of 50 or more out of 100 and any additional other criteria will be automatically transferred onto the equivalent Bachelors Honours degree.

29.33 Students who wish to withdraw during the year following the year abroad or in industry will not normally be eligible for a Bachelors Honours degree as an exit award. Faculty boards of examiners may exceptionally award the appropriate Bachelors Honours degree to such students, where “exceptionally” shall mean:

1. the student has completed the third year of study satisfactorily and successfully taken any required assessments;
2. the student is incapable of continuing their studies owing to documented, severe extenuating circumstances;
3. the boards of examiners have sufficient confidence in the third year results that they can satisfactorily award a classified degree;
4. the student has achieved the prescribed programme intended learning outcomes for the award.

30. Student Progression and Completion - in Non-Modular Programmes (MB,ChB, BDS and BVSc)

30.1 This section applies to all new registrations on the non-modular programmes of MB,ChB and BVSc at the University of Bristol from the **2012-13** academic year and supersedes previous regulations.

This section applies to all **new and currently** registered students on the BDS programme from the 2013-14 academic year and supersedes all previous regulations and standing orders.

30.2 It is the responsibility of the relevant Faculty Board of Examiners to determine whether or not a student has satisfactorily completed a unit or element and in doing so has satisfied the requirements for progression from year-to-year and for completion of the programme.

30.3 Consonant with professional body requirements, the teaching and learning in an entire year of study of the programmes is intentionally cohesive and complementary. On this basis students are required to demonstrate, and are subsequently judged upon, the ability to manage a workload at a standard appropriate to the time available. A component part of the teaching will not therefore be assessed in isolation (i.e. outside of the year of study in which it is taught). For this reason students on the professional programmes will not normally be permitted to undertake the 'supplementary year'.

30.4 Where a standard set pass mark is used for a summative assessment, candidates' marks will be adjusted for consideration by Faculty Board of Examiners and for subsequent publication so that the overall pass mark equates to 50 on a percentage scale.

30.5 Where extenuating circumstances may have affected the performance of a student in a summative assessment, section 17 'extenuating circumstances' will apply.

Progression of Students

30.6 Students must achieve a minimum standard by attaining the assigned pass mark for all units and any additional assessment (normally 50 on a percentage scale) and meet any additional criteria, if applicable, to progress to the next year of study. Any additional criteria must be explicitly described in the relevant programme standing orders and unit / programme specification, as appropriate, and communicated to the students in advance of the commencement of their study.

Failure to fulfil criteria for progression at the first attempt

30.7 A student who fails ONE unit but achieves a mark of 40 or more out of 100 (following readjustment from any standard set pass mark assessment; see 30.4) will be permitted a second attempt (i.e. a 're-sit' or 're-assessment') to achieve a satisfactory standard in the same academic year in order to progress to the next year of study.

A student who fails ONE unit with a mark of less than 40 out of 100 (following readjustment from any standard set pass mark assessment; see 30.4) will also be permitted a second attempt but may be required to undertake additional assessment(s) within the unit or additional units, as specified in the programme's standing orders or regulations.

30.8 A student who does not achieve the pass mark in MORE THAN ONE unit will either, as specified in the programme's standing orders or regulations, be required by the Faculty Board of Examiners to:

- (i) re-sit the failed units in the same academic year (which may include a requirement to undertake additional assessment within the unit or additional units);
- (ii) re-sit all the units in the same academic year;
- (iii) repeat the year in its entirety as a second attempt; or,
- (iv) withdraw from the programme with an exit award, if appropriate.

The Board of Examiners may take into account the student's academic progress to date (e.g. the average year mark) and their professional behaviour when considering the options for progression.

30.9 A student who fails a must-pass component of a unit will be considered to have failed the unit and therefore will be required to either re-sit the entire unit or only the must-pass component, as determined by the programme's standing orders, as a second attempt.

30.10 The opportunity to repeat a year of study for the purposes of progression (i.e. in years 1 - 4) is only available if a student has not previously repeated a year of study at an earlier stage of the programme. Notwithstanding this, a Faculty Board of Examiners may permit a student in their fifth and final year to repeat the entire year, subject to the student's academic progress to date.

Failure to fulfil the specified additional criteria⁴ for progression at the first attempt

30.11 A student who does not achieve the additional criteria associated with the programme or a constituent unit(s), as specified in the programme's standing orders or regulations, will normally be permitted a second attempt to meet these criteria in order to progress to the next year of study.

Failure to fulfil criteria for progression at the second attempt

30.12 A student who fails to achieve the pass mark for any assessment, or to achieve the specified additional criteria, at the **second attempt** will be required to withdraw from the programme with an exit award, if appropriate, unless there are validated extenuating circumstances.

If a Faculty Board of Examiners permits a student to repeat the whole year of the programme in response to validated extenuating circumstances, it may also apply supplementary conditions for progression.

30.13 A second attempt need not be in the same form as the original assessment, as long as it: tests the same learning outcomes, does not compromise any competence standards, and applies to the entire cohort of students who are undertaking the assessment.

30.14 Within any unit where a constituent assessment(s) is passed as a second attempt, the recorded mark for the unit will be capped at the minimum pass mark. Where a student repeats the entire year, the recorded mark for all the units are capped at the minimum pass mark, even if the student had passed a unit at the first attempt.

⁴ Additional criteria may include: regularly attending any prescribed activity; undertaking or attending a prescribed assessment; reaching a satisfactory standard in any work which is deemed essential to understanding the academic discipline the student is studying; demonstrating the ability to manage a workload appropriate to the time available; satisfying professionalism and/or fitness to practice requirements.

31. Awards and Classification - in Modular Programmes

- 31.1 The following regulations apply to all **new** registrations from the 2010-11 academic year on an undergraduate programme so to calculate the final programme mark and/or degree classification. An example of the calculation to reach the final programme mark and degree classification in an undergraduate programme is provided in annex 11.
- 31.2 Classification is permitted on honours degree programmes; however, unless provision is made within this Code, non-degree undergraduate modular awards are not classified. These awards are made where a student achieves the credit points for them with an overall mark of 40 out of 100 or more.
- 31.3 Guidance for faculties on students who do not complete all the required assessment for honours classification in relation to Ordinance 18 is provided at annex 9.
- 31.4 No further regulations or rules will apply for the calculation of the degree classification **following** application of the common algorithm (i.e. the primary and secondary rule).
- 31.5 Rules which are inherent to the design of the programme, such as a requirement for the student to pass a project in order to graduate, must be approved and be described in the relevant programme specification, and be implemented **before** the algorithm is applied
- 31.6 Bands of marks for use in final degree classification in undergraduate modular programmes are as follows:

All Faculties

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|
| First Class Honours | 70 and above |
| Second Class Honours, First Division | 60-69 |
| Second Class Honours, Second Division | 50-59 |
| Third Class Honours | 40-49 |
| Fail | 39 and below |

An Ordinary degree can be awarded if a student has successfully completed at least 300 credits with a minimum of 60 credits at level 6.

Primary Rule for calculating the final programme mark and degree classification

- 31.7 First year (undergraduate) marks will not contribute to the calculation of the final programme mark and/or degree classification. Additionally, units in any year of study that are pass/fail only will be disregarded in this calculation.
- 31.8 All units taken in the years of study that contribute to the final programme mark and/or degree classification will count towards the weighted average final mark. Where students are given exemption from units, due to accredited prior learning, see annex 13.
- 31.9 The weightings apply to years of study, **not** to the level of the units taken by a student within the year.
- 31.10 The default position is that within each faculty a single weighting rule for the years of study will apply, unless a faculty is able to demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the University Education Committee, that more than one weighting rule is required because of the major differences between subjects within the faculty and/or

professional body accreditation requirements. The agreed weightings for the programmes within each of the faculties are provided in annex 12.

- 31.11 Within each year of study the weighting given to the unit mark, in relation to the mean 'year mark', will correspond to the credit point value of the unit, e.g. the mark for a 20 credit point unit would be 1/6 of the whole year mark, if the student has to achieve 120 credit points during the year.
- 31.12 For the purposes of applying the primary and secondary rules, the final programme mark is calculated by averaging the weighted individual unit marks. The result of the calculation should then be rounded to the nearest integer. This must be done PRIOR to determining whether the final programme mark is within the classification boundary range, as defined in 31.13.
- 31.13 The honours programme classification boundary ranges are based on marks out of 100 and are:
- | | |
|--------------|---|
| First / 2.1 | equal to or more than 68 but less than 70 |
| 2.1 / 2.2 | equal to or more than 58 but less than 60 |
| 2.2 / Third | equal to or more than 48 but less than 50 |
| Third / Fail | equal to or more than 38 but less than 40 |
- If the final summative programme mark falls within the range of one of these classification boundaries, the secondary rule will apply.

Secondary Rule

- 31.14 If the final summative programme mark falls within the range of one of the classification boundaries, as set out in 31.13, the higher degree classification will only be awarded if 50% or more of the rounded individual unit marks, weighted by credit point value and year of study, which contribute to the degree classification are achieved at the higher class or classes, otherwise the lower class will be awarded.
- 31.15 It is the responsibility of the School Board of Examiners to consider and determine between classifications on the basis of the secondary rule.

32. Awards and Classification - in Non-Modular Programmes

- 32.1 This sections applies to all newly registered students on the non-modular professional programmes of MB,ChB and BVSc at the University of Bristol from the 2011-12 academic year and supersede all previous regulations and standing orders.
- This section applies to all **new and currently** registered students on the BDS programme from the 2013-14 academic year and supersedes all previous regulations and standing orders.
- Students on the MB,ChB and BVSc programmes who registered before 2011-2012 will continue to be governed by the regulations that were in place in the academic year 2010-11, for the duration of their programme of study, unless they re-sit a year (and thereby join a cohort governed by the new rules, in which case they too will be subject to the new rules) or a current cohort of students consents to the new rules being applied, so long as this would not disadvantage any student.
- 32.2 The final programme mark is calculated by averaging the weighted individual unit marks. The result of the calculation of both the overall average mark achieved for the year and the final programme mark should be recorded to one decimal point.

- 32.3 If there is evidence that the performance of a student at the time of examination is likely to have been affected by extenuating circumstances, section 17 'extenuating circumstances', applies.
- 32.4 Requirements which are inherent to the design of the programme, such as the requirement for the student to pass a particular assessment or component in order to graduate, must be described in the relevant programme specification, and be implemented before these rules are applied.
- 32.5 The marks gained in all units within the approved programme structure that are undertaken by the student will contribute to the final programme mark. Where students are given exemption from units of the programme due to accredited prior learning, including from other higher education institutions, marks previously gained for any such units will not contribute to the calculation of the final programme mark.
- 32.6 Unit marks will be weighted for any calculation of the year and the final programme mark, as described in the relevant programme handbook. Students must be informed of any weighting in advance of commencement of the year of study.
- 32.7 Assessments which only test competencies on a pass/fail basis will not contribute to the unit mark and therefore will also not contribute to the year mark or the final programme mark.
- 32.8 The award of a degree in the non-modular professional programmes is determined by the final programme mark, as follows:
- | | |
|------|--------------|
| Pass | 50 and above |
| Fail | 49 and below |
- 32.9 The classification of a degree is determined by the final programme mark in relation to the overall performance in the cohort, as follows⁵:
- The top 10% of the student cohort on the programme will be awarded a degree with distinction;
 - The next 15% of the student cohort on the programme will be awarded a degree with merit;
 - All other students that have a final programme mark of 50 out of 100 or more will be awarded a professional degree. The rank of the remainder of students may be published, at the discretion of the relevant faculty Board of Examiners.
- 32.10 Where programmes decide to award distinctions or merits for individual units, the same method provided in 32.9 will apply.
- 32.11 No further rules will apply for the calculation of the final programme mark and the award of a degree with merit and distinction following application of these rules.

⁵ The professional programmes determine student performance primarily on the attainment of a threshold of competence. For this reason these degrees are not classified. However potential employers require the university to recognise excellence and the simplest, most transparent and justifiable approach is by ranking within a cohort of students. All three programmes have sufficient students each year to minimise the risk of students being disadvantaged by any year effect.

C. TAUGHT POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES ONLY

33. Admission and Study

Selection and admission

33.1 Selection of students for taught postgraduate programmes must be in accordance with the University's Admissions Principles and Procedures for Postgraduate Taught Programmes: www.bristol.ac.uk/university/governance/policies/admissions/taught-pg.html

Registration

33.2 Students must register at the beginning of each academic year for which credit is being sought and pay the relevant tuition fee. Continuing students in debt to the University will not be permitted to re-register or progress until the debt is settled.

33.3 No student registered for a programme of full-time study leading to a qualification of the University of Bristol may be registered concurrently on a programme of full or part-time study leading to the award of a qualification at this or another institution.

33.4 Students on some taught postgraduate programmes may be permitted to register initially for a postgraduate diploma or postgraduate certificate, subject to faculty approval.

33.5 Graduates of the University in receipt of a Postgraduate Certificate or Postgraduate Diploma award may be permitted by the faculty to re-register for the taught or research component (and to pay the relevant fee) for a Masters degree, normally within the programme's maximum study period or, where applicable, as part of the University's procedures for recognising prior learning (see section 4). In such cases, on successful completion of the Masters award, the Postgraduate Certificate or Diploma will be subsumed into the higher award.

Period of study

33.6 The period of study commences when the student is first registered for the degree programme. Students are expected to complete their programme within the specified normal period of study and must not exceed the maximum study period.

33.7 The maximum study period normally only applies to students who are undergoing re-assessment.

33.8 The following table shows the normal and maximum periods of study for taught postgraduate degrees. These periods of study include extensions but exclude suspensions of study.

| Title of award | Student mode of attendance | Normal study period | Maximum study period |
|---|----------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Postgraduate Certificate 60 credit points | Full-time | Not less than 15 weeks' study | 6 months |
| | Part-time | 6 months | 12 months |
| | Part-time variable | Not applicable | Not more than three years |
| Postgraduate Diploma 120 credit points | Full-time | Not less than 31 weeks' study | 12 months |
| | Part-time | 6 months | 24 months |
| | Part-time variable | Not applicable | Not more than three years |
| Masters degree by intercalation 180 credit points | Full-time | 12 months | 12 months |
| Masters degree 180 credit points | Full-time | 12 months | 24 months |
| | Part-time | 24 months | 36 months |
| | Part-time variable | Not applicable | Not more than five years* |
| MA in Law 240 credit points | Full-time | 24 months | Not more than three years |
| | Part-time | 4 years | Not more than five years |
| MSc in Social Work 300 credit points | Full-time | 24 months | Not more than three years |
| PGCE (Postgraduate Certificate in Education) 60 credit points | Full-time | 12 months | Not more than three years |

**Not more than eight years study for part-time variable students on the MSc in Teaching and Learning for Health Professionals and the Master in Laws (LLM) by Advanced Study.*

For the Postgraduate Dental Studies programme, the maximum period of study for a part-time variable mode of study is 24 months for the Certificate, 48 months for the Diploma and 72 months for the Masters degree.

School Responsibilities

33.9 Schools will ensure that:

- a) At the commencement of their period of study, students are given the opportunity to meet key teaching and support staff, and other students on the programme.
- b) Students are provided with induction/orientation information in electronic or paper format to include a detailed induction programme, a timetable and calendar of key

academic events. Students should also receive a copy of the University and Faculty Student Handbook or be directed to the online versions.

- c) Students receive appropriate handbooks (for the programme, unit/s and dissertation), outlining programme requirements and academic standards, contact details of key staff and their office hours/weekly availability and sources of academic and pastoral help and sources of general and skills training. Students should also be given access to general and discipline specific careers advice. Health and Safety training should be provided by schools as appropriate.
- d) Students on professional programmes receive information on any professional requirements, including any compulsory practical, clinical or professional placements and fitness to practice procedures. Additional professional and clinical skills and competency requirements will be specified in full in programme specifications.
- e) Teaching staff have expertise in the subject area and that students can interact with a range of appropriate teaching staff on their programme of study.
- f) The learning environment is suitable for a diverse student body, including disabled students, international students or students working in professional employment who do not often visit the University campus, whether they are studying full-time, part-time or on a part-time variable basis.
- g) Students are made aware of the facilities available to them during their studies (e.g. library, office/laboratory/workshop space), and of any requirements for their use. Students working remotely, including those 'writing up' their dissertation (or equivalent), should be given access to appropriate facilities and resources to support their study, including those available electronically.
- h) If a student is required to participate in a professional or industrial placement, the School will ensure that the student has access to appropriate facilities, information and support while on the placement. Organisers of student placements must be familiar with the University's 'Guidelines on Student Placements in Taught Programmes' (www.bristol.ac.uk/esu/studentlearning/placements/).

Student Entitlements

33.10 Taught postgraduate students can expect:

- a) Information on tuition fees, registration, induction, the timetable and staff office hours/availability.
- b) Information on programme and unit content and requirements and how academic progress towards the award is monitored.
- c) Adequate opportunities to meet their personal tutor and/or programme director (as applicable), unit directors and dissertation supervisor(s) for informal and formal discussions about academic progress or pastoral matters.
- d) Information on the return of required written work, with formative feedback, within an agreed time scale (typically three weeks for full-time students, unless exceptional circumstances arise, in which case students will be informed of the deadline).
- e) Access to a learning infrastructure that supports their academic progress and their ability to complete the degree successfully within the required time period. Where relevant, details of appropriate language courses should be provided, bearing in mind the challenge of taking a language course while committed to a full-time programme of study

- f) Access to an appropriate learning environment, including a wider research environment, (in the University or collaborating institutions) within which there is relevant and sufficient expertise and appropriate facilities available to support the programme of study.
- g) Information about the support and guidance available at School/Faculty/University level (e.g. student handbooks, student web pages), including information on complaints and appeals procedures and information on student representation procedures at School/ Faculty/University level and on student feedback opportunities

Student Responsibilities

33.11 Taught postgraduate students are expected to:

- a) Register with the University at the start of the academic session, ensuring that they are registered on the correct units with sufficient credit points for the programme.
- b) Pay the required tuition fee and ensure that they have the necessary financial support to enable completion of the programme
- c) Take responsibility for their own personal and professional development and academic progress, making the most of those learning opportunities that will enhance their capacity for independent and 'self-directed' learning.
- d) Meet the University's requirements for good academic conduct, including timely submission of assessed work by the set deadline, attending at meetings with unit directors and dissertation supervisor(s) as required, attend lectures, seminars and practical sessions regularly and take an active part in the programme of study.
- e) Maintain effective working relationships with teaching staff (programme director, personal tutor, unit directors, dissertation supervisor) and other students, treating all with respect and consideration. Students on professionally-recognised vocational programmes are additionally expected to maintain standards of conduct commensurate with professional practice standards.
- f) Maintain academic integrity, acknowledging fully the work of others in their coursework and assessed work, and be familiar with the referencing conventions of the discipline or programme, so that their work is free from plagiarism.
- g) Notify the University of any disability, extenuating circumstance or support needs that may affect their study or performance in assessments, in line with these Regulations and Code of Practice.
- h) Notify the University of changes in their personal information (teaching time/home addresses, telephone numbers) immediately by updating their personal details online at <https://www.bris.ac.uk/studentinfo/>.
- i) Notify their programme director of any potential change in circumstance (requests for a change in mode of attendance, suspension of study, resumption of study, extension of study, programme transfer or withdrawal) in good time.
- j) Be familiar with, and comply with, University Regulations and Guidelines including: these Regulations and Code of Practice, relevant programme regulations, the Rules and Regulations for Students (including the University's Intellectual Property Policy for Students: www.bristol.ac.uk/secretary/student-rules-regs/) and the Examination Regulations (including sections on plagiarism and cheating).

- k) Be familiar with relevant University rules on health and safety, data protection, research ethics and confidentiality and the norms of good research practice applicable to their disciplinary area.
- l) International students with visa / immigration queries must only discuss these with the specially trained staff based in the International Advice and Support team. These staff can also provide general support and guidance to international students.

Monitoring of the progress of taught postgraduate students

- 33.12 Faculties should monitor the progress of taught postgraduate students at boards of examiners meetings and as part of Annual Programme Review.
- 33.13 The University expects informal monitoring of student progress within 2 - 3 months of initial registration. Practice may vary according to the discipline, student cohort or mode of study.
- 33.14 Monitoring of student progress normally includes monitoring of attendance on units and performance in seminars and may also include informal evaluations of a student's progress in a unit/programme.
- 33.15 Informal reviews of student progress will help ensure that the student is in a position to overcome practical or academic hurdles to progress and will enable the student to discuss any concerns about progress with the unit/dissertation supervisor. The student should see and comment on any written report made about his/her progress.
- 33.16 All *part-time variable* students, defined here as students on non-standard professional programmes who are studying part-time, typically less than 0.5 FTE*, must register for, and engage with, a minimum of one unit per academic year. The programme director and faculty graduate education director must approve any exceptional cases where a student is unable to meet this requirement. A student who does not take at least one unit per year and who does not have an approved exemption will be required to withdraw from his/her studies.

(*This regulation does not apply to taught postgraduate students who are designated *part-time variable* purely because they are undertaking a Supplementary Year.)
- 33.17 Part-time variable students should receive timely feedback on their progress in each unit from the unit director, normally in advance of commencing study on another unit.

The Dissertation

- 33.18 For most postgraduate Masters awards, an extended piece of work, such as a dissertation or project, is required. Postgraduate Masters awards with an enhanced research component normally require dissertation/s worth 90 to 120 credit points. Dissertation requirements are outlined in annex 14 'Dissertations in Taught Postgraduate Programmes' and in individual programme specifications.
- 33.19 The dissertation/research project must normally be submitted by 8 September. Faculties may alter this deadline date for part-time or professional Masters programmes. Information on submission procedures and submission deadlines are published in faculty and/or school handbooks.

33.20 The dissertation must be a student's own work. A student may not include in any dissertation (or equivalent), material previously submitted and approved for an award of a degree at this or any other university.

33.21 School responsibilities concerning the dissertation:

- a) To assign each student a dissertation supervisor by the start of the dissertation.
- b) To provide students with information and guidance on the dissertation process. Students may receive information in a school handbook, in a dissertation workshop, seminar, work session or via Blackboard.
- c) To inform students of how formative feedback will be provided on the draft section(s) of the dissertation.
- d) To provide students with relevant legal and regulatory information and guidance e.g. health and safety, research ethics, copyright, data protection, plagiarism, criminal records bureau check procedures.
- e) If a student's research requires a period working away from the University, the School should ensure that appropriate supervisory/personal tutor arrangements, understood by the student, are in place to cover these periods.
- f) To inform students of the independent sources of help/advice that are available should a problem arise during the dissertation process, e.g. programme director, personal tutor.
- g) In schools where a dissertation or research project has a placement element or a student spends time at a company location, the dissertation supervisor and the safety officer will seek to ensure student safety by ensuring that the company has a safety code of practice. Organisers of placements must be familiar with the University's Guidelines on Student Placements in Taught Programmes (www.bristol.ac.uk/esu/studentlearning/placements/).

33.22 Dissertation supervisor's responsibilities

- a) To be aware of and understand University policies and procedures.
- b) To be knowledgeable about the general or specific research area of the student's dissertation so as to provide guidance on the nature of the dissertation and the standard of work expected.
- c) To advise on the planning of the dissertation; to discuss the timetable and dates for completion of different stages.
- d) To advise the student on training necessary for completion of the dissertation, e.g. statistical or software courses which may include referral to other sources of help and advice. To advise on techniques, research methods, research ethics and other relevant issues (e.g. criminal records check procedures, intellectual property), and to encourage the student to become aware of recent developments in the research area.
- e) To supervise and maintain contact with the student through meetings, email or telephone contact where appropriate (e.g. when a student is working on a placement away from Bristol) as detailed in school handbooks.
- f) To propose adequate arrangements for supervision of students during study leave (or unavoidable absence) to the Programme Director or Head of School, as applicable.

- g) The dissertation supervisor will not proof-read or edit the work. In programmes where a specified proportion of the draft dissertation may be read by the dissertation supervisor, s/he may comment on the following as applicable: dissertation or report structure, content of sections, research sources and methodology, referencing and style.
- h) Where re-assessment of the dissertation is permitted by the Board of Examiners, the dissertation supervisor will ensure that the student understands the feedback given by the examiners and knows what is required for re-submission. The student can normally expect at least one meeting with their supervisor to clarify these points, and can expect the supervisor to read and comment on one revised draft prior to re-submission.

33.23 **Student's responsibilities during the dissertation**

- a) To agree a suitable dissertation topic with their dissertation supervisor and to work on a research plan in consultation with that supervisor.
- b) To attend dissertation workshops and seminars (where provided) and be familiar with relevant school information on the dissertation process.
- c) To agree a schedule of meetings with their dissertation supervisor at the start of the process, initiate meetings, attend all scheduled meetings and presentations and remain in contact during the period of the dissertation.
- d) To be responsible for their own progress with the dissertation, keeping their dissertation supervisor informed of their overall progress, raising any problems they are having with the dissertation with their dissertation supervisor at the earliest opportunity. To work on their dissertation taking account of advice and guidance and submit work by set deadlines.
- e) To ensure that ethical or statutory checks are carried out early in the dissertation process so that the progress of their research is not delayed. Criminal records bureau, research ethics or intellectual property checks or approval may take weeks/months to complete.
- f) Where required by the school, to provide the dissertation supervisor with a draft section of the dissertation by the specified deadline, in accordance with school dissertation guidelines.
- g) To be responsible for the quality and standard of their own work. They should proof-read the final draft, ensure it is legible and check that both citation and referencing have been done to the required standard.
- h) To submit the dissertation within the normal study period for the programme
- i) Where the Board of Examiners permits re-assessment of the dissertation, the student must take account of the feedback from examiners to improve the re-submitted work.

Feedback opportunities

33.24 Taught postgraduates may provide feedback on their experiences through their student representatives on school staff/student liaison committees, through 'end of programme' and unit questionnaires as well as providing their views during School Reviews. At faculty level they may express their views through student representatives on relevant faculty committees and by providing feedback on their experiences to Faculty Quality Teams. At University level there are student

representatives on University Graduate Studies Committee, University Education Committee, Senate, Student Affairs Committee and the Board of Trustees.

34. Programme Structure and Design

34.1 Taught postgraduate programmes may sit wholly within a discipline, school or faculty, or may cross discipline, school or faculty boundaries.

Master of Research (MRes)

34.2 The MRes is a taught postgraduate degree. Its main aim is to provide a structured research training programme which can act as a foundation for doctoral study or for a research career outside academia. It may also be used to provide an exit award from a doctoral programme which includes a taught component.

34.3 An MRes will comprise 180 credit points, and include a research component of between 60 and 120 credit points at level 7.

34.4 All MRes programmes will provide an exit award of a Postgraduate Certificate (with the attainment of 60 credit points). If the structure of the taught component permits, MRes programmes will also provide an exit award of a Postgraduate Diploma (with the attainment of 120 credit points).

34.5 Successful completion of the taught component of an MRes is normally required for progression to the research component. The relevant Board of Examiners may permit a student to start the research component before the assessment of the taught component is complete.

35. Student Support

35.1 The policy applies to the support of postgraduate taught programmes. There is variance in the type and cohort size of these programmes, including those covering distance and blended learning, and so the mechanisms for support will differ at the local level. This policy however sets out the overarching principles for that support, which should be normalised and developmental. The aim is to assist students in reaching their potential. It is acknowledged that while students studying at this level may have their own alternative support networks, they should also have access to appropriate support from the University. Postgraduate taught students are here for a relatively short period and it is crucial that they are aware of the support available to them in a timely manner.

