

Validation Manual

*Procedures and Regulations for the Approval and
Management of Validated Programmes*

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PRIFYSGOL
BANGOR
UNIVERSITY

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1. Introduction and Principles

The University welcomes applications from Institutions of high standing to deliver programmes leading to Bangor University awards. Collaborative programmes include articulation agreements, franchised courses, courses delivered in partnership, and validated programmes. This Manual describes the procedures for approving Institutions to deliver validated programmes and for the ongoing management and delivery of such programmes. Institutions wishing to offer franchised or other collaborative programmes should refer to the University's Code of Practice for Collaborative Provision (Code 12), available at www.bangor.ac.uk/regulations.

The University will validate programmes that are delivered and examined in English or in Welsh and in subject areas in which it has comparable courses. Applications to validate programmes in areas outside the University's portfolio of courses or delivered in languages other than English or Welsh will be considered. Applications will only be pursued if the University can assure itself that academic quality and standards can be maintained and that appropriate external moderation can be arranged.

The academic reputation and goodwill of the University depends on maintaining the highest academic standards for all programmes leading to its awards. The University is therefore responsible for the academic standards, quality and direction of all its validated programmes.

The key principles governing the approval of Institutions to deliver validated programmes are:

- The need for appropriate due diligence.
- The need to ensure that the Institution's resources and procedures, especially for quality assurance and enhancement, meet the University's requirements.
- The need for a two-stage process that approves the Institution and then, subject to a positive outcome from the first stage, validates specific programmes.

The key principles governing the delivery and ongoing monitoring of validated programmes are:

- Regular dialogue between the University and the Institution to ensure that any emerging issues, problems or proposed changes are discussed and resolved promptly.
- Regular monitoring and reporting, facilitated by University-appointed Moderators, to demonstrate adherence to the agreed quality assurance and enhancement procedures.
- Scrutiny of programmes by University-appointed External Examiners to ensure that standards are comparable with UK expectations.

The University's procedures for approving Institutions and validating programmes are based on the expectation that Institutions will have codified policies and procedures that are consistent with the University's Quality Assurance Manual. It is not a requirement that Institutions' documents are an exact copy of the University's procedures. However, if policies or procedures have to be developed by an Institution in preparation for an application to the University, the University is content for such procedures to be developed by adapting sections of the University's Quality Assurance Manual.

Approved Institutions are not allowed to:

- Franchise any part of validated programmes to a third party (e.g. arranging for another institution or organisation to deliver part of a programme).
- Offer any part of validated programmes under collaborative arrangements with third parties (e.g. delivering part of a programme as a joint venture with another institution or organisation).
- Offer any part of validated programmes under serial arrangements with other organisations (e.g. using course content developed by a third party and validated by another institution or organisation).

Where there is a specific need to involve a third party in the delivery of a programme (e.g. to offer work placement modules), the arrangements must be in accordance with this Manual and must be agreed as part of the programme validation process.

2. University Management of Validated Provision

Quality Assurance and Validation Task Group

The procedures for approving Institutions and validating programmes are the responsibility of the University's Quality Assurance and Validation Task Group. The Quality Assurance and Validation Task Group also oversees the ongoing monitoring of validated programmes. In relation to approved Institutions and validated programmes, the Quality Assurance and Validation Task Group:

- Maintains a register of approved Institutions.
- Maintains a register of validated programmes.
- Receives reports of the External Partnership Scrutiny Group.
- Receives reports of Institution Approval Panels.
- Receives reports of Programme Validation Panels.
- Receives reports from Moderators.
- Receives reports from External Examiners.
- Receives summary information on student numbers and completion rates.
- Takes action on any matters of concern relating to the quality and standards of validated programmes.
- Reports matters that require the University's attention to the Teaching and Learning Task Group.

Minutes of the Quality Assurance and Validation Task Group are reported to the Teaching and Learning Task Group.

Teaching and Learning Task Group

The Teaching and Learning Task Group receives and considers the minutes of the Quality Assurance and Validation Task Group. The Teaching and Learning Task Group's role is to consider any items that require attention by the University and acts as the link, through its Chair (the Pro Vice-Chancellor Teaching & Learning) with Senate and the University Executive. Such items include:

- Proposed changes to the regulations for validated programmes that might necessitate comparable changes to other University regulations and documents.
- Serious concerns about the management and delivery of programmes requiring termination of validated programmes and/or collaborative agreements.

Senate

The University's Charter describes the Senate as the "academic authority" of the University, responsible for the "academic work". The Senate is therefore the ruling body on academic matters and considers major academic issues affecting the University. In relation to approved Institutions and validated programmes, Senate is responsible for all academic matters. Boards of Studies and Boards of Examiners responsible for validated programmes are answerable to Senate and must abide by the Senate's decisions and those of its sub-committees.

Senate Regulations and Special Cases Committee

The Senate Regulations and Special Cases Committee is a Senate sub-committee. In relation to approved Institutions and validated programmes, the Senate Regulations and Special Cases Committee:

- Scrutinises and approves the Validation Manual.
- Considers special cases that do not comply with the academic regulations.
- Resolves questions on the interpretation of academic regulations.
- Considers any matters referred to it by Senate, the Teaching and Learning Task Group or the Quality Assurance and Validation Task Group.
- Maintains a list of University awards and approves proposals for any new awards.

Matters requiring urgent attention may be considered by the Chair. The Chair is authorised to take executive action on urgent matters and on matters insufficiently substantial to bring to the committee.

External Partnership Scrutiny Group

The External Partnership Scrutiny Group considers proposals from Institutions to deliver validated programmes. The Group also considers proposals from approved Institutions to deliver new programmes. Proposals are referred to the Group following initial scrutiny and approval by the Academic Registrar or nominee.

The membership of the External Partnership Scrutiny Group is:

- Director of International Development (Chair for International/EU partnerships)
- Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching & Learning) (Chair for UK partnerships)
- Chair of the Quality Assurance and Validation Task Group
- Academic Registrar or nominee
- 2-3 senior members of the academic staff of the University, at least one of whom is a Head of College not involved in the proposals under consideration
- Regulations, Complaints and Appeals Officer

The role of the External Partnership Scrutiny Group is described in Section 3.2.

Academic Registry

The University's Academic Registry, under the direction of the Academic Registrar, ensures that the University meets its responsibilities for the management of validated programmes, as defined in this Manual. The Academic Registry is also responsible for ensuring that agreements have been confirmed.

International Education Centre Office (IEC)

The IEC, under the direction of the Director of International Development, provides advice and guidance to potential partners and has delegated responsibilities, for scrutinising proposals received from outside the EU.

3. Approval of Institutions to Deliver Validated Programmes

3.1. Principles

The process of approving Institutions to deliver validated programmes establishes whether Institutions are capable of supporting the delivery of HE programmes. The process includes the key areas listed below:

- Governance
- Procedures and policies for quality assurance & enhancement
- Assessment of students
- Promotion of learning
- Student support
- Student accommodation (where appropriate)
- The Institution's links to academic and professional peers
- Criteria for appointment of teaching staff
- Resources (including staff)

3.2. Approval Process

Initial Proposal

Institutions must produce a proposal that includes:

- The name and address of the Institution
- A summary of the Institution's status (e.g. FE College, State Funded Institution)
- Names and summary details of proposed taught programmes
- The intended benefits for the Institution of approval by the University
- Signature of the Head of the Institution

The proposal will be considered by the Academic Registrar or nominee. The University's International Partnerships Office will normally act as the Academic Registrar's nominee for proposals from partners outside the EU. The Academic Registrar or nominee will conduct a preliminary investigation, involving academic staff of the University as necessary, to satisfy the University about the good standing of the Institution. The investigation will include:

- A review of the Institution's website to check that its mission statement and existing courses are compatible with those of the University.
- An investigation of the Institution's links with other UK or overseas partners.
- A review of the QAA website to investigate whether there have been any reports relating to the Institution.
- Confirmation that the Institution has the legal capacity to offer Higher Education programmes validated by the University.
- In the case of an overseas Institution, independent confirmation that the University is legally permitted to make awards for programmes delivered by the Institution.

Following the investigation, the Academic Registrar or nominee must choose one of the following options:

- i. Approve the proposal in principle.
- ii. Refer the proposal for consideration by the Chair of the Quality Assurance and Validation Task Group.
- iii. Return the proposal to the Institution requesting additional information.
- iv. Reject the proposal and inform the Institution of the reasons, giving an indication of whether the University will/will not consider future applications.
- v. Reject the proposal and inform the Institution, without specifying the reasons, indicating that the University will not consider future applications.

Under option ii above, the Chair of the Quality Assurance and Validation Task Group may determine, consulting with other Senior Officers as required, whether to approve the proposal in principle or instruct the Academic Registrar or nominee to proceed with option iii, iv or v above.

Consideration by the External Partnership Scrutiny Group

Once approved in principle, proposals and the results of the Academic Registrar's investigation must be considered by the External Partnership Scrutiny Group. The External Partnership Scrutiny Group must choose one of the following options:

- i. Approve the proposal.
- ii. Return the proposal to the Institution requesting additional information.
- iii. Reject the proposal and inform the Institution of the reasons, giving an indication of whether the University will/will not consider future applications.
- iv. Reject the proposal and inform the Institution, without specifying the reasons, indicating that the University will not consider future applications.

The External Partnership Scrutiny Group may report to, or raise any matters with, the Executive at any point in the Group's consideration of a proposal.

Consideration by an Approval Panel

If the External Partnership Scrutiny Group approves the proposal, the Academic Registrar must appoint an Officer to arrange an Approval Panel. The Panel will normally meet at the Institution.

The Approval Panel will normally consist of:

- Chair of the Quality Assurance and Validation Task Group or nominee
- Two members of the University's academic staff
- An External Assessor (nominated by the Officer and approved by the Chair)
- The Officer nominated by the Academic Registrar as secretary to the Panel

An External Assessor will normally be nominated by the Officer following discussion with academic staff at the University.

The Approval Panel must establish whether the Institution is capable of supporting the delivery of Higher Education programmes. The Approval Panel must consider the Institution's governance, management, resources, services, and quality assurance arrangements. The Panel must consider documents provided by the Institution, and circulated by the Officer before the meeting, covering the key areas listed in Section 3.1 and including:

- Mission statement
- Self evaluation with regard to the delivery of Higher Education programmes
- Governance and structure (including the committee(s) responsible for quality assurance)
- Financial standing
- Legal status
- Procedures and policies for quality assurance & enhancement
- Regulations and procedures, including:
 - Admission of students
 - Appeals and complaints procedures
 - Unfair practice procedure
 - Academic regulations
 - Health and safety
 - Appointment and role of External Examiners
 - Annual and periodic review of programmes
- Staff profile and staff development
- Outcome of external reviews
- Student feedback
- Student support services and pastoral care

The Chair must specify, in advance, any additional documentation required, the resources the panel wishes to see, and the teaching staff or senior managers it wishes meet.

The Approval Panel must choose one of the following options for ratification by the External Partnership Scrutiny Group:

- i. Approve Institution with no conditions.
- ii. Approve Institution with minor conditions.
- iii. Approve Institution with conditions to be fulfilled before the Panel's report is submitted for approval by the Panel Chair.
- iv. Reject the application by Institution and inform the Institution of the reasons, giving an indication of whether the University will/will not consider future applications.
- v. Reject the application by Institution and inform the Institution, without specifying the reasons, indicating that the University will not consider future applications.

After the visit, the Panel secretary must prepare a report for approval by the Panel Chair. The report of the Approval panel must be submitted to the External Partnership Scrutiny Group and to the Quality Assurance and Validation Task Group.

3.3. Renewal of Approval

Renewal Period

The approval of Institutions to deliver programmes leading to University awards must be renewed every five years. Approval may have to be renewed on a more regular basis if:

- A shorter renewal period is specified in the agreement between the University and the Institution.
- The University, for whatever reason, determines that renewal of approval is necessary.
- The Institution requests renewal of approval in order to allow it to extend its validated provision beyond the terms of the existing agreement with the University.

The Quality Assurance and Validation Task Group must maintain, as part of its register of approved Institutions, a schedule of renewal dates and must inform the Academic Registrar or nominee when approval is to be renewed. The Academic Registrar or nominee must be informed at least 12 months before the end of the current approval period. The Academic Registrar or nominee will contact the Institution to confirm that the Institution wishes to renew its agreement with the University and to identify any proposed changes to the list of validated programmes.

Normally, renewal of approval and revalidation of programmes will be combined into one event. Programme revalidation is described in Section 4.3. Any programmes introduced since the initial approval or most recent renewal of approval must be revalidated (unless they were validated within the previous 12 months). This is to avoid proliferation of approval and revalidation events.

Consideration by the External Partnership Scrutiny Group

The Academic Registrar or nominee must notify the External Partnership Scrutiny Group of any approvals that have to be renewed. For each Institution, the External Partnership Scrutiny Group must be provided with a proposal to renew approval, with details including:

- A list of the Institution's currently validated programmes (with any proposed changes).
- Details of any new programmes the Institution wishes to introduce.
- Reports from Moderators.
- Reports from External Examiners.
- Feedback from Professional Bodies.
- Summary information on student numbers and completion rates.
- Details of any matters of concern relating to the management of validated programmes as recorded by the Quality Assurance and Validation Task Group.
- Details of any matters considered by the Teaching and Learning Task Group.