35.2 The aim of the University's model for postgraduate taught student support has the same basis as the undergraduate framework: it is to provide students with a productive, predictable and meaningful support experience, which also allows for the distinctive disciplinary traditions in the University to provide this support in a manner appropriate to their discipline. Support structures can have a level of flexibility for postgraduate taught programmes, but they must meet these key principles:

35.3 That support is provided by those colleagues and in those forms which are best suited for their purpose;

- That the adopted support structure is efficient in terms of impact and delivery;
- That it enables staff and students to meet when needed and in conducive circumstances;

- That it is visible to all and in a timely manner, which is particularly important for postgraduate taught students who are here for a relatively short period;
- That it forms a coherent and holistic approach;
- That it is developmental for all those who wish to access it, rather than deficit orientated for the few with perceived problems;
- That it is accountable and reviewed regularly, including with input from students.

35.4 The University, through its schools, specialist central services, the Students' Union and student representatives, will provide postgraduate taught students with an overall framework of support throughout their University lives. The particular structure will be determined by local requirements and will be proportionate to needs, but will include tutoring and welfare support. Heads of Schools are responsible for the process and the quality of the support provided.

35.5 Schools will ensure that there is a multi-level approach that provides a flexible and transparent network of support for postgraduate taught students. This network of support must be clearly articulated. The different elements of the network should work holistically to ensure that appropriate and meaningful support is sustained.

35.6 In the case of students who may find it inappropriate or uncomfortable sharing problems with individuals they feel may be assessing their work or forming academic judgements of them, Schools will ensure that students are aware of alternative pathways for advice that offer students a choice of how to raise and discuss personal issues, such as: a member of academic staff not involved in assessing their work; a designated member or members of support staff within the School; the Students' Union Advice Centre; and/or one of the University's central Student Support services.

35.7 Schools will ensure that its model of student support is visible and that students are fully aware of the support opportunities that are available to them, particularly during their transition to the University and at the key points during their programme of study. A system of recording the meetings between Tutors and tutees should be established.

35.8 The University will ensure that students are aware of and have access to the support opportunities that are available, but the onus is on the student to engage with these opportunities as necessary.

36. Extension of Study

36.1 Extensions are used where exceptional circumstances necessitate extension of the normal period of study in order to complete the dissertation or equivalent. An agreed extension may involve the payment of additional fees.

36.2 An extension of study will only be granted where there are good grounds, supporting documentation (e.g. a medical note from a GP) and the request is made in accordance with the dates outlined in 36.4 and 36.5. There will need to be clear evidence of satisfactory progress for an extension request to be granted.

36.3 Good grounds for an extension of study may include: serious and persistent health problems, significant bereavement or additional sole caring responsibilities, serious financial problems, mandatory military service or where a part-time student's employment pattern has changed.

- 36.4 One or more extensions of study totalling not more than 12 months may be requested by a student and authorised by the graduate Education Director. The request should be made at least two weeks prior to the end of the period of study.
- 36.5 An extension of study for any period that takes the accumulative total over 12 months will also require the approval of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education and Students). The request should be made at least four weeks prior to the end date of the original period of extension.
- 36.6 Requests should be made on the relevant form and be accompanied by any supporting documentation, such as medical evidence or correspondence. Requests should be sent initially to the Programme Director.
- 36.7 The Programme Director should forward written support for the extension to the relevant education director, and certify that the student has made satisfactory progress so far. There may be additional rules on extensions from a funding body. It is the responsibility of the student to confirm that arrangements and approval for the extension have been secured with any funding body that is involved.
- 36.8 Any change to student status, such as an extension of study, will affect immigration status in the UK. The University is required to report any changes in status to the Home Office. The International Office provides guidance and advice to visa-holding students who are seeking an extension of study. Please see the website for further information: www.bristol.ac.uk/international-office/visas-immigration/

37. Processing and Recording Marks

The unit mark

- 37.1 The mark for each individual unit is calculated as the weighted average of the marks for each of its constituent assessments.
- 37.2 For the purposes of awarding credit for an individual unit, the mark for each unit is rounded to the nearest integer.
- 37.3 For the purposes of determining progression from the taught component to the dissertation stage, the actual unit mark is used to calculate the taught component mark.
- 37.4 Programmes may weight the different assessments within a unit and may permit compensation across assessments within a unit, as prescribed within the appropriate unit specifications, unless the assessment has been designated as 'must-pass'.
- 37.5 The final unit mark should be displayed as the calculated rounded integer, unless required by a board of examiners for the purposes of calculating the taught component mark so to determine progression or classification.
- 37.6 Students should receive the scores for each assessment, as well as their overall rounded unit mark.

The taught component mark

- 37.7 For the purposes of determining progression from the taught component to the dissertation stage, specifically the application of 38.12 and classification, the overall mark achieved for the taught component is calculated by averaging the weighted unit marks and rounding the result to the nearest integer.
- 37.8 Units that are pass/fail will not contribute towards the calculation of the taught component mark, but must be passed for the purposes of progression / completion.

37.9 The weighting given to the unit mark will correspond to the credit point value of the unit, e.g. the mark for a 20 credit point unit would be 1/6 of the taught component mark, if the student has to achieve 120 credit points.

See annex 11 for an example of this calculation.

37.10 Progression to the dissertation stage is normally only permitted on the satisfactory completion of the taught component. There is no compensation between the taught component and the dissertation (i.e. a mark in the taught component cannot compensate for a lower mark in the dissertation, and vice versa). The dissertation may be suspended at the discretion of the relevant Board of Examiners if the result from the taught component is unsatisfactory.

38. Student Progression and Completion

38.1 For the purposes of **awarding credit** for an individual unit, the actual mark for each unit is rounded to the nearest integer.

38.2 For the purposes of **determining progression** from the taught to the dissertation component, the unit mark is used to calculate the taught component mark. The result of the calculation of the overall average mark achieved for the taught component should be rounded to the nearest integer for the purpose of applying 38.12.

38.3 If a student fails to achieve the credit points, but there is evidence that their performance at the time of the examination is likely to have been affected by extenuating circumstances, the provisions in section 17 'Extenuating Circumstances' will apply.

38.4 Schools will make suitable arrangements to implement the regulations for the award of credit for students who are studying a programme on a part-time basis such that the students are aware of the arrangements (e.g. the timing and status of any re-sits) and are not disadvantaged by the point in their studies in which their progression is formally considered.

The award of credit for the purposes of progression or completion of award in taught postgraduate modular programmes

38.5 Students must achieve the pass mark for the unit (normally a mark of 40 out of 100 at levels 4-6 and 50 out of 100 at level 7) and meet any additional criteria, if applicable, to be awarded the associated credit. The criteria for the award of credit points, and an explanation of how the award of credit may be affected by criteria additional to marks in an examination or other formal assessment, must be explicitly described in the relevant unit specification and communicated to the students in advance of the commencement of their study of the unit.

38.6 By reaching a satisfactory standard, students thereby acquire the necessary credit points to progress, *except as specified below*.

38.7 A student who is not awarded the credit for a unit may be permitted a second attempt to achieve a satisfactory standard to progress (i.e. a 're-sit') or to achieve any specified additional criteria. A "re-sit" need not be in the same form as the original assessment, as long as it: tests the same learning outcomes, does not compromise any competence standards; and applies to the entire cohort of students who are undertaking the re-assessment.

A re-sit examination should normally take place as soon as possible after the learning experience within the University's recognised examination periods, while re-

submission of essays and coursework should normally be within 4-6 weeks for full-time taught postgraduate students.

- 38.8 In order to be permitted a second attempt (i.e. re-sit) in any failed unit(s), taught postgraduate students must gain at least half of the credit points in the taught component by achieving the pass mark at the first attempt AND must have satisfied any additional criteria at the time they are considered by the progression board, or equivalent.
- 38.9 A student will not be permitted a re-sit where he or she has already fulfilled the criteria for the award of credit points for the unit. As detailed in section 17, a Board of Examiners must consider the effect of previous extenuating circumstances, if applicable, on its decision-making (e.g. progression from the taught component).
- 38.10 A student must acquire the necessary credit before progressing to the next component of study. The Faculty Board of Examiners can permit the student to register for the next component without the necessary credit, pending and subject to the decision of the board of examiners. Where it has not been possible for the relevant board of examiners to consider the student's formal progress prior to the commencement of the next component, the Chair of the Faculty Board of Examiners may permit the student to register for the next component without the necessary credit, pending and subject to the decision of the board of examiners.
- 38.11 If a student does not achieve the criteria set out in 38.8, she or he will be required to withdraw from the programme with an exit award, if appropriate; unless there are validated extenuating circumstances (see section 17). Faculties have discretionary authority to permit postgraduate students who have failed part, or all, of the taught component to re-sit for the purposes of achieving an exit award.
- 38.12 Notwithstanding 38.7, under the conditions (a) - (f) specified below the relevant Board of Examiners will apply a compensation rule at **either** the first **or** the second attempt for each programme in order to award credit for marginally failed taught units to permit progression or completion. The decision on when to apply compensation (ie, at the first or second attempt) must be approved by the faculty or faculties concerned before the programme starts and communicated to all students on the programme before they start their studies.
- a) Either, where the total of the taught credit points failed in the taught component does not exceed the normal permitted maximum value of a sixth of the total credit points for the award (typically, 30 credit points for a 180 credit point Masters programme, 20 credit points for a 120 credit point Diploma and 10 credit points for a 60 credit point Certificate)
- Or, for programmes where the credit value of each and every unit in the taught component exceeds the maximum permitted value, as defined above, the total of the credit points failed does not exceed the value of the taught unit with the lowest amount of credit points.
- b) The relevant unit mark is within the specified range (35-39 out of 100 for level 4-6 units or 45-49 out of 100 for level 7 units).
- c) The student has a taught component mark of at least 50 out of 100.
- d) The student has not failed a unit that is deemed by the faculty or a professional body as being 'must pass' (see annex 1 for definition).
- e) Fulfils all other requirements for the award of credit, as stated in the programme and/or unit specification, such as:

- *completion of practical work, e.g. field courses, laboratory sessions, language tuition, etc, deemed essential to understanding the academic discipline the student is studying;*
- *a combination of coursework and practical work, supplemented by a record of attendance at teaching sessions, e.g. tutorials or laboratory sessions;*
- *the acquisition of professional skills and attributes required in disciplines such as education, the health professions or the performing arts.*

f) Satisfactorily completes any additional work deemed necessary, as determined by the relevant Board of Examiners, so as to enable the student to achieve the learning outcomes in the assessment(s) that they had failed.

38.13 Students who are permitted to progress as described in 38.12 (i.e. *notwithstanding a failed unit mark*) will be awarded and carry forward the actual unit mark they achieved at the attempt where the compensation was applied (not the unit pass mark) and will only receive the credit for these unit/s upon final completion of the programme for which they are registered (i.e. at graduation).

38.14 If any student fails to satisfy the conditions specified in 38.12, such that compensation cannot be applied and the student cannot progress following a re-sit of the unit, she or he will be required to withdraw from the programme with an exit award, if appropriate, or exceptionally, the relevant faculty Board of Examiners may permit a final opportunity to be re-assessed, normally as part of a 'supplementary year', in order to obtain the necessary credit points to progress.

A student will only be permitted to undertake the supplementary year **once** for this reason during their programme of study. Students who are placed on a supplementary year will normally be registered on the units they have failed. A board of examiners has the discretion to: (i) permit students to undertake a replacement unit listed in their programme structure in lieu of a failed optional or open unit from outside of their honours subject as a third and final attempt, and (ii) require students to register for additional units, appropriate to their programme of study (guidance on the supplementary year is available at section 7).

38.15 For any unit which is passed by re-assessment, the student will receive the awarded mark for the re-assessment, however the unit mark will be capped at the minimum pass mark (40 out of 100 for units at levels 4, 5 and 6, and 50 out of 100 for units at level 7), even if the student achieves a higher mark in the re-assessment. The marks recorded when repeating the whole year or undertaking the supplementary year will also be capped at the minimum pass mark regardless of what marks are actually achieved, unless the student is being permitted to repeat the year or undertake a supplementary year "*as for the first time*" due to validated extenuating circumstances.

Award of credit for the dissertation in taught postgraduate programmes

See also section 37 with regards to the 'taught component mark' and annex 14 for 'Dissertations in Taught Postgraduate Programmes'.

38.16 Students must achieve the pass mark for the dissertation to be awarded the associated credit; by *reaching a satisfactory standard* students thereby acquire the necessary credit points to complete the programme of study, *except as specified over the page.*

- 38.17 Where a student has achieved a near-pass mark (45 or over but less than 50 out of 100 or equivalent on the 0-20 point scale) for the dissertation and, in addition, the examiners recommend that it is suitable for re-assessment, the relevant Board of Examiners may decide to permit the student to re-submit the dissertation, or equivalent.
- 38.18 Re-submission of the dissertation where the student has achieved a mark less than 45 out of 100 will be permitted *where failure is due to validated extenuating circumstances* (see section 17).
- 38.19 The recorded mark for any re-submitted dissertation will be *capped at the minimum pass mark* (50 out of 100) even if the student achieves a higher level of attainment in the re-assessment, except that where there is good cause for the initial failure (validated extenuating circumstances) the dissertation may be re-submitted “as though for the first time” and the mark achieved need not be capped.
- 38.20 Re-submission of the dissertation must normally be made within 3 months of the student being notified by the faculty Board of Examiners of its decision (and within 6 months for part-time students and 12 months for part-time variable students).
- 38.21 Where re-assessment of the dissertation is not permitted the student may be awarded a postgraduate diploma, if appropriate, by the relevant Board of Examiners, subject to the satisfactory accumulation of credit points. Whenever a Board decides that re-submission of the dissertation is not permitted, the reason(s) must be clearly documented in the meeting minutes.

39. Awards: Taught Postgraduate Modular Programmes

- 39.1 The taught component mark is calculated by averaging the relevant weighted individual unit marks. The result of the calculation should then be rounded to the nearest integer.
- 39.2 The weighting of each unit mark, in calculating the ‘taught component mark’, will correspond to the credit point value of the unit. See annex 11 for an example of how to do this calculation.
- 39.3 An award with Merit or Distinction is permitted for postgraduate taught masters, diplomas and certificates, where these are specifically named entry-level qualifications.
- An award with Merit or Distinction is not permitted for exit awards where students are required to exit the programme on academic grounds.
- An exit award with Merit or Distinction may be permitted where students are prevented by exceptional circumstances from completing the intended award.
- 39.4 The classification of the award in relation to the overall taught component mark and the dissertation mark is as follows:
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| Award with Distinction | at least 65 out of 100 for the taught component overall and, for Masters awards, at least 70 out of 100 for the dissertation. Faculties retain discretion to increase these thresholds. |
| Award with Merit | at least 60 out of 100 for the taught component overall and, for masters awards, at least 60 out of 100 for the dissertation. Faculties retain discretion to increase these thresholds. |

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| Pass | at least 50 out of 100 for the taught component overall and, for Masters awards, at least 50 out of 100 for the dissertation. |
| Fail | 49 or below out of 100 for the taught component overall or, where relevant, 49 or below out of 100 for the dissertation. |

Exceptions

i. The classification of the award for programmes using the 5-point (A-E) scale (all taught Masters programmes in the Graduate School of Education) should be reached by using a fixed mid-point for each grade where A = 75, B = 65 and C = 55. The same boundaries as in 39.4 will apply.

ii. The classification of the award in the MA in Law* is, as follows:

For the award of a Distinction: not less than an overall mark of 65 out of 100 with a mark of not less than 70 in 120 of 240 credit points.

For the award of a Merit: not less than an overall mark of 60 out of 100 with a mark of not less than 60 out of 100 in 120 of 240 credit points.

** Applicable to students who registered on the programme from autumn 2014. Students who began their studies before this time will be covered by the previous regulations.*

Amendments for 2016-17, approved by Senate, June 2016.

Annexes

| | | |
|-----|---|-----|
| 1. | Glossary | 98 |
| 2. | Regulations for specific programmes | 104 |
| 3. | University examination regulations | 122 |
| 4. | Student transfer between undergraduate programmes and units of the University of Bristol | 137 |
| 5. | University policy on supporting disabled students | 139 |
| 6. | Guidance on reasonable adjustments to the assessment of disabled students | 142 |
| 7. | University policy for the external examining of taught programmes | 150 |
| 8. | Guidance for faculties on classifying extenuating circumstances | 163 |
| 9. | Guidance on making awards to students who are unable to complete all the necessary assessment | 166 |
| 10. | Flow diagram to show options for progression and completion in taught modular programmes | 167 |
| 11. | Calculating the unit mark, year mark, taught component mark and final programme mark and degree classification in taught programmes | 172 |
| 12. | Agreed weightings, by faculty, to be applied for the purposes of calculating the final programme mark and degree classification in undergraduate programmes | 179 |
| 13. | Applying recognised prior learning to the calculation of the final programme mark and/or the degree classification in modular undergraduate programmes | 181 |
| 14. | Dissertations in taught postgraduate programmes | 182 |

Annex 1

GLOSSARY and DEFINITION OF TERMS

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| Academic session | The University's teaching year, made up of two teaching blocks, running from late September to mid-June the following year. For most postgraduate Masters degree students, the period of study extends throughout the summer vacation. |
| Academic Personal Tutor | A member of academic staff in the student's school who is his/her first point of contact for any personal or academic problems. |
| Accreditation of prior learning | See <i>Recognition of Prior Learning</i> . |
| Anonymous marking | A process whereby, to ensure impartiality, the identity of students is not revealed to those marking their examination scripts or to the Board of Examiners. |
| Assessment | A generic term for processes that measure students' learning, skills and understanding. Assessment can be <i>formative or summative</i> . |
| <i>Formative assessment</i> | Assessment designed to provide feedback to students on their progress towards meeting stated learning objectives/outcomes. |
| <i>Summative assessment</i> | Assessment designed to provide a clear statement of achievement or failure in relation to stated learning objectives/outcomes |
| Assignment | A piece of coursework (e.g. project or essay) to be completed by a student. |
| Award | A degree, diploma or certificate. |
| Credit points | Credit points denote the notional amount of time (formal classes plus private study) to be allocated to that unit of teaching. Credit points are awarded to a learner in recognition of the verified achievement of designated learning outcomes at a specified level. |
| Credit transfer | A mechanism which allows credit awarded for a higher education (HE) awarding body to be recognised, quantified and included towards the credit requirements for a programmes delivered by another HE provider. |
| Credit Accumulation and Transfer System (CATS) | A system which enables learners to accumulate credit and which facilitates the transfer of that credit within and between education providers. |
| Compensation | The award of credit to a student to permit progression, despite failure to achieve a pass mark associated with a taught unit(s) at the first attempt, on the basis of specified criteria. |
| Competence standard | The academic, medical or other standard(s) applied for the purpose of determining whether or not a student has a particular level of competence or ability. |
| Conditional progression | Where a student is permitted by a board of examiners to progress to the next year of study and make up a credit deficit in identified programmes where they have failed a particular unit or units, where specific conditions are satisfied. |

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| Co-requisite | A requirement that certain units must be studied together, either at the same time or in sequence. |
| Dissertation | A member of the academic staff assigned to a taught postgraduate student undertaking a dissertation to provide academic guidance and personal support. |
| Double marking | A process whereby student work is independently assessed by more than one marker. |
| Exit award | If defined, an award conferred upon a student who has achieved the credit for a defined stage of a programme. |
| Extenuating circumstance | Reasons external to study (such as illness, an accident or personal or family problems) put forward by a student to explain absence or a negative impact on their performance in assessment. Such circumstances and their effect on performance will be considered by a Board of Examiners when it makes decisions on progression, completion or classification. |
| Extension of period of study | Taught postgraduate students may apply for an extension where circumstances necessitate an extension to the normal period of study in order to complete a dissertation or equivalent. |
| Foundation year programme | A year of study in a stand-alone programme, taught at the equivalent of level 3 in the national Qualifications and Credit Framework, which prepares students for admission to higher education generally. Such programmes are subject to specific regulations. |
| Gateway year programme | A year of study, taught at level 4, which is integrated with and prepares students for studying on an identified non-modular professional degree programme. Such programmes are subject to specific regulations. |
| Intercalation | The circumstance in which a student takes up the opportunity to pause his or her study on a registered programme to study for a degree in a different programme of study. The student resumes, as normal, on their registered programme following the period of intercalation. |
| Intended learning outcomes | Statement of what a learner is expected to know, understand and/or be able to demonstrate after completion of a process of learning. |
| Levels of study | <p>There are five defined levels of study within undergraduate programmes. All programmes are awarded at one of these levels as defined in the University's credit framework. Minimum credit points required at each level are also defined in the framework. The levels are:</p> <p><u>NQF</u> level 3 (generally called level 0) Level <u>4</u> (Certificate) Level <u>5</u> (Intermediate) Level <u>6</u> (Honours) Level <u>7</u> (Masters)</p> |

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| Mark | A mark is the numerical value by which a Board of Examiners assesses the performance of a student. Such a mark is normally on a scale linked to the specified criteria. |
| Marking criteria | The learning outcome knowledge, understanding and skills requirements that are taken into account in awarding assessment marks. |
| Marking scheme | A detailed structure for assigning marks where a specific number of marks are given to individual components of the answer. |
| Model answer | The examiner's perception of what an answer should be, made available to the external examiner. |
| Moderation | <p>A quality assurance process whereby the marks are reviewed, to ensure that the individual marks awarded are appropriate in terms of consistency, fairness and rigour in the assessment. Methods of moderation include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sampling, either by an external examiner or by an internal second marker; • Additional marking of work that has received a mark near the boundary between classifications, firsts and fails; • Additional marking where there is significant disparity between the different elements of assessment for an individual student, in a unit or across the programme; • Additional marking where there is significant disparity between the marks of different markers in a particular unit or programme. |
| Must-pass unit | A unit for which a student must obtain the credit points by achieving the pass mark and any additional criteria (i.e. it cannot be compensated). A unit may be deemed 'must-pass' by the faculty either for entry onto a subsequent unit(s) or because it is determined to be an integral part of the programme for pedagogic or for professional accreditation reasons. |
| Negative Marking | Sometimes used in multiple choice or extended matching index assessments, where marks are deducted from the overall score for a wrong answer. Negative marking is designed to discourage students from guessing when they do not know the answer to the question. |
| Norm-Referencing | Norm-referenced assessment is the process of allocating students' marks according to a fixed distribution of bands of achievement which is determined by the performance of the cohort overall. |
| Notional hours of learning | The number of hours which it is expected that a learner (at a particular level) will spend, on average, to achieve the specified learning outcomes at that level. |
| Open unit | A unit that is outside of the student's subject discipline which a student can take (normally at level 4), subject to programme structure, space and timetabling constraints. |
| Pathway | A pathway is a defined route through a programme which reflects a specialism that may lead to a specific title on the award certificate in |

the following format, 'Master of Science in Management (Leadership and Change)'.

A pathway is comprised of specified groups of units that can be either mandatory or optional. Pathways on a programme will lead to the same award e.g. Bachelor of Science.

A pathway may be selected by the student at the time of application to a programme, or may be chosen at a progression point (e.g. Level 3 of a Bachelor of Arts programme).

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| Penalty | Action taken when a student does not comply with University regulations, which has a consequence for the student. |
| Plagiarism | The unacknowledged inclusion in a piece of work of material derived from the published or unpublished work of another, whether intentional or unintentional. This includes material obtained from the internet. Students submitting work for assessment must acknowledge all sources of information correctly and confirm that the work is his/her work alone. Proven cases of plagiarism attract a range of penalties which are detailed in the University Examination Regulations. |
| Policy | A common University statement / expectation established by common consensus that will be followed, unless there is good and validated reason otherwise. |
| Preliminary year programme | A year of study taught at the equivalent of level 3 in the national Qualifications and Credit Framework, which is integrated with and prepares students for studying on an identified modular degree programme. Such programmes are subject to general regulations. |
| Pre-requisite | A requirement which must be satisfied as a condition of entry to a programme or unit. |
| Programme | <p>A programme is a defined and approved set of units leading to a named award. It must have a single intended award, which must be the highest award available on the programme. A programme may only have one group of mandatory units.</p> <p>A programme must have a single programme specification, which contains information about: programme aims, intended learning outcomes, learning and teaching methods, assessment, specified units. The structure of each taught programme is available in the Programme Catalogue: www.bris.ac.uk/unit-programme-catalogue/.</p> <p>There will be a single set of measurable programme intended learning outcomes, which all students will seek to achieve. The programme ILOs should map to the programme's mandatory units and, if the programme includes a pathway/s, the pathway's mandatory units.</p> <p>A programme specification must demonstrate that the ILOs will be achievable by all students on a programme, including all pathways, where applicable.</p> <p>A programme must have one lead Programme Director even where the programme is taught across more than one school. The lead</p> |

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| | programme director is responsible inter alia for the production and updating of the relevant programme specification. |
| Progression | All students are required to make satisfactory academic progress before being allowed to progress to the next year of study (undergraduate degree programmes) or to the dissertation stage (most postgraduate Masters programmes). Students on taught programmes are required to achieve a certain level of attainment, and to have acquired a certain number of credit points, as laid down in the regulations, in order to progress. |
| QAA | Quality Assurance Agency |
| Recognition of prior learning (RPL) | A process whereby students can be exempt from some parts of their chosen programme of study by recognition of previous learning. This may be either certificated learning or prior experiential learning where learning achieved outside education or training systems is assessed and recognised for academic purposes. |
| Regulation | A rule set by the University which must be followed. |
| Re-sit | A re-assessment that is taken because of failure to achieve the required standard in summative examinations. |
| Required to withdraw | Students on taught programmes who fail to make adequate progress with their academic work, or who repeatedly fail to attend scheduled classes without providing an acceptable explanation, may be asked to leave the University. |
| Results | The term 'results' covers the range of formulations currently used in the University to reflect the outcome of examinations. |
| Sampling | see Moderation |
| Scaling | The systematic adjustment of a set of marks (applied to the marks of the whole cohort), according to a scale, in order to ensure that they properly reflect the achievements of the students concerned as defined by the assessment criteria. |
| Second marking | see Double marking |
| Supplementary assessment | An assessment that is taken without penalty (i.e. "as if for the first time") because of validated extenuating circumstances. |
| Supplementary year | An additional year of study within a programme that provides eligible students the opportunity to meet the criteria for progression whereas otherwise they are not able to progress to the next year or component of study. |
| Suspension of studies | A formal introduction of a pause in a student's studies during which they are not required to engage with their studies. |
| Teaching block | A teaching period of 12-weeks, followed by an assessment period. |
| Unit | A unit is a component of learning, which must be assigned a level and (and for modular programmes, a credit value), and a coherent and explicit set of intended learning outcomes and assessment. |

Individual units do not have an intrinsic status as mandatory, optional or 'must-pass' as attributes, but are defined as such in relation to a specific programme or pathway.

- A unit is **mandatory** if all students on a programme or pathway must undertake that unit before they are permitted to the next level of study or qualify for a designated award.
- A unit is **optional** if a student is able to choose from a specified list on a particular programme or pathway.
- Please also see 'must-pass unit' and 'open unit' for definitions.

Withdrawal

Students who, for academic or personal reasons, wish to leave the University before completing their programme of study

Annex 2

Regulations for Specific Programmes

The regulations in the Code have primacy over these regulations, should there be a conflict in policy, with regard to students newly registered on the following programmes: MBChB, BDS, BVSc, Gateway to Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Science, Diploma in Dental Hygiene, Diploma in Dental Therapy, Postgraduate Certificate in Education, Graduate Diploma, MSc in Social Work and MSc in Veterinary Sciences and Postgraduate Diploma in Veterinary Clinical Practice.