The External Partnership Scrutiny Group must choose one of the following options:

- i. Approve the proposal.
- ii. Request additional information.
- iii. Reject the proposal.

If a proposal is rejected, under iii above, the Academic Registrar must inform the Institution and arrange for a Termination Agreement to be drafted and signed (See Section 17).

Consideration by an Approval Panel

If the External Partnership Scrutiny Group approves the proposal, an Approval Panel must be arranged as described in Section 3.2. The Panel must consider evidence as described in Section 3.2 and:

- Details of any new programmes the Institution wishes to introduce.
- Reports from Moderators.
- Reports from External Examiners.
- Feedback from Students.
- Summary information on student numbers and completion rates.
- Details of any matters of concern relating to the management of validated programmes as recorded by the Quality Assurance and Validation Task Group.
- Details of any matters considered by the Teaching and Learning Task Group.
- Minutes of Boards of Studies

The Approval Panel must choose one of the following options:

- i. Approval of Institution to be renewed with no conditions.
- ii. Approval of Institution with minor conditions.
- iii. Approval of Institution to be renewed with conditions to be fulfilled before the Approval Panel's report is submitted for approval by the Panel Chair.
- iv. Approval of Institution to be reconsidered and Panel to be reconvened.
- v. Approval of Institution to be discontinued.

After the visit, the Panel secretary must prepare a report for approval by the Panel Chair. The report must be submitted to the External Partnership Scrutiny Group and the Quality Assurance and Validation Task Group.

If approval is to be reconsidered, under option iv above, the Panel must be reconvened within 3 months of the original Panel meeting and at least 1 month before the current agreement expires. A Panel must only chose option iv if there is enough time:

- For the Institution to address the issues raised by the Panel and
- For the Institution to meet any conditions specified by the Reconvened panel and
- For a new agreement to be put in place.

If a Panel chooses option iv, it must identify the areas of concern and specify matters it requires the Institution to change/improve.

If approval is to be discontinued, under option v above, the Academic Registrar must inform the Institution and arrange for a Termination Agreement to be drafted and signed (See Section 17).

4. Programme Validation

4.1. Initial Validation of Programmes

Programme validation may only proceed when an Institution has been approved as described in Section 3.2.

New Award Titles

Proposals to offer an award which is not already approved by the University must be submitted, via the University's Academic Registrar, for approval by the Senate Regulations and Special Cases Committee. New awards should normally have been approved by the Committee prior to submitting a programme for validation.

University awards that may be delivered by approved Institutions include:

Undergraduate Awards

Title	Abbreviation	Level	Credits
Certificate of Higher Education	HECert	4	120
Diploma of Higher Education	HEDip	5	240
Foundation Degree in Arts	FdA	5	240
Foundation Degree in Science	FdSc	5	240
Foundation Degree in Engineering	FdEng	5	240
Bachelor of Arts	BA	6	360
Bachelor of Divinity	BD	6	360
Bachelor of Education	BEd	6	360
Bachelor of Engineering	BEng	6	360
Bachelor of Laws	LLB	6	360
Bachelor of Midwifery	BM	6	360
Bachelor of Music	BMus	6	360
Bachelor of Nursing	BN	6	360
Bachelor of Science	BSc	6	360
Bachelor of Theology	BTh	6	360

Taught Postgraduate Awards

Title	Abbreviation	Level	Credits
Postgraduate Certificate	PgCert	7	60
Postgraduate Diploma	PgDip	7	120
Master of Arts	MA	7	180 ¹
Master of Business Administration	MBA	7	180 ¹
Master of Education	MEd	7	180 ¹
Master of Laws	LLM	7	180 ¹
Master of Ministry	MMin	7	180 ¹
Master of Music	MMus	7	180 ¹
Master of Public Administration	MPA	7	180 ¹
Master of Science	MSc	7	180 ¹
Master of Theology	MTh	7	180 ¹
Master of Research	MRes	7	180 ²

¹ 120 taught credits and 60 credits Research Project

² 60 taught credits and 120 credits Research Project

Programme Outline

Approved Institutions should consider new schemes at least 12 months prior to the proposed start date. Proposals must normally be submitted for approval, via the University's Academic Registrar at least 9 months before the proposed start date. Proposals must be submitted for initial scrutiny in the form of a Programme Outline. Forms for completing a Programme Outline can be obtained from the University. The Programme Outline consists of the following sections:

A. Summary of the Programme

1. Full title
2. Name and level of the award (e.g. BA, MSc etc)
3. List of intermediate or exit-point qualifications
4. Whether the programme is to be delivered on a full-time and/or part-time basis
5. Duration of the course
6. Proposed date of introduction
7. Details of any deviations from the University's regulations
8. Name of Institution presenting the programme
9. Expected number of students
10. Does the programme include:
 - a. Elements delivered at locations away from the Institution's main campus or involving third parties
 - b. Compulsory period abroad
 - c. Compulsory placement or work experience
 - d. Provision for learning a foreign language
 - e. Teaching through the medium of Welsh
 - f. Distance learning
 - g. Significant elements delivered by staff who are not full time employees of the Institution
 - h. A requirement for compulsory accreditation by a professional, statutory or regulatory body
 - i. A requirement to meet any defined national standards
 - j. A requirement for CRB or other (e.g. medical screening) checks

B. Rationale for the Programme

The rationale for the programme must be presented in no more than 500 words and must include:

1. The reasons why the programme is being developed
2. The expected demand for the programme and the employment opportunities
3. The extent to which the programme overlaps with existing programmes at the Institution (at the same and/or different level)
4. Type of student that is likely to be attracted to the programme
5. A summary of consultation with industry and any other relevant organisation/bodies
6. The resources required to run the programme

C. Partial Programme Specification

The Partial Programme Specification has sections from the Programme Specification as follows.

1. Awarding Institution (Bangor University to be specified in all cases)
2. Teaching Institution
3. Name of external accreditation body (where appropriate)
4. Final Award
5. UCAS Code (where known)
6. Name of appropriate QAA Benchmark Statement
7. Date when Partial Programme Specification was produced
8. Main educational aims of the programme

9. Intended programme outcomes for each of the categories
 - a. Knowledge and understanding
 - b. Subject-specific skills
 - c. Cognitive (thinking) skills
 - d. Key skills
10. List of modules for each year of the programme, indicating those that are Core and/or Compulsory
11. Criteria for Admission
12. Regulations of assessment (Bangor University's regulations as defined by its Validation Manual must be specified in all cases)
13. Student employability and careers

Institutions are encouraged to seek advice from suitably experienced members of staff, either within or outside the Institution, as the proposal is developed. Institutions must ensure that the content and rationale for the programme are robust and in line with the relevant national standards (e.g. Credit & Qualifications Framework for Wales, Subject Benchmark Statements in the UK).

If the intended programme does not have a modular structure as expected by the University, the Institution must provide an explanation of how the programme will be structured and how students will be assessed. The assessment methods and classification of awards must be consistent with the requirements of this Manual.

Where MA/MSc or BA/BSc variants of a programme are planned, it is good practice to differentiate between them by title, learning outcomes and course structures. Proposals for MA/MSc or BA/BSc with the same title must be justified and scrutinised as part of the programme validation processes.

Where proposals for awards at the same level and with the same title are allowed (e.g. MA/MSc versions of a programme or BA/BSc versions of a programme), then:

- They must be presented for approval with separate programme specifications.
- The learning outcomes must not be identical.
- The course contents must normally differ by approximately $\frac{1}{3}$ of the credits that contribute to the award.
- Some leeway may be permitted at the discretion of the Validation Panel, but programmes should not normally be allowed to differ by less than 25% of the credits that contribute to the award.

Institutions submitting proposals must nominate and provide details of 3 persons from other HE institutions (or their equivalent) to act as the External Assessor on the Validation Panel. The Chair of the Validation Panel will choose one of the nominees. Nominations are not normally required, unless specifically requested by the University, if approval of the Institution and programme validation are to be combined into one Panel event. In such cases, the External Assessor appointed by the University will sit on the Approval Panel and on the Validation Panel.

All proposals must be scrutinised by an Officer nominated by the Academic Registrar who will consult as required with academic colleagues. Based on the Officer's report, the Academic Registrar must choose one of the following options:

- i. Approve the proposal in principle.
- ii. Send it back to the Institution with comments.
- iii. Reject the Proposal.

If the proposal is approved in principle (Option i), then the Programme Outline must be submitted for consideration by the External Partnerships Scrutiny Group.

Consideration by the External Partnership Scrutiny Group

Once approved in principle, Programme Outlines must be considered by the External Partnership Scrutiny Group. The External Partnership Scrutiny Group must choose one of the following options:

- i. Approve the proposal.
- ii. Return the proposal to the Institution requesting additional information.
- iii. Reject the proposal and inform the Institution of the reasons, giving an indication of whether the University will/will not consider future applications.
- iv. Reject the proposal and inform the Institution, without specifying the reasons, indicating that the University will not consider future applications.

The External Partnership Scrutiny Group may report to, or raise any matters with, the Executive at any point in the Group's consideration of a proposal.

If the proposal is approved in principle (Option i), then a Full Programme Proposal must be submitted for consideration by a Validation Panel.

Full Programme Proposal and Validation Panel

The Validation Panel will normally consist of:

- Chair of the Quality Assurance and Validation Task Group or nominee
- Two members of the University's academic staff
- An External Assessor
- A Professional Body nominee (where required for accreditation)
- The Officer nominated by the Academic Registrar as secretary to the Panel

The Full Programme Proposal and all other relevant documents must be sent to Validation Panel members, by the secretary, at least 14 days before the Panel meeting. The Full Programme Proposal must contain:

A. Summary of the Programme

The details (subject to any minor editorial modifications) should be the same as those contained in Section A of the Programme Outline (as described above).

B. Rationale for the Programme

The details (subject to any minor editorial modifications) should be the same as those contained in Section B of the Programme Outline (as described above) but also including the views, presented in writing, of at least one other appropriate assessor who is external to the University and the Institution. This may be an individual, an organisation, institution or company.

C. Programme Specification

The Programme Specification should be a more detailed version of the Partial Programme Specification in Section C of the Programme Outline (as described above). The additional elements should be as follows:

Section 10. List of modules

Section 10 should be supplemented by tables to relate the learning outcomes to a) the modules, b) the teaching and learning methods and c) the assessment methods.

Section 14. Indicators of Quality

Section 14 can include:

- External examiner reports
- Degree results
- Student feedback
- Professional body accreditation
- Accreditation/ratification against national standards

Section 15. Staff Development

Section 15 should refer to any staff development activities or opportunities in the Institution that are relevant to staff directly involved with managing and delivering the programme.

Section 16. Modules

Details of all modules as described in Section 4.2.

Section 17. Assessment Profile

Section 17 should include a table showing the assessment methods that are to be used either in the core/compulsory modules or modules that will be taken by a typical student.

The Validation Panel must consider all of the following:

- i. Aims and learning outcomes and how they reflect the level of the award and relevant Benchmark Statement(s).
- ii. Curriculum content and design and their links to the learning outcomes.
- iii. Curriculum content in each stage of the programme including the level and credit ratings of each module.
- iv. Assessment strategy and how it supports learning and measures the achievement of the learning outcomes.
- v. The needs of all students, including those with disabilities and specific learning difficulties.
- vi. Opportunities for students to engage with and participate in research.
- vii. Where placement learning is part of the programme, policies and procedures to ensure that the Institution's responsibilities will be met and that the learning opportunities during a placement are appropriate.
- viii. Teaching and learning strategy, including the use of learning technologies.
- ix. Resources available to deliver the programme.
- x. The demand for the course, type of student and entry requirements.
- xi. Employment opportunities offered by the course and/or the extent to which the course enhances the employability of graduates.
- xii. Issues specified in documentation/handbooks of Professional Bodies and organizations.
- xiii. Relationship of the award to the Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales, ensuring that any intermediate exit points are clearly defined.
- xiv. Teaching schedule of the course and the implications for accommodation and teaching facilities/resources.
- xv. Extent to which consultation has taken place regarding the design of the scheme.
- xvi. That the programme conforms to the University's regulations as specified by the validation Manual. Any deviations from the regulations must be approved by the Chair of the Senate Regulations and Special Cases Committee.

The Validation Panel must choose one of the following options:

- i. Unconditional approval.
- ii. Approval subject to minor modifications to be approved by the Chair of the Panel. In this case the revisions must be made within a time limit defined by the Panel and sent to the Chair.
- iii. Conditional approval subject to specified conditions and recommendations being fulfilled within a time limit defined by the Panel. In this case the Institution must submit a report to the Chair of the Panel which will then be submitted to the External Assessor for ratification.
- iv. Referral back to Institution for representation at a future date.
- v. Rejection.

A report summarising the conclusions of the Panel will be produced following the meeting.

Students must not be enrolled onto programmes before the approval process has been completed, and an agreement between the University and Institution has been signed.

4.2. Module Descriptions

Module descriptions may be presented using a form available from the University or in a format chosen by the Institution. Module descriptions must include the following information:

Module Title: The title should reflect the content of the module. Titles such as 'Business 1' should be avoided because they are of little value to an employer looking at a student's transcript. It is recommended that Institutions place a limit on the length (number of characters or words) in the module title.

Module Code: The module code must be entered in accordance with the Institution's requirements and conventions. It is recommended that the code includes information to indicate the level (year taught) of the module.