REGULATIONS FOR THE CONJOINED DEGREES OF MBCHB

1. For the purpose of these regulations 'the University' shall include those hospitals and outreach practices that the University may use regularly or occasionally.

Admission to the MBChB Programme

2. To be eligible for admission to the MBChB programme, candidates shall have such qualifications as the relevant Board shall determine. To be eligible for admission to the graduate MBChB programme, candidates shall have obtained an honours degree (class 2.1 or better) in one of the medical sciences (e.g. Physiology, Pharmacology, Pathology) or professional degrees allied to medicine (e.g. dentistry, pharmacy, physiotherapy).

Programme Structure

3. The standard curriculum of the MBChB programme shall extend over not less than five years from the commencement of professional study in the University or other institution approved for that purpose by the University. The graduate MBChB programme shall extend over not less than four years from the commencement of professional study in the University or other institution approved for that purpose by the University. The next year shall not normally be entered upon until that which precedes it has been successfully completed.

4. The curricula will be divided into five years, (4 years for the graduate MBChB programme) each of which will comprise a number of units or elements as shall be determined by the Faculty of Health Sciences. Students will be admitted to units or elements only at the beginning of those units or elements. Students must attend the units or elements in the prescribed order and in the years of the curriculum in which they are scheduled. Students may not take courses elsewhere in place of units or elements provided unless approved by the University.

The MBChB examinations

5. The examination in each year shall comprise a range of assessments, and shall cover those units or elements studied during the year. The Board of Examiners shall determine whether a candidate has satisfactorily completed a unit or element for the purpose of proceeding to the next year of the curriculum.

6. The failure of any student to show satisfactory progress in a unit or element of the MBChB programme or to attend regularly any prescribed activity (including such lectures, discussion periods, tutorial and practical classes, clinical commitments, as may be required) or to undertake prescribed written or other work or to attend any examination or to reach a satisfactory standard in any terminal, sessional or degree examination, or any part or parts thereof, shall be reported to the Examination Board of the Faculty which may, at its discretion, require the student concerned to repeat a unit/s or element/s or to re-sit an examination/s or to withdraw from the MBChB programme. The exact requirements for

progression from year to year of a student newly registered from the 2012/13 academic year are provided in the University's Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Programmes and in the Standing Orders for the programme.

7. The requirements for the progression of a student registered **before 2012/13** are:

Candidates shall be required to pass in all subjects of an examination at the same time, except that a candidate who is taking the examination for the first time and who satisfies the examiners in one or more subjects may, at the discretion of the relevant Board of Examiners, be permitted a further attempt, at the next examination only, in the subject(s) failed.

A student, on the standard MBChB programme, whose performance is unsatisfactory in Year 3 or 4 may, at the discretion of the relevant Board of Examiners, be allowed to progress to Year 4 or 5 of the programme on the understanding that the deficit must at the first opportunity be made good in order to meet the requirements of the degree.

The Degree of BSc

8. The unclassified degree of Bachelor of Science in the Science of Medicine may be awarded at the discretion of the relevant Board of Examiners. The BSc will only be obtainable by a student registered for the MBChB programme who has passed the year 3 written examination, but who chooses to leave or is required to leave the programme after this point.

Certificate and Diploma of Higher Education

9. A candidate who has satisfactorily completed year 1 of the standard MB ChB Degree, but who either does not proceed or does not complete year 2 satisfactorily, may be awarded the Certificate of Higher Education. Similarly, a candidate who has completed year 2 of the standard MB ChB degree satisfactorily, but who either does not proceed or does not complete year 3 satisfactorily, may be awarded the Diploma of Higher Education.

Degree with Distinction or Merit

10. The degree classification of a student shall be awarded in accordance with the regulations set out in the University's Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Programmes.

Distinctions and Merits in Units

11. Distinctions or Merits may be awarded in accordance with University's Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Programmes.

REGULATIONS FOR THE DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF DENTAL SURGERY (BDS)

1. For the purpose of these regulations 'the University' shall include those hospitals and outreach practices that the University may use regularly or occasionally.

Programme Structure

2. The curriculum of the BDS programme shall extend over not less than five years from the commencement of professional study in the University or other institution approved for that purpose by the University. The next year shall not normally be entered upon until that which precedes it has been successfully completed.

3. The curriculum will be divided into 5 years each of which will comprise a number of units or elements as shall be determined by the Board of the Faculty of Health Sciences. Students will be admitted to units or elements only at the beginning of those units or elements. Students must attend the units or elements in the prescribed order and in the years of the curriculum in which they are scheduled. Students may not take courses elsewhere in place of units or elements provided unless approved by the University.

BDS examinations

4. The examination in each year will comprise a range of assessments, and shall cover those units or elements studied during the year. The Board of Examiners will determine whether a candidate has satisfactorily completed a unit or element for the purpose of proceeding to the next year of the curriculum.

5. The failure of any student to show satisfactory progress in a unit or element of the BDS programme or to attend regularly any prescribed activity (including such lectures, discussion periods, tutorial and practical classes, clinical commitments, as may be required) or to undertake prescribed written or other work or to attend any examination or to reach a satisfactory standard in any terminal, sessional or degree examination, or any part or parts thereof, shall be reported to the Board of the Faculty which may, if it thinks fit, require the student concerned to repeat a unit or element or to re-sit an examination or to withdraw from the BDS programme. The exact requirements for progression from year to year are provided in the University's Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Programmes and in the Standing Orders for the programme.

Degree with Distinction or Merit

6. The degree classification of a student shall be awarded in accordance with the regulations set out in the University's Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Programmes.

The Degree of BSc

7. The unclassified degree of Bachelor of Science in the Science of Dentistry may be awarded at the discretion of the Faculty Board. The BSc will only be obtainable by a student registered for the BDS programme who has passed year 1, year 2 and year 3, but who chooses to leave or is required to leave the programme after this point.

Certificate and Diploma of Higher Education

8. A candidate who has satisfactorily completed year 1 of the BDS Degree, but who either does not proceed or does not complete year 2 satisfactorily, may be awarded the Certificate of Higher Education. Similarly, a candidate who has completed year 2 of the BDS degree satisfactorily, but who either does not proceed nor does not complete year 3 satisfactorily, may be awarded the Diploma of Higher Education.

REGULATIONS FOR THE DEGREE OF BVSC

1. All practical classes shall be compulsory; failure to attend will necessitate the student undertaking additional work specified by the unit organiser. The failure of any student to show satisfactory progress in a unit of study or to attend regularly any prescribed teaching session (including such lectures, directed self-education (DSE), clinical commitments, field work and vacation units as may be required) or to undertake prescribed written or other work or to present himself or herself for any assessment or to reach a satisfactory standard in any assessment, shall be reported to the Faculty Undergraduate Studies Committee, which may, if it thinks fit, require the student concerned to repeat a unit, to complete any additional coursework, to sit an examination or to withdraw from the programme. The exact requirements for progression from year to year on the BVSc is provided in the University Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Programmes and in the Standing Orders for the programme.
2. The assessment for units that contribute formally to the curriculum for the degree of BVSc may comprise several components, and which may include a mid-session examination, directed self-education assessment and a final examination, together with practical or other assessments. Students shall be informed at the start of any academic year of the assessments they will be required to undertake in that year and the distribution of marks between the assessments and any components that are 'must pass'.
3. The curriculum shall be divided into five parts, and shall extend over not less than five years from the commencement of study in the University or other institution approved for that purpose by the University. Information on the programme structure and its units are provided in the University's Programme Catalogue.

Extramural Studies

- 4.1. Before entering the third year of the programme a candidate must normally produce satisfactory evidence that he or she has received extramural experience in accordance with arrangements approved by the Veterinary Programme Committee for a total period of not less than twelve weeks.
- 4.2 Before presenting himself or herself for the final examination a candidate must normally produce satisfactory evidence that he or she has received extramural experience in accordance with arrangements approved by the Veterinary Programme Committee, for a total period of not less than twenty-six weeks.

Degree with Distinction or Merit

- 5.1. A student graduating in 2015-16 or before shall be awarded the degree of BVSc with distinction if he or she: gains a 'high average mark', as defined in the programme's standing orders, in examinations contributing to the BVSc degree programme and gains a 'minimum mark', as defined in the programme's standing orders, above the pass mark in these examinations (subject to concessions on grounds of illness); does not fail any unit during the course of the programme (subject to concession on grounds of extenuating circumstances) and has been awarded at least one distinction (≥ 75 per cent) in individual unit assessments at any stage of the programme.
- 5.2 The degree classification of a student graduating in or after 2016-17 shall be awarded in accordance with the regulations set out in the University's Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Programmes.

Degree of BSc

6. The unclassified degree of Bachelor of Science (Veterinary Science) may be awarded at the discretion of the Board of the Faculty of Health Sciences. The BSc will be obtainable by a student registered for the BVSc programme who has passed the third year of the BVSc but who chooses to leave or is required to leave or who is unable to complete the programme after this point.

Certificate and Diploma of Higher Education

7. A candidate who has completed satisfactorily Year 1 of the Degree, but who either does not proceed or does not complete satisfactorily Year 2, may be awarded the Certificate of Higher Education. Similarly, a candidate who has completed satisfactorily Year 2, but who either does not proceed or does not complete satisfactorily Year 3, may be awarded the Diploma of Higher Education.

REGULATIONS FOR THE GATEWAY PROGRAMMES IN MEDICINE, DENTISTRY AND VETERINARY SCIENCE

1. For the purposes of University Regulation the 'Gateway' programmes are non-modular. These regulations apply to the first year of study; the subsequent years of study are governed by the Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Programmes.

Period of Study

2. The normal period of study for the programme is six academic years and the maximum is eight years on a full-time basis. Within this, the normal period of study for the first year of the Gateway programme is one academic year and the maximum is two academic years on a full-time basis.

3. Students who have not passed all units within an academic year will be required to retake the year in its entirety in the next academic year. This is because, in non-modular professional programmes, the teaching and learning in a year of study is designed to be cohesive and complementary and students are required to demonstrate, and are subsequently judged upon, the ability to manage a workload at a standard appropriate to the time available; therefore a component part of the teaching is not assessed in isolation.

Transfer of Programme

4. Any request to transfer, in the first year of study, from one of the Gateway programmes to another must be made prior to the end of the first teaching block (see: www.bristol.ac.uk/university/dates/).

Progression

For progression from Year 1 to Year 2

5. A student must achieve a unit mark of 50 out of 100 or more in each and every unit.

6. All units on the Gateway programme, including Year 1, are 'must pass'. Students are not permitted to undertake a supplementary year due to academic failure.

7. The re-sit opportunities where the progression requirements are not met at the first attempt are:

- A student who achieves a unit mark of at least 50 in at least two (of the five) units will be permitted a second attempt in the failed unit/s in the same academic year.
- A student who does not achieve a unit mark of at least 50 (i.e. 'fails') in four (of the five) units or more will be required to withdraw from the programme.

8. A student who does not achieve a unit mark of 50 in one or more units at the second attempt will be required to withdraw from the programme.

9. Where a student has a second attempt in a unit and achieves a mark of 50 or more, the recorded mark for the unit will be capped at 50 out of 100.

10. Students who fail to meet the requirements for progression, as outlined above, may be offered the opportunity to be admitted onto Year 1 of a suitable Bachelors biomedical science or science programme, subject to fulfilling the admissions criteria for the programme and there being a place available.

For progression in subsequent years

11. Progression to subsequent years of study of the programme is provided in the Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Programmes ('Student progression and completion – in non-modular programmes').

Fitness to practise

12. Students on a Gateway programme are subject to the University's fitness-to-practise requirements.

Award

13. A student who has successfully completed a Gateway programme will receive one of the following awards:

- Bachelor degree in Medicine (MChB)
- Bachelor degree in Dental Surgery (BDS)
- Bachelor degree in Veterinary Science (BVSc)

14. A student who has completed the first year of one of the Gateway programmes by passing all the requisite units, but does not proceed onto the next year of study, will be eligible for the award of a Certificate of Higher Education in Gateway to Medicine, Dentistry or Veterinary Science.

REGULATIONS FOR THE DIPLOMA IN DENTAL THERAPY

1. The programme shall extend over not less than 1 year of full-time study under the direction of the School of Professionals Complementary to Dentistry.
2. Candidates for the Diploma must at the time of entry upon the course have satisfied the Programme Director as to their suitability for the programme of study.
3. The failure of any student to attend regularly at classes and to submit prescribed work may lead to the student being required to withdraw from the programme. A student whose work during the first year fails to reach satisfactory standard may be refused admission to the second year of the programme.
4. The **Final examination** consists of two parts:

Part 1 Adult Restorative Dentistry Part 2 Paediatric Dentistry

The pass mark for each Part is 50%.

In order to be awarded the Diploma students must pass both Parts of the Final Examination. Each Part comprises a knowledge-based assessment and a clinical assessment. The pass mark for each assessment is 50%.

Compensation

A board of examiners will permit a student to pass a Part of the final examination by compensating a fail mark of 45-49% in the knowledge-based assessment on the basis that he or she has passed the corresponding clinical assessment with a mark of 55% or more at the first attempt. A knowledge-based assessment mark of less than 45% cannot be compensated and the student will fail that Part of the examination. Compensation is not permitted between Part 1 and Part 2 of the examination.

The Process for considering Candidate Performance

The External Examiner will be advised of candidates whose performance in the knowledge-based assessment has not reached a pass standard, prior to the clinical assessment.

In marking the performance of candidates in the clinical assessment, examiners will take into account that any Final clinical mark of less than 50% is a fail and cannot be adjusted by further examination. A mark of less than 50% awarded in the clinical assessment indicates that the examiners are of the opinion that the candidate should not pass the Examination, which will be ratified at the Examiners meeting.

The Examiners Meeting in the Final Examination

This meeting will take place as soon as possible after the conclusion of the clinical assessment. The purpose of the meeting is to agree the knowledge-based assessment marks awarded by the Internal Examiners and to confirm the clinical assessment marks. The Examiners should agree the Final marks and pass list. A review of the examination process and discussion of the performance of failing students will take place.

The Referred Candidate

Students who fail one or more Parts of the Final examination will be required to only resit the failed Part(s) of the examination as a second and final attempt. The mark for any Part of the final examination that is passed at the second attempt will be capped at 50%.

Students who fail the Final examination at the second and final attempt will be required to withdraw from the programme.

REGULATIONS FOR THE DIPLOMA IN DENTAL HYGIENE

The Diploma in Dental Hygiene ('the Diploma') will be subject to the General Regulations within the Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Programmes except in the case of the specific regulations below:

1. In addition to those approved by Senate, to be eligible for admissions to the programme of study candidates must have obtained entrance qualifications acceptable to the General Dental Council.
2. To be eligible for the award the Diploma students must successfully gain 240 credits with at least 80 at Level I (Intermediate). A total of 240 credit points must be achieved in order for candidates to be awarded the Diploma in Dental Hygiene.
3. The Diploma in Dental Hygiene may be awarded with Distinction to candidates of special merit. These candidates must obtain a minimum of 65% in their end of first year examination and 75% or above in their final examination.
4. Candidates who leave the programme before sitting the final Diploma and have gained 120 credit points from modules passed will be awarded a Certificate in Higher Education in Dentistry.
5. The normal length of the programme will be 21 months of full time study or equivalent. The maximum length of enrolment for the award is 39 months.
6. Candidates who fail to satisfy the examiners in a key unit of assessment shall be permitted to re-present the failed work or to present themselves for re-examination on one further occasion only at one time specified by the examiners. Key units are defined as the end of first year examination and the Project module.
7. Candidates may not proceed to the second year of study carrying a fail mark in any key unit. Candidates must pass specified units before proceeding to other specified units; as specified in the programme specification.
8. The Examination Regulations shall form part of these regulations.

REGULATIONS FOR THE POSTGRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN EDUCATION

1. General

- 1.1 The Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Programmes (referred to throughout these Regulations as "the Code") will apply to this degree, except where separate provision is made below.
- 1.2 Candidates for the programme will be issued with a programme handbook, and are bound by the contents of the handbook in addition to these Regulations. Handbooks contain detailed information on the expectations placed upon candidates. Handbooks addressing the experience of the individual candidate will be produced by the University. These may differ for candidates studying for the same award but undertaking placements in different professional environments. This is due to the variety of environments and regulatory structures under which Initial Teacher Education may now take place (via. Academies and associated chains/federations; Free Schools; TeachFirst School Partners; Local Authority Schools; School Direct Partner Schools; and Independent Schools or any other structures as appropriate).
- 1.3 Successful completion of the programme will lead to recommendation for Qualified Teacher Status, based on successful completion of both the programme and other requirements as set by the National College for Teaching and Leadership (or any future successor to this agency).

2. Conditions for Admission

- 2.1 A candidate for the Postgraduate Certificate in Education shall hold a qualification deemed by the National College for Teaching and Leadership (or any future successor to this agency) to entitle a qualified teacher to be classified as a graduate for salary purposes, or shall have qualifications or experience deemed equivalent to the above. In addition a candidate shall, at the time of admission to the programme, normally hold a GCSE at Grade C or above, or its equivalent (for applicants from outside the UK), in both English and Mathematics and have passed the National College for Teaching and Leadership Numeracy and Literacy Skills Tests (or any future successor assessments).

3. Application

- 3.1 Application for admission is made through one of three routes:
 - a) *either* through the GTTR (Graduate Teacher Training Registry, or any other agreed future successor process) at any time during the period October to August preceding commencement of study. Candidates registering *via* this route will be known as "*Student Teachers*";
 - b) *or* normally through the GTTR application route for School Direct allocated places (or any agreed future successor process). Candidates registering *via* this route will be known as "*Student Teachers*";
 - c) *or* through participation in a TeachFirst Assessment Centre (or any agreed future successor process operated by the University under contract from the national teaching charity "TeachFirst"). Candidates registering *via* this route will be known as "*TeachFirst Participants*".

Recruitment will close when each subject is deemed full by the Head of School.

3.2 The University of Bristol upholds legal responsibility for determining academic, medical and professional suitability for all candidates permitted to register on its programmes.

4. Progression

4.1 In cases of failure in a unit, any piece of assessed work may be resubmitted once only. The resubmitted piece of work will receive a capped mark.

4.2 *Student Teachers* may undertake a repeat school placement once only, subject to a two year time limit. The two year time limit is counted from the date of the Board of Examiners.

4.3 *TeachFirst Participants* may not undertake a repeat school placement.

4.4 In addition to the Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Programmes , a candidate who is absent from any part of the programme for 10 days or more will be referred to the Board of Examiners and may be required to complete additional time or other requirements.

4.5 A candidate who, without good cause, fails to take up a school placement offered to him or her or who withdraws from a school placement will be deemed by the Board of Examiners to have withdrawn from the entire programme.

4.6 A candidate who is required to withdraw from a school placement by the regulating authority for that placement will be deemed to have failed practical teaching by the Board of Examiners.

4.7 If a *Student Teacher's* placement is withdrawn or they are required to undertake a repeat placement the University will approach a maximum of three schools within the two year time limit to secure a placement. If, after approaching three schools, the University is unable to secure a placement the candidate will be required to withdraw from the entire programme by the Board of Examiners.

4.8 A candidate whose continuance on the programme causes serious concerns may be referred under the Procedure for Termination for the Postgraduate Certificate in Education.

5. Assessment and Awards

5.1 A candidate who is deemed by the Board of Examiners to have passed all level 6 and level 7 requirements of the programme will be awarded the Postgraduate Certificate of Education (in specialty subject) with 60 level 7 credits, and with Qualified Teacher Status.

5.2 A candidate who is deemed by the Board of Examiners to have passed all level 6 requirements of the programme, but not all level 7 requirements of the programme will instead be awarded the Professional Certificate of Education (in specialty subject), with Qualified Teacher Status.

5.3 A candidate who has not met the requirements of the programme will be deemed by the Board of Examiners to have failed.

5.4 As a consequence of failure, the Board of Examiners may require the candidate to re-sit or withdraw, as outlined in section 4 (above) as deemed appropriate.

5.5 Candidates meeting the requirements of either 5.1 or 5.2 (above) will be eligible for the award to be made with a passing classification.

- 5.6 Candidates meeting the requirement in 5.1 (above) may additionally be eligible for the award to be made with a classification of distinction or merit.
- a) Classification will be derived from achievement in level 7 units associated with the programme only, using a fixed-point scale.
 - b) Candidates with an overall grade profile of AAB or better may be eligible for the award with the classification of distinction.
 - c) Candidates with an overall grade profile below AAB, and above BBB, and who have not been required to re-sit any module, may be eligible for the award with the classification of merit.

REGULATIONS FOR THE GRADUATE DIPLOMA

Qualification for Entry

1. Candidates for the Graduate Diploma shall be holders of a degree (or other appropriate qualification) of any university (or other comparable institution) approved by the relevant Faculty Board.

Programme Requirements

2. The qualification for the award of the Graduate Diploma shall be the pursuance of a curriculum consisting of 120 credit points with at least 80 at level 6.

Period of Study

3. The period of study for the degree will be not less than one year of full time study or two years of part-time study, where permitted.

Assessment

4. The pass mark for the Graduate Diploma is 50 out of 100.
5. For the Graduate Diploma in Economics, re-sit exams are not available, however, the relevant Board of Examiners will award credit to a student, despite failure to achieve a pass mark associated with taught unit(s) at the first attempt (i.e. a 'compensated pass'), provided conditions (a)-(d) are satisfied.
 - a) The total of the units failed in the year of study does not exceed 20 credit points.
 - b) The relevant unit mark is within 45-49 out of 100 at the first attempt.
 - c) The student fulfils all other requirements for the award of credit, as stated in the programme and/or unit specification, such as:
 - completion of practical work, e.g. field courses, laboratory sessions, language tuition, etc, deemed essential to understanding the academic discipline the student is studying;
 - a combination of coursework and practical work, supplemented by a record of attendance at teaching sessions, e.g. tutorials or laboratory sessions;
 - the acquisition of professional skills and attributes required in disciplines such as education, the health professions or the performing arts.
 - d) The student satisfactorily completes any additional work deemed necessary, as determined by the relevant Board of Examiners, so as to enable the student to achieve the learning outcomes in the assessment(s) that they had failed.

Award

6. The Graduate Diploma may be awarded with distinction where a student receives at least an average mark of 70 and where all units have been passed at the first attempt.
7. The Graduate Diploma may be awarded in subjects approved by Senate. The subjects available at present are:
 - Economics
 - Social Work with Children and Young People (post qualifying award in specialist social work)
 - Professional Practice with Children and Young People

REGULATIONS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SCIENCE IN SOCIAL WORK

1. The Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Programmes (referred to throughout these Regulations as "the Code") will apply to this degree, except where separate provision is made below.

Admission

2. Application for admission to the degree of MSc in Social Work shall be subject to the Taught Code, and the relevant admissions statement, which can be found at www.bristol.ac.uk/pg.

Curriculum

3. The curriculum for the degree shall extend over a period of not less than two academic years and shall consist of lectures, seminars, placements, fieldwork and training periods as specified by the school. The curriculum aims to develop candidates' practical, theoretical and applied social work skills and knowledge in line with professional requirements.

Progression and Examination

4. In year 1 of the programme, students are required to achieve a pass in the Readiness for Practice portfolio in order to progress to the practice placement. Students who fail to meet this standard will be required to withdraw from the Programme, and credit will be awarded at Masters level in respect of any unit in which they have satisfied the examiners up to the point of withdrawal.

5. Students will normally be required to have gained 160 credit points in order to progress from year 1 to year 2.

6. The degree of Master of Science in Social Work shall be awarded to a candidate who satisfies the examiners in the following areas:

(a) satisfactory completion of prescribed work for the taught curriculum;

(b) satisfactory completion of social work practice placements;

(c) satisfactory completion of the dissertation; and

(d) obtains a total of 320 credits at level 7 for the degree of Master of Science including 260 credits for the taught /practice learning component and 60 credits for the dissertation.

Assessment of Practice

7. The school will establish a Practice Assessment Panel with the following responsibilities:

(a) monitoring the assessment of students' practice, and making recommendations to the school Board of Examiners in individual cases where special circumstances have occurred;

(b) monitoring the quality of placement provision.

Composition and terms of reference of the Panel will be determined by the school, and it will normally include a balanced representation of practice educators and university staff.

8. In the event of a student being required to re-take a placement, or requesting a placement outside the programme's normal geographical or timetabling arrangements, the School will make all reasonable attempts to identify a suitable placement provider who can offer the student the necessary opportunities. In the event that these efforts are

unsuccessful, the student will be required to withdraw from the programme, and, subject to the eligibility criteria in clause 12, will be awarded a qualification in Social Welfare Studies.

Appointment of External Examiners

9. In compliance with requirements of the Health and Care Professions Council (or any future successor to this agency), at least one of the external examiners appointed to the MSc in Social Work programme must be a registered Social Worker.

Award of Postgraduate Diploma

10. A candidate who has failed to satisfy the examiners in the dissertation, or, exceptionally, chooses not to proceed to the dissertation, may be recommended for the award of the Postgraduate Diploma in Social Work subject to the following conditions:

In the case of the Postgraduate Diploma in Social Work, candidates must obtain 260 credits in total through successful completion of all the taught and practice learning components of the programme.

Award of MSc in Social Work with Merit or Distinction

11. **In addition** to the final programme marks thresholds specified in the Code, regarding the award of Merit or Distinction, the following condition will apply to the MSc in Social Work.

To be granted the award with Merit or Distinction, candidates for the MSc in Social Work must normally pass **both** practice placements **at the first attempt**. Exceptions to this rule will normally be made only where the failure to achieve the necessary standard was demonstrably outside the control of the student concerned. Where appropriate, the school's Practice Assessment Panel may act as an Extenuating Circumstances Committee to consider such cases and make recommendations to the Examinations Board.

Award of qualification in Social Welfare Studies

12. Students who satisfy the academic requirements and achieve 60, 120, or 180 credit points, but who:

(a) fail the practice learning components or are otherwise deemed unsuitable for professional social work, or

(b) choose not to proceed to the postgraduate Diploma or MSc in Social Work,

will be eligible respectively for the award of Postgraduate Certificate, Postgraduate Diploma or Master of Science in Social Welfare Studies. The 180 credits for the MSc in Social Welfare Studies must include 60 credits awarded as a result of successful completion of the dissertation.

The University does not award Aegrotat qualifications for the Social Work Programme, and the awards of PG Certificate, PG Diploma and MSc in Social Welfare Studies do not confer eligibility for admission to the Health and Care Professions Council Register of Social Workers.

Protected Title

13. The MSc in Social Work is a programme approved by the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC). Successful completion of the programme (at MSc or PGDip level) confers, on the successful candidate, eligibility for registration with the HCPC as a social worker. 'Social worker' is a protected title and the MSc and PG Diploma in Social Work are the only awards available at the University of Bristol that confer eligibility for admission to the Register of Social Workers.

Suitability for Social Work Procedure

14. A candidate whose continuance on the programme causes serious concerns, whether arising from academic work, placement work or their general conduct, will be subject to the 'Suitability for Social Work Procedure' (or any future successor procedure).

REGULATIONS FOR THE MASTER OF SCIENCE IN VETERINARY SCIENCES AND THE POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA IN VETERINARY CLINICAL SCIENCE

1. The Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Programmes (referred to throughout these Regulations as "the Code") will apply to this degree, except where separate provision is made below.