Number of Credits: Each credit equates to 10 notional learning hours (contact plus private study). It is recommended that modules should be at least 10 credits. The number of credits must be consistent with the notional learning hours specified for the module.

Teaching Period: This defines when a module is delivered, e.g. which semester or term. This information may be omitted if all modules at an Institution are taught in the same teaching period.

Pre-requisites and/or Co-requisites: This defines any modules that a student has to complete before taking the module (pre-requisites) and/or has to taken at the same time (co-requisites) as the module being presented.

Module description: This is an overview of the module written as a short paragraph. It should be written in a way that provides a general summary of the module's aims and contents.

Learning Outcomes: Learning outcomes specify what a student is expected to know, understand and be able to do at the end of a module. Guidance on learning outcomes is given in Section 4.5.

Course Content: This is a list of the main themes/topics covered in the module. It is recommended that the list contains no more than 10 items, and should not normally be a list of topics covered in each teaching session.

Notional Learning Hours: This is the sum of the contact and private study time in the module. The notional learning hours must be consistent with the number of credits specified for the module. For example, for a 20 credit module the notional learning hours must be 200 hours. The notional learning hours must be divided between contact hours and private study time. The 'format' of the contact hours must then be described in detail. For example, for a 20 credit module with 48 hours of contact time there must be 152 hours of private study. The 'format' of the 48 hours of contact time must then be defined, for example:

Lectures	24 hours (2 per week over 12 weeks)
Seminars	12 hours (1 per week over 12 weeks)
External visits	12 hours (4 x 3hr visits)

Assessment Methods: All assessments that contribute to the final module mark must be described. Each assessment must measure one or more learning outcomes and each outcome must be assessed at least once. Weightings of different elements, word limits, and lengths of examinations must be specified.

Assessment Criteria: For each element of assessment, the assessment criteria define what students have to do/demonstrate to achieve different levels of performance (threshold/pass, good, excellent). The assessment criteria must be written so they can be easily understood by students. The use of generic criteria is permissible, provided that they are sufficiently detailed and relevant to the module and assessment methods. Where assessment involves group work or peer assessment the method of determining an individual student's mark should be clearly indicated.

Health or Other Checks: Any checks that are required before a student may take the module must be defined, e.g. health checks or Criminal Records Bureau Checks.

Modules must normally be delivered to students at one level. Joint teaching across levels (e.g. across Levels 5 and 6 or across Levels 6 and 7) should be avoided. It is only permitted where modules are designed in accordance with the following guidelines:

- There must be separately coded and validated modules for each Level with clearly distinguishable learning outcomes and assessment methods.
- If modules are taught in alternate years, the versions of a module must be designed so that each cohort group is able to fulfil all of the learning outcomes.
- Joint teaching activities across modules will typically be those where information is given to students as lectures or case studies. The proportion of the contact time for combined activities across modules should be considered carefully, taking into account the format of the teaching activities. For example, in a module delivered entirely by lectures all the contact time could be combined. In contrast, in a module delivered partly by lectures and partly by tutorials, only the lecture component should be combined. Where students are expected to engage in discussion, analysis or interpretation, separate activities and assessment should be arranged for each level. Such activities will typically be tutorials, seminars, group work and presentations.
- There must normally be different assessments for students at each level. The maximum proportion of identical assessment across 2 modules should not exceed 25% of the marks for the modules. Where Level 5 and Level 6 students complete identical elements of assessment, students' work should be assessed and moderated within cohort groups and should not be across Level 5 and Level 6 groups. It is also good practice for moderators to consider whether there is sufficient differentiation in marking between the work of Level 5 and Level 6 students.
- There should be no identical assessments for modules that employ joint teaching across levels 6 and 7.

Joint teaching across levels should not be used:

- Where Level 5 students will not have acquired at Level 4 the necessary skills, knowledge or understanding of context to allow an appropriate version of a Level 5 module to be designed for a particular subject/topic.
- Where Level 6 students will not have acquired at Level 4 or 5 the necessary skills, knowledge or understanding of context to allow an appropriate version of a Level 6 module to be designed for a particular subject/topic.
- Where joint teaching across levels would compromise the standards expected in a professionally accredited course.
- Where it is expected that students who have completed Level 6 modules as part of their undergraduate degree will pursue their studies by enrolling on a Master's course at the Institution or at the University in the same discipline.

4.3. Revalidation of Programmes

All taught programmes must be revalidated every 5 years. Normally, renewal of approval and revalidation of programmes will be combined into one event. Renewal of approval is described in Section 3.3. Any programmes introduced since the initial approval or most recent renewal of approval will be revalidated (irrespective of how recently they were validated) to avoid proliferation of approval and revalidation events.

The documents required when submitting a programme for re-validation are:

1. Programme specifications (as described in Section 4.1)
2. Copies of recent annual monitoring forms
3. Copy of the most recent internal quality audit applicable to the programmes
4. Copies of course handbooks
5. Copies of all module outlines associated with the programmes
6. Reports from external bodies (if available)

It is assumed that Moderator's reports and External Examiner's reports will also be available as part of the documentation provided for renewal of approval.

Documents must be sent to Panel members, by the secretary, at least 14 days before the Panel meeting.

The Validation Panel must consider the items as listed in Section 4.1 under Full Programme Proposal and Validation Panel.

For each programme, the Panel must choose one of the following options:

- i. Validation to continue.
- ii. Validation to continue subject to minor modifications to be approved by the Chair of the Panel. In this case the revisions must be made within a time limit defined by the Panel and sent to the Chair.
- iii. Validation to continue subject to specified conditions and recommendations being fulfilled within a time limit defined by the Panel. In this case the Institution must submit a report to the Chair of the Panel which will then be submitted to the External Assessor for ratification.
- iv. Referred back to the Institution.
- v. Withdrawal of validation.

If validation is withdrawn (as in option v above) students who have already embarked on a programme must normally be permitted to complete their studies.

New students must not be enrolled onto programmes until the University has confirmed that validation can continue.

Forms summarising the view of the panel must be produced following the meeting.

4.4. Changes to Validated Programmes

Institutions may make minor changes to modules without the University's approval. The changes must not alter a module's title, learning outcomes, main themes or methods of assessment. Minor changes include:

- Editorial/typographical corrections.
- The wording of one or two module learning outcomes.
- The relative emphasis placed on the various themes/topics.
- Removal of minor themes/topics.
- Adding new themes/topics.
- Altering the form of an element of assessment (but without changing the balance between examination and coursework elements).

Any substantial changes to individual modules must be supported by the Moderator and approved by the University. Proposals must be submitted to the University's Academic Registrar. The Academic Registrar or nominee may approve changes but also has the right to refer proposals to the Chair of the Quality Assurance and Validation Task Group.

In exceptional circumstances, Institutions may submit a proposal to amend a Programme Specification. Proposals must be submitted to the University's Academic Registrar for consideration by the Chair of the Quality Assurance and Validation Task Group or nominee. The Chair or nominee will consult with the appointed Moderator regarding the Proposals.

Proposals must include:

- A brief explanation of why the changes are required
- A list of the changes
- A Programme Specification as described in Section 4.1 (Part C of Full Programme Proposal)
- A description of any new or substantially modified modules (Presented as described in Section 4.2)

The Chair of the Quality Assurance and Validation Task Group or nominee must choose one of the following options:

- i. Unconditional approval.
- ii. Approval subject to minor modifications to be completed within a time limit specified by the Chair.
- iii. Conditional approval subject to specified conditions and recommendations to be fulfilled within a time limit defined by the Chair.
- iv. Referral back to Institution for representation at a future date.
- v. Rejection.

If the changes to a programme affect students (e.g. an advertised module is to be discontinued), students and prospective students must be informed.

A decision by an Institution to change a Programme can not compel the University to accept the change. The University may withhold approval to change modules or programmes at its absolute discretion. Institutions must not, under any circumstances, change programmes without the University's approval or seek approval for changes that have already been implemented. The University considers such actions to be breaches of its agreement with Institutions.

4.5. Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes define what a student is expected to know, understand and be able to do at the end of a module.

Learning outcomes should:

- Be written as threshold targets, i.e. every student passing the module will be expected to have achieved the outcomes described.
- Be written in a student-friendly manner.
- Be easy for employers to understand.
- Be based on a particular level (e.g. different outcomes are expected at levels 4,5,6 and 7).
- Reveal progression through the levels. Subsequent levels must have more exacting and challenging learning outcomes and/or extra learning outcomes.
- Inform decisions about assessment methods.
- Inform decisions about subject content, resources, learning and teaching strategies, and activities.

Learning Outcomes can be:

- Generic (e.g. expected of all graduates)
- Subject-specific
- Transferable skills (e.g. communication, teamwork, self-evaluation, problem solving, numeracy, literacy)

Learning outcomes usually start with the phrase "On successful completion of the module, students will be able to ...". Each outcome should then begin with a verb. Typical verbs include:

assess	evaluate	critically evaluate	analyse
argue	interpret	examine	understand
discuss	deduce	think critically	appreciate
differentiate	judge	explain	appraise
demonstrate	summarise	utilise	distinguish
inquire	solve	estimate	apply
compare	contrast	predict	calculate
develop	design	test	determine
generate	create	discriminate	discover

5. Management of Validated Programmes

5.1. University's Responsibilities

The University is responsible for the following, and any other additional items specified in the agreement between the University and the Institution:

- Ensuring that students are properly recorded as students pursuing a programme that lead to an award of the University.
- Maintaining the Validation Manual and inform Institutions of any substantive changes that affect an Institution's validated programmes.
- Recruiting, training and liaising with Moderators
- Selection and induction of External Examiners
- Ensuring that the academic standards and the quality of the programme(s) are consistent with the standards expected for the awards.
- Ensuring that appropriate groups are established at the University to manage and monitor the programme(s) in accordance with the Validation Manual.
- Ensuring that the Institution has procedures to complete risk assessments for activities.
- Pursuing any accusations against students regarding inappropriate conduct or unfair practice, made after an award has been conferred.
- Conferring awards and issuing of certificates.
- Providing the Institution with guidance and information to permit the Institution to deliver the programme(s).
- Keeping a permanent record of students' results for the awards of the University.

5.2. Institutions' Responsibilities

Institutions must:

- Manage the programme(s) in accordance with the terms of the agreement with the University and as defined by this Manual.
- Assign an officer in the Institution to co-ordinate and direct the programme(s).
- Ensure that the standards required by the University in relation to the programme(s) are met.
- Co-operate fully with the University in relation to any quality assurance processes, monitoring and reports.
- Notify the University of any changes that affect the Institution's status or capacity to deliver validated programmes.
- Have administrative responsibility for the day to day operation of the programme(s) in accordance with the terms of the agreement between the University and the Institution.
- Be responsible for the recruitment and administration of students.
- Be responsible for the setting, marking and administration of the assessment of programme(s).
- Maintain students' records including information required by the University and students' results.
- Ensure that information available about the programmes(s) is consistent with the requirements of the Quality Assurance Agency's Quality Code (Part C).
- Be responsible for the general health, safety and welfare of students and ensure adequate access to resources and services.
- Provide any information as might be reasonably requested by the University or by students.
- Establish Board(s) of Studies and Board(s) of Examiners for each programme(s) or group of programme(s).
- Provide provision and support for disabled students.
- Ensure that all arrangements for tuition, support and accommodation for students are compliant with the University's Policy for Vulnerable Adults.
- Be responsible for its own policies, planning and financial matters relating to programme(s) not covered by the agreement with the University.
- Be responsible for any additional items specified in the agreement with the University:

5.3. Boards of Studies

Taught programmes are the responsibility of a Board of Studies, specifically constituted for individual programmes or groups of cognate programmes. The Board of Studies must report to the relevant committee at the Institution e.g. Senate or Teaching & Learning Committee. The Board of Studies must meet at appropriate times during the academic year, and at least 2 times. It must monitor annual and periodic reviews/audits and the implementation of quality assurance procedures. All proposed modifications to programmes (e.g. in content, delivery, assessment or staffing) must be considered by the Board of Studies. Meetings must be fully minuted and the minutes held by the Institution. The Institution may establish Boards of Studies that encompass more than one academic department and may use alternative names for the Boards.

Boards of Studies should comprise:

- All members of the academic staff in the department(s) delivering the programme
- At least three student representatives (except for Boards of Examiners – see Section 5.4)
- Moderator and External Examiner(s) (for the meeting of the Board of Examiners)
- Co-opted consultative members (*must have no right to vote*)
 - Other members of the Academic Staff of the Institution
 - Members of the non-academic staff in the department
 - Additional student representatives

The Head of the Department or nominee must act as Chair of the Board of Studies. The Board of Studies should elect one of its members to act as Secretary. Twenty five percent or more of the members should normally be present for the meeting to be quorate.

The number of students attending should be a reflection of the total number of students registered on validated programmes. Students across years and courses must be represented. It is expected that, as a minimum requirement, there should be at least one representative from undergraduate programmes and one representative from postgraduate taught programmes.

Board of Studies may:

- Determine, subject to the University's and Institution's regulations, the policy of the department in regard to criteria for admission, courses and syllabuses, and methods of teaching and assessment.
- Function as Board of Examiners (See Section 5.4).
- Advise, via appropriate groups in the Institution, on academic matters.
- Consider and confirm the names of persons suitable for appointment as external examiners.
- Consider matters referred to it by other groups or committees at the Institution.
- Make recommendations to the Institution's committees on academic matters.

Any of the functions defined above may be devolved to committees or groups within an academic department. However, these committees or groups must report to the Board of Studies.

5.4. Boards of Examiners

Role and Membership

Boards of Studies serve as the Board of Examiners for all programmes leading to an award. No student members may be present for consideration of assessment and progression issues, that is, when the Board of Studies is acting as the Board of Examiners. Board of Examiners should normally be held within 3 weeks of the end of the teaching and examination period in each academic year.

An agenda for Boards of Examiners meetings should be prepared by the Secretary of the Board in consultation with the Chair. Boards of Examiners minutes should be written by the Secretary or nominee and signed by the Chair. The minutes must be maintained in accordance with the Institution's record retention schedule.

Members of staff must inform the Chair of the Board of any personal interests, involvement or relationship with any students. The Chair must decide whether the circumstances have to be declared at the meeting. The member of staff must normally withdraw from the meeting when the student's case is being discussed. Any declaration of interest and/or withdrawal of a member of staff must be recorded in the minutes of the Board of Examiners.

Items discussed at Boards of Examiners must be treated in the strictest confidence. Members of the Board must not disclose or discuss information with students or other members of staff.

The Board of Examiners must:

- Ensure that any procedures/decisions are consistent with this Manual.
- Ensure that it has taken account of students' extenuating circumstances.
- Confirm the module marks and overall marks for each student.
- Decide whether students are eligible for re-assessment if a module has been failed.
- Decide whether a failed elective module mark is condoned or compensated.
- Record any action taken in response to unfair practice/plagiarism.
- Confirm the classification of awards (e.g. pass/fail or degree class).

It is recommended that the Board of Examiners creates a sub-group to consider extenuating circumstances. The sub-group should provide the Board with recommendations about changing assessment component or module marks. The University recommends that Institutions categorise extenuating circumstances as suggested in Section 12.12:

Boards of Examiners must not amend students' marks achieved in earlier years and previously confirmed by a Board of Examiners unless, for defined reasons, students have been informed that previously issued results are provisional.

Minutes of the Board of Examiners

Minutes should be taken at each Board of Examiners to:

- Record relevant discussion and decisions.
- Record the reasons for special recommendations/decisions for students, e.g. special examination arrangements, medical cases, plagiarism.
- Provide examples for future Board of Examiners meetings, thereby facilitating Consistency in the conduct of the Board's business.
- Receive and record the decisions of any sub-groups.
- Record comments of External Examiners in Board of Examiners at which awards are agreed.

The minutes should follow a basic outline as follows:

- i. Date of the meeting
- ii. List of programmes for which the Board of Examiners is responsible
- iii. Members present and apologies
- iv. Minutes of the previous meeting and any matters arising
- v. Any actions by the Chair since the most recent meeting
- vi. Confirmation of module marks - to confirm that the Board agrees with the marks as listed in an attached appendix. This section must include generic information on the reasons for any changes to marks (specific details of a medical/personal nature should not be included)
- vii. Award of Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates.
- viii. Decisions taken with regard to any prizes or awards.
- ix. External Examiner's comments.

Notification of Results

Institutions must have a procedure to record final results on a notification of results form. The form must contain, as a minimum, the following information:

- Name of student
- Student's Institutional ID
- Award title (BSc, BA etc)
- Course title
- Result achieved (pass/fail, pass/merit/distinction or degree class)
- Date that the form was completed

The form must be completed by the Board of Examiners and must be signed by the Chair and by all External Examiners present. If no External Examiner is able to attend, a copy of the form must be forwarded immediately to at least one External Examiner for his/her signature.

5.5. Staff Development and Training

Institutions must have a documented staff training and development policy. The policy must enable staff to:

- Acquire the knowledge and skills to perform their current roles.
- Enhance their performance in their current roles.
- Respond effectively to change and development.
- Develop their careers within the Institution.

In order to fulfil these objectives, the Institution must provide opportunities for initial and continuing professional development. The Institution must provide training on any statutory or legal matters, such as equality and diversity. There must also be systems to identify training and development needs.

It is expected that Institutions' staff training and development policy is coordinated by a central Staff Development Unit or its equivalent, providing central oversight of the policy and its implementation. Typically, Staff Development Units will:

- Be responsible to and report to senior officers.
- Liaise with academic departments.
- Liaise with Moderators for validated programmes.
- Ensure that training and development opportunities are relevant to the needs of staff.
- Arrange training and development activities.
- Evaluate training and development activities.

It is essential that Institutions provide adequate resources to support the implementation of its staff training and development policy.

6. Appointment and Role of Moderators

6.1. Introduction

The University must appoint a Moderator for a programme or group of cognate programmes. Institutions must ensure that the Moderator is given access to all the facilities, documents and records that are necessary for the Moderator to fulfil his/her duties and functions.

Given the range of partner institutions it is recognised that the role of the Moderator will vary depending on the nature of the collaborative provision. However the guidance for the role outlined below is given as the key basic requirements and responsibilities of the Moderator.

6.2. Nomination and Approval

Moderators are normally full time academic staff members of the University. Moderators are appointed by the Academic Registrar for individual programmes or groups of closely linked programmes. Moderators may be appointed from outside the University if expertise in a specific area is necessary for particular Institutions and/or programmes. Nominations, accompanied by Curriculum Vitae, are submitted for approval by the Chair of the University's Quality Assurance and Validation Task Group.

Moderators are normally appointed for a period of five years, with the possibility of re-appointment for a further two years. Moderators are not normally permitted to act as Moderators on behalf of the University in more than 4 Institutions at the same time.

Moderators must inform the University if there are circumstances which might cause a conflict of interest, either before appointment or during the term of their appointment.

6.3. Purpose of the Moderator

The purpose of the moderator is to act as a link between the programme team in the Institution and the University. They help the University maintain oversight of its validated programmes by producing reports that are considered by the Quality Assurance and Validation Task Group.

The primary role of the moderator is in monitoring and programme development, but they can assist in the maintenance of academic standards via attendance at examination boards and liaison with the External Examiner(s).

The Institution should be visited at least two times a year, one of which must be to attend the meeting of the Board of Examiners. These visits may be supplemented by regular contact with the programme team, including face to face contact, and regular email or telephone contact as required.

6.4. Relationship with the External Examiner

The role of the External Examiner is outlined in Section 7.

The Moderator is expected to liaise with the External Examiner(s), supporting them in verifying the quality and standards of validated awards. The Moderator is not expected to carry out any of the duties of the External Examiner, and **is not expected to mark any work.**

6.5. Duties of the Moderator

The main duties of the Moderator are to:

Operation and development of programme(s)

- Verify that the programme is managed in accordance with the Validation Manual.
- Monitor the programme progress and development and advise the Institution on proposed changes. Consideration should be given to the implications of cumulative changes and recommendations should be made to the University regarding the proposed changes.
- Advise the programme team on sources of support and advice for programme development, assessment design and programme amendments.
- Monitor the management, as appropriate, of placement/work based/simulated learning activity.

Admissions

- Verify that procedures for accrediting prior learning are consistent with the Validation Manual (Section 11.5) and offer support as necessary.
- Offer guidance on admissions procedures and requirements in accordance with the Validation Manual (Section 10).

Assessment

- Attend Examination Board(s) and verify that the External Examiner has access to assessments, and that decisions on progression and final awards are consistent with what was agreed at validation and in accordance with the Validation Manual.
- Advise the Institution on regulatory matters to ensure that students are treated equitably in decisions taken on progress and awards. This includes checking that procedures for extenuating circumstances (Section 12.3), Unfair Practice Panels (Section 11.4), marking, second marking and anonymous marking and moderation are applied in the Institution.

External Examiners

- Assist, as appropriate or on request, on the selection of a suitable nominee for an External Examiner.
- Assist and support partner staff in responding to the External Examiner's report, and advise the Institution on how to address any other issues raised.
- Report to the University, if the circumstances demand, on the External Examining process.

Course Quality

- Meet with students on the programmes at least once annually to receive feedback on the current programme, and make them aware of progression opportunities to the University as appropriate.
- Provide advice, as required, to the programme team on the completion of the Annual Programme Review.
- Verify to the University that the Annual Programme Review is a fair reflection of the Programme(s) and its operation.
- Provide support, where appropriate, to the Institution in preparation for audit, review or re-validation.
- Monitor the effective operation of the Board of Studies, or its equivalent, and attend as appropriate.
- Check that student representative systems are in place and verify that adequate feedback mechanisms exist between staff and students.

Quality of staffing support

- Assist the Programme Leader in identifying staff development opportunities, and on request consider delivering staff development sessions.
- Report to the Quality Assurance and Validation Unit if information emerges about changes in academic staff concerned with delivering and supporting the programme.
- Respond to requests from the Quality Assurance and Validation Unit about changes to teaching staff.

Produce reports to the Quality Assurance and Validation Task Group

- Provide the University with reports on the Programme(s), identifying any issues requiring intervention by the University. Normally, two reports* are required annually, one at the end of the first Semester (or its equivalent) and another after the Board of Examiners.
- Where the need arises, report immediately on any matters of concern which may pose a risk to quality and standards.
- Engage in Moderator Forums or events arranged by the University as necessary.

**When a programme is well-established, and operates effectively and successfully, the moderator may be asked to produce only one annual report following the Board of Examiners.*

7. External Examiners

7.1. Introduction

External Examiners help the University to ensure that:

- The procedures used to assess each programme conform to the University's regulations as defined by this Manual.
- The threshold academic standards set for its awards are maintained, in accordance with the frameworks for higher education qualifications and applicable subject benchmark statements.
- The assessment processes measure student achievement appropriately against the intended learning outcomes.
- The assessment processes are rigorous and fair.
- The University is able to compare the standards of its awards with those of other Higher Education Institutions in the UK.

The University expects external examiners to provide informative comment and recommendations on:

- Good practice and innovation relating to learning, teaching and assessment.
- Opportunities to enhance the quality of the learning opportunities provided to students.

The number of External Examiners per programme is based on the requirements of a discipline and on cohort numbers. For undergraduate programmes, the norm is 1 examiner per 200 students per subject, where 'subject' is a single programme or a group of programmes. Where there are justifiable reasons, for example where the subject requires breadth of expertise or where particular knowledge or experience is required, more than 1 examiner per 200 students may be appointed.

7.2. Criteria for Appointment

Current UK employment legislation requires that nominees must be eligible to work in the UK. Non-European Economic Area nationals must be eligible to work in the UK in the same profession and at the same professional level required for external examining.

When approving nominations for External Examiners, the University will take into account:

- Knowledge and understanding of UK sector agreed reference points for the maintenance of academic standards and assurance and enhancement of quality.
- Competence and experience in the fields covered by the programme of study.
- Relevant academic and/or professional qualifications to at least the level of the qualification being externally examined, and/or extensive practitioner experience.
- Competence and experience relating to designing and operating a variety of assessment tasks appropriate to the subject and operating assessment procedures.
- Sufficient standing, credibility and breadth of experience within the discipline to be able to command the respect of academic/professional peers.
- Familiarity with the standard to be expected of students to achieve the award that is to be assessed.
- Awareness of current developments in the design and delivery of relevant curricula.
- Competence and experience relating to the enhancement of the student learning experience.

Normally, a nominee will be of Senior Lecturer status or above, or the equivalent. If there is robust evidence of sufficient expertise, experience and seniority of their nomination, such criteria will take precedence over the formal job status and/or academic qualifications. Nominees should have fluency in English or Welsh, and where programmes are delivered and assessed in languages other than English or Welsh, fluency in the relevant language(s) (unless other secure arrangements are in place to ensure that external examiners are provided with the information to make their judgements). External examiners must meet any applicable criteria set by professional, statutory or regulatory bodies (e.g. HPC). The External Examiners in such cases will be appointed as defined by this Manual. The Academic Registry will be responsible for liaising with the Professional Body, or equivalent, where necessary. An external examiner may be reappointed in exceptional circumstances but only after a period of five years or more has elapsed

since their last appointment. External examiners should normally hold no more than two external examiner appointments for taught programmes/modules at any point in time.

To avoid conflicts of interest, anyone in the following categories or circumstances cannot normally be appointed as an external examiner:

- Member of a governing body or committee of the University or one of its collaborative partners, or a current employee of the University or one of its collaborative partners.
- Anyone with a close professional, contractual or personal relationship with a member of staff or student involved with the programme of study.
- Anyone required to assess colleagues who are recruited as students to the programme of study.
- Anyone who is, or knows they will be, in a position to influence significantly the future of students on the programme of study.
- Anyone significantly involved 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.
- Former staff or students of the University unless a period of five years has elapsed and all students taught by or with the external examiner have completed their programme(s).
- A reciprocal arrangement involving cognate programmes at another institution.
- The succession of an external examiner from an institution by a colleague from the same department in the same institution.
- The appointment of more than one external examiner from the same department of the same institution.

In cases where a nominated External Examiner does not meet the criteria defined above, a detailed explanation and a curriculum vitae must be provided by the Institution at the time of the nomination. Such a submission should include a list of all alternative names that were considered with their current posts and institutional affiliations.

7.3. Welsh-Medium Work

If a substantial proportion of a programme is delivered and assessed through the medium of Welsh, an External Examiner capable of moderating work presented in Welsh should be appointed. This may be as the sole External Examiner or as an additional External Examiner.