Admission

2. Application for admission to the above programmes shall be subject to the Taught Code, and the relevant admissions statement, which can be found at www.bristol.ac.uk/pg.

Study

3.1 The Postgraduate Diploma shall extend over a period of not less than one academic year and no more than two academic years on a full-time basis and consist of seminars, clinical work and rotations including emergency out of hours care, clinical ward rounds, journal clubs and independent study as specified by the school.

3.2 The curriculum for the MSc shall extend over a period of not less than three academic years and no more than four academic years on a full-time basis and consist of seminars (both face to face and online), discussion groups, clinical work and rotations including emergency out of hours care, clinical ward rounds, journal clubs, supervision discussions and independent study as specified by the school.

Progression and Examination

4. Students are required to obtain clinical skills via attendance on clinics and participation in rotations, including out of hours and emergency care in order to progress and be eligible for a qualification; therefore students are expected to attend and actively partake in timetabled clinical sessions.

5. Due to the nature of the assessment of clinical skills, the programmes and its constituent units are classified on a pass/fail basis; there will be no merit or distinction for the programmes.

6. All units on both programmes are 'must pass'. Students are not permitted to undertake a supplementary year due to academic failure.

7. The Faculty Board of Examiners may permit students a second attempt in a unit where the credit points are not achieved at the first attempt.

8. A student who does not pass a unit at the second attempt will be required to withdraw from the programme.

For the MSc:

9. Students will be expected to have gained 80 credit points in order to progress from year 1 to 2, and 160 credit points to progress from year 2 to 3. Failure to achieve the stated learning outcomes for any clinical unit will result in a failure to progress into the subsequent year of study.

10. Due to the need to collate data from a range of potentially rare and complex clinical cases the research project will run for the entirety of the period of study. Formative assessment and review will occur at 6 monthly intervals to ensure students are supported and progressing as expected.

11. The degree of Master of Science in Veterinary Sciences shall be awarded to a candidate who satisfies the examiners in the following areas:

(a) satisfactory completion of prescribed work for the taught curriculum; including clinical work via rotations and out of hours emergency care; (b) satisfactory completion of the dissertation; and (c) obtains a total of 300 credits at level 7 for the degree of Master of Science comprising 240 credits for the taught /practice learning component and 60 credits for the dissertation.

12. There are no exit awards available for this MSc programme due to the structure of the programme.

For the Postgraduate Diploma:

13. The Postgraduate Diploma in Veterinary Clinical Practice shall be awarded to a candidate who satisfies the examiners in the following areas:

(a) satisfactory completion of prescribed work for the taught curriculum; including clinical work via rotations and out of hours emergency care and

(b) obtains a total of 140 credits at level 7.

14. There is no Postgraduate Certificate exit award for this Postgraduate Diploma due to the structure of the programme.

Appointment of External Examiners

15. Each programme will appoint at least one external examiner. In some cases more than one examiner may be appointed to reflect the diversity of clinical specialities that may be covered by the programmes.

Suitability for Veterinary Practice Procedure

16. A candidate whose performance on the programme causes serious concerns, whether arising from clinical work, academic work or their general conduct, may be referred to the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons.

University Examination Regulations

1. Nominees

Unless the context indicates otherwise, under these regulations a University officer or the chair of a board of examiners may act through his or her properly appointed nominee.

2. Conduct of formal examinations

2.1 Attendance

Failure to attend an examination without reasonable cause may result in the award of no marks for that examination. It is the responsibility of the student to be aware of the details of the examination timetable and to arrive at the venue in good time for an examination. The regulations governing the absence of students for medical or other cause are provided in the Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Programmes.

2.2 Entering the examination room

Candidates may not normally enter the examination room to sit a written examination nor undertake the written examination in any other location after it has been in progress for more than thirty minutes. Late candidates will be referred to their home school⁶ for advice on the next course of action.

2.3 Leaving the examination room

No candidate may leave the examination room within thirty minutes of the beginning of the examination, save in exceptional circumstances, and with the permission of the invigilator. In order to avoid disturbing other candidates, candidates may not leave the examination room during the last fifteen minutes of the examination, save in exceptional circumstances, and with the permission of the invigilator. The Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Programmes cover the leaving of an examination by a student because of illness.

2.4 Supervised absence

No candidate may leave and return to the examination room during an examination unless supervised by an invigilator while absent.

2.5 Communication during the examination

Unless an invigilator has given permission otherwise, during the course of the examination a candidate may communicate with no other person but the invigilator.

2.6 Permitted items and texts

A candidate may take to his or her desk only those items and texts that are permitted for the examination he or she is sitting. Advice about which objects other than writing implements are permitted may be found in the "Code of Conduct for Examinations" maintained by the Academic Registry. The interpretation of this Code is within the discretion of invigilators and students must follow their instructions. All non-permitted items must not be taken to the examination desk, but must be deposited elsewhere, as instructed by the invigilator.

It is the responsibility of the student's faculty or school to provide guidance to students about items, for example calculators, they may take into examinations and the responsibility of the student to establish which items and texts are permitted. Such

⁶ 'School' should be taken to mean 'School or Department', whichever is more appropriate, throughout the Examination Regulations

guidance should be provided in a format and location easily accessible to the student, including in student handbooks or on school websites and should indicate to students the circumstances in which it is likely they will be granted permission and the types of materials they may be allowed to use.

If the usual practice of the faculty or school is to allow students who do not have English as a first language to use a translation dictionary during written examinations, then the school should ensure that an "Authorisation for the use of dictionaries in examinations" form is completed and signed by the Head of School or nominee for each student. Where a student is studying across schools then the form should be signed by the Head of School for each of their units. This form should be returned to the student and it **MUST** be displayed on the examination desk when a dictionary is being used. Failure to display the authorisation will result in the confiscation of the material. All dictionaries used in examinations will be checked for annotations and markings and any dictionary deemed to contravene regulations will be removed from the student.

2.7 Distracting behaviour

Candidates may not behave in any way which is distracting to other candidates. A candidate who ignores a request from an invigilator not to behave disruptively may be required to leave the examination room. The candidate's examination scripts will be submitted to the board of examiners as they were at the time when the candidate was required to leave. The invigilator will annotate the scripts with the time at which the candidate left, and submit a report to the chair of the board of examiners.

2.8 Examination scripts

It is the responsibility of the candidate to ensure that all his or her scripts are appropriately marked with an identifying name and number. No candidate may remove an examination script from the examination room. No candidate may remove any other examination materials without permission.

A school may invite a candidate to transcribe or dictate an illegible script. Any transcription or dictation must be verbatim, and the student should be asked to sign the transcript to confirm that it is a true copy of the original script. The transcription or dictation will be treated as part of the formal examination process. Schools may also invite the student to undertake an oral examination.

Where a student provides an answer to more questions than is required by the examination paper, the marker should mark all the answers and use the marks from the highest scoring answers to calculate the assessment mark.

2.9 Cheating

Cheating in an examination will be dealt with as a disciplinary offence under these regulations.

In addition it is a disciplinary offence for a candidate to:

- a. Have unauthorised items or texts that may be accessed from their desk in the examination room during the examination
- b. Make use of unauthorised items or texts during the examination
- c. Copy from the script of another candidate during the examination
- d. Dishonestly receive help from another person during the examination
- e. Dishonestly give help to another person during the examination

- f. Act dishonestly in any way, whether before, during or after the examination, so as to obtain an unfair advantage in the examination
- g. Act dishonestly in any way, whether before, during or after the examination, so as to assist another candidate to obtain an unfair advantage in the examination.

2.10 Suspicion of cheating during the examination

Should a candidate be suspected of cheating during the examination, the invigilator will confiscate any unauthorised material, indicate on the candidate's script that it has been confiscated due to suspected cheating, and remove the script. The candidate will then be given further examination books and permitted to complete the examination. The student must discuss the incident with the invigilator at the end of the examination. The invigilator will submit an incident report to the University Examinations Officer who will notify the chair of the school board of examiners from the student's home school.

3. Conduct in other assessed work

3.1 Work must be that of the student

3.1.1 Any thesis, dissertation, essay, or other coursework must be the student's own work and must not contain plagiarised material. Any instance of plagiarism in coursework will be treated as an offence under these regulations.

3.2 Plagiarism

3.2.1 Plagiarism is the unacknowledged inclusion in a student's work of material derived from the published or unpublished work of another. This constitutes plagiarism whether it is intentional or unintentional. "Work" includes internet sources as well as printed material.

3.2.2 Examples of plagiarism (this list is not intended to be exhaustive) include:

- Quoting another's work "word for word" without placing the phrase(s), sentence(s) or paragraph(s) in quotation marks and providing a reference for the source.
- Using statistics, tables, figures, formulae, data, diagrams, questionnaires, images, musical notation, computer code, etc, created by others without acknowledging and referencing the original source.
- Summarising or paraphrasing the work or ideas of another without acknowledging and referencing the original source. "Paraphrasing" means re-stating another author's ideas, meaning or information in a student's own words.
- Copying the work of another student, with or without that student's agreement.
- Collaborating with another student, even where the initial collaboration is legitimate, e.g., joint project work, and then presenting the resulting work as one's own. If students are unclear about the extent of collaboration which is permitted in joint work they should consult the relevant tutor.
- Submitting, in whole or in part, work which has previously been submitted for assessment at the University of Bristol or elsewhere, without fully referencing the earlier work. This includes unacknowledged reuse of the student's own submitted work.
- Buying or commissioning an essay or other piece of work and presenting it as a student's own.
- Unauthorised joint or group working on a piece of work that is to be assessed individually.

3.2.3 A student who knowingly allows their work to be copied will be treated with equal seriousness to the student by whom the work is copied.

3.3 Avoidance of plagiarism

3.3.1 Schools may provide further discipline-specific definitions of plagiarism and guidance on how to avoid it, including advice on proper referencing practice.

3.3.2 Schools must explicitly specify when joint or group working is permissible for an assessment.

3.3.3 Schools must explicitly specify when it is permissible to incorporate publicly available material into assessments (e.g. computer code snippets) and give explicit guidance on what is permissible and how it should be referenced.

3.3.4 It is the responsibility of the individual student to familiarise him- or herself with these regulations and with any guidelines issued by the school, to attend any relevant induction or other sessions and to avoid plagiarism.

3.4 Cases of bad academic practice

3.4.1 Where a marker detects minor irregularities within a piece of work, and feels that it is a case of poor academic practice rather than a deliberate attempt to deceive, appropriate other people's work or gain an unearned advantage, and where the student has not disregarded explicit instructions, the case should be referred to the unit director.

3.4.2 If the unit director agrees with the marker and feels that the poor academic practice may be addressed appropriately within the marking scheme for the unit, then no further process should be pursued.

3.4.3 In such cases explicit feedback should be given to the student, with further instruction, as necessary, on proper academic practice, and a note put on the student's record for future reference.

3.4.4 If the unit director suspects that the irregularity may amount to more than poor academic practice they should consult with the designated member(s) of staff in the school, and refer the matter to the appropriate Faculty Education Director.

4. Procedure for cases of cheating and plagiarism in undergraduate and taught postgraduate programmes of study (including any taught component of a professional or other doctoral degree)

4.1 Roles and responsibilities

4.1.1 The overall responsibility for dealing with allegations of plagiarism or cheating lies with the appropriate Undergraduate or Graduate Faculty Education Director or their nominee (as applicable throughout these regulations).

4.1.2 The process will be conducted by the school and faculty responsible for the student involved.

4.1.3 If the allegation covers units from more than one school or faculty then the relevant Undergraduate or Graduate Faculty Education Director should determine which school or faculty should handle the investigation.

4.1.4 Where this procedure results in a board of examiners making a decision, this will be made by the boards responsible for the programme on which the student is registered.

4.1.5 The Head of School shall be responsible for nominating a member or members of staff to discharge the responsibilities outlined in these regulations, including organising the

school plagiarism and cheating panels, ensuring that penalties are brought forward to the School Board of Examiners, and liaising with the Faculty Education Directors.

4.2 Standard of proof

4.2.1 The applicable standard of proof will be the balance of probabilities. A student will be found guilty of cheating or plagiarism if, on the evidence available, it is more likely than not that the offence was committed.

4.3 Consideration of allegations of plagiarism or cheating

4.3.1 All allegations of cheating or plagiarism referred by a unit director, the Examinations Office, or from any other source shall be considered by the Undergraduate or Graduate Faculty Education Director responsible for the home school of the student (i.e. the school for which the student is registered).

4.3.2. The Undergraduate or Graduate Faculty Education Director will consider the case promptly and either:

- a. determine that there is no case to answer,
- b. convene School Plagiarism and Cheating panel under section 4.4,
- c. convene a Faculty Plagiarism and Cheating panel under section 4.5 ,or
- d. refer the case for disposal under the Student Disciplinary Regulations.

4.3.3 Initial determination of how the allegation of plagiarism and cheating will be dealt with must take place within fifteen working days of an allegation being received by the Undergraduate or Graduate Faculty Education Director.

4.4 School Plagiarism and Cheating panels (“SPC”)

4.4.1 If the Undergraduate or Graduate Faculty Education Director decides under section 4.3 to convene a SPC panel, the designated member(s) of staff in the school (see 4.1.5) will notify the student in writing of the pieces of work affected and the holding of an interview.

4.4.2 The SPC will consist of two academic members of staff nominated by the designated member of the school. The panel should not include the student’s personal tutor.

4.4.3 Where a panel requires advice on procedures and regulations, it should consult the Faculty Education Manager.

4.4.4 A note of the interview will be taken, which will be circulated after the interview to all parties.

4.4.5 The unit director or nominee of the unit affected or other appropriate witness may be required to attend the SPC in order to explain the allegation and provide specialist knowledge.

4.4.6 The student may be accompanied at the interview by an adviser, friend or other representative.

4.4.7 The purpose of the interview shall be to determine whether or not there has been cheating or plagiarism and to allow the student to make representations and to present any mitigating factors.

4.4.8 Once the interview is complete, the SPC may decide to defer a decision until further investigation has taken place. Otherwise the panel shall determine whether or not there has been cheating or plagiarism and either make a recommendation to the Undergraduate or Graduate Faculty Education Director or to the board of examiners:

- a. to dismiss the case entirely;

- b. to refer it back to the unit director to be dealt with as poor academic practice;
- c. to impose no penalty beyond recording the case on the student's record for future reference;
- d. to disregard the original mark for the examination or piece of assessed work;
- e. to award the student lower marks than those which they would otherwise have been awarded, down to the pass mark for the examination or the piece of assessed work being considered.

4.4.9 For penalties (d) and (e), the SPC should also decide whether the student must submit an equivalent piece of work in order to obtain credit for the unit affected.

4.4.10 The SPC may decide to refer the matter back to the Undergraduate or Graduate Faculty Education Director with a recommendation that the allegations be referred to a Faculty Cheating and Plagiarism Panel if it considers that the offence merits a penalty which the SPC does not have the power to impose or if it considers that the matter should be dealt with under the Student Disciplinary Procedure.

4.4.11 The penalty for an offence should be decided on the individual circumstances of the case.

4.4.12 When considering a penalty, the SPC should take into account the seriousness of the offence (examination cheating should normally be considered as serious). Factors that also should be considered include:

- a. The student's year of study.
- b. Whether this is a first or subsequent offence.
- c. The amount of credit attached to the assessment.
- d. The extent and significance of the plagiarism in the piece of work.
- e. The extent to which the plagiarism or cheating undermines the learning objectives of the work.
- f. Whether the assessment contributes significantly to the student's progress or degree classification.
- g. The degree of dishonesty and the effects of the dishonesty e.g. the implicating of other students in the act.

4.4.13 The school must write promptly to the student informing him or her of the SPC's decision and any recommendations.

4.4.14 Where there is a case to answer and the student is registered on a professional programme for which there is a Fitness to Practice procedure, the fact of the case of plagiarism or cheating will also be subject to that procedure.

4.5 Faculty Plagiarism and Cheating panels ("FPC")

4.5.1 If the Undergraduate or Graduate Faculty Education Director decides under section 4.3 to convene a FPC, the Faculty Education Manager will notify the student in writing of the pieces of work affected and the holding of an interview.

4.5.2 The FPC will consist of at least three academic members of staff without previous direct involvement with the student as a personal tutor or supervisor, including:

- a member of the student's home school;
- a member of a school other than the student's.

4.5.3 The Faculty Education Manager or nominee will be in attendance to advise the panel on procedures and regulations.

4.5.4 The unit director or nominee of the unit affected or other appropriate witness may be required to attend the FPC in order to explain the allegation and provide specialist knowledge.

4.5.5 The student may be accompanied at the interview by an adviser, friend or other representative.

4.5.6 Notes will be taken of the interview and subsequently circulated to all parties.

4.5.7 The purpose of the interview shall be to determine whether or not there has been cheating or plagiarism and to allow the student to make representations and to present any mitigating factors.

4.5.8 Once the interview is complete, the FPC may decide to defer a decision until further investigation has taken place. Otherwise it shall determine whether or not there has been cheating or plagiarism and make a recommendation to the board of examiners:

- a. to dismiss the case entirely;
- b. to refer it back to the unit director to be dealt with as poor academic practice;
- c. to impose no penalty beyond recording the case on the student's record for future reference;
- d. to disregard the original mark for the examination or piece of assessed work;
- e. to award the student lower marks than those which they would otherwise have been awarded, or award no marks, for the examination or the piece of assessed work being considered.
- f. to award the student lower marks than those which they would otherwise have been awarded, or award no marks, for the unit of which the examination or piece of assessed work was part.

4.5.9 For penalties (d), (e) and (f), the FPC should also decide whether the student must submit an equivalent piece of work in order to obtain credit for the unit affected.

4.5.10 The penalty for an offence should be decided on the individual circumstances of the case.

4.5.11 When considering a penalty, the FPC should take into account the seriousness of the offence (examination cheating should normally be considered as serious). Factors that also should be considered include:

- a. The student's year of study.
- b. Whether this is a first or subsequent offence.
- c. The amount of credit attached to the assessment.
- d. The extent and significance of the plagiarism in the piece of work.
- e. The extent to which the plagiarism or cheating undermines the learning objectives of the work.
- f. Whether the assessment contributes significantly to the student's progress or degree classification.
- g. The degree of dishonesty and the effects of the dishonesty e.g. the implicating of other students in the act.

4.5.12 Where the panel considers that the penalties set out in section 4.5.8 may not be appropriate to the seriousness of the offence, then the panel may refer the case for consideration under the Student Disciplinary Regulations under section 4.8 below.

4.5.13 The faculty must write to the student informing him or her of the panel's decision and any recommendations.

4.5.14 Where there is a case to answer and the student is registered on a professional programme for which there is a Fitness to Practice procedure, the fact of the case of plagiarism or cheating will also be subject to that procedure.

4.6 Consideration of recommendations from plagiarism and cheating panels by Boards of Examiners

4.6.1 When a plagiarism or cheating panel makes a recommendation, it should be considered by the school and faculty boards of examiners.

4.6.2 The ultimate decision on the penalty applied shall be taken by the Faculty Board of Examiners.

4.6.3 The Board shall determine whether any original material from the submitted work meets the necessary standard for the award of credit for a unit, separate to applying any penalty.

4.6.4 It will normally be assumed that mitigating circumstances will have been raised by the student and taken into account in the recommendation made. However, any exceptional mitigating circumstances will be taken into account by boards of examiners when determining the penalty.

4.6.5 The boards of examiners will take explicit consideration of the impact of the penalty on the student's credit points and, where applicable, degree classification and whether this impact, in the context of the student's overall performance, is proportionate to the offence.

4.6.6 Where a student is not permitted to resubmit the piece of work in question and the final mark for the assessment or the unit is less than that required to be awarded credit for a unit, then the student should be treated in exactly the same way as if they had obtained the same mark through academic failure.

4.6.7 The student will have the usual right of appeal against a decision of the board of examiners.

4.7 Recording the penalty

4.7.1 The final decision of each of the board of examiners, with supporting rationale, will be recorded in its minutes.

4.8 Disposal under Student Disciplinary Regulations

4.8.1 At any point in the process before the student has been informed of a final decision or recommendation, the matter may be referred to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education and Students) to be dealt with under the Student Disciplinary Regulations.

4.8.2 Plagiarism and cheating offences will be subject to the Student Disciplinary Regulations.

4.8.3 Where an offence has been referred under these regulations to be dealt with under the Student Disciplinary Regulations, the Board of Examiners may not impose any penalty under these Regulations in place of or in addition to the penalty or penalties that the Board is directed to implement under the Disciplinary Regulations in respect of that offence.

4.9 Students taking University of Bristol assessment, but not in attendance at the University

4.9.1 All the above regulations will apply to students not in attendance at the University, including distance learning students, students on a year abroad, or international students who have temporarily returned home. In these circumstances it may be appropriate to replace the interview with written correspondence or a conference call with the student.

5. Procedures for cases of plagiarism in a thesis submitted for a research degree

Please see the Regulations and Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes.

6. Students taking University of Bristol assessment, but not in attendance at the University

6.1 All the above regulations will apply to students not in attendance at the University, including distance learning students, students on a year abroad, or international students who have temporarily returned home. In these circumstances it may be appropriate to replace the interview with written correspondence or a conference call with the student.

7. Disposal under Student Disciplinary Regulations

7.1 If the interview panel considers that the matter should be dealt with under student disciplinary regulations, it may, in place of a report to the board of examiners, make a recommendation to the Vice-Chancellor, through the University Secretary, to this effect. Examination offences which disclose gross dishonesty, such as substantial and premeditated attempt to gain unfair advantage, or cases in which the candidate and the interview panel are not able to agree an account of the incident, are appropriately dealt with under the Student Disciplinary Regulations.

7.2 Where an offence of plagiarism or other examination offence has been referred under these Regulations to be dealt with under the Student Disciplinary Regulations, the Board of Examiners may not impose any penalty under these Regulations in place of or in addition to the penalty or penalties that the Board is directed to implement under the Disciplinary Regulations in respect of that offence.

8. Factors to be taken into account when deciding whether to use the procedures for minor or serious cases for undergraduate and taught postgraduate students

- a. The student's year of study. First year cases are more likely to be considered minor. Finalist and taught masters student cases will normally be considered serious;
- b. Whether this is a first or subsequent offence;
- c. The extent and significance of the plagiarism in the piece of work. Plagiarism accounting for less than 30% of the piece of work and where there is evidence of independent argument and thought might reasonably be classed as minor;
- d. Whether the assessment contributes significantly to the student's progress or degree classification;
- e. Examination cheating should normally be handled under the "serious" procedures.

9. Guidance on the Procedures

Guidance and advice on the implementation of the cheating and plagiarism regulations will be available from the Academic Registrar.

10. Extenuating Circumstances

10.1 Procedure for consideration of extenuating circumstances in taught programmes

Boards of examiners shall establish a committee (which will meet before the Board of Examiners meets) to consider any relevant matters, for example personal matters such as illness or bereavement, that may have affected a student's performance in assessment.

10.2 Evidence

If a student wishes a board of examiners to take any such matters into account, he or she must complete and submit the relevant form **before** the meeting of the board at which the

student's performance in assessment is to be considered. A written record must be kept of such matters. Any such matters which could have been raised before the meeting of the board, but, without good reason, were not raised, will not be considered in the event of an appeal.

The committee may require a student to submit such other evidence as it deems necessary to substantiate any matter raised by the student.

10.3 Extenuating circumstances in research degree programmes

The treatment of extenuating circumstances in research degree programmes is set out in the Regulations and Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes.

11. Appeal against a decision of a Board of Examiners

A student may not have a degree or other academic qualification conferred until all his or her outstanding examination or assessment appeals have been resolved. If the degree or other qualification has already been conferred, whether the student has attended the graduation ceremony in person or not, no appeal will be considered.

11.1 Right to appeal

A student registered on a taught (undergraduate or postgraduate) programme may make an academic appeal against an appealable decision made by one of the following (referred to in this Regulation as a "board of examiners"):

- a. A faculty board of examiners (including a faculty progress committee or equivalent)
- b. A school board of examiners in relation to a case of minor plagiarism.

A postgraduate research student may make an academic appeal against an appealable decision made by any of the following (also referred to in this Regulation as a "board of examiners"):

- a. The University Research Degrees Examination Board
- b. The Dean of the relevant faculty, on the recommendation of a registration review panel
- c. An upgrade or progression panel.

An academic appeal is a request for a review of a decision of an academic body charged with making decisions on student progress, assessment and awards.

An appealable decision is a decision in respect of:

- a. An examination or other form of assessment
- b. A student's progress, including a decision in respect of a suspension or a requirement to withdraw from the University
- c. In the case of a research postgraduate student, a decision by a Dean relating to termination or change of registration
- d. A penalty imposed for a cheating or plagiarism offence dealt with under these Regulations.

No student shall be treated less favourably as a result of bringing an academic appeal under this procedure.

11.2 Permissible grounds of appeal

Appeals may only be made on the basis of one or more of the following permissible grounds:

1. There has been a material irregularity in the decision making process sufficient to require that the decision can be reconsidered.

For example:

- a. the assessment and subsequent decision making process were not conducted in accordance with the relevant regulations;
- b. an adverse decision has been taken because of an administrative error;
- c. the student has not been given the opportunity to draw relevant matters to the attention of the board of examiners; and/or
- d. appropriate account was not taken of illness or other extenuating circumstances known to the board of examiners.

2. A student's performance in assessment has been affected by illness or other factors which the student was unable, for good reason, to divulge before the meeting of the board of examiners (see section 10 of these Regulations).

3. A penalty for cheating or plagiarism, imposed under the examination regulations by the school or faculty is wrong or disproportionate. For the avoidance of doubt, there is no right of appeal under these Regulations in respect of a penalty or penalties imposed under the Student Disciplinary Regulations and implemented by the board of examiners on the direction of the Vice-Chancellor or a Disciplinary Committee.

11.3 Grounds of appeal that are not permissible

1. Disagreement with the academic judgment of the board of examiners will not constitute a ground for appeal.

2. No appeal will be considered if it raises for the first time issues concerning the supervision or teaching of a student. Such matters will only be considered if they have been raised by the student promptly, at the time they first arose and pursued under the Student Complaints Procedure.

11.4 The Appeal Process

The appeal process has two stages:

i The Local Stage

ii The University Stage.

Those hearing the appeal at either stage will not attempt to re-examine the student, nor to appraise professional academic judgments, but will consider whether the decision made was fair and reasonable in all the circumstances of the case, and whether all relevant factors were taken into account.

Appeals should be resolved at the earliest possible stage and with minimum formality. The University Stage of the process may only be invoked if the student has pursued the appeal through the Local Stage and remains dissatisfied with the outcome.

11.5 The Appeal Form

In order to start the appeal process, the student must complete the Appeal Form and submit it to the Faculty Education Manager within 15 working days of the notification of the appealable decision to the student after the meeting of the board of examiners. An extension of this time limit will be allowed, by the University Secretary, only in exceptional circumstances.

The Appeal Form must set out:

- a. the reason(s) for the student's dissatisfaction with the appealable decision;
- b. the student's grounds for appeal; and
- c. the outcome sought by the student.

All the evidence on which the student seeks to rely **must** be submitted with the Appeal Form unless there are good reasons why this is not possible.

The student is encouraged to seek assistance from the Students' Union Advisory Service ubu-justask@bristol.ac.uk when preparing the Appeal Form.

11.6 The Local Stage

On receipt of the completed Appeal Form and any accompanying evidence, the Faculty Undergraduate or Graduate Education Director (as appropriate) will review the appeal on behalf of the Dean of the Faculty (who may also act in person if he or she considers it appropriate) with a view to considering whether the appeal can be resolved at the Local Stage.

In the case of an appeal by a postgraduate research student, the Faculty Education Manager will forward the Appeal Form and any accompanying evidence to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education and Students) who will review the appeal at the Local Stage.

Students may be invited to attend a meeting at the Local Stage to provide further information about their appeal. If invited to attend, the student may bring an adviser, friend or representative to the review meeting. The Faculty Education Manager (or in the case of an appeal against a decision of the Research Degrees Examinations Board another appropriate person) will provide administrative support.

Appeals must be considered under all applicable permissible grounds, whether or not specified by the student in the Appeal Form.

If the person reviewing the appeal considers that the appeal can be resolved at the Local Stage, he or she may take such action to resolve the appeal as is fair and reasonable in all the circumstances of the case, including but not limited to any or all of the following:

- a. refer the student's extenuating circumstances to be reconsidered by a committee under section 10 of these Regulations, if the person reviewing the appeal considers that insufficient weight was given to the student's circumstances by the committee;
- b. allow the student to submit late evidence of extenuating circumstances, if the person reviewing the appeal considers that the student had good reason for his or her failure to submit the evidence at the appropriate time;
- c. refer the appealable decision for reconsideration by the board of examiners, with or without a recommendation as to the outcome of such reconsideration;
- d. where the person reviewing the appeal considers it appropriate, vary the appealable decision without referring it to the board of examiners and report the variation to the board of examiners.

If the person reviewing the appeal does not consider that the appeal can be resolved at the Local Stage the student may request that the appeal be progressed to the University Stage under section 11.7.

The Local Stage will normally be dealt with and the student informed, in writing, of the outcome of the review and the reasons for the decisions made, within 25 working days of the Appeal Form being submitted to the Faculty Education Manager (or, in the case of an Appeal Form which has been submitted out of time, within 25 working days from the date

of notification, to the Faculty Education Manager, of the University Secretary's decision to allow an extension of time for submission of the appeal).

11.7 Progression to the University Stage

If the student remains dissatisfied with the outcome of the Local Stage, or has not received the Local Stage decision by the prescribed time limit set out in section 11.6 above, he or she may request that the appeal is progressed to the University Stage. The student should make the request in writing to the Student Complaints Officer at student-complaints@bristol.ac.uk within five working days of the Local Stage decision or, if earlier, the expiry of the prescribed time limit. Upon receipt of the written request to progress to the University Stage, the Student Complaints Officer will obtain the Appeal Form and supporting evidence from the Faculty Education Manager, together with all of the evidence considered at the Local Stage and a copy of any decision letter sent to the student. If the Student Complaints Officer considers that further information from the student, school or faculty is required in order for the appeal to be considered, he or she may call for such information and this must be provided promptly.

The Student Complaints Officer may invite the student to respond to the Local Stage decision. If substantive new information is provided by the student after the Local Stage decision has been made, the Student Complaints Officer will normally refer this information back to the Local Stage for reconsideration before referring the appeal to the University Stage. Where appropriate, the Student Complaints Officer may also intervene to suggest a resolution of the appeal before referring it to the University Stage.

Upon receipt of the Appeal Form and other documentation from the Local Stage, the Student Complaints Officer shall refer the student's appeal to a Review Panel for consideration.

11.8 Appeal Review Panel

The Review Panel shall normally consist of three members of the academic staff who have had no prior involvement with the appealable decision or the Local Stage.

The proceedings of the Review Panel will not involve a hearing. The Review Panel may call for additional information from the student, school or faculty, which must be provided promptly. The Review Panel will consider the Appeal Form and other evidence and may:

- a. refer the matter back to the faculty (or in the case of postgraduate research students, to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education)) for reconsideration with, or without, a recommendation for resolution. If following reconsideration at the Local Stage the original decision is not altered, the student may request that the matter be further reviewed by the Review Panel. If the original decision is altered, but the outcome is not acceptable to the student, the student may request that the new decision is referred to the Review Panel for further review, unless the new decision results in an outcome requested by the student in the Appeal Form, in which case there shall be no further right of appeal;
- b. dismiss the appeal, giving reasons, and issue a Completion of Procedures letter; or
- c. recommend that a committee be appointed by the Board of Trustees to hear the appeal.

A decision by the Review Panel that the student has provided a good reason for failure to submit extenuating circumstances at the appropriate time shall be binding.

Recommendations by the Review Panel should normally be followed, unless based on inaccurate information or a manifest misunderstanding of the facts of the case. If after reconsideration at the Local Stage, a recommendation is not followed, evidence of the

reconsideration must be provided and reasons given for the decision not to follow the Review Panel recommendation.

11.9 Committee of the Board of Trustees

If the Review Panel recommends that a committee be appointed to hear the appeal, the Board of Trustees will appoint a committee which shall normally consist of three members, including at least one academic member of the Board of Trustees or member of Senate, and which may include among its members University staff who are not members of the Board of Trustees. At the request of the student, the Board of Trustees may appoint a student sabbatical officer as an additional member. In the event of the Committee being divided in its view, the chair will have the casting vote. The Committee will normally be chaired by a lay member of the Board of Trustees. Wherever possible the Committee should include at least one member of the same gender as the student.

11.10 Clerk

The University Secretary will appoint a clerk to the Appeal Review Panel and to the Committee. The role of the clerk is to assist the Panel or Committee by collating the evidence, preparing the documentation, making arrangements for the hearing, taking a note of the proceedings and advising the Panel or Committee on the relevant regulations and procedures. The clerk may, on behalf of the Panel or Committee, ask for written witness statements or documents such as medical certificates to be produced. The student, the school and the faculty will be entitled to see all statements and documents seen by the Panel or Committee.

11.11 Nature of hearing

The Committee will decide its own procedure. The student may present his or her appeal in person or in writing as he or she chooses. Witnesses may be asked to give evidence.

11.12 Representation

The student may be accompanied at the appeal hearing by an adviser, friend or representative for support or representation. The Students' Union employs student advisers who may be asked to act in this capacity. In the event that the student fails to attend, without good reason, the hearing may be held in the student's absence. If the student has a good reason for not attending, the hearing will be rescheduled.

11.13 Time limits

The University will normally comply with the following time limits:

- a. the Local Stage will be completed within 25 working days of receipt of the student's Appeal Form. Where the Local Stage has involved a meeting with the student, the Local Stage decision will be issued to the student within five working days of the meeting (these five days being included within the 25 day limit set out above);
- b. The Appeal Review Panel will meet within 25 working days of the student's request for progression to the University Stage;
- c. The Committee hearing will be arranged as soon as is practicable after the Review Panel's recommendation that a Committee be appointed. The Committee's report will normally be issued within 10 working days of the hearing.

If the University is unable to meet these time limits it will inform the student of the reasons for the delay.

If at any time during the appeal procedure, the student fails to pursue the appeal or to respond to enquiries in a timely manner without good reason, the University Secretary may

after a delay of more than 20 working days on the part of the student, determine that no further action should be taken in respect of the appeal and that the appeal procedure is concluded.

11.14 Nominees

Unless the context indicates otherwise, under these Regulations an Officer of the University or other designated member of staff may act through his or her properly appointed nominee.

11.15 Report to Senate and Board of Trustees

The Committee will report to the Board of Trustees, setting out, in summary, the grounds of the appeal, the evidence received, the Committee's findings and any recommendations or instructions to be made by the Board of Trustees to the board of examiners. A copy of the report will be sent to the student and to the Faculty (via the Faculty Education Manager) or to the Chair of the Research Degrees Examination Board, as appropriate. The Student Complaints Officer will present an annual report on appeals under these regulations to both Senate and the Board of Trustees and will inform the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education and Students) of any general recommendations made by Committees of the Board of Trustees during the year.

11.16 Powers of the Board of Trustees

On receipt of the report of the Committee, the Board of Trustees may refer the matter back to the faculty (or the Research Degrees Examination Board, as appropriate) with a recommendation or instruction to the relevant board to amend its original decision.

11.17 Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA)

The OIA provides an independent scheme for the review of student complaints. The OIA will only consider cases when the University's internal procedures have been exhausted. It will not intervene in matters which turn purely on academic judgment.

At the end of the appeal process the student will be issued with a Completion of Procedures letter which will confirm the outcome of the appeal.

Following receipt of the Completion of Procedures letter the student is entitled to make an application to the [OIA](http://oiahe.org.uk) (oiahe.org.uk).

Last amended July 2016.

University Policy for Student Transfer between Undergraduate Programmes and Units of the University of Bristol

Opportunities for the transfer of programme

Occasionally, a student may seek to change their programme of study; this may be for a number of reasons. It may be the student has decided that they no longer have an academic interest in the subject for which they initially registered or that they wish to pursue another subject. In either case, the following rules apply:

1. Students, in principle, can transfer between programmes, subject to approval, but there is no automatic right of transfer between programmes. Transfer is subject to sufficient space being available and the applicant meeting the academic criteria and requirements for the new programme.
2. Providing the conditions for entry are met, permission to register for a new programme will not normally be granted outside of the following time periods, as it becomes increasingly difficult to catch up on the content of a new programme, especially where practical work is concerned:
 - Within the first TWO weeks of the first teaching block*;
 - At the end of the first year of study, where the student has met the criteria for progression to the second year.

* Students who still wish to transfer programme following the second week of the start of the first teaching block may be required to suspend studies for the remainder of the current academic session and commence the new programme at the start of the next academic year.

3. Students can, however, transfer outside of these time periods where the structures of the two programmes in question are cognate, i.e. sufficiently similar, so that the student would not be academically disadvantaged by the transfer, for example between an honours programme to one with a 'study in industry', or between a joint and singles honours programme, and vice versa.
4. International students with a Tier 4 student visa may transfer within the time periods above, although the transfer will have an impact upon his or her visa. Students should seek advice from the International Student Visa Advice team **prior to** requesting a transfer: www.bristol.ac.uk/international-office/visas-immigration/enquiry-form/.
5. Schools, subject to faculty approval, may allow the transfer of a student onto the final year of an Integrated Masters programme provided the student has fulfilled the equivalent programme learning outcomes for the programme to which the transfer is intended and the school is satisfied that the student is capable of performing at the standard required for the integrated masters degree.

There are also academic reasons why a student may wish to transfer and, in some cases, a transfer of programme will be required where a student has failed to fulfil programme requirements.

6. A Faculty Progress Board, or equivalent faculty committee, may propose that a student who has not achieved sufficient credit points for progression in one programme is offered the opportunity to transfer to a cognate programme, particularly in cases where the student is unable to achieve the credit points in a discrete part of the programme (e.g. in a single unit or in half of a joint honours programme). The proposed transfer will be at the discretion of the 'receiving' school.

7. Where this is the case, the student will be informed of the decision of the Board and given the opportunity to transfer to the recommended programme.
8. The accepting school will indicate to the student the point in the programme they will begin their studies following transfer and specify whether any credit and marks obtained from units undertaken in the previous programme, which are common to the new programme, will be accepted.
9. Where a student has been required to withdraw from a programme of study, transfer to another programme may be permitted subject to approval by the receiving Faculty following consideration of the student's academic record, any pre-requisite study requirements, and the normal academic and admissions criteria for the receiving programme. Transfer to a cognate programme may be permitted at any level of the programme. Transfer to a non-cognate programme may be permitted provided the student enters at the first year of study.

Opportunities for the transfer of (optional) unit(s)

Similarly, a student may seek to change an optional unit within their programme of study during the year of study.

10. Students in principle can transfer from an optional unit to another optional unit in the same teaching block within their programme structure, subject to approval, but there is no automatic right of transfer. Students are not permitted to withdraw from a unit in the first teaching block and undertake a unit in the second teaching block as a replacement, unless there are validated extenuating circumstances.
11. Transfer is subject to: sufficient space being available on the new unit; the student's timetable; and, the fulfilment of any pre- or co- requisites that the new unit might have.
12. Permission to register for a new unit will normally only be granted within the first two weeks of the unit being taught. Where the taught component of a unit is delivered over a period of less than eight weeks, then the deadline in which students are permitted to transfer onto such a unit may be reduced to the end of the first week in which the unit is taught.

Transferring a programme or unit(s)

13. A student who wishes to transfer from one degree programme to another must first obtain the consent of both the Faculty and the School that will relinquish the student and the Faculty and the School (if different) that is accepting the student onto a programme.
14. A student who wishes to transfer from one unit to another must obtain the consent of their home School and also the School, if different, that owns the unit that the student is transferring from or onto.
15. The 'relinquishing' school must notify the 'accepting' school of any recorded issues relating to the student, particular those which have had or may have an effect on academic progress, prior to approving the transfer. Where the transfer involves a disabled student, details of any existing reasonable adjustments must also be shared with the 'accepting' school.
16. The arrangements for a transfer of programme or unit(s) on the return of a student from a suspension of studies must be set out and agreed by the relevant parties at the point of suspension.

Revisions approved by University Education Committee, May 2014

University Policy on Supporting Disabled Students

1. Introduction

The University of Bristol is committed to creating and sustaining an excellent teaching and learning experience for our students, offering a high-quality, research-led education that encourages independence of mind, where students are encouraged to thrive academically. As a provider of education, we value the diversity of our students and remain committed to sustaining a fair, equitable and mutually supportive learning environment. We aim to create an environment where disabled students are supported to achieve their full potential, to contribute fully, and to derive maximum benefit and enjoyment from their involvement in the life of the University.

2. Legal context

For the purpose of this policy the following definition of a disability will apply as set out in the Equality Act 2010:

'A person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment, and the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.'

The effect of the impairment is long term if it has lasted for 12 months; it is likely to last for at least 12 months; or is likely to last for the rest of the person's life. Physical or mental impairments include hidden impairments such as depression, dyslexia and epilepsy. A person with cancer, HIV or multiple sclerosis is covered by the Act from point of diagnosis. It is unlawful to discriminate against disabled students in relation to:

- admissions
- the provision of education
- access to any benefit, facility or service
- exclusions
- any other detriment

3. The Reasonable Adjustment Duty

The Equality Act places the University under a duty to make reasonable adjustments to support individual disabled students in realising their full potential and to ensure that they are not disadvantaged in comparison with non-disabled students. This duty is also anticipatory, meaning that the University is required to consider and take action in relation to barriers that impede disabled people generally prior to an individual disabled person seeking to become a student. Failure to make a reasonable adjustment can never be justified. The duty comprises three requirements:

- Where a provision, criterion or practice puts disabled students at a substantial disadvantage compared with those who are not disabled, to take reasonable steps to avoid that disadvantage.
- Where a physical feature puts disabled students at a substantial disadvantage compared with people who are not disabled, to take reasonable steps to avoid that disadvantage or adopt a reasonable alternative method of providing the service or exercising the function.
- Where not providing an auxiliary aid or service puts disabled students at a substantial disadvantage compared with students who are not disabled, to take reasonable steps to provide that auxiliary aid/service.

The term provision, criterion or practice covers all aspects of the student experience, access to education, other benefits, facilities and services, as well as all University policies, procedures and regulations. In determining what is reasonable, the University will not compromise academic/competence standards⁷ and the expectation is that disabled students will achieve the same learning outcomes as non-disabled students. Consideration will be given to adjusting the way in which a competence standard is assessed unless the passing of the assessment is conditional upon having a practical skill or ability which must be demonstrated by completing a practical component or demonstrating fitness to practise.

In determining what is reasonable in each individual case, the University may consider factors including but not limited to:

- whether taking any particular steps would be effective in overcoming the substantial disadvantage that disabled people face in accessing the education or other benefit, facility or service in question
- the extent to which it is practicable to take such steps
- the type of education or other benefit, facility or service being provided
- the effect of the disability on the individual
- the financial and other costs of making the adjustment
- the availability of grants, loans and other assistance to disabled students
- the extent to which aids and services will otherwise be provided to disabled people or students
- the resources of the education provider and the availability of financial or other assistance
- health and safety requirements (the Act does not override health and safety requirements)
- the relevant interests of other people, including other students

4. Disclosure of Disability

Students who disclose a disability should be referred to Disability Services where further discussion can take place with a Disability Advisor on issues connected to support and to explore funding that may be available to cover the costs of reasonable adjustments where appropriate. Where appropriate a Disability Support Summary (DSS) will be produced to assist staff in determining what adjustments should be considered and to assist the University in meeting the requirements of the reasonable adjustment duty. It is expected that staff will engage fully with this process and familiarise themselves with any associated University guidance.

Students can disclose a disability at any point during the course of their studies. The reasonable adjustment duty applies to the individual student from this point of disclosure - regardless of whether the student has a DSS in place. In some cases (particularly where disclosure relates to an unseen disability) supporting evidence may be required to help understand the support needs of the individual student.

A disabled student has a right to request that the existence or nature of their disability be treated as confidential. In such cases, the recommended support can be shared (as agreed with the student in terms of what is shared) but the nature of the disability must remain

⁷ A competence standard is defined as 'an academic, medical, or other standard applied by or on behalf of an education provider for the purpose of determining whether or not a person has a particular level of competence or ability'.

confidential. In some instances this will limit the University's ability to implement satisfactory adjustments or result in no adjustments being provided.

5. Responsibilities

The University Board of Trustees is legally responsible for ensuring that the University properly discharges its duties under the Equality Act. As such, all University staff are expected to operate within the parameters of this policy and any associated guidance.

The success of the support that both the school and Disability Services are able to provide relies on the student's willingness to engage with it. The general expectation is that the student will assume an element of personal responsibility and work in partnership with their School and Faculty to ensure that any adjustments make a positive contribution to their ability to engage with their studies and to complete their programme successfully.

Guidance on Reasonable Adjustments to the Assessment of Disabled Students

Summary

Disabled students are an integral part of the University community. As such, they have a general entitlement to the provision of education in a manner that meets their individual requirements. This entitlement extends to provision for disabled students at assessment.

The various parts of the equality legislation relating to disabled students in higher education⁸ require universities not to discriminate against disabled students. Discrimination includes (1) treating a disabled student less favourably than other students and (2) failing to make 'reasonable adjustments' to both course delivery and assessment. As a consequence, the University must provide reasonable adjustments to the assessment of disabled students to ensure that they are not placed at a 'substantial disadvantage' in relation to their non-disabled peers. Although this obligation covers many aspects of higher education, this annex deals only with adjustments at assessment. Universities are not required to make adjustments to assessment which will compromise the academic, medical or other 'competence standards' of the degree programmes in question. This annex describes the types of adjustments which may be required and gives examples of good practice (with regard to reasonable adjustments) and of what would and would not be likely to be considered competence standards (in relation to assessment). It should be noted that all universities are subject to the public sector equality duty⁹, the effect of which is to require universities to promote and embed disability equality proactively across institutional structures, hierarchies, policies, procedures and practice¹⁰.

Key concepts

- Disability
- Reasonable adjustments
- Competence standards

Disability – Section 6 of the Equality Act 2010 specifies that: **a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a long term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities**¹¹. 'Physical or mental impairment' includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing. 'Long term' means that the impairment has lasted or is likely to last (may well last) for 12 months or more. 'Substantial' means more than minor or trivial. Case law has established that 'day-to-day' includes sitting examinations, which are not regarded as a specialised activity¹². Unseen impairments are also covered (such as mental ill health and conditions such as diabetes and epilepsy). Cancer, HIV infection and multiple sclerosis are

⁸ The Equality Act 2010 replaced the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA, 1995, amended 2001, 2005). In amending the DDA, the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA, 2001) introduced the concept of 'reasonable adjustments' to the provision of higher education. The 2005 revision to the DDA placed a 'positive statutory duty' on public bodies (including the University) to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between disabled and other persons and to avoid disability-related discrimination (among other obligations). All these provisions have been incorporated into the Equality Act, together with a new, broader public sector equality duty.

⁹ The public sector equality duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and foster good relations between people with a 'protected characteristic' and those without. The 'protected characteristics' are: age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity.

¹⁰ The Equality and Human Rights Commission has published useful technical guidance for providers of post-compulsory education, which is available here:

http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/uploaded_files/EqualityAct/technical_guidance_on_further_and_higher_education.pdf

¹¹ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/6>

¹² *Paterson v The Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis* (2007) UKEAT 0635/06.

considered disabilities under the Act from the point of diagnosis. Progressive conditions (such as lupus, multiple sclerosis) and fluctuating conditions (such as CFS/ ME, chronic pain) and conditions which may reoccur (such as depression) will amount to disabilities in most circumstances.

Disabled students at the University may include those with:

- Specific learning difficulties, such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, attention deficit (hyperactivity) disorder (AD(H)D)
- Mental health difficulties, such as depression, anxiety, eating disorders, obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD), bipolar affective disorder, psychosis
- Autistic spectrum conditions, such as Asperger syndrome, high functioning or atypical autism
- Sensory impairments, such as a visual or hearing impairment, blindness, deafness (with or without British Sign Language as a first or preferred language)
- Mobility difficulties, such as para- and quadriplegia, scoliosis, chronic pain affecting mobility
- Long term health conditions, such as arthritis, cystic fibrosis, narcolepsy, repetitive strain injury (RSI), cancer, HIV, hepatitis, multiple sclerosis, Crohn's disease, chronic pain, lupus, chronic fatigue syndrome/ myalgic encephalopathy (CFS/ ME)

Students with any of the conditions listed above are regarded as disabled because they meet the definition of disability under the Act. This list is not exhaustive. A person with a long term health condition or mental health difficulty continues to be regarded as disabled despite fluctuations in the severity of their condition or, in the case of cancer, after recovery.

Many disabled students receive funding for study support via Disabled Students' Allowances (DSAs)¹³. However, a student need not be in receipt of DSAs to be supported as a disabled student at the University; they need only be disabled as described by the Act. Likewise, many disabled students receive advice and support from Disability Services; however, a student need not be known to Disability Services before they can be supported by others at the University, such as their tutors, their School/ School Disability Coordinator, the Library Disability Coordinator and staff and services across the wider University community.

Reasonable adjustments – Section 20 of the Act imposes a duty on universities to make reasonable adjustments for students¹⁴ in relation to:

- A provision, criterion or practice – including assessment practices
- Physical features – including access to assessment venues
- Auxiliary aids – including exam support such as hearing loops, exam scripts in large print or Braille, and human support such as readers, scribes and sign language interpreters

Where the University's assessment practices put a disabled student at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with students who are not disabled, the University must take reasonable steps to avoid the disadvantage. Consequently, the purpose of the duty is not to confer an unfair advantage on disabled students but to remove barriers where it is reasonable to do so, such that disabled students have the opportunity to demonstrate their learning.

¹³ <https://www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowances-dsas/overview>

¹⁴ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/20>

The duty to make reasonable adjustments to assessment is anticipatory. The University should not wait until an individual student discloses a disability or until adjustments are requested. Instead, likely solutions to predictable difficulties should be prepared in advance such that disabled students are not substantially disadvantaged. There is no legal defence for the failure of an institution to make a reasonable adjustment. This would be interpreted as discrimination under Section 21 of the Act¹⁵.

The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) Code of Practice for the Assurance of Academic Quality and Standards in Higher Education¹⁶ defines reasonableness as follows: "The application of an adjustment will result from consideration of the circumstances of the individual student and will involve the student in discussion of possible courses of action. What is 'reasonable' for an institution will vary according to a range of factors and will depend on the circumstances of the individual case. Factors influencing the determination of what is reasonable will include the effectiveness of taking particular steps in enabling the student to overcome the relevant disadvantage, health and safety issues, the effect on other students and the financial cost to the institution."

Examples of reasonable adjustments to the assessment of disabled students

It is important that adjustments meet the needs of the individual disabled student rather than providing a generic response to a class or type of disability. It cannot be assumed that what works for student A on course X will work for student B on course Y. Once implemented, adjustments do not provide automatic precedents for other students, but may be taken into account when considering what would be appropriate in a different case. The following list is not exhaustive – neither in terms of the kinds of adjustments that may be required nor the types of students who may require them.

Extra time is often recommended for students with some kind of processing difficulty. This can be the result of a specific learning difficulty (such as dyslexia), a mental health difficulty (such as depression), or an autism spectrum condition (such as Asperger syndrome). It is also recommended for students with fatigue conditions (such as CFS/ ME) and for students who are prescribed medication which may slow cognitive processing (such as some medications for hyperthyroid conditions, depression or chronic pain). Extra time is often recommended at 25% of the prescribed examination time but may range up to 100% – for example, to allow a blind student to complete an exam using technological aids.

Stop-the-clock rest breaks are often recommended for students with fatigue conditions, mental health conditions (such as anxiety disorders), conditions which require the student to mobilise to relieve discomfort or pain (such as hypermobility), conditions which necessitate frequent visits to the toilet (such as irritable bowel syndrome or any condition which gives rise to bladder urgency), and to students who require higher percentages (more than 25%) extra time, since students whose exams last longer will need break time in response to additional working time.

Use of a **computer** (word processor) is recommended for students who may write slowly in comparison to their peers (such as some students with dyslexia and many students with dyspraxia), students whose handwriting is not easily legible, and students who due to a physical disability cannot write with pen and paper.

A **scribe** is recommended when a student can neither write nor type at a rate which would not significantly disadvantage them in relation to their peers.

¹⁵ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/21>

¹⁶ <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/informationAndGuidance/Documents/Section3Disabilities2010.pdf>

An **exam paper in an alternative format** may be recommended for a student with a visual impairment, for example, an exam paper in large print or in Braille. A student with a particular dyslexic profile may be recommended an exam paper on a particular colour of paper or a reader to read exam questions to them aloud.

A student with anxiety might be recommended a **smaller venue**. This might also be recommended for a student with an attention deficit disorder. A sole venue may be recommended for a student who needs to mobilise (e.g., because of chronic pain) or read exam questions aloud or 'think aloud' (due to their particular dyslexic profile).

A student may be recommended a **scheduling adjustment**. This might include a recommendation not to have more than one exam per day and/ or to have a least a one-day break between exams, and/ or not to be scheduled for early AM or late PM exams. This may be recommended for students with fatigue conditions, long-term illnesses (such as cancer or the after-effects of cancer) or mental health difficulties -- or for students who require higher percentages of extra time (more than 25%) and/ or larger allowances for stop-the-clock rest breaks.

An **alternative form or time-course of examination** may be recommended where a student cannot display their learning in a traditional, speeded, timed assessment. Alternative forms may include:

- submitted (take home) work, a viva or a submitted portfolio in place of speeded, timed assessments
- a series of shorter unseen papers in place of one longer paper, thus allowing a student to be assessed in the traditional way but over a longer time period

Where an alternative way of demonstrating learning is permitted, the expectation is that it will be equally rigorous in comparison to the assessment undertaken by a student's non-disabled peers. It must be as capable of demonstrating that the student has met the requisite learning outcomes as the original form of assessment.

Examples of anticipatory adjustments to the assessment of disabled students

- Scheduling exams in venues with level/ lift access and easy access to accessible toilets
- Scheduling exams such that students do not have more than one exam per day and have a one day break between exams
- Where possible, offering a range of assessment options in addition to speeded, timed exams

The QAA Code of Practice for the Assurance of Academic Quality and Standards in Higher Education¹⁷ highlights: "There may be more than one way of demonstrating the attainment of a learning outcome, and the various possibilities should have been considered in the process of programme design. Institutions should use a range of assessment methods as a matter of good practice to provide opportunities for disabled learners to show that they have attained the required standard."