7.4. Nomination Procedure

The appointment period for an External Examiner is 4 years. An extension of one year may be permitted in exceptional circumstances. The Institution must nominate two possible External Examiners for approval by the University. Nomination forms for External Examiners for programmes starting in September should be submitted to the University's Academic Registry at the latest by the beginning of the preceding February.

Following approval by the Chair of the Quality Assurance & Validation Task Group, invitation letters are sent from the University's Academic Registry. Confirmation of the appointment will be given to the Institution once nominees have accepted the position.

In cases where the Chair of the Quality Assurance & Validation Task Group rejects both nominated External Examiners, alternative nominations will be required.

7.5. Responsibilities

The University is responsible, through the Academic Registry, for ensuring that External Examiners are provided with an induction briefing, including details of the University's regulations and terms of appointment.

Institutions are responsible for ensuring that External Examiners receive appropriate induction and briefing material about the programme(s) with which they will be associated. This must include assessment practices and procedures, programme specification(s) and a schedule of assessments. The Institution must also provide details of the learning outcomes and assessment methods for individual modules.

If External Examiners are unable to moderate Master's research projects within 3 months of submission, an alternate examiner should be appointed for this purpose. Institutions must inform the University's Academic Registry of any such delay. Institutions must also inform students if there is likely to be any delay in the examination process beyond 3 months after research projects have been submitted.

Institutions are responsible for including the name, position and institution of External Examiners in module or programme information provided to students. This must be accompanied by clear warnings that attempting to contact the External Examiner directly is inappropriate and any such incidences will be investigated by the University.

The University is responsible, through the Academic Registry, for informing external examiners, in writing at the beginning of their term of office, that they have a right to raise any matter of serious concern with the Vice-Chancellor, if necessary by means of a separate confidential written report. The University will provide a considered and timely response to any confidential report received, outlining any actions they will be taking as a result.

7.6. Roles of the External Examiner

The main function of External Examiners is to report on the standards of student performance and on the comparability of the standards with those of similar programmes delivered in Higher Education Institutions in the UK. For undergraduate programmes this includes work at Level 4. External Examiners submit an annual report using a form provided by the University.

External examiners should determine whether the standards are appropriate for the awards by reference to national subject benchmarks, national qualifications frameworks, programme specifications and other relevant information.

External examiners must be consulted about the proposed dates of meetings of the Board of Examiners for programmes at the beginning of each academic session. An External Examiner should be present at all meetings of the Board of Examiners. If, because of extenuating circumstances, an External Examiner cannot attend the Board of Examiners, he/she should be available for consultation by telephone, video network or other suitable means.

Drafts of examination papers which contribute to the final award should be sent to the External Examiner for approval. External Examiners should also see all, or a representative sample, of draft coursework which contribute to the final award. This is particularly important in programmes where the majority of the assessment is by continuous assessment rather than examination. At the beginning of each academic session an agreed timetable for sending examination papers, assessment and examination scripts should be confirmed between the Institution and the External Examiner. External examiners should also be informed of the Institution's policy on double marking.

For cohorts of 10 students or less, the views of the External Examiner may be sought by post, e-mail, telephone and/or video link.

External Examiners may moderate all or a sample of students' work. The sample must normally contain all work assessed as first class/distinction and work that has been failed. The sample should also contain work from all levels of performance. Many External Examiners wish to see scripts from the top, the middle and the bottom of the range. The guiding principle is that External Examiners should have enough evidence to determine that internal marking and classifications are of an appropriate standard and are consistent. They should inspect a sufficient amount of the work to enable them to arrive at a judgement that can be applied to the body of work and the student cohort(s). All work that counts towards the final award should be moderated by the External Examiner at the end of the academic year in which the module(s) has been delivered and assessed.

Boards of Examiners are responsible for agreeing final marks and the classification of awards. External Examiners may advise, as members of the Board, on the mark and classification for individual students. External examiners should sign the record of the classifications awarded on the notification of results form provided by the Institution.

External Examiners moderate the research projects submitted by students on Master's programmes. A sample may be moderated within the following guidelines:

- External Examiners must see all research projects which are:
 - Within the category of distinction
 - Within +/- 5% of the minimum pass mark
 - Within the fail category
 - Resubmitted research projects
- External Examiners retain the right to select and see additional research projects.
- All research projects must be double marked before a sample is sent to the External Examiner.
- At least 20% of research projects or a minimum of 10 – whichever is the higher figure – must be seen by External Examiners. If the total number is less than 10, all research projects must be sent to the External Examiner.

The role of External Examiners in viva voce examinations is described in Section 0.

7.7. External Examiners Reports

External Examiners should write their reports on the assumption that they will become a public document made available to students by Institutions. The University will assume that examiners give consent to disclose information from reports in response to reasonable requests. External Examiners' reports must be returned to the University. On receipt of the report form, the University will pay the Examiners' fee. External Examiners are expected to return their reports within 1 month of the Board of Examiners meeting. After moderating Master's research projects, External Examiners should complete reports by the end of January.

Comments made by External Examiners must be considered by Boards of Studies to identify points that require the attention of the Institution and/or academic departments. Boards of Studies must also consider the reports as part of the programme review process.

The Head of the Institution is responsible for ensuring that any action resulting from External Examiners' comments is carried out promptly and should report the action to the University's Academic Registry. The Head of the Institution is also responsible for responding directly to the External Examiner, particularly on academic issues. The University's Academic Registry is responsible for contacting External Examiners regarding any issues to be considered by the University.

Reports not received within 3 months will be brought to the attention of the University's Teaching and Learning Task Group and could result in the termination of an appointment. Whilst it is hoped that such a situation will not arise, an External Examiner whose performance or general conduct is deemed to be unsatisfactory by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching & Learning) will be warned in writing in the first instance and, if necessary, be advised on appropriate remedial action(s) which need to be taken. In exceptional circumstances, the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching & Learning) may authorise a letter of premature termination to be sent to the External Examiner concerned without prior warning. This will have the effect of terminating the contract immediately. A letter of premature termination will also be sent following a less serious incident if an External Examiner has already received a warning.

If an External Examiner wishes to terminate their appointment early, due to illness or other unforeseen circumstances, Examiners are asked to notify the University's Academic Registry in writing at the earliest opportunity.

8. Quality Enhancement

The University uses the widely agreed definition of quality enhancement as “the process of taking deliberate steps at institutional level to improve the quality of learning opportunities”¹. Quality enhancement should be a continuous process, embedded within an institution’s structures and systems. Quality enhancement must be an integral part of an institution’s teaching and learning strategy, its cycle of regular and periodic reviews, and of its planning cycles.

The University’s view is that quality enhancement is best served by focussing attention on a restricted number of major enhancement projects. A small number of projects may be started in each academic year, and may take 2-3 years to complete. This results in a schedule with several projects running simultaneously with a variety of start and end dates. This approach is preferable to an emphasis on a large number of ad-hoc, small-scale enhancements whose cumulative effect is negligible. Quality enhancement projects should be explicit, major interventions in current provision and practices, affecting all, or almost all, of the Institution. They should be innovative and influential and should benefit the majority of students.

Ideas for quality enhancement projects may come from students, senior managers, academic staff or administrative staff. The role of students as initiators, consultants, evaluators and project members is essential. Quality enhancement projects may be prompted by internal factors (e.g. an analysis of performance indicators or the outcome of audits), External Examiner reports or research. They may also follow visits to other institutions in the UK and internationally, from conferences and meetings, and from external guidance (e.g. Higher Education Academy).

Each quality enhancement project should be championed and led by a senior member of staff with a Task and Finish Group that has expertise in the topic, and enthusiasm for transformational change. Each quality enhancement project should report to the relevant committee at the institution e.g. Senate or Teaching & Learning Committee.

Quality enhancement projects may target any aspect of the Institution that is linked to teaching and learning including:

- Management processes
- Quality assurance processes
- Assessment of Students
- Recruitment and retention
- Student welfare and support
- Student voice and representation
- Pedagogic processes and standards

¹ QAA. Handbook for Institutional audit: England and Northern Ireland 2009.

9. Quality Assurance

9.1. Principles

The University maintains the highest possible standards of teaching, learning and student support. The University has quality assurance procedures to ensure that it continues to deliver teaching of the highest quality. In line with the University's aims and standards, Institutions are expected to have quality assurance procedures for all areas defined by this Manual.

The Institution's quality assurance procedures must be underpinned by the following:

- A partnership between academic departments and the Institution's central committees.
- Robust mechanisms for quality assurance in all academic departments.
- Institutional committee(s) with responsibility for quality assurance.
- A commitment to a continuous upward spiral of quality with individual staff, module teams and course teams assuming responsibility for raising standards in all aspects of teaching and learning.
- A rigorous and actionable system of quality assurance.
- Regular auditing of quality assurance procedures and outcomes.
- Student satisfaction and feedback as key elements in audits, regular reviews and action plans.
- A commitment to responding to changes in the needs, interests and expectations of students, their sponsors, employers and society in general.

9.2. Management of Quality Assurance

Institutions must define the structures responsible for managing quality assurance including the role of committees and officers.

There must be a central committee with responsibility for quality assurance that will:

- Ensure that routine quality assurance procedures operate effectively.
- Oversee the process of nominating External Examiners.
- Oversee issues raised in reports by Moderators and External Examiners.
- Oversee the processes to review programmes and modules.
- Oversee the processes to conduct periodic audits of academic departments.
- Receive and consider reports on any courses conducted by an external organisation, professional body or other authority.
- Receive and consider any new proposals from national or professional bodies.
- Monitor all quality assurance policies and procedures.
- Maintain/review academic regulations and related documentation.
- Review any special cases not complying fully with the academic regulations.
- Consider questions related to the interpretation of regulations.

There must be a committee in academic departments with responsibility for quality assurance that will:

- Review reports from External Examiners and Moderators.
- Review student feedback (obtained through questionnaires and other means).
- Review teaching and learning strategies.
- Review the adequacy of human and material resources.
- Review Programme Specifications.
- Review standards of teaching.
- Review each module.
- Review the holistic nature of each degree course, its fitness for purpose, the need for innovation, standards, structure, and methods of delivery.
- Review student learning aims, goals and objectives as well as outcome competences.
- Review assessment outcomes.
- Prepare and review a development/action plan for each programme.
- Review relationships with any external organizations (e.g. placement providers).
- Consider reports of any professional body that accredits a programme.

9.3. Institution's Administrative Responsibilities

Institutions must define and document how quality assurance functions are managed and administered. This will include:

- The roles of central committees
- The roles of committees in academic departments
- The roles assigned to senior officers
- The roles of managerial staff in academic departments
- The roles of students and their representatives
- The lines of communication between individuals and groups
- The lines of communication with Moderators and External Examiners

9.4. Monitoring Academic Standards and Achievement

Academic standards must be reviewed on a regular basis, including consideration of statistical indicators. Statistical indicators are used to inform future curriculum development, and to identify trends and issues. The statistical indicators may comprise the following:

- Student applications and registrations
- Student Progression
- Student pass:fail ratio by course
- Student outcomes (including degree classification)

9.5. Internal Quality Audits

Institutions must have systems for conducting periodic quality audits of academic and service departments. The purpose of quality audits is to verify that the processes and mechanisms for quality and standards are operating effectively and efficiently. Quality audits are used to monitor and enhance the quality and standards of academic programmes and student support services.

Quality Audits should have the following characteristics:

- Students views must be obtained.
- Audits must occur at least once every 6 years:
 - on a regular basis following a defined schedule and/or
 - in response to defined criteria (e.g. failure to achieve defined targets)
- Audits must include:
 - Consideration of documents such as self-evaluation documents, committee minutes and other documentation related to teaching and learning
 - Meeting(s) with the Head of Department and staff
 - Meeting(s) with student representatives
 - Meeting(s) with other staff involved in quality assurance and/or teaching and learning (e.g. administrators)
- It is considered good practice to include an external assessor on audit panels. Normally, an external assessor should not be a current or recent External Examiner and should have knowledge of quality assurance processes and procedures.

Audits will consider:

- The standards of teaching and learning.
- Methods of assessment and their relationship to learning outcomes, course content, learning strategies and transferable skills.
- Student progression and achievement.
- Student support and representation.
- Teaching and learning resources and innovations.
- Student handbooks, module handouts, assessment forms/checklists.
- Welsh medium teaching (where applicable).
- Work placements (where applicable).
- Staff development and training.

Audits must result in reports which highlight the strengths of an academic or service department. The reports should list action points for consideration by the department in relation to academic standards, quality of the learning opportunities and maintenance of quality and standards. Issues for the Institution to consider should also be included in the report.

9.6. Programme and Module Review

Programmes and modules must be reviewed annually. The reviews must include a development/action plan and should reflect student feedback, comments of external examiners, and progress on the previous development plans. Example forms for programme and module reviews are available from the University and Institutions may use those forms (QA1 and QA2) with or without amendments.

10. Admissions, Enrolment, Registration and Termination of Studies

10.1. Admissions Policy

Institutions must have an admissions policy. The aim of the policy is to ensure that Institutions' policies and procedures to attract, recruit and admit students are clear, fair and consistently applied.

The information provided for prospective students in promotional material produced by the Institution must be:

- Relevant and accurate
- A means to help applicants to make informed decisions about their options
- Accessible
- Applicable to all students

An Institution's Prospectus (or the equivalent) should provide information on:

- The range and content of programmes
- The modes of study
- The teaching and learning methods
- Accreditation and/or approval of programmes by professional or statutory bodies
- Open Days and other opportunities for prospective students to meet current students and staff
- The welfare, guidance and support services that are available
- The services that are available for those with particular needs
- Fees and associated costs
- Availability of financial support
- Admissions requirements (any health and/or other checks)
- Whether availability of the course will depend on the number of applicants

Detailed information about courses should also be available. This should include information about the teaching and learning methods, the assessment procedures and the extent of flexibility and choice.