Competence standards – reasonable adjustments are implemented to prevent disabled students from experiencing substantial disadvantage and hence to support such students to achieve their potential. However, in defining reasonableness, institutions are not required to compromise competence standards. Within the Act, competence standards are defined as: **the academic, medical or other standard(s) applied for the purpose of determining whether or not a person has a particular level of competence or**

¹⁷ <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/informationAndGuidance/Documents/Section3Disabilities2010.pdf>

ability¹⁸. Not all competences, assessment criteria or learning objectives which students might be expected to fulfil on a particular course are genuine competence standards as defined by the Act. These are the characteristics of a genuine competence standard¹⁹:

1. Its primary purpose is to determine whether or not a student has achieved a particular level of competence or ability
2. It must be specific to an individual course (not applied University-wide)
3. It must be relevant to the course
4. It applies equally to all students, not just to disabled students
5. It must not directly discriminate against disabled students
6. It must be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim

The 'proportionate' and 'legitimate' elements of this guidance refer to such considerations as:

- There must be a pressing need that supports the aim
- The application of the competence standard must be causally related to achieving the aim
- There is no other way to achieve the aim that has a less detrimental effect on the rights of disabled people

While genuine competence standards are exempt from the obligation to make reasonable adjustments, the method by which students demonstrate their attainment of a learning outcome is not itself a competence standard (although there are occasions where the competence standard and the method of assessment are inextricably linked, such as in the case of a musical performance). Thus, requiring all candidates to complete a written exam within three hours would lead to indirect discrimination²⁰ and discrimination arising from disability²¹ against people with fatigue conditions, physical impairments, or specific learning disabilities unless it could be shown that the three-hour time limit meets all the characteristics of a genuine competence standard (see 1.-6., above). This would be unlikely in most cases given the variety of methods of assessment already accepted within the University. It will generally be difficult to demonstrate that the ability to make a written, time-constrained response is an integral and irreplaceable component of any standards applied in order to determine whether a student has achieved the required level of competence or ability. Failure to make adjustments to the mode of assessment for disabled students could therefore give rise to claims of discrimination, including a failure to make reasonable adjustments. In contrast, a method of assessment which required candidates to demonstrate synoptic knowledge of material studied over the course of one or two years is likely to be regarded as an acceptable competence standard. However, a method of assessing this knowledge which requires high levels of stamina in order to complete a number of papers within a limited time scale would not be justifiable.

¹⁸ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/54>

¹⁹ ICDS (Inclusive Curriculum for Disabled Students) Guide and Briefing Series: 'Competence Standards', IMPACT Associates and the University of Westminster, 2009

²⁰ 'Indirect discrimination' occurs when a policy, criterion or practice applied equally to all students has the effect of putting disabled students at a substantial disadvantage and is unlawful unless it can be justified as a 'proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim'.

²¹ 'Discrimination arising from disability' occurs where a person is treated less favourably as a result of his or her disability and the treatment cannot be justified.

Examples of what would and would not be likely to be considered competence standards

The requirement for students studying for a law degree to demonstrate a particular standard of knowledge of certain areas of law in order to obtain the degree is a competence standard.

It matches all the characteristics of a genuine competence standard (see 1.-6., above).
In contrast:

The requirement for students studying for a law degree to demonstrate a particular standard of knowledge of certain areas of law **within a certain period of time** in order to obtain the degree is likely not to be a competence standard.

This is because the competence being tested is not the ability to do something within a limited time period.

Sometimes the process of demonstrating whether a competence standard has been achieved is inextricably linked to the standard itself. Here, the passing of an assessment may be conditional upon having a practical skill or ability, which must be demonstrated by completing and passing a practical test. Therefore, in relatively rare circumstances, the ability to take the test may itself amount to a competence standard:

Being able to undertake a practical exam in medicine to demonstrate competence in dissection is a competence standard.

Similarly:

Being able to undertake an oral exam in simultaneous interpretation between English and another language is a competence standard for a qualification in simultaneous interpreting.

In these cases, the ability to take the practical or oral exam is part of the standard.

It may not be possible to make reasonable adjustments to the assessment of some competence standards:

A student taking a course with a strong practical element, such as car maintenance, tree surgery or dentistry, could not replace practical assessments with a written assignment or instruct an assistant to do the task on their behalf.

In practice, many examples are less clear cut and require careful consideration. When deciding whether the prescribed form of assessment is **inextricably linked** to the demonstration of the competence standard, it may be necessary to navigate complex issues:

- Does the course lead to professional recognition?
- If so, will it be possible to provide similar adjustments in the work place?
- What does the relevant professional body say?

If the course leads to professional recognition, there may be professional requirements to meet (for example, in the case of medicine and veterinary science). Professional requirements may be linked to fitness to practice. Professional requirements may specifically preclude the use of alternative forms of assessment. In light of current legislation, professional bodies should have revised their standards to ensure that they are genuine competence standards. Nevertheless, it may be necessary to enter into discussion with professional bodies if it does not appear that their standards are non-discriminatory. Alternatively, many professional bodies may be at the forefront of good practice, as indicated by the General Medical Council's current published list of reasonable

adjustments, including reasonable adjustments to practical assessments, such as OSCEs²².

The following are examples which are unlikely to amount to competence standards in most cases:

- being able to cope with the demands of a course
- having good health and/ or fitness (if this is not relevant to the course)
- attendance requirements
- speaking or writing clearly (as in speaking distinctly and writing legibly)

How can the University avoid discrimination in relation to competence standards?

All students should be given the opportunity to demonstrate their competence in the most appropriate way for them. Universities can benefit from taking an anticipatory approach and reviewing course standards to determine whether they are genuine competence standards. This can be accomplished by:

- Identifying the specific purpose of each competence standard and examining how each standard achieves that purpose
- Considering the possible impact of each competence standard on disabled students and if there are any which have a negative impact, asking whether the application of the standard is absolutely necessary
- Reviewing the purpose and effect of each competence standard in the light of changing circumstances, such as developments in technology
- Examining whether the purpose for which the competence standard is applied could be achieved without adverse impact on disabled people
- Documenting the manner in which these issues have been addressed, the conclusions that have been reached and the reasons for those conclusions
- Publishing course competence standards in marketing materials and course handbooks so that applicants and students are aware of what is required and can make informed choices

Further advice and support

Current University processes for implementing reasonable adjustments (Alternative Examination Arrangements; AEAs) are here: www.bristol.ac.uk/exams/alternative/

There are currently two routes for students to AEAs – either (1) by applying with evidence directly to their School via their School Disability Coordinator:

www.bristol.ac.uk/disability-services/staff-professionals/school-disability/coordinators.html

or (2) by submitting evidence to Disability Services and meeting with a Disability Adviser to have a Disability Support Summary prepared (see below). This second route has some advantages for the student in that it provides Disability Services with the opportunity to:

- make broader recommendations for reasonable adjustments to course delivery beyond assessment (for example, adjustments to teaching and the provision of library services)
- open up a dialogue with the academic School about support for that student

Disability Services provides recommendations for reasonable adjustments via students' Disability Support Summaries. These recommendations are based on the contents of students' externally-conducted assessments (such as GP/ Consultant reports, Educational Psychologist and Specialist Teacher reports), on the summary recommendations contained in externally conducted, quality-assured Needs Assessments, on discussion

²² <http://www.gmc-uk.org/education/undergraduate/appendix.asp>

with the student, the involvement of the Faculty/ School in more complex cases, and on the professional judgement of the University's Disability Advisers. In all cases, recommendations documented in a Disability Support Summary are evidence-based. In making their recommendations, Disability Advisers have access to input from their professional body (National Association of Disability Practitioners²³) and are thus informed by practice across the UK HE sector.

Guidance on working with disabled students and on Disability Support Summaries can be found here: www.bristol.ac.uk/disability-services/staff-professionals/school-disability/supportsummaryguidance.pdf

Disability Services provides confidential advice and support to prospective and current disabled students and to University staff who support them. Disability Services can be contacted by email: disability-services-advice@bristol.ac.uk or see www.bristol.ac.uk/disability-services/

²³ <http://nadp-uk.org/>

Annex 7

University Policy for the External Examining of Taught Programmes

This Policy summarise the University's expectations for the conduct of external examining of taught programmes. This Policy can be found on the Academic Quality and Partnerships Office (AQPO) website: www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/assessment/exexs/.

External examining provides a crucial means for maintaining academic standards and is an integral part of the University's Quality Framework. This policy is consistent with Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) current guidelines, in particular with Chapter B7: External Examining (www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Pages/Quality-Code-Chapter-B7.aspx#.VSaDFvnF-UY).

The University has its own internal quality assurance procedures for the processing and consideration of assessment marks, and attaches great importance to peer review from colleagues in other academic institutions, professional bodies and industry.

The duties and responsibilities of individual external examiners will be based on their role to act as independent and impartial advisors providing informed comment on academic standards set, (including those associated with Professional and Statutory Bodies where appropriate) and student achievement in response to those standards.

The purposes of the external examiner system are to help ensure that:

- the University is maintaining the threshold academic standards set for its awards in accordance with the frameworks for higher education qualifications and applicable subject benchmark statements, and that the standards of student performance are properly judged against this;
- the assessment process measures student achievement against the intended learning outcomes, and is rigorous, fairly operated, and in line with University policies and regulations;
- that the assessment process is fair and is fairly operated in the marking, grading and classification of student performance, and that decisions are made in accordance with University regulations;
- the University is able to compare the standard of awards with those in other higher education institutions;
- programmes and units are well structured and balanced with appropriate content;
- good practice and innovation relating to learning, teaching and assessment is identified and shared.

Note: Use of the word school in this document can also relate to departments or centres.

1. Appointment

The responsibility for external examiner appointments

- 1.1. Senate regulates University examinations and recommends external examiners for appointment by the Board of Trustees. In practice, Senate delegates responsibility for approving appointments of external examiners to the appropriate Faculty Board.
- 1.2. It is normally the responsibility of Heads of Schools to monitor all appointments and to ensure adherence to the appointment procedures for external examiners. Heads of

School or their nominees, after consultation with colleagues, will use their academic judgement in undertaking this responsibility.

The requirement for external examiners

- 1.3. External examiners provide impartial and independent advice on academic standards and on student achievement. At least one external examiner must be appointed for each subject or group of subjects forming part of a programme leading to an award of the University.

Criteria for the appointment of an external examiner (person specification)

- 1.4. An external examiner should meet the following criteria:
 - 1.4.1. Knowledge and understanding of UK academic standards and of the assurance and enhancement of quality;
 - 1.4.2. Relevant academic qualifications, or where appropriate professional qualifications and/or extensive practitioner experience;
 - 1.4.3. Breadth of knowledge and standing within the subject to demonstrate credibility to peers;
 - 1.4.4. Competence and experience in the areas covered by the programme (or parts thereof) and of assessment methods appropriate to the subject;
 - 1.4.5. Competence and experience of the standards expected of students to achieve the award and of the enhancement of the student learning experience;
 - 1.4.6. Awareness of current developments in curricula design and delivery;
 - 1.4.7. Fluency in English, and for programmes that are delivered and assessed in languages other than English, fluency in the relevant language(s); and
 - 1.4.8. Where appropriate, any additional criteria set by professional, statutory or regulatory bodies.
- 1.5. Individuals who have retired may be appointed but they should provide sufficient evidence of continuing involvement in the academic area in question, and with current developments in higher education learning, teaching and assessment.
- 1.6. The school must check that the incoming external examiner should not hold an unreasonable number of other external examiner appointments. It is recommended that there should not be more than two appointments at any one time.

Avoiding reciprocal and long-standing arrangements

- 1.7. It is important for schools to ensure that they do not put in place reciprocal arrangements between cognate programmes with another institution. Schools must refer to the list detailing where their own staff act as external examiners, to avoid this occurring.
- 1.8. The Head of School is responsible for ensuring an accurate record is kept of the institutions where school members of staff are currently acting as external examiners. This list should be available upon request.
- 1.9. Where there is more than one external examiner covering a programme/s, the incoming external examiner should not be from the same department in the same institution as any other external examiner covering the programme/s.

1.10. The incoming external examiner should not be from the same department in the same institution as the outgoing external examiner.

Conflicts of interest

1.11. The nominated external examiner and members of the school involved in the nomination should declare, using the Nomination Form, any conflicts of interests that should be given due consideration before the nominated external examiner can be formally appointed; these include:

- 1.11.1. Significant involvement in recent or current substantive collaborative research activities with a member of staff closely involved in the delivery, management or assessment of the programme(s) or modules in question
- 1.11.2. Having a near relative as student or member of staff in the school
- 1.11.3. Personal association with sponsorship of students in the school
- 1.11.4. Involvement in assessing colleagues who are recruited as students to the programme
- 1.11.5. Holding a position which may have significant influence on the future of students on the programme
- 1.11.6. Membership of the University of Bristol Court or the Board of Trustees.
- 1.11.7. Employment with one of the University's collaborative partners

1.12. The incoming external examiner should not have been an external examiner for a taught programme at the University of Bristol for at least five years.

1.13. Former staff (including those with honorary appointments) and students of the University of Bristol can only be appointed as external examiners after a lapse of at least five years.

Exceptions and special cases

1.14. Where there is a legitimate reason for making an appointment that does not fulfil all of the criteria (Section 1.4), the details should be set out in the Nomination Form and approved by the Faculty Board. This consideration may be assisted where there are other external examiners on a programme, so that the proposed appointee's expertise is complemented by that of others. Where a proposed appointee does not fully fit the criteria, appropriate induction and support should be provided.

1.15. There may be exceptions when addressing nominations for external examiners in small and specialist subjects where the pool of potential external examiners is limited. This should be set out in the Nomination Form and approved by the Faculty Board.

1.16. The Faculty Board must give close consideration to any proposed exceptions and special cases before giving approval to the nomination. The University Academic Quality and Standards Committee maintains an overview at University level of all cases where approval of exceptions and special cases have been given.

Duration

1.17. The normal period of appointment of external examiners for undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes is four years (for the MBChB, BDS and BVSc it is five years). This does not preclude schools appointing external examiners for a shorter period of time if that is desirable for both parties.

- 1.18. The appointment may be exceptionally extended for a further one year period to ensure continuity, for example when a programme is coming to an end, with the permission of the Dean of the relevant faculty. This should be done using a Re-Appointment Form, found at www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/assessment/exexs/.
- 1.19. If an existing external examiner starts to examine another programme during his or her appointment, which must have faculty approval, the end date of the contract for both programmes will be after the initial four (or five) years. See also Section 5.8.

Ensuring appropriate coverage

- 1.20. The Head of School must ensure that a sufficient number of external examiners are appointed so that adequate expertise is available to cover all the major areas of the programme(s) being examined including the requirements of professional, statutory and regulatory bodies.
- 1.21. The Head of School must ensure an appropriate match between the numbers of external examiners and the quantity of material being examined.
- 1.22. Where there are multiple external examiners who moderate different parts of the programme, it may be advisable to appoint a senior external examiner whose role is to assure the quality of the assessment and academic standards across the whole programme.
- 1.23. Where there are specialist units requiring particular expertise, the school may appoint external examiners to act as external assessors. External assessors can carry out much of the work of an external examiner but covering only one unit or a limited set of units. The school must also have appointed an external examiner/s who is able to take more of an oversight of the whole programme. External assessors are not required to attend Boards of Examiners.

2. Induction and support

- 2.1. External examiners must receive appropriate induction and support. They must be provided with opportunities to familiarise themselves with the University, its assessment procedures, and with the extent and nature of their appointment as external examiners. External examiners will receive appropriate information as part of the appointment process (see Section 5.6). The school has a primary responsibility for ensuring that external examiners receive appropriate induction and support.
- 2.2. Where the external examiner has not acted in this role before for any institution, the school should ensure that the external examiner is provided with the appropriate support to carry out the role. Support might involve assigning a more experienced external examiner as mentor, or using a team of externals, if practicable. Where it is not possible to have more than one examiner acting at any one time, due to the size and nature of the programme/unit, the school might consider supporting the new appointment through training and mentoring by an experienced examiner in a different field.
- 2.3. Where more than one examiner is appointed to a programme or unit, the school is encouraged to phase new appointments to enable mentoring of new examiners. Where only one examiner is appointed or the phasing of new appointments has not been possible, a handover or shadowing of the outgoing examiner is encouraged.
- 2.4. An external examiner will normally be an academic from another UK higher education institution; but there are cases where someone from a professional, statutory or regulatory body or from industry is more appropriate. In these cases, the

school will need to provide additional appropriate support to enable these examiners to carry out the role.

- 2.5. Schools must provide external examiners with sufficient evidence to undertake the role effectively. Information, including samples of assessed work, must be sent to the external examiner within a reasonable timeframe so that they are able to engage in the process in an appropriate way.

3. Duties of the External Examiner

Quality Assurance role

- 3.1. External examiners should ensure the programmes/units are coherent, that they satisfy the University's credit framework and the outcomes are aligned with the relevant qualification descriptor set out in the applicable qualification framework, with reference to subject benchmark statements where applicable.
- 3.2. External examiners should quality assure the decisions in relation to the University's policy and procedures, ensuring that the types of assessment are appropriate for the subject, the students, the respective level of study and the expected outcomes, and suggest appropriate amendments where necessary.
- 3.3. External examiners should assure themselves that University procedures and regulations have been applied fairly and equitably.
- 3.4. External examiners should review and approve draft assessment and ensure that assessment criteria, marking schemes and arrangements for classification are set at an appropriate level.
- 3.5. Where applicable, external examiners should ensure that any additional professional, statutory and regulatory body (PSRB) requirements are reflected and satisfied by the programme.
- 3.6. External examiners will be provided with sufficient evidence to enable them to discharge their responsibilities.

External examiner feedback

- 3.7. External examiners are asked to comment and provide advice on matters of curriculum content, balance and structure, in so far as these affect the programme academic structure.
- 3.8. Schools should ensure that external examiners are made aware of the outcomes of their comments and advice.

Oral assessments

- 3.9. External examiners can find guidelines for conducting oral assessments in the Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Programmes. These guidelines specify that two examiners should be present during oral examinations; the external examiner could be one of these.

Reviewing assessed work

- 3.10. The external examiner should normally be asked to review a sample of assessed work to enable them to assure the institution is maintaining academic standards. Schools are required to ensure that student anonymity as set out in Section 14 of the Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Programmes is extended to any assessed work considered by the external examiner.

- 3.11. Schools/ Boards of Examiners should establish guidelines concerning the range of assessed student work that external examiners should sample as part of the quality assurance process and which should be brought specifically to the attention of the external examiners and, where appropriate, any additional evidence relating to the award of marks for that assessed work.
- 3.12. The external examiner has the right to request to see all assessments that contribute to the degree result.
- 3.13. The external examiner may be asked to adjudicate where there are disagreements between the internal examiners, although internal examiners should try to agree marks where possible and only send irreconcilable conflicts to the external examiner.

Detection of improper practice

- 3.14. If an internal or external examiner considers that a candidate has engaged in an improper assessment practice or other academic misconduct, the examiner should, as soon as possible, report the circumstances to the Chair of the appropriate Board of Examiners, who should follow the appropriate rules and regulations pertaining at that time.

External Examiner Reports

- 3.15. The external examiner must submit an annual Report, providing commentary and recommendations as appropriate on the conduct of the assessment processes, academic standards, assessment, and the curriculum design and delivery. Additionally, the external examiner is asked to highlight and comment on examples of good practice, innovation and enhancement opportunities provided to students.
- 3.16. External examiners should satisfy themselves that the school has given due consideration to any recommendations given in the previous year's Report, with any actions noted or rationale for the status quo. The school will respond formally through the Response Form process (see Section 5.22).
- 3.17. When the external examiner is submitting a Report for the final year of his/her period of appointment it is the opportunity for the examiner to write an overview of his/her experience at the University of Bristol. It should, therefore, include comment of the University's academic standards in the relevant subject and in particular any significant changes in standards over the appointment period.
- 3.18. The Report should be completed in English on the External Examiners' Report Form.
- 3.19. The completed External Examiner Report must not name or otherwise identify staff or students on the programme or unit as the Report will be made available to students on the University's Blackboard site (see Section 3.22).
- 3.20. The procedures for the submission of the Report are in Sections 5.9 to 5.11.

Disclosure of External Examiner Reports

- 3.21. External Examiner Reports will be made available by the University to various internal committees and groups and appropriate statutory and professional bodies. The Report can also be made available to members of the public under the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act. By signing the External Examiner Acceptance Form, the external examiner gives consent to such disclosure as the University considers appropriate. The External Examiner Report also includes a statement and declaration to allow disclosure.

- 3.22. The Report (and the Response Form) will also be made available to students via the University's Blackboard site.
- 3.23. Students are made aware of the identity and current position of external examiners appointed to their units, programmes and awards. Students are advised not to contact external examiners directly, and if an external examiner receives any direct contact from a student they should refer the matter to the Academic Quality and Partnerships Office.

Raising serious concerns

- 3.24. Should external examiners encounter particular problems during their term of office which they are unable to resolve with the appropriate academic staff and believe should be drawn to the attention of the Vice-Chancellor, they may submit a special report to him at any time.
- 3.25. The report should be addressed to the Vice-Chancellor and sent to the Academic Quality and Partnerships Office at Senate House, Tyndall Avenue, Bristol, BS8 1TH. The University shall provide a timely response to any confidential report received, which will describe the actions taken to address the concerns.
- 3.26. In the event that an external examiner has a serious concern relating to failings with academic standards and internal procedures and feels the Vice-Chancellor has not sufficiently addressed the concerns, the matter can be raised externally through HEFCE.

4. Boards of Examiners

See also the Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Programmes (www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/assessment/codeonline.html) for information about the conduct of Examination Boards.

- 4.1. External examiners are required to be notified of, and have the right to attend, the meetings of the Board of Examiners for all programmes which lead to a University award, and to which they have been appointed as external examiner. The external examiner should attend at least one meeting of the Board each academic year, as specified by the school. The external examiner should receive the minutes for meetings to which he or she does not attend.
- 4.2. External examiners should be informed of their role and the extent of their authority in terms of the Board of Examiners. All of those involved in the Board should be clear on the role of the external examiner.
- 4.3. Schools should ensure they give as much notice as possible to external examiners of the dates of Board of Examiners and other occasions on which they may be present. In the event that an external examiner cannot attend a specified meeting, the school should be informed as soon as possible in order to agree an alternative process:
- 4.3.1. Telephone conference or another means of incorporating the external examiner's views, and with the external examiner receiving relevant paperwork; or
- 4.3.2. An alternative and appropriate external examiner attends instead.
- 4.4. Where neither of these options are possible, the school should consult the relevant Faculty Education Director to consider appropriate actions.
- 4.5. The external examiner should endorse the recommendations for award classification by signing the completed student degree classification list. It is the schools

responsibility to ensure that the external examiner(s) sign the completed student degree classification list. The template of this document is provided by the Examinations Office.

5. External Examiner Procedures

Appointment procedures

- 5.1. The Faculty Board approves the appointment of External Examiners.
- 5.2. The school must complete an External Examiner Nomination Form, available at www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/assessment/exexs/ . This Policy and the Nomination Form give guidance on the factors to consider when making the nomination.
- 5.3. The Nomination Form should be signed by the nominated external examiner, the Head of School (or nominee) and the Faculty Dean (or nominee) and submitted to the Faculty Board.
- 5.4. Once approved, the completed Nomination Form must be sent to the Academic Quality and Partnerships Office, which is responsible for sending out appointment letters to the External Examiner. A copy of the letter will also be sent to the school for information.
- 5.5. The Academic Quality and Partnerships Office maintains a list of the University's external examiners, including an archive of nominations and appointments.

Information sent to the external examiner

- 5.6. When an external examiner is appointed, the Academic Quality and Partnerships Office will send him/her:
 - 5.6.1. a letter of appointment (including information on fees);
 - 5.6.2. a link to the electronic template of the External Examiner Report form;
 - 5.6.3. the name of the school contact person, nominated by the Head of School;
 - 5.6.4. a copy of the Policy for External Examining of Taught Programmes;
 - 5.6.5. a copy of the University's Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Programmes Rules for Assessment, Progression and the Award of a Qualification;
 - 5.6.6. information about where to find University strategies, policies and procedures and the framework for UK higher education including subject benchmark statements;
- 5.7. The relevant school will send him/her, as and when appropriate;
 - 5.7.1. details of the programme(s) and units on which the students are being assessed (including content, structure, learning outcomes & assessment methods, for instance through the student handbook);
 - 5.7.2. draft examinations papers and assessments and the proposed marking scheme(s), including, if appropriate, model answers and marking criteria;
 - 5.7.3. the relevant faculty and/or school assessment guidelines;
 - 5.7.4. any further information relevant to the discipline, e.g. fitness to practice guidelines;
 - 5.7.5. the fee/expense claim form and details of how to claim.

- 5.8. If there is faculty approval for an existing external examiner to cover another programme during his or her appointment (see Section 1.19), the Academic Quality and Partnerships Office will issue a new appointment letter confirming the extended coverage of the new programme.

External Examiner Reports

- 5.9. As set out in Section 3.15, all external examiners must submit an annual External Examiner Report Form. These Reports provide essential independent feedback and any recommendations are considered carefully by the University. External examiners who have only been involved for a partial part of the process, such as participation in a Board of Examiners as a replacement (as set out in Section 4.3.2), should also complete a Report or provide appropriate feedback on their participation by another written means. A suitable fee should also be paid for any participation in the external examiner process.
- 5.10. The Academic Quality and Partnerships Office will contact all external examiners annually by email and send them a copy of the External Examiner Report Form, found at: www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/assessment/exexs/ .
- 5.11. Reports must be submitted electronically in Microsoft Word format to exex-admin@bristol.ac.uk.

Reporting deadlines

- 5.12. It is recommended that the External Examiner Report is sent to the Academic Quality and Partnerships Office within four weeks of the final meeting of the Board of Examiners, and it must be sent by the following maximum deadlines:
- 5.12.1. 1st September (undergraduate programmes);
 - 5.12.2. 30th November (taught postgraduate programmes where the final meeting of the Board of Examiners is on or before the 1st November) or
 - 5.12.3. 31st January (taught postgraduate programmes where the final meeting of the Board of Examiners is after 1st November)
- 5.13. If the school is subject to external scrutiny (for example for professional accreditation) which requires the External Examiner Report to be submitted earlier than the normal deadline, the school must ensure that the external examiner is made aware of this earlier deadline.

Receipt and circulation of Reports

- 5.14. The Academic Quality and Partnerships Office logs receipt of the Reports and maintains a full record of Reports received as part University's Quality Framework. External examiners receive an email acknowledgement on receipt of their Report.
- 5.15. The Academic Quality and Partnerships Office will be responsible for forwarding Reports to:
- 5.15.1. Head(s) of School
 - 5.15.2. Director of Teaching and Learning OR Head of Education OR Programme Director(s)
 - 5.15.3. School Administrator(s)
- 5.16. It is the responsibility of the school to ensure that the External Examiner Report is circulated to all relevant staff including any unit and/or element leads.

5.17. The Academic Quality and Partnerships Office manages the upload of External Examiner Reports to the University's Blackboard site. Any part of a Report where an individual has been identified or in very exceptional cases where text has been included that could bring the University into disrepute will be redacted from the Blackboard version. The Response Form from the school will also be uploaded by the Academic Quality and Partnerships Office to demonstrate that any relevant action has been taken.

Overdue External Examiner Reports

5.18. The Academic Quality and Partnerships Office must receive the External Examiner Report by the relevant maximum deadline.

5.19. If the Report is not received by the deadline, the Academic Quality and Partnerships Office will write to the external examiner requesting receipt of the Report. It is a requirement for the external examiner to return the Report, and these Reports form a significant part of the University's Quality Framework. In addition, the fees of the external examiner should not be paid until the requirement to submit a satisfactorily completed Report has been met.