All publicity material should note that the information was correct at the time of publication. It is good practice to note that the Institution, subject to the University's agreement, reserves the right to modify courses and to discontinue them, if considered necessary.

Institutions must ensure that all information provided to external publications, including course databases, educational websites, the UCAS Handbook and Guide to University Entrance is accurate and relevant.

The Institution should organise Open Days, or their equivalent, for prospective students. They provide an opportunity for prospective students to visit the Institution to find out more about both the courses and the student experience. Open Days should give prospective students the chance to meet staff and current students, view the campus and halls of residence and obtain current information about the courses offered.

10.2. Clearing (UK Institutions only)

The Institution must provide a service to answer calls from applicants during the UCAS Clearing period. The aim is to provide relevant, correct and up-to-date information, while also ensuring speed of response at a potentially stressful time for applicants.

Students applying for courses through Clearing must be asked if they have a disability. Before an offer is made, applicants with disabilities must be referred to the appropriate officer(s) at the Institution to discuss their support needs.

Those applying for courses through Clearing should, if they meet the requirements, normally be sent a same-day letter confirming the offer of a place on a course and informing them of the steps required to take up that place.

10.3. Entry Requirements

Entry requirements may be determined by the Institution but must be in accordance with the University's admissions policy and must be agreed when a programme is validated. The entry requirements must include academic qualifications and any other criteria (e.g. English language requirements, medical screening checks). All offers of places must be conveyed in a clear and easily understood format. If applicants have to be interviewed before offers are made, this should be explained in all course-specific publicity materials. All interviews should be conducted in accordance with the principles of the Institution's Equal Opportunities Policy.

Where an applicant will be under 18 at the start of a course, the Institution must honour its statutory obligations. Applicants for courses subject to an age limit due to professional or other requirements must be informed if they do not meet the age requirements.

Entry criteria (including non-academic criteria) should be transparent, easily understood, current and publicly available. The normal minimum entry requirements for undergraduate programmes are outlined below but more specific requirements may be applied to individual programmes subject to approval at validation:

- UCAS Tariff Points: All current qualifications eligible for UCAS tariff points may be considered and may be included when calculating tariff scores.
- Welsh Baccalaureate: Offers should reflect the requirements of the course and the qualification profile of the applicant.
- Irish Leaving Certificate (Highers): Points must be calculated from the best 6 results in one sitting of the Irish Leaving Certificate and must include 4 grades at the Higher level, two of which should be grade C or above.
- Scottish Framework Qualifications: Offers should be made on an individual basis to students taking Scottish awards that are not included in the UCAS tariff.
- International Baccalaureate: Normally the diploma must have been awarded.
- European Baccalaureate: Diploma – a mark of 60% or more.
- Access courses: Offers should be made on an individual basis to students taking a recognised Access course.

Students for postgraduate programmes must have one of the following:

- An initial degree from a recognised Higher Education Institution (for overseas institutions: listed by UK NARIC).
- A non-graduate qualification which is of a satisfactory standard.
- At least 3 years of relevant professional experience

Additional entry criteria for postgraduate courses may be defined at validation.

International students (i.e. from a country where English is not the first language) must provide evidence of their language skills. The minimum English language competency must be a IELTS score of 6.0 with no element below 5.5 (or the equivalent). Higher levels may be specified for individual programmes at validation. In some cases, international students may be exempt from the requirement to provide evidence of their language skills. For example, if an applicant:

- Comes from a country that is 'recognised' by UK HEIs as English speaking and/or having an English language medium education system.
- Has obtained a suitable alternative qualification (e.g. A levels, degree, etc through the medium of English).
- Has worked in an English speaking country and it is clear from the nature of the work and the references that a suitable level of English has been attained.
- Has studied in the UK via the Socrates scheme or similar and has obtained credit at HE level.

10.4. Overseas Applications for Postgraduate Courses

Qualification equivalence and academic standing of overseas institutions must be determined by the Institution by referring to nationally and internationally recognised sources (e.g. NARIC). If the Institution is unable to determine the academic standing of an overseas institution it must consult the University's Postgraduate Admissions Office to confirm whether an applicant's qualification may be considered as "equivalent".

10.5. Fee Eligibility

The fee status (i.e. Home or Overseas) of an applicant must be determined by the Institution prior to registration. The assignment of fee status should be in accordance with 'The Education (Mandatory Awards) Regulations' (as amended) used by Local Education Authorities (LEAs). The determination of fee eligibility should normally be consistent with the UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA) guidance.

10.6. Disability

Institutions must take all reasonable steps to ensure that disabled applicants are not treated less favourably, for reasons relating to their disability, than non-disabled applicants. All applications must be considered on the same grounds unless there are overriding health and safety concerns, barriers relating to professional requirements, or required adjustments that cannot be made.

10.7. Criminal Convictions

If an applicant declares a criminal conviction Institutions must ensure that:

- The Institution observes its duty of care to staff, students and visitors.
- The rights of the individual to be treated in a non-discriminatory manner are reconciled with the rights of the Institution's community to have a safe environment.
- The 'vetting' system is practical, equitable and lawful.
- Particular attention is paid to applications for courses that give a qualification in a profession where a particular type of criminal record acts as an absolute bar to study.
- Information regarding criminal convictions is made available only to those staff directly involved in the admissions process and this information is held separately in a secure manner.

Institutions' procedures to deal with applications where a criminal conviction has been declared must be consistent with the following:

- The procedures must be followed before a decision is taken to admit the applicant.
- The procedures must comply with the requirements of any professional bodies, or their equivalent that provide student registration/accreditation.
- Applicants must be given a precise time in which to respond (14 days is recommended) to requests by the Institution for details of their conviction. If no reply is received, a single reminder should be sent and then if no reply, the application must be rejected.
- If it becomes apparent that an applicant has withheld information regarding previous criminal convictions, then the application must be rejected.
- If the declared offence raises no concerns (e.g. a motoring offence), then the application may proceed.
- Where more serious offences are identified (e.g. convictions for offences of a sexual nature or involving violence), then the application must be considered by the appropriate authority as defined by the Institution's procedures.
- There must be mechanisms to assess risks to staff and students if the applicant was accepted and to decide what actions are required to manage the presence of the applicant on the campus and course.
- There must be a procedure for applicants to appeal against decisions to reject their application.
- The reasons for accepting or rejecting an application must be recorded.

10.8. Fraudulent Applications

All fraudulent applications must be cancelled and the University and any other interested parties (e.g. UCAS) must be notified.

10.9. Information for Successful Applicants

If programmes are changed after an offer has been made, applicants must be informed about the changes and about the options available to them. The Institution is responsible for informing applicants.

All new students must receive a 'welcome pack' containing relevant induction material about enrolment, registration, induction and orientation arrangements prior to registration at the Institution. Information may also be published on the Institution's web site.

10.10. Admissions - Staff Training

Staff involved in the recruitment of prospective students must:

- Be aware of the Institution's Equal Opportunities Policy to make sure that applicants are treated fairly, equally and without discrimination.
- Be aware of the diversity of background, experience and age of applicants.
- Be aware of the different modes of study available.
- Provide prospective students and applicants with information that will enable them to make informed decisions about their options.
-

10.11. Data management and Registration

Institutions must have systems to manage data gathered as part of the admissions process. Institutions must also have systems to record students' registration status and achievement. The systems must ensure that:

- Students can be identified via unique identifiers.
- Staff can only access information that is specifically required for the tasks they routinely undertake.
- Data storage is robust with tested backup and retrieval systems.
- Systems and system developments are properly tested before implementation.
- There are user-friendly procedures for analysis and reporting.

10.12. Interruption and Termination of Studies

Institutions must have procedures to allow students to interrupt their studies, that is, to take time out for personal reasons. Institutions must also have procedures to identify students who are causing concern and to consider whether to terminate a student's studies. There must be no ambiguity about which procedure to use in response to specific circumstances.

Normally, a interruption of studies procedure and a termination of studies procedure would not apply to:

- Approved short absences (e.g short-term illness). Such cases should be treated as authorised absences on the assumption that students can continue with background work, can access electronic resources and that appropriate extensions to coursework can be approved.
- Situations that can be addressed through the Institution's procedures for dealing with extenuating circumstances.
- Extensions to registration periods. Such cases should be considered under the procedures for extending a period of study.
- Disciplinary or unfair practice cases. Such cases should be considered under the Institution's disciplinary procedures or unfair practice procedure.
- Students who are in debt. Such cases should be considered under the Institution's procedures for dealing with debtors.

- Students whose studies may be terminated by Boards of Examiners according to the Institution's regulations and procedures.
- Students whose studies may be terminated by specific procedures (e.g. suitability for practice procedures) approved as part of the validation process for their course, including conditions imposed by professional bodies or sponsors.

A procedure to interrupt studies must only be used in cases where there are justifiable reasons why a student can't continue with his/her studies as planned. Interruption of study must only be approved for significant periods, normally representing the remainder of the academic session; that is, students must not be allowed to return to their studies within an academic session and can only resume their studies in the next academic session. During a period of interrupted study, students must be recorded as enrolled students, must not pay fees, and must not have access to facilities, including access to IT resources. It is expected that the Procedure will include guidance on the reasons/circumstances under which interruption of study will be approved.

Before a student returns to the Institution after a period of interrupted study, he/she must inform the Institution in writing. The letter/email must be sent at least one month before the intended date of return. If a student does not inform the Institution of his/her intention to return, the Institution may prevent the student from resuming his/her studies. Where the Interruption of Study has been approved on medical grounds, the student must normally submit a medical certificate at least one month before the intended date of return. For some courses, additional health checks arranged by the Institution may also be required. If a student does not provide a medical certificate, the Institution may prevent the student from resuming his/her studies. After a period of interrupted study, students must normally pursue the programme as offered at the time when the studies are resumed. For example, students returning to complete Level 6 modules after a period of interrupted study must follow those core and compulsory modules that have been defined for the academic year in which the student resumes study. Students may not normally repeat modules in which credit has been achieved. If a student does not return after a period of interrupted study and an additional period of interrupted study had not been requested and/or approved, the student's registration will be discontinued, and where possible, an exit qualification will be awarded.

Grounds for terminating the studies of a student should normally include the following:

- Failure to attend formally scheduled activities over a substantial period and in the absence of extenuating circumstances and/or of prior approval to be absent.
- Failure to submit substantial components of coursework or to attend tests and/or examinations.
- Failure to meet the expected standards in some or all professional placements. The required standards can be defined by the institution or can be external standards applied to students on courses leading to professional qualifications.
- Evidence of insufficient commitment to study (e.g. repeated unwillingness to participate in group activities, seminars, tutorials or presentations).
- Evidence that work submitted for assessment is consistently below the threshold standard to the extent that the student will be unable to redeem failure by reassessment.
- Failure to meet specific requirements defined for a programme.

The termination of studies procedure must be consistent with the following:

- A student's progress must be considered in the first instance by the academic department responsible for the student's programme.
- All extenuating circumstances must be carefully considered.
- Students must normally be given an opportunity to correct any deficiencies in their conduct/performance or to withdraw voluntarily.
- If a student's unsatisfactory progress affects his/her ability to complete a professional placement the Institution may remove the student from the placement before a decision is made to terminate the student's studies.
- A student's studies should only be terminated when all attempts to remedy the situation have failed.

10.13. Transfer of students

With the consent of students, and by agreement between the University and the Institution, students may be transferred to alternative programmes and/or alternative providers. Such alternative programmes may be delivered by the University, the Institution or another institution approved by the University.

Wherever possible, both the University and the Institution should accommodate any reasonable request from students to transfer to an alternative programme.

Wherever possible, the Institution should allow students to exit from programmes and should provide advice to assist students to decide whether to continue or discontinue their studies.

11. Academic Regulations

11.1. General Regulations and Students' Responsibilities

General Regulations

Institutions must have general regulations that apply to all students, supplemented by specific regulations for areas such as use of the library, IT facilities and laboratories. Students must agree to abide by the Institution's regulations as part of the enrolment and registration procedure.

It is expected that the general regulations will include:

- Student conduct and discipline on and off campus
- Use of computing and other IT facilities
- Smoking policy
- Criminal convictions
- Enrolment, registration and attendance
- Rules of residence (if on-campus accommodation is provided)
- Payment of fees and other charges
- Health and safety
- Motor vehicles on campus
- Use of the institution's premises
- Student intellectual property rights
- Data protection
- Freedom of information
- Copyright regulations

Enrolment, Registration and Attendance

Students are required to take the correct number of modules at the correct level. They must also attend lectures, seminars, tutorials, examinations or other activities. They must also complete and submit coursework by the defined deadlines. Institutions must have policies covering:

- Attendance at lectures
- Attendance at tutorials, seminars, laboratory and other sessions
- The methods used to monitor attendance

Where the programme allows, students in Semester 1 of their first year may change modules within the first 3 weeks and other students may change modules within the first 2 weeks of the semester. A student may change from one programme to another if approved by the department(s) concerned provided a 'change of degree programme' form has been signed in accordance with the method approved by the Institution.