5.20. The school must continue to remind the external examiner regularly until the Report has been received. The Academic Quality and Partnership Office will work with the school to assist in this process.

5.21. If the Report is not returned in a timely manner, the Academic Quality and Partnership Office will contact the Head of School and then, if necessary, refer the matter to the relevant Faculty Education Director. The failure to submit Reports may lead to the early discontinuation of the appointment (see Section 8).

Receipt and circulation of Response Forms

5.22. When the External Examiner Report is forwarded to the Head of School, a copy of the Form for the School Response to an External Examiner's Report will be included (the Response Form is also available at www.bristol.ac.uk/academic-quality/assessment/exexs/). Using the Response Form, the school must provide a short overall response to the external examiner, followed by detailed individual responses to all recommendations and to any previous recommendations that the external examiner considers to be unresolved. This formal response to the external examiner is an important part of the feedback process, and must be completed and sent to the external examiner in a timely manner.

5.23. The Response Form must be sent to the external examiner and copied to the Academic Quality and Partnerships Office by email to exex-admin@bristol.ac.uk. The Academic Quality and Partnerships Office will log receipt of the Response Form and will retain a copy of the form for use as part of the University's Quality Framework. The Response Form (and the External Examiner Report) will also be made available to students via the University's Blackboard site.

5.24. It is recommended that the Response Form is sent to the external examiner and to the Academic Quality and Partnerships Office within four weeks of receipt of the Report, and it must be sent by the following maximum deadlines:

5.24.1. 1st October for undergraduate Reports

5.24.2. 10th January for taught postgraduate Reports received on or before 30th November

5.24.3. 1st March for taught postgraduate Reports received on or before 31st January

5.25. Reports that are received late (see Report deadlines in Section 5.12) may receive a delayed response.

5.26. If the Academic Quality and Partnerships Office does not receive the School Response Form by the appropriate maximum deadline, the Head of School will be contacted with a request for the Form to be submitted within one week and, if necessary, the matter will be referred to the relevant Faculty Education Director, who should notify the Dean. If a response is still not made to the external examiner, the matter will be further escalated to the relevant Academic Director, who may involve the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Education and Students).

5.27. Once the school has completed and returned the Response Form to the external examiner the school should check with the external examiner that s/he is satisfied with that response. The school may make an initial response to the external examiner on the Response Form and then provide an update at a later date on any actions undertaken, for example after the APR meeting.

Uploads to Blackboard and oversight by the Academic Quality and Partnerships Office

5.28. The External Examiner Report and the Response Form will be uploaded to the University's Blackboard site at the same time so that a complete set of information is shared with students.

5.29. Before uploading the Report and Form, the Academic Quality and Partnerships Office will verify that the points raised by external examiners are addressed appropriately in the response. Any possible discrepancies will be brought to the attention of the Head of School in the first instance. If the possible discrepancies are not clarified / addressed and notified to the Academic Quality and Partnerships Office within one week, the matter will be referred to the relevant Faculty Education Director, who should notify the Dean. If the matter is not resolved, it will be further escalated to the relevant Academic Director, who may involve the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Education and Students).

Annual summary report

5.30. The Academic Quality and Partnerships Office will prepare an annual summary report highlighting themes arising from the University's External Examiner Reports. This summary report will be reviewed by the University Academic Quality and Standards Committee to highlight good practice examples and to take forward any actions at University level. The annual summary report is regarded as confidential but will be made available to various internal committees and groups, and to appropriate statutory and professional bodies.

6. Data protection and commercial confidentiality

6.1. Schools and external examiners should be fully aware of information security when exchanging draft exam papers and other draft forms of assessment, see www.bris.ac.uk/infosec/.

6.2. All personal data supplied by the external examiner for the purpose of his or her appointment and subsequently his or her engagement as an external examiner will be held securely and for no longer than necessary.

6.3. The University will use this data for communication about and payment of fees and expenses and for any other necessary communications. This data may be shared, if

necessary, with schools of the University. The University will not disclose external examiners' contact details or any other personal details to third parties (i.e. outside the University) without the consent of external examiners.

- 6.4. External examiners should ensure that Reports do not name or otherwise identify individual students on the programme or unit.
- 6.5. It is the responsibility of the Head of School to ensure that any potential intellectual property issues that may require commercial confidentiality agreements (i.e. industrial placements) be resolved in consultation with the Faculty Office and Secretary's Office prior to the appointment being made.

7. Fees and Expenses

- 7.1. Payment of external examiners' fees and expenses is the responsibility of the school (or the faculty in some cases). There are University-level guidelines on setting fee levels, but the relevant school has the discretion to determine the appropriate fee payable for each external examiner. The level of fee paid to an external examiner should be taken into account if a school is considering whether to ask him/her to take on additional tasks.
- 7.2. External examiners will be provided with a fee/expense claim form which should be completed and returned to the school. Any queries related to fees or expenses will be addressed by the school.

8. Discontinuation of appointment

- 8.1. The appointment of an external examiner may be discontinued by the University or the individual examiner before the completion of his/her period of appointment.
- 8.2. If an external examiner wishes to resign from his or her appointment, this would normally be after the External Examiner Report has been satisfactorily completed at the end of the annual cycle, where there is a natural break in activity. In these cases, the external examiner must inform the Head of School in writing before the end of the academic year (31 July).
- 8.3. If the external examiner wishes to resign during the academic year, he or she must do so in writing to the Head of School, giving a three month notice period.
- 8.4. Where an external examiner resigns prior to the expiry of the appointed term the appropriate school is responsible for obtaining written confirmation of the resignation, advising the Academic Quality and Partnerships Office and nominating a replacement.
- 8.5. In the event of unsatisfactory performance, the University reserves the right to terminate the appointment at any time. Unsatisfactory performance could cover a range of issues, including the failure to attend appropriate examination boards without making alternative arrangements and the failure to submit completed Reports. A termination of the appointment may also be necessary where a conflict of interest arises during the term of office.
- 8.6. The decision to discontinue shall be based on a statement (usually from the Head of School) detailing the proposed grounds for discontinuation and submitted to the Academic Quality and Partnerships Office. The final decision to discontinue will be made by the Dean. The Academic Quality and Partnerships Office will inform the external examiner in writing of the decision and it will be reported to the school and to the relevant Faculty Board.

This Policy was revised and approved by University Academic Quality and Standards Committee in March 2016, with further amendments approved in May 2016.

Guidance for Faculties on Classifying Extenuating Circumstances

All circumstances should be considered by the Extenuating Circumstances Committee (ECC).

In determining the classification of an extenuating circumstance, ECCs should consider whether the circumstance is:

- **Timely:** to what extent the circumstance has directly affected the assessment event, if at all;
- **Sufficiently severe:** so as to have a significant impact upon performance;
- **Unexpected:** whether the circumstance could not have been foreseen.

An extenuating circumstance may relate to a student's physical health, mental wellbeing and/or be of a circumstantial/ personal nature.

Consideration of students who develop mental health issues must be made with reference to the University's Policy on Student Mental Health and that "reasonable adjustments" will be made "to enable individual students to participate and engage in all aspects of university life".

Types of extenuating circumstance

A student may have or develop either a **chronic** circumstance or an **acute** impairment/episode. A student may also have a chronic condition, from which an acute episode is experienced.

Chronic: where the student develops or enrolls with a particular ongoing circumstance that is experienced over a significant duration such that their learning as well as their performance in assessment is affected. In relevant cases, the University will accommodate the student by establishing and implementing a Disability Support Summary (e.g. extra time in examinations) in order to help them with their studies until they complete their programme. Where this is the case, the circumstance should not be considered by the Extenuating Circumstances Committee, unless there are further adverse developments, an additional new condition develops, or the condition is such that it could be expected to impact the student's performance notwithstanding support and any reasonable adjustments that have been made.

Chronic cases may lead to a suspension of studies where the level of severity causes a sustained disruption on the programme.

Acute: where the student unexpectedly experiences a circumstance or event of a short duration and for a defined period of time, such that they are unable to attend or their performance in assessment is substantially affected by circumstances beyond their control.

Such cases may be able to be accommodated within the assessment process, for example, allowing the student more time to complete coursework and examinations. Retaking of the unit as a first attempt may also be considered appropriate.

Classifying an extenuating circumstance

As well as indicating the type of circumstance, an ECC should operate within four bands of classification: mild, moderate, serious and severe.

Mild

Circumstances that are perceived as having had a minimal effect on the assessment process. This classification would normally be reached if the circumstance:

- was mild in its severity such that it did not have a substantive impact on performance in assessment, and/or;
- could have been foreseen, and/or;
- was experienced at a time that did not directly affect the assessment or significantly affect the student's learning.

Extenuating circumstances classified in this category normally relate to physical health and circumstantial events.

This classification would normally result in no change being made.

A typical example may include:

- Common (or 'day-to-day') illnesses such as a common cold

Moderate

Circumstances that are perceived as having had a moderate effect on the assessment process. This classification would normally be reached if the circumstance:

- was sufficient in its severity as to have a moderate impact on performance in assessment, and/or;
- could not have been foreseen (with the exception of known, managed chronic medical or mental health conditions), and/or;
- was experienced within the assessment period or immediately preceding it.

This classification acknowledges that the student's performance in assessment was affected by the ECs and that appropriate action should be taken in mitigation.

Typical examples may include:

- Sustained common illness, such as a lower respiratory tract infection, during the assessment period, including on the day of the assessment
- Acute medical episode, such as gastroenteritis, experienced immediately preceding the assessment period
- Chronic medical condition, such as glandular fever, which is managed but still acutely affects performance in assessment
- Mental health difficulty, such as generalised anxiety disorder, which is being managed, but still acutely affects performance in assessment
- Being involved in a road traffic incident that, whilst does not cause any injury, prevents the student from attending an examination

Serious

Circumstances that are perceived as having a serious effect on the assessment process. This classification would normally be reached if the circumstance:

- was sufficient in its severity as to have a substantial impact on performance in assessment, and/or;

- could not have been foreseen (with the exception of known, managed chronic medical or mental health conditions), and/or;
- occurs during or immediately preceding the assessment period, or during the teaching period such that the student's learning has been significantly affected.

This classification acknowledges that the student's performance in assessment was affected by the ECs and that appropriate action should be taken in mitigation.

Typical examples may include:

- Acute medical condition, such as gastroenteritis, experienced during the assessment period / on the day of the assessment that prevents attendance
- A medical condition that prevents the student from reasonably undertaking a specific form of assessment (e.g. broken wrist for a musical recital)
- Complex mental health difficulties that are not being positively controlled/managed or are difficult to manage, which may also be manifesting in a physical way
- Being the victim of a distressful non-violent crime during or immediately preceding the assessment period

Severe

Circumstances that are perceived as having a severe effect on the assessment process. This classification would normally be reached if the circumstance:

- was extreme in its severity as to have a significant impact on performance in assessment, and/or;
- could not have been foreseen, and/or;
- occurs during or immediately preceding the assessment period, or during the teaching period such that the student's learning has been severely compromised, normally due to significant absence or non-engagement.

This classification acknowledges that the student's performance in assessment was affected by the ECs and that appropriate action should be taken in mitigation.

Typical examples may include:

- Severe physical trauma during or preceding the assessment period where a student has been admitted to hospital
- Emerging complex mental health difficulties, which are yet to be controlled by professional support
- Severe mental trauma
- Death of a close friend or immediate family member

Note: the examples here are provided purely as a guide, since, by their nature, any one circumstance may range in its complexity and in its effects on an individual student. Each case should therefore be judged on its own merits.

Annex 9

Guidance on making awards to students who are unable to complete all the necessary assessment

1. This guidance should be read in conjunction with Ordinance 18.
2. The purpose of Ordinance 18 is to give Examination Boards the discretion to make awards to students who they consider would have gained them but for serious circumstances that have prevented them from completing all the assessment normally necessary.
3. Ordinance 18 does not form part of the examination regulations and a student's extenuating circumstances should be considered in the normal manner before the application of the Ordinance is contemplated. The Ordinance should only be applied to students who would not qualify for the award after this process and where it would be impossible for the student to take supplementary assessments in the foreseeable future. The Ordinance should not be used in order to expedite graduation of a student who is likely to be able to take supplementary assessment in the future. The Ordinance is also not a mechanism by which degree class or its equivalents may be adjusted.
4. After considering a student's extenuating circumstances, an examination board should apply each of the four tests set out in the Ordinance. If all of these tests are passed, then the Faculty Examination Board may make the award based on the assessments that contribute to the award and have been completed notwithstanding the incomplete assessment. The case for the final award should be detailed in the Examination Board minutes. Where there is not sufficient evidence for a student to be given the award for which they are registered, an examination board may consider an alternative applicable award e.g. a student studying for a Masters degree may be considered for an Honours Bachelors degree, though the same tests must be satisfied.
5. Where, after a student's extenuating circumstances have been considered, a student is unable to qualify for the award to which they were studying, there is no prospect of he or she resuming their studies in the foreseeable future, and there is insufficient evidence of achievement at the right level for the usual award to be made, a Faculty Examination Board may determine there is enough evidence that a student would have gone on to achieve an award but for their circumstances; on this basis it may make an aegrotat award. This is always an unclassified award and cannot be made where it would imply that the candidate would be able to practise in a professional capacity. When this award is made then the case must be detailed in the Examination Board minutes. The award is subject to its acceptance by the student or their next-of-kin if they are deceased.

Annex 10

Flow diagram to show options for the progression and completion of students on taught modular programmes

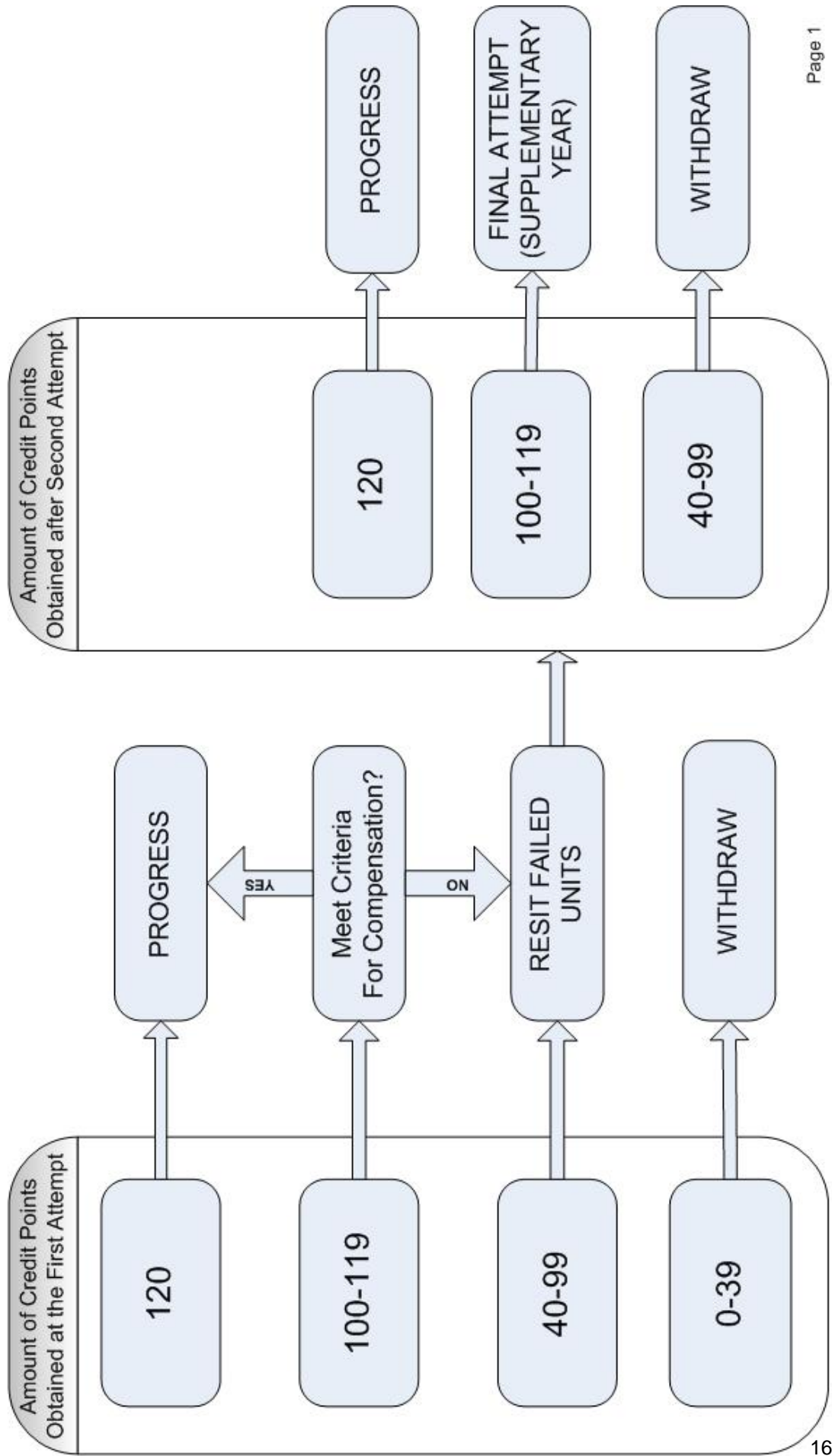
These flow diagrams are for illustrative purposes only and must be read in conjunction with the relevant regulations that are set out in this Code.

The flow diagrams for progression and completion in an undergraduate modular programme represents a typical Honours Bachelors or Integrated Masters programme; they do not therefore reflect programme-specific regulations with regard to must-pass units and conditional progression.

The flow diagrams for progression and completion in a taught postgraduate programme represents a typical Masters programme where the taught component is 120 and the dissertation 60 credit points. The flow diagrams do not therefore represent the MRes or MSc in Social Work.

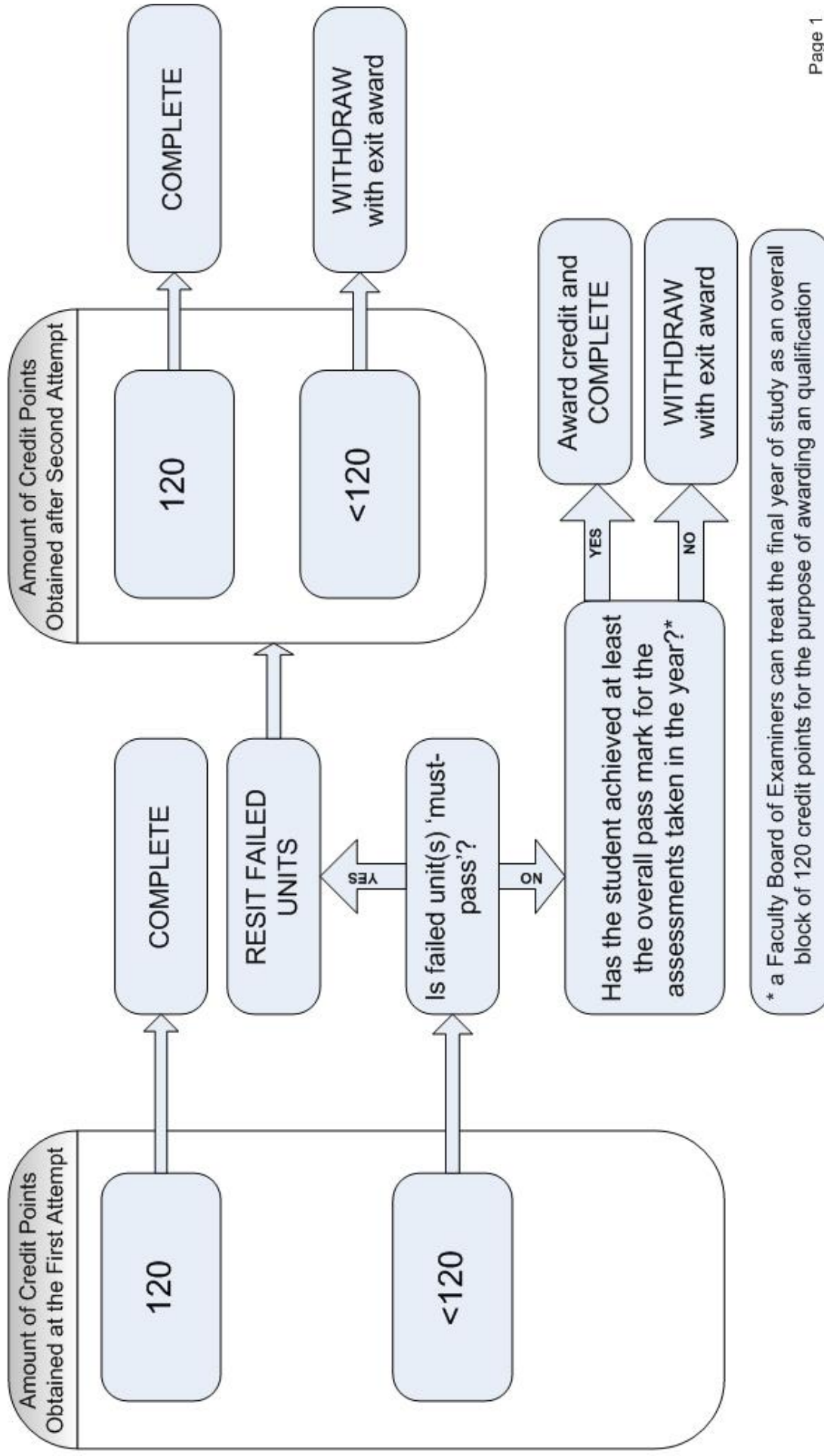
Flow Diagram for Student Progression in Undergraduate Modular Programmes

For newly registered students starting in and after 2011/12

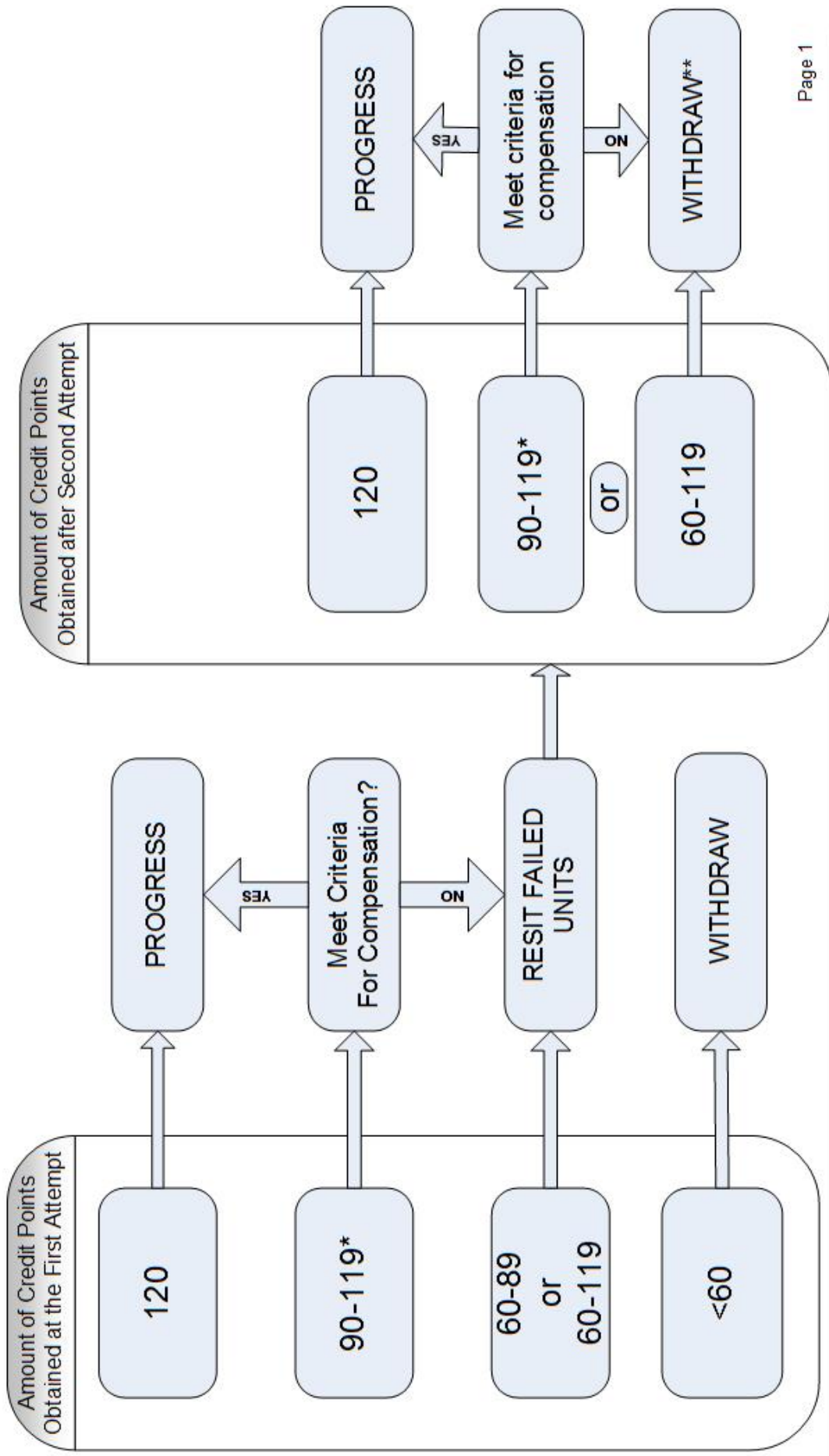


Flow Diagram for Completion in the Final Year of Study in Undergraduate Modular Programmes

For newly registered students starting in and after 2011/12

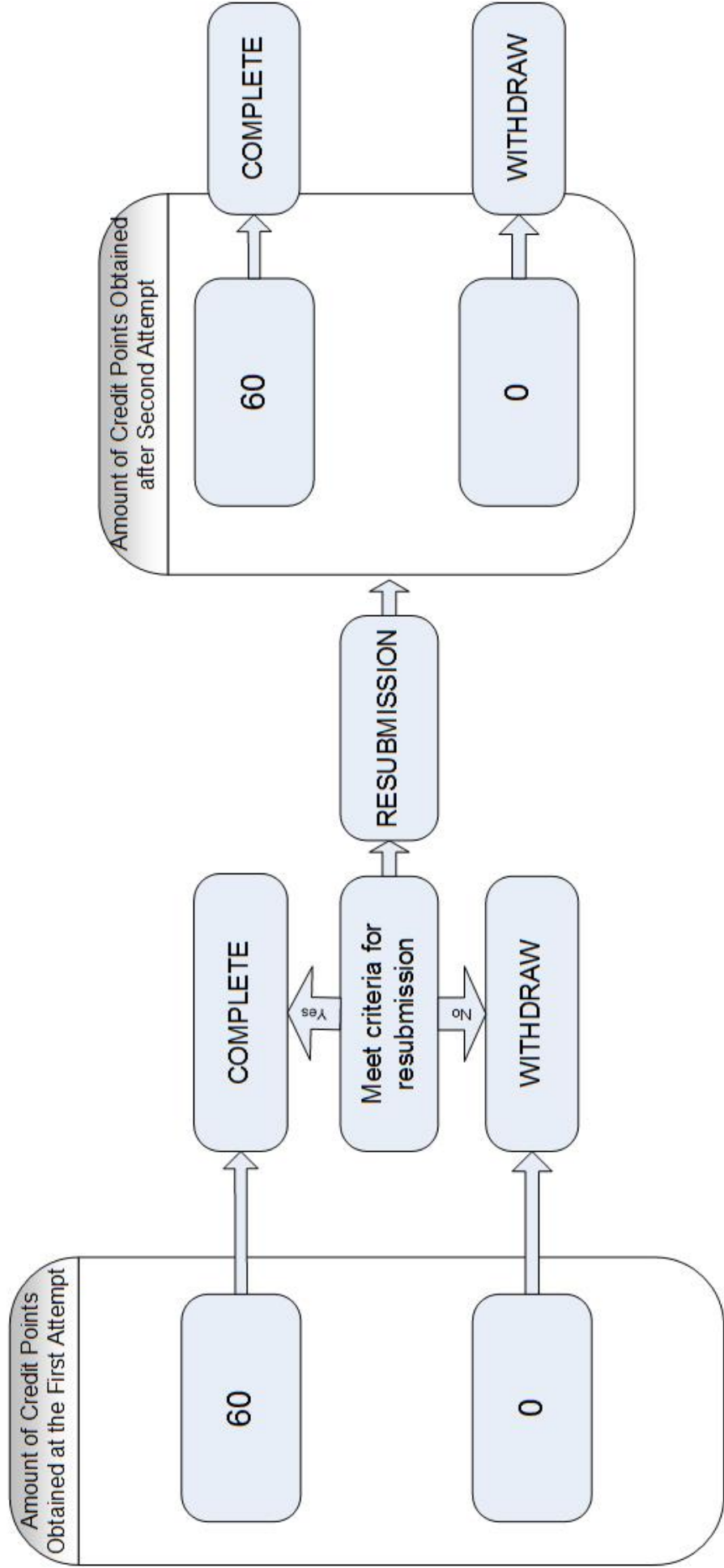


Flow Diagram for Student Progression to the Taught Component in Taught Postgraduate Master's Programmes



* A programme may apply compensation at either the first or the second attempt.
 ** A Board of Examiners may, exceptionally, permit a final opportunity to be assessed, normally as part of supplementary year.

Flow Diagram for Completion of the Dissertation Stage in Taught Postgraduate Master's Programmes



Annex 11

Calculating the Unit Mark, Year Mark, Taught Component Mark, Final Programme Mark and Degree Classification in Taught Programmes

The following examples are intended to assist by applying the rules to a set of hypothetical run of marks

EXAMPLE 1 is a student on an integrated MSci undergraduate programme

1. Calculation of unit mark

The summative assessment for a notional unit 1 consists of:

- Essay (40%),
- Unseen written exam (40%),
- Oral presentation (20%).

The final unit mark is calculated from the assessment marks (all marked on the 0-100 scale) thus:

| <i>Level 4-6 unit (pass mark of 40/100)</i> | Essay (40%) | Unseen written exam (40%) | Oral exam (20%) | Final unit mark |
|---|--------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------|---|
| Score (out of 100) | 68 | 59 | 72 | |
| Weighted mark | 68 x 40 = 2720 | 59 x 40 = 2360 | 72 x 20 = 1440 | 2720 + 2360 + 1440 = 6520 6520/100= 65.2* (65) |

(If some assessments are marked on the 0-20 point scale section 12 of the Code explains how to calculate the unit mark).

So credit is awarded for unit 1 (assuming the student has fulfilled any other criteria) with a mark of 65.2 whilst the rounded mark of 65 is displayed.

2. Calculating the Year Mark for the Purposes of Progression

The 'year mark' needs to be calculated for the purposes of applying the progression rules in section 27 of the Code. This is done by averaging the unit marks following weighting (corresponding to the credit point value) where the notional unit marks in year 2 are:

| Level 5 units (pass mark 40/100) | UNIT 1 | UNIT 2 | UNIT 3 | UNIT 4 | UNIT 5 | Total |
|--|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|--|
| | (20cp) | (20cp) | (40cp) | (30cp) | (10cp) | (120cp) |
| Unit mark | 65.2 | 52.4 | 52.3 | 55.8 | 46.0 | |
| Unit mark for progression and the award of credit (to nearest integer) | Pass (65) | Pass (52) | Pass (52) | Pass (56) | Pass (46) | |
| Weighted unit mark - by credit value of each unit | 65.2 x 20 = 1304 | 52.4 x 20 = 1048 | 52.3 x 40 = 2092 | 55.8 x 30 = 1674 | 46.0 x 10 = 460 | 1304 + 1048 + 2092 + 1674 + 460 = 6578/120 = 54.816...* (55) |

*The result is rounded to the nearest integer to determine whether the student has achieved the required level of attainment to progress to the next year of study, so in this example the exact average is **54.816...** In order to determine progression to the next year of the programme on the basis of the student achieving the pass mark in each unit and achieving the programme requirement of a year mark of 55 or more out of 100 (see section 28 of the Code) - the year mark is rounded to the nearest integer i.e. **55** and progression is permitted.

3. Calculating the Final Programme Mark and Degree Classification

For this Integrated Masters programme, with study abroad the year of study weighting is 0:15:10:75 (see annex 12 for the agreed weightings by programme).

The final programme mark and degree classification is reached by calculating all the year marks (with credit point weighting – as in section 2 previously) and then applying the primary and secondary rules, as follows:

| Year 2 | | Year 3 | | Year 4 | |
|------------------|---------------|-------------|---------------|------------------|---------------|
| Unit Mark | Credit Points | Unit Mark | Credit Points | Unit Mark | Credit Points |
| 65.2 | 20 | 68.0 | 120 | 64.5 | 20 |
| 52.4 | 20 | | | 70.4 | 20 |
| 52.3 | 40 | | | 78.2 | 20 |
| 55.8 | 30 | | | 71.8 | 20 |
| 46.0 | 10 | | | 66.5 | 20 |
| | | | | 72.0 | 20 |
| 54.816... | 120 | 68.0 | 120 | 70.566... | 120 |

Application of Primary Rule

Apply the weighting (0:15:10:75) to the year marks, not the rounded year marks, to give a weighted year mark.

$$\text{Year 2} = 15 \times 54.816\dots = 822.24$$

$$\text{Year 3} = 10 \times 68.0 = 680$$

$$\text{Year 4} = 75 \times 70.566\dots = 5292.45$$

$$\text{All years} = 822.24 + 680 + 5292.45 = 6794.69 / 100 = \mathbf{67.9469}$$

Final programme mark is rounded to the nearest integer = **68**

As the final programme mark of **68** is within the classification boundary range for a first class degree (see section 30 of the Code) the secondary rule is applied.

Application of the Secondary Rule for Degree Classification

“If the final summative programme mark falls within the range of one of the classification boundaries, the higher degree classification will only be awarded if 50% or more of the individual unit marks, weighted by credit point value and year of study, which contribute to the degree classification are achieved at the higher class, otherwise the lower class will be awarded.”

Year 2

- 0 of 120 credit points in higher class
- Apply 15% weighting for the year of study = $0 \times 15 = 0$ weighted credit points

Year 3

- 0 of 120 credit points in higher class
- Apply 10% weighting for the year of study = $0 \times 10 = 0$ weighted credit points

Year 4

- 80 of 120 credit points in higher class
- Apply 75% weighting = $80 \times 75 = 6000$ weighted credit points

Add weighted credits - $0 + 0 + 6000 = 6000 / 100 = 60$ out of 120 total possible credit points. Thus 50% of the credits are in the higher classification and so the higher class (I) may be awarded.

EXAMPLE 2 – A student on a Bachelor of Arts undergraduate programme

1. Calculating the Unit Mark

The summative assessment for notional unit 1 consists of:

- Essay (40%),
- Unseen written exam (60%).

The final unit mark is calculated from the assessment marks (all marked on the 0-100 scale):

| Level 4-6 unit (pass mark 40/100) | Essay (40%) | Unseen written exam (60%) | Total unit mark |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|--|
| Score (out of 100) | 44 | 37 | |
| Weighted mark | 44 x 40 = 1760 | 37 x 60 = 2220 | 1760 + 2220 = 3980 3980/100 = 39.8* (40) |

(If some assessments are marked on the 0-20 point scale section 12 of the Code explains how to calculate the unit mark).

So credit is awarded for unit 1 (assuming the student has fulfilled any other criteria) with a mark of 39.8, whilst the rounded mark of 40 is displayed.

2. Calculating the Second Year Mark for the Purposes of Progression

The 'year mark' is calculated by averaging the unit marks following weighting (corresponding to the credit point value) where the notional unit marks for the second year of study are:

| Level 5 units (unit pass mark of 40 out of 100) | UNIT 1 | UNIT 2 | UNIT 3 | UNIT 4 | UNIT 5 | Total |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|---|
| | (20cp) | (20cp) | (20cp) | (30cp) | (30cp) | (120cp) |
| Unit mark | 39.8 | 45.8 | 39.4 | 42.2 | 41.0 | |
| For the award of credit and progression | Pass (40) | Pass (46) | Fail (39) | Pass (42) | Pass (41) | |
| Weighted mark (corresponding to credit point value) | 39.8 x 20 = 796 | 45.8 x 20 = 916 | 39.4 x 20 = 788 | 42.2 x 30 = 1266 | 41.0 x 30 = 1230 | 796 + 916 + 788 + 1266 + 1230 = 4996 4996/120 = 41.633... (42)* |

* The result mark is rounded to the nearest integer for the purposes of applying rules for progression.

This student has failed UNIT 3 (20 credit points) so the rule in section 28.13 of the Code may be considered:

- ✓ The volume of credit points failed (20) is within the specified amount permitted (20).
- ✓ The failed unit mark (39) is within the specified range of the pass mark (35-39).
- ✓ The rounded overall weighted average year mark (42) is at or higher than the weighted average pass mark of all the taught units taken in the year (40).
- ✓ Student meets all other criteria in 30.12 of the Code.

Therefore the board of examiners may permit the student to progress to the next year of study notwithstanding a failed unit mark.

3. Calculating the Final Programme Mark and Degree Classification

For the purposes of calculating the final programme mark and degree classification the year of study weighting for a Bachelors of Arts programme is 0:40:60 (see annex 12 for the agreed weightings by programme).

The final programme mark and degree classification is determined by calculating all the year marks (with credit point weighting) as in example 1 section 3 and then applying the primary and secondary rules:

| Year 2 | | Year 3 | |
|------------------|----------------------|------------------|----------------------|
| <i>Unit Mark</i> | <i>Credit Points</i> | <i>Unit Mark</i> | <i>Credit Points</i> |
| 39.8 | 20 | 55.8 | 20 |
| 45.8 | 20 | 62.4 | 20 |
| 39.4* | 20 | 58.1 | 20 |
| 42.2 | 30 | 57.0 | 60 |
| 41.0 | 30 | | |
| 41.633... | 120 | 57.883... | 120 |

* the unit mark is carried forward even though progression is permitted notwithstanding the failed unit mark.

Application of Primary Rule

Apply the weighting (0:40:60) to the year marks (not the rounded year marks):

Year 2 40 x 41.633... = 1665.32
 Year 3 60 x 57.883... = 3472.98
 All years 1665.32 + 3472.98 = 5138.3 / 100 = 51.383

Final programme mark is rounded to the nearest integer = **51**

The final programme mark of **51** is not within the classification boundary range so the secondary rule is not applied and a 2.2 is awarded.

EXAMPLE 3 – A student on taught postgraduate MSc programme

1. Calculating the Unit Mark

The summative assessment for notional unit 1 consists of:

- Essay (30%),
- Unseen written exam (40%),
- Practical (30%).

The final unit mark is calculated from the assessment marks (all marked on the 0-100 scale):

| Level 7 unit (pass mark 50/100) | Short essay (30%) | Unseen written exam (40%) | Practical (30%) | Total unit mark |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|---|
| Actual score | 60 | 49 | 59 | |
| Weighted mark | 60 x 30 = 1800 | 49 x 40 = 1960 | 59 x 30 = 1770 | 1800+1960+ 1770 = 5530 5530/100 = 55.3 (55) |

Credit may be awarded for the unit (assuming the student has fulfilled any other criteria), with a mark of 55.3, whilst the rounded mark of 55 is displayed.

(If some assessments are marked on the 0-20 point scale section 12 of the Code explains how to calculate the unit mark).

2. Calculating the Taught Component Mark for the Purposes of Progression

The average 'taught component mark' is calculated by averaging the actual unit marks following weighting according to the credit point value of the units:

| | UNIT 1 | UNIT 2 | UNIT 3 | UNIT 4 | UNIT 5 | Total |
|--|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------|--|
| | (20cp) | (20cp) | (40cp) | (20cp) | (20cp) | (120cp) |
| Level of unit (and associated pass mark/100) | 7 (50) | 6 (40) | 7 (50) | 7 (50) | 7 (50) | |
| Unit mark | 55.3 | 48.9 | 49.6 | 47.6 | 54.2 | |
| For the award of credit and progression | Pass (55) | Pass (49) | Pass (50) | Fail (48) | Pass (54) | |
| Weighted mark (corresponding to credit point value) | 55.3 x 20 = 1106 | 48.9 x 20 = 978 | 49.6 x 40 = 1984 | 47.6 x 20 = 952 | 54.2 x 20 = 1084 | 1106+ 978+ 1984 + 952+ 1084= 6104 6104/120= 50.866... (51)* |

* The result is rounded to the nearest integer for progression purposes.

The student has failed Unit 4 (20 credit points) with a mark of 48 while Unit 2 (level 6 with a pass mark of 40) has been passed with a mark of 49. Therefore the progression rule in section 37.13 of the Code may be considered:

- ✓ The volume of credit points failed (20) is within the specified amount permitted (30).
- ✓ The unit mark (48) is within the specified range of the pass mark (45-49).
- ✓ The year mark (51) at or higher than the weighted average pass mark for all the taught units, which in this example is 48.3* because of the mix of level 6 and 7 units which have different pass marks.

* the weighted average pass mark is calculated by averaging the pass marks for the units, weighted by volume of credit points, i.e. the sum of the calculation $(a / b \times c)$ for each unit where a is the pass mark, b is the total volume of credit points and c is the volume of credit points of the unit: $(50 \times 20) + (40 \times 20) + (50 \times 40) + (50 \times 20) + (50 \times 20) = 5800 / 120 = 48.333\dots$

- ✓ And meets all other criteria in 37.13 of the Code.

Therefore progression of the student to the dissertation stage is permitted notwithstanding the failed unit mark.

3. Calculating the Final Programme Mark and Degree Classification

The final programme mark is calculated by averaging the unit marks following weighting (corresponding to the credit point value):

| | UNIT 1 | UNIT 2 | UNIT 3 | UNIT 4 | UNIT 5 | DISS | Total |
|---|------------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|--|
| | (20cp) | (20cp) | (40cp) | (20cp) | (20cp) | (60cp) | (180cp) |
| Level of unit (and corresponding pass mark/100) | 7 (50) | 6 (40) | 7 (50) | 7 (50) | 7 (50) | 7 (50) | |
| Unit mark | 55.3 | 48.9 | 49.6 | 47.6 | 54.2 | 59.5 | |
| For the award of credit | Pass (55) | Pass (49) | Pass (50) | Fail (48) | Pass (54) | Pass (60) | |
| Weighted mark (corresponding to credit point value) | 55.3 x 20 = 1106 | 48.9 x 20 = 978 | 49.6 x 40 = 1984 | 47.6 x 20 = 952 | 54.2 x 20 = 1084 | 59.5 x 60 = 3570 | 1106+978+1984+952+1084+3570 = 9674/180= 53.744... (54)* |

*The overall programme mark is rounded to the nearest integer and the Masters degree is awarded on the basis of the final programme mark of **54**.

Annex 12

Agreed Weightings, by Faculty, to be applied for the Purposes of Calculating the Final Programme Mark and Degree Classification in Undergraduate Programmes

| Faculty | Type of Programme | | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|--|
| | Bachelors three year honours degree | Bachelors four year honours degree with a year in Industry or Study Abroad | Integrated four years Masters degree | Integrated four years Masters degree with year in Industry or Study Abroad |
| Arts | 0:40:60 | 0:30:10:60 | 0:10:40:50 | 0:15:10:75 |
| Engineering | 0:25:75 | 0:15:10:75 | 0:10:40:50 | 0:15:10:75 |
| Biomedical Sciences | 0:25:75 | 0:15:10:75 | 0:10:40:50 | 0:15:10:75 |
| Science (by school) | | | | |
| <i>Biological Sciences</i> | 0:25:75 | - | - | - |
| <i>Chemistry</i> | 0:25:75 | 0:15:10:75 | 0:10:40:50 | 0:15:10:75 |
| <i>Earth Sciences</i> | 0:25:75 | - | 0:10:40:50 | 0:15:10:75 |
| <i>Experimental Psychology</i> | 0:40:60 | - | - | - |
| <i>Geographical Sciences</i> | 0:25:75 | 0:15:10:75 | 0:10:40:50 | 0:15:10:75 |
| <i>Mathematics</i> | 0:25:75 | 0:15:10:75 | 0:10:40:50 | 0:15:10:75 |
| <i>Physics</i> | 0:25:75 | 0:15:10:75 | 0:10:40:50 | 0:15:10:75 |
| Social Sciences and Law (by school) | | | | |
| <i>Sociology, Politics and International Studies*</i> | 0:40:60 (0:25:75) | 0:30:10:60 (0:15:10:75) | 0:20:30:50 | - |
| <i>Policy Studies**</i> | 0:40:60 (0:25:75) | 0:15:10:75 | 0:20:30:50 | - |
| <i>Economics, Finance and Management</i> | 0:40:60 | 0:30:10:60 | 0:20:30:50 | - |
| <i>Law</i> | 0:40:60 | 0:30:10:60 | - | - |

* The weighting for classifying undergraduate honours degrees in the School of Sociology, Politics and International Studies applies to new entrants from 2015/16. The weightings for entrants prior to this date are in parentheses.

** The weighting for classifying undergraduate honours degrees in the School of Policy Studies applies to new entrants from 2016/17. The weightings for entrants prior to this date are in parentheses.

Generic Weightings for the Differing Programmes to be applied for the Purposes of Calculating the Final Programme Mark and Degree Classification in Undergraduate Programmes

| Programme | Weighting of years |
|---|--------------------------------|
| Aegrotat degree (unclassified) | N/A |
| Ordinary degree (unclassified) | N/A |
| Bachelors honours degree by intercalation | 0:0:100 |
| Bachelors three year honours degree <ul style="list-style-type: none"> for subjects where there is an emphasis on the incremental skills, knowledge and understanding that will be accumulated during the programme, the weighting rule gives a significantly higher weighting to the final year. for subjects in which a more balanced weighting is deemed appropriate with some recognition of progression. | 0:25:75 or 0:40:60 |
| Bachelors four year honours degree that includes and requires study abroad or in industry (i.e. away from the University) for one academic year <ul style="list-style-type: none"> for subjects where there is an emphasis on the incremental skills, knowledge and understanding that will be accumulated during the programme, the weighting rule gives a significantly higher weighting to the final year. for subjects in which a more balanced weighting is deemed appropriate with some recognition of progression. | 0:15:10:75 or 0:30:10:60 |
| Integrated four year masters degree (spent entirely at Bristol) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> for subjects where there is an emphasis on the incremental skills, knowledge and understanding that will be accumulated during the programme, the weighting rule gives a significantly higher weighting to the final years of study for subjects in which a more balanced weighting is deemed appropriate with some recognition of progression. | 0:10:40:50 or 0:20:30:50 |
| Integrated four year masters degree that includes and requires study abroad or in industry (i.e. away from the University) for one academic year | 0:15:10:75 |
| Integrated five year masters degree that includes and requires study abroad or in industry (i.e. away from the University) for one academic year | 0:10:10:30:50 |
| Professional five year undergraduate programmes | N/A |

Annex 13

Applying recognised prior learning to the calculation of the final programme mark and/or the degree classification in modular undergraduate programmes

Prior Certified Learning

1. With regard to applications for exemption due to prior certified learning, schools should consider the learning which has been accredited at the other institution and decide, in the best interests of the student, how this may be taken into account. The school has discretion to decide if: (a) the subject content, and therefore knowledge gained, is sufficiently similar for a student to be exempt from unit(s), and (b) whether marks may be transferred.
2. Where a student is exempted from units due to recognition of prior credit from another institution, and these units contribute to the final programme mark and/or degree classification but the marks are not accepted, these unit(s) will not be considered in the algorithm for the purpose of calculating the final mark and the degree classification.
3. If a student is exempted from a year of study (due to recognised prior learning) that would otherwise contribute to the final programme mark and/or the degree classification, but marks have not been transferred, no weighting will be given to the “exempt” year when determining the final programme mark and/or the degree classification. The relevant weighting must be applied, on a *pro rata* basis, to the remaining years of study. For example, if a student is exempt from the second year of study:
 - Bachelors three year honours degree: 0:25:75, will become 0:0:100;
 - Integrated four year masters degree: 0:10:40:50, will become 0:0:45:55.
4. Where a student is exempted from units (due to the recognition of prior learning from another institution) that contribute to the final programme mark and/or degree classification and the marks are accepted by the University, the transferred marks will be ‘converted’ and incorporated into the algorithm for calculating the final programme mark and degree classification.

Prior Experiential Learning

5. Where a student is exempted from units due to the recognition of the non-certified acquisition of relevant skills and knowledge, gained through relevant experience and where these units contribute to degree classification, then these units will not be given any weight in the algorithm when calculating the final mark and the degree classification.

Dissertations in Taught Postgraduate Programmes

A generic standard for dissertations in taught postgraduate programmes is set out below. Any particular requirements must be set out in programme specifications and in guidance from schools.

Schools may adopt their own requirements based on this generic standard, but they will be subject to annual monitoring and progressive harmonisation at Faculty level.

Preparation

Schools will provide students with information to enable them to prepare the dissertation and will advise them of the specific requirements and submission deadlines that apply in relevant handbooks. Students are expected to attend dissertation workshops/seminars, dissertation units and/or specific sessions with their dissertation supervisor. Students should be given access to good examples of Masters dissertations or dissertation templates while preparing the dissertation.

Students must ensure that their dissertation is their own work and must identify any material which is not their own work by referencing and acknowledgement. The dissertation must NOT incorporate dissertation material which has been used for another degree or plagiarise the work of others.

Group projects: For certain programmes, it is possible for collaborative projects and reports to form part of the dissertation. These collaborative projects and reports must however include individual assessment. This must be set out in the unit specification and reiterated by the school at the start of the unit.

Content and format of the dissertation

Word length: The normal requirements for the word length of a dissertation are as follows:

- A maximum word count of between **10,000–15,000 words**.
- A dissertation based on laboratory work may have a maximum word count of between **6,000–10,000 words**.

References and lists of contents pages may be additional to the word limit, as can appendices if allowed (although these should be reasonable in length).

If different, the exact requirements for the word length of the dissertation must be specified in the relevant unit specification for the dissertation and communicated to students.

Binding: The dissertation should be presented in a secure, temporary binding, with a glued or spiral spine, e.g. 'perfect binding' and 'spring-back binding'. The University's Print Services (www.bristol.ac.uk/printservices/) can provide this service. Information may be obtained from the relevant School Office.

Sequence: Dissertation material should be organised as follows:

Title Page

Abstract

Dedication and Acknowledgements (if applicable)

Author's Declaration

Table of Contents, Tables and Illustrative Material

Text – chapters, sections and sub-divisions

Appendices – (if any, including media)

List of references/Bibliography

The Title Page, Abstract, Dedication and Acknowledgements (if applicable), Author's Declaration and Table of Contents must be single-sided.

Title page: At the top of the title page, give the title and, if necessary, the sub-title. The full name of the dissertation author should be in the centre of the page. At the bottom centre should be the following words:

“A dissertation submitted to the University of Bristol in accordance with the requirements of the degree of Master of ...(title) by advanced study in ...(programme title) in the Faculty of...(Faculty name)’.

Under this text, the name of the School and the date that the dissertation was submitted should be provided. The word count must be shown on the title page.

Abstract: Each dissertation copy must include an abstract or summary of the dissertation in not more than 300 words, on one side of A4, which should be single-spaced in font size 10, 11 or 12.

Dedication and acknowledgements are at the discretion of the student.

Author's declaration

I declare that the work in this dissertation was carried out in accordance with the requirements of the University's Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Programmes and that it has not been submitted for any other academic award. Except where indicated by specific reference in the text, this work is my own work. Work done in collaboration with, or with the assistance of others, is indicated as such. I have identified all material in this dissertation which is not my own work through appropriate referencing and acknowledgement. Where I have quoted or otherwise incorporated material which is the work of others, I have included the source in the references. Any views expressed in the dissertation, other than referenced material, are those of the author.

SIGNED: DATE:

(Signature of student)

Table of contents, list of tables and illustrative material: The table of contents must list, in sequence and with page numbers, all chapters, sections and sub-sections, the list of references; as well as abbreviations and appendices (if permitted). The list of tables and illustrations should follow the table of contents, listing with page numbers the tables, photographs, diagrams in the order in which they appear in the text.

Appendices: Not all programmes allow appendices as part of the dissertation. If a programme does not allow appendices, the school will ensure that this information is clearly provided to students in the unit specification for the dissertation.

Referencing: General guidance on referencing standards is provided by Library Services (www.bristol.ac.uk/library/support/findinginfo/literature-references/).

Digital recording media, photocopies and photographs: Appendices may include digital recording media in standard formats and good quality photocopies and photographs as long as such material constitutes the most appropriate method of presenting the information. This material should be clearly labelled and listed in the dissertation's list of illustrative material. Material must not infringe copyright regulations.

Paper: The dissertation must be printed on A4 (210mm x 297mm) white paper. A3 paper may be used for maps, plans, diagrams and illustrative material. Pages should normally be double-sided (except the preliminary 5 pages which must be single-sided).

Page numbering: Pages should be numbered consecutively at the bottom centre of the page (i.e. the title page is page 1), including appendices.

Text: Text should be in double or 1.5 line spacing; the font size should be chosen to ensure clarity and legibility for the main text and any quotations and footnotes e.g. 12pt. Margins should not be less than 40mm at the left hand (binding) side and not less than 15 mm at the top, bottom and side.

Submission of the dissertation

Students should submit **two** printed copies of the dissertation to the school, together with the signed submission form by the required deadline date and time. Students must also submit an electronic copy of their dissertation via Blackboard or via email to the school. Electronic submission of the dissertation enables examiners to check submitted dissertations for plagiarism using plagiarism detection software. One copy will normally be securely stored in the school, in line with data protection guidelines. Students should retain an additional copy of the dissertation in case they are called for an oral examination.

In many schools, the dissertation must be submitted by 12.00 noon on the deadline date. This may, however, vary as the particular details for submission are set by schools using this annex as a guide.

Dissertation submission deadline dates for some part-time and professional programmes may differ from the above deadlines, but they must be clearly stated in school handbooks and enable timely student graduation.

Penalties apply for late submission: See section 15 of the Regulations and Code of Practice. Other than in exceptional circumstances, students must submit their dissertation within the normal study period for the award and in accordance with the programme's requirements and published University deadline dates for submission:

| Student mode of attendance | Dissertation submission deadline date | Degree Congregation date (degree conferred if successful) |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| Full-Time | 8 September | January |
| Part-time | 8 September | January |
| Part-time variable | Normally by the maximum study date. | July/January |

Dissertation examination

Dissertations are assessed by two internal examiners (at least one of whom is not the dissertation supervisor). The role of the external examiner is outlined in the University's Policy for the External Examining of Taught Programmes (see annex 7). An Examiner's Report Form is used to give feedback on the dissertation and a final mark. Details are contained in school handbooks. Official notification of the examination result is sent to students following the relevant Board of Examiners.