Responsibilities of Students

It is the responsibility of students to check their examination schedule, attend examinations and submit coursework. They must also provide examiners, before the Board of Examiners meeting, with any relevant information on personal circumstances which may have affected their performance. If a student does not attend an examination, the Board of Examiners has authority to award a fail mark for the examination. If a student does not submit work for assessment at the right time without good cause, a penalty for late submission will be applied.

11.2. Boards of Examiners' Discretion

Within the boundaries imposed by this Manual, Boards of Examiners have discretion when reaching decisions on the classification of awards for individual students. Boards of Examiners are responsible for interpreting the assessment regulations for the programme if any difficulties arise, in the light of the University's requirements and good practice in higher education. The academic judgements made by Boards of Examiners may not, in themselves, be questioned or overturned. The authority of Boards of Examiners to exercise judgement and discretion should be clearly stated in student handbooks.

11.3. Student Discipline

Institutions must have a student disciplinary procedure. Institutions must take action in accordance with the procedure when there is any breach of the Institution's regulations. It is expected that Institutions' disciplinary procedures define the circumstances under which allegations or suspicion of criminal activity will be reported to the Police. As noted in Section 10.12, Institutions must also ensure that the scope of the procedure is clear, so that there is no ambiguity regarding when it should be used, and when other procedures, like a termination of studies procedure, should be used.

Institutions' student disciplinary procedures must be consistent with the following:

- Officers with disciplinary powers must be identified.
- The powers of disciplinary officers must be defined.
- There must be mechanisms to temporarily suspend students if the circumstances demand, pending consideration of the case under the disciplinary procedure.
- A student must be informed about the allegations against him/her before any meeting to consider the case.
- A two-stage disciplinary process is recommended, involving:
 - an initial stage where the case is considered by a disciplinary officer who may deal with minor offences
 - A second stage where, for more serious offences, the case is considered by a board of discipline or its equivalent

11.4. Plagiarism

Institutions should have a central strategy to prevent, detect and respond to plagiarism and to provide training to academic staff. Whilst identifying the roles of the Institution and of academic staff, it is important to emphasise the responsibility of students not to engage in unfair practice.

Definitions

Plagiarism includes:

- Unacknowledged use of another person's work.
- Use of another's work/ideas with slight modification or paraphrasing.
- Use of essay banks or similar services.
- Use of unacknowledged material downloaded from the internet.
- Re-use of one's own material (unless specific permission has been granted).
- Translation of another's work without acknowledging the original source.

Inadvertent plagiarism is usually a consequence of poor understanding of what constitutes this form of unfair practice. Incidences of inadvertent plagiarism should be dealt with as sympathetically as possible. There should be support from academic staff and/or personal tutors, to ensure that students understand why they were found guilty of plagiarism and how further incidences could be avoided.

Advertent plagiarism represents a deliberate attempt to engage in unfair practice. Incidences of advertent plagiarism must be pursued using the Institution's unfair practice procedure.

The Institution's Responsibilities

The Institution has a responsibility to ensure that all students are aware of the main characteristics of plagiarism and of the penalties for unfair practice. Such details should be included in student guides/handbooks and in specific documents on unfair practice. Audits, conducted as part of the Institution's regular cycle, should consider academic departments' policies and procedures on plagiarism and the extent to which these comply with institutional guidelines.

Students are expected to complete a cover sheet, or on-line declaration for work submitted electronically, to accompany the submission of assessed work. The cover sheet should include a section where the student declares that the work is their own (subject to any specific guidance on collaborative work affecting specific pieces of work) and acknowledging the Institution's guidance on plagiarism. Institutions must provide academic departments with guidance on the design and content of cover sheets.

The University strongly recommends the use of electronic plagiarism detection systems, currently the JISC detection software. The Institution must ensure that students' consent for submission of work to an electronic plagiarism detection service is obtained.

Responsibilities of Academic Departments

It should not be assumed that students enter the Institution with knowledge of academic conventions, of what plagiarism is, or of how they can avoid it. Instructions about the use of primary and secondary sources, bibliographical techniques, and referencing should be presented in clear and unambiguous language. The instructions should include as many examples as possible drawn from the subject being studied. Illustrations of good and bad practice should use sources which students are likely to recognise as relevant to their studies. Where possible, students should be provided with an opportunity to discuss plagiarism. Opportunities for students to test whether they are committing plagiarism are considered to be good practice, for example, by allowing students to submit draft versions of work for comment or by formative assessment. The early period of each student's studies should be regarded as developmental, providing opportunities to encourage and develop good academic practices.

Special induction procedures are recommended for students whose first language is not Welsh or English. Some cultures encourage deference to expert opinion. Students must understand that repetition of the words and thoughts of such experts, without acknowledgement, constitutes plagiarism. Students should be made aware of the value of challenging received opinion, and that understanding of a subject and independent thought will be rewarded. For distance-learning students, academic departments must provide clear guidelines which take into account the varying cultures in which the students are living and working. Plagiarism should be discussed in residential courses, study groups or any other support meetings. Academic departments should publicise the central support services that are available to students and should reassure students that advice can be sought from academic and support staff at any stage in their studies.

Essay/project titles should be reviewed regularly to ensure that plagiarism is discouraged and that a personal response from the student is encouraged, i.e. that simple repetition of views/opinions does not adequately meet the assessment criteria. The review should consider the topics covered, the style of the questions and the extent to which questions are repeated across years. Academic departments should give students guidelines on how to correctly reference material, both in the text and in the bibliography. Students should also be given subject-specific conventions regarding the style/format of referencing. It is preferable to provide examples to ensure that students understand how to reference sources correctly. Students should also be given specific feedback whenever their work does not include appropriate referencing. Academic departments should provide students with guidance on any subject- or discipline-specific examples of plagiarism. This should place particular emphasis on examples other than those described in general guidelines on plagiarism.

Responsibilities of Academic Members of Staff

At the beginning of each module, guidance should be provided on expectations relating to seminar work, group project work or any other academic activity where students have to work together. Students should be informed explicitly about the extent to which collaboration is either required or forbidden, both in the completion of preparatory/research work, and when completing coursework for submission.

Members of staff who mark students' work are responsible for identifying plagiarism and may use whatever methods are deemed appropriate within the guidelines provided by the Institution and any specific procedures adopted by the academic department. Staff marking students' work should use their professional judgement to determine whether plagiarism has occurred.

Indicators of plagiarism include the following:

- The work exceeds the student's research or writing abilities and is too professional, journalistic or scholarly.
- The student's paper contains complex or specialised vocabulary, technical terms, or other words and expressions.
- The quality of writing is inconsistent. For example, the introduction or conclusion is poorly written compared to the body of the paper.
- The title page, font, references, format, or layout of the paper is inconsistent.
- There are embedded links, page breaks, or incorrect page numbers in the paper.
- The topic of the paper isn't consistent with the assignment, class lectures, or class handouts.
- The bibliography is odd in some way. For example, it is long, its style is different from the one normally used, the citations are from old or remote sources, or the materials referenced are not readily available.

11.5. Unfair Practice

Unfair practice (Academic misconduct, dishonesty or cheating) is any act by which a person obtains an unfair advantage for himself/herself or for another. Unfair practice can occur in all forms of assessment.

Examples of Unfair Practice in examinations include:

- Taking unauthorised materials into an examination room (e.g. book, loose papers or electronic device).
- Copying from another person in an examination room.
- Communicating with another person in an examination room.
- Impersonation of a student or allowing oneself to be impersonated.
- Presentation of an examination script as one's own work when the script includes material produced by unauthorised means.

Examples of Unfair Practice in Non-Examination Conditions include:

- Plagiarism.
- Collusion (i.e. when work that has been undertaken by or with others is submitted and passed off as solely the work of one person).
- Fabrication of data (e.g. making false claims to have carried out experiments, observations, interviews or analysis).
- Failing to obtain proper consent from participants in research projects or failure to adhere to agreed protocols for obtaining and recording consent.

It is also unfair practice to present evidence of special circumstances to a Board of Examiners which is false, falsified or which misleads or could mislead the Board of Examiners.

Institutions must have procedures to deal with cases of unfair practice in examination and non-examination conditions. The procedures must include clear guidance on matters that may be dealt with at departmental level and matters that have to be dealt with by the Institution's central processes.

Institutions' procedures must be consistent with the following principles and guidelines:

- The student must be deemed innocent unless there is sufficient evidence to prove otherwise, beyond a reasonable doubt.
- Where it is suspected that a student is engaging in unfair practice in an examination, the student should be informed, preferably in the presence of a witness, that the circumstances will be reported. Invigilators should confiscate and retain evidence so that it is available to any subsequent investigation.
- An internal or external examiner or any other person who, whether in the course of the marking period or subsequently, considers or suspects that a student has engaged in an unfair practice in an examination, must report the matter in writing to the appropriate authority.
- No penalty should normally be imposed that is greater than the cancellation of marks in the module(s) where plagiarism has been proven. If the student is permitted to resubmit work, the mark for any resubmitted elements should normally be capped 40% (Level 4-6) or 50% (Level

- 7). Where all the assessed work contributing to a module is to be resubmitted the overall mark for the module should normally be capped at 30% (Level 4-6) or 40% (Level 7), but if the module is core, then the mark should be capped at 40% (Level 4-6) or 50% (Level 7).
- The Head of the academic department must deal with unfair practice in work (examinations and coursework) that:
 - Does not contribute to the overall mark upon which the award is classified. For example, assessed work at level 4 in an undergraduate degree.
 - Amounts to 20 credits or fewer in assessed work that contributes to the overall mark upon which the award is classified. For example, assessed work at level 6 in an undergraduate degree.
 - The Head of the academic department can conclude that the student has demonstrated poor academic practice: This option must be chosen if the student's coursework contains examples for poor academic practice that fall short of unfair practice. For example, weaknesses in the way that the work of others is referenced or over-reliance on referenced material with insufficient independent academic input from the student. If this option is chosen, no allegation of unfair practice should be recorded in the student's file or noted in correspondence with the student. However, students must be warned that any comparable incidents in the future may be considered as unfair practice. The Head of the academic department can specify the penalty to be applied and whether students are permitted to resubmit the coursework.
 - If unfair practice is proven, appropriate penalties would normally be one of the following:
 - Issue a formal reprimand. This option is appropriate where a very small proportion of the text is affected by unfair practice and the unfair practice is considered to be inadvertent
 - Instruct examiners to assign a mark ignoring that part of the assessed work affected by unfair practice (e.g. plagiarised text). This option is appropriate where a small proportion of the text is affected by unfair practice and/or the unfair practice is considered to be inadvertent
 - Cancellation of marks for the element where unfair practice occurred. This option is appropriate where a substantial proportion of the text is affected by unfair practice and/or the unfair practice is considered to be advertent
 - Cancellation of marks for the module in which unfair practice occurred. This option is appropriate where there is evidence of extensive unfair practice in all of the assessed elements within a module and the unfair practice is considered to be advertent
 - Second occurrences of unfair practice and unfair practice in work amounting to more than 20 credits should be dealt with by a centrally organised institutional Panel of Enquiry (or its equivalent).
 - There must be a mechanism to determine whether a case exists for referring cases of unfair practice for further scrutiny by a Panel of Enquiry or its equivalent.
 - The composition of Panels of Enquiry must be defined and there must be codified procedures for conducting a Panel of Enquiry. Students must be given copies of documents to be considered by the Panel and must be given an opportunity to present a statement.
 - When determining the penalty to be imposed, the Panel of Enquiry must consider the student's record including profile of marks. The Panel of Enquiry may apply one or any combination of the following penalties:
 - Formal reprimand
 - An instruction to the examiners, when marking, to ignore any plagiarized text, possibly resulting in a reduced mark or a zero mark
 - Cancellation of the student's marks in part or in whole for module(s) concerned, or in all of the modules for the year in question or the equivalent for a part-time student, with a recommendation as to whether or not a re-assessment should be permitted, either with eligibility for the bare pass mark only or for the full range of marks
 - Reduction of the degree result by one class or the non-award of a merit or distinction, as appropriate
 - Disqualification of the student from any future University examination

Where an allegation of unfair practice arises at any time after an individual has been admitted to an award of the University, the allegation must be considered by the University in accordance with its procedures.

11.6. Recognition of Prior Learning

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is used generically in this section to include the recognition of prior learning (RPL), recognition of prior certificated learning (RPCL), recognition of prior experiential learning (RPEL), recognition of prior certificated and/or experiential learning (RP[E/C]L) and the recognition of prior learning and achievement (RPL&A). RPL should normally be available to students on all programmes excluding the research project (dissertation) component of taught postgraduate programmes. RPL, as defined here, does not include credit transfer and accumulation (CAT). Where a student has gained credit by study at an approved institution (normally a UK Higher Education institution or its equivalent) such credit may be transferred as part of the credit requirements for a validated programme subject to the limits defined elsewhere in this Manual.

The maximum numbers of credits that can be transferred from previous study are:

Award	Credits	Minimum Level
HE Certificate	60	4
HE Diploma	120	4
Foundation Degree	120	4
Bachelor's Degree (Honours)	240	4
Graduate Certificate	40	4
Graduate Diploma	80	4
Postgraduate Certificate	40	6
Postgraduate Diploma	80	6
Master's Degree (except MRes)	120	6
MRes	60	6

RPL should only be approved if:

- The applicant has provided evidence that is less than 5 years old.
- Learning outcomes, and their levels, match the learning outcomes for the University programme or module.
- The evidence has **not** already been submitted to the Institution or the University and been awarded credits.
- The RPL can be applied to whole modules.
- No restrictions on RPL were defined for the programme at validation.

Institutions must have procedures to consider and approve applications for RPL. The procedures must define:

- The cost of considering an RPL application
- How to apply for RPL
- The evidence required from applicants
- The timescales for applications and decisions
- The procedures for considering applications
- The support provided to applicants
- How RPL procedures are monitored and enhanced
- The process to appeal against decisions to reject applications for RPL

Institutions' procedures must also be consistent with the following guidelines:

- It is the applicant's responsibility to provide full documentation and evidence.
- Achieved learning outcomes should be consistent with the learning outcomes for those parts of the course or module for which RPL is to be applied.
- RPL must not be given solely for experience, engagement in activities, or attendance.
- There must be consistency between the levels at which outcomes have been achieved and the levels of courses/modules to which the RPL is to be applied. In exceptional circumstances RPL achieved at a particular level may be applied to courses/modules at a lower level. However, RPL achieved at a particular level can not be applied to courses/modules at a higher level.
- RPL may not be granted on the basis of evidence that has already been submitted to the University and for which the student has been awarded University credits.
- RPL is normally applied on an individual module basis and is not applied across modules. The number of credits that may be gained may not be less than the credits associated with the module for which RPL is to be applied. That is, RPL is normally applied to whole modules and not to parts of modules.
- RPL may not normally be approved for experience gained, or evidence acquired, more than 10 years previously. Shorter time limits may be defined for programmes at validation.
- Modules for which RPL may not be used must be defined for programmes at validation.
- Grades or marks awarded for work submitted as evidence to support an RPL application should not be recorded by the Institution and should not be used as part of the calculations to determine the class of a University award. However, grades or marks awarded for work submitted for RPL may be taken into consideration at the discretion of the Board of Examiners when considering the class to be awarded to borderline students.

Additional information:

Credits

- *Transferred Credit must be less than 10 years old. Other time limits can be applied by the Institution.*
- *Students must complete the correct number of credits as described in this Manual*
- *Credits cannot be transferred from a programme (e.g. undergraduate degree) that a student has already completed unless a specific admissions or progression route has been approved at validation, for example, to allow entry onto a validated programme after completing a similar non-accredited programme.*

Marks and classifying awards

- *A pass mark should be recorded on the transcript for transferred credit or RPL.*
- *Transferred credit should not be used to calculate the overall average mark unless under the terms of the agreement between the University and a collaborative partner institution.*
- *The Board of Examiners can decide whether transferred credit or RPL is of merit or distinction standard. This may be useful if a student's overall average mark is borderline and additional evidence is needed before raising the degree class.*

11.7. Study Period and Time Limits

Award	Study Period (years)		Time Limit (years)	
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
HE Certificate	1	2	3	6
HE Diploma	2	4	4	8
Foundation Degree	2	4	4	8
Bachelor's Degree (Ordinary)	3	6	5	10
Bachelor's Degree (Honours)	3	6	5	10
Graduate Certificate	6 months	1	6 months	1
Graduate Diploma	12 months	2	12 months	2
Postgraduate Certificate	4 months	1	4 months	1
Postgraduate Diploma	8 months	2	8 months	2
Master's Degree	1	2* ¹	1	3* ¹

*¹ A part-time Master's Degree can also be completed over a 3 year study period and with a time limit of 3 years (See Additional Information).

Additional information:

Study (Registration) periods

- Study periods must be stated in Programme Specifications and may therefore be different to those specified in the Table above.
- Study periods and time limits can be increased for a programme at validation, for example, to allow placements abroad or in industry.
- For a part-time Master's degree with a study period of 2 years, students complete 90 credits in each year, or 60 credits in one year and 120 credits in the other year. Students can, provided this is allowed for the programme, study over 3 years, completing 60 credits in each year. For the 2 year and 3 year routes, students must submit the Research Project within 3 years of starting the programme. Students should consider any financial implications, in terms of support and living costs before choosing study over 2 years or 3 years.
- Some programmes can only be studied full-time or part-time.
- Students will not be allowed to carry on studying after the programme's time limits.
- The study period can be reduced if a student transfers credit or is assigned credit based on prior learning.
- If study periods are increased or decreased then the time limit must also be adjusted by the same amount of time as the study period (i.e. if the study period is increased by 6 months the time limit must be increased by 6 months).

Start date

- Start times must be agreed at validation.
- If the Institution agrees, a student can start a programme on a date other than the official start date.

Extensions

- The Board of Examiners can recommend an extension to the time limit if there are extenuating circumstances.
- Institutions can approve extensions of up to 3 months for students on the Graduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma, Postgraduate Certificate, Postgraduate Diploma and Master's Degree. Extensions greater than 3 months may be recommended by the Board of Examiners. Such recommendations must be sent, via the University's Academic Registry, to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) or nominee for approval

Fees

- Students will be charged tuition fees and other costs, such as study visit fees and laboratory charges.
- Fees will be adjusted if a student's registration period is increased or decreased.

11.8. Transfers

Students can transfer between full-time and part-time programmes. Students can only transfer once during their enrolment period.

Study periods are calculated as shown below. The calculations must be adjusted if the lengths of the full-time and/or part-time programmes have been changed at validation.

From Part-Time to Full-Time

The study period already completed is calculated as:

For all programmes except PGT

$$\text{Full-time equivalent (months)} = \text{Part-time study completed (months)} / 2$$

For PGT

$$\text{Full-time equivalent (months)} = \text{Part-time study completed (months)} / 3$$

From Full-Time to Part-Time

The study period already completed is calculated as:

For all programmes except PGT

$$\text{Part-time equivalent (months)} = \text{Full-time study completed (months)} * 2$$

For PGT

$$\text{Part-time equivalent (months)} = \text{Full-time study completed (months)} * 3$$

Additional information:

- *Master's students can only transfer during the taught part of the programme.*
- *UG students cannot transfer within the last three months of the study period.*
- *Students can transfer from a full-time programme to a full-time programme in a different academic department and/or subject area. The study period on the new programme will be the same as the time left on the original programme.*
- *Students can transfer from a part-time programme to a part-time programme in a different academic department and/or subject area. The study period on the new programme will be the same as the time left on the original programme.*
- *The Institution can specify that a student must start a new programme from the beginning with a study period and time limits as defined for the programme in Section 1.1. For example, if the student is transferring to a different subject area, and has not completed core or compulsory modules for the new programme. If a student has to restart the new programme from the beginning, the admitting School can allow the student to carry-forward up to 20 credits.*

11.9. Credits and Levels

All programmes are made up of modules. Modules must be at least 10 credits and must be in multiples of 10 or 15 credits. Programmes can include core, compulsory, optional and elective modules (See Section 20 **Error! Reference source not found.** for definitions). Core, compulsory and elective modules must be defined in the Programme Specification. Students choose optional modules from a set of modules listed in the Programme Specification. PGT programmes must include a 60 credit Research Project and MRes programmes must include a 120 credit Research Project.

The credits and levels for awards are shown below. Part-time students can take up to 90 credits per academic year.

Award (Level)	Number of Credits Studied				
	(Minimum number of credits at the highest level)				
	Total	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6	Level 7
HE Certificate (Level 4)	120	120 (90)			
HE Diploma (Level 5)	240	120	120 (90)		
Foundation Degree (Level 5)	240	120	120 (90)		
Bachelor's Degree (Ordinary) (Level 6)	360	120	120	120 (60)	
Bachelor's Degree (Honours) (Level 6)	360	120	120	120 (90)	
Graduate Certificate (Level 6)	60				60 (40)
Graduate Diploma (Level 6)	120				120 (90)
Postgraduate Certificate	60				60 (50)
Postgraduate Diploma	120				120 (100)
Master's Degree	180				180 (150 ¹)

¹ For the MRes 160 credits must be at Level 7.

Additional information:

Credits and levels

- Each single credit has 10 notional learning hours.
- The number of credits at the highest level (as described in the table) can only be changed when a programme is validated.
- Foundation Degrees must include at least 20 credits of work-based learning.
- In PGT programmes and at Level 5 of Undergraduate Degrees, students can study 20 credits of elective modules. Elective modules can only be used if approved at validation.
- In PGT programmes, modules must be at Level 6 or level 7.
- Because the overall pass mark for PGT programmes is 50%, students should aim to achieve a mark of at least 50% in modules below level 7 (i.e. even though the marking criteria for the modules will be based on a pass mark of 40%).

Research Project

- The Research Project, which must be a Core module, can be based on several elements of thematically-linked assessment in (a) a single Research Project module or (b) separately coded multiple modules.

Exit points

- *Certificates and Diplomas awarded as exit points must have the same number of credits as Certificate and Diploma programme*
- *Intermediate exit points must be named for each programme at validation. The exit points must have the same titles as the final award unless alternative names are approved at validation.*
- *Programmes can be approved without exit points if there is a good reason (e.g. if there are professional body rules)*
- *The possible exit points are:*

Award	Possible Exit Points
<i>HE Diploma and Foundation Degree</i>	<i>HE Certificate</i>
<i>Bachelor's Degree (Honours)</i>	<i>HE Certificate, HE Diploma and Bachelor's Degree (Ordinary)</i>
<i>Graduate Diploma</i>	<i>Graduate Certificate</i>
<i>Postgraduate Diploma</i>	<i>Postgraduate Certificate</i>
<i>Master's Degree (except MRes)</i>	<i>Postgraduate Certificate and Postgraduate Diploma.</i>
<i>MRes</i>	<i>Postgraduate Certificate</i>

- *There are no exit points for the HE Certificate, Graduate Certificate or Postgraduate Certificate.*

Studying part-time

- *Full-time University staff usually study on a part-time basis.*
- *Part-time students can register for more than 90 credits per year if the extra credits are for a module taken over several years.*

Bachelor's Degrees - Joint Honours and Major/Minor combinations

- *Joint Honours programmes have 60 credits in each subject at Level 5 and Level 6. Joint Honours programmes are called 'A and B', for example, French and German.*
- *Programmes with a minor subject have 80 credits in the major subject and 40 credits in the minor subject at Level 5 and Level 6. These programmes are called 'A with B', for example, French with German. In this example, French is the major subject 'A'. All versions of programmes have to be validated, e.g. 'French with German' and 'German with French' have to be validated as two separate programmes.*
- *'Single Honours programmes can be validated with 'and' or 'with' in the programme title. For example, 'French and German' can be validated as a Single Honours Programme.*

Honours Degree after Ordinary Degree

- *Boards of Examiners can allow students with an Ordinary Degree to enrol to complete 120 credits at Level 6 to gain an Honours Degree. The degree class must be based on the 120 credits of Level 6 modules.*

Posthumous and Aegrotat Awards

- *If a student is prevented from completing a programme, Boards of Examiners can recommend to the Academic Registrar that a posthumous or aegrotat award is made. Posthumous awards are made if a student dies before completing a programme. Aegrotat awards are made if a student is unable to complete a programme because of illness and there is evidence that the student will be unable to resume studies at the University or elsewhere. Boards of Examiners can recommend posthumous or aegrotat awards if there is evidence that the student would have completed the award had circumstances permitted. Evidence can include completed credit, other completed work, and evidence from supervisors and/or tutors regarding a student's work and/or commitment. If there are restrictions on what can be awarded, for example because of professional accreditation, an alternative award may be recommended.*

11.10. Passing Levels

Students have to pass each level of a programme before moving to the next level. For example:

- Passing Level 4 (first year of UG) before starting Level 5 (second year of UG).

To pass each level a student must have:

- An overall average mark of at least a pass*.
- A pass* mark in all core modules.
- Pass* marks in modules worth at least 80 credits.
- No mark in any modules (including elective modules) below 30% at Level 4-6

*** The Pass Mark at Level 4-6 is 40%**

Additional information:

PGT programmes

- *PGT students are not required to fulfil any criteria before beginning the Research Project unless criteria are approved for a programme at validation. If criteria are approved at validation then:*
 - *The Programme Specification must define any individual modules that have to be passed (a mark of at least 50%) before students can start the Research Project. The Research Project can only be marked when a student has fulfilled the criteria and is eligible to proceed.*
 - *Boards of Examiners can allow PGT Students to proceed if they have not fulfilled the criteria, but only if there are documented extenuating circumstances. The reasons for the decision must be recorded in the minutes of the Board of Examiners.*
- *A PGT student who is not allowed to proceed can be awarded a Postgraduate Certificate if it is available for the programme and if the student has met the criteria for the Postgraduate Certificate (See Section 11.11).*

11.11. Calculation and Classification of Final Results

Stage A. Calculate overall percentage mark

For HE Certificate

$$\text{Overall \%} = L_4$$

For HE Diploma and Foundation Degree

$$\text{Overall \%} = [L_4 + (L_5 \times 2)] / 3$$

For Bachelor's Degree (Honours)

$$\text{Overall \%} = [L_5 + (L_6 \times 2)] / 3$$

For Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma

$$\text{Overall \%} = L_6$$

For Postgraduate Certificate and Postgraduate Diploma

$$\text{Overall \%} = L_7$$

For Master's Degree and MRes

For students who began their studies **before** 1 September 2017

Master's Degree (except MRes)

$$\text{Overall \%} = (L_{7-T} + L_{7-RP}) / 2$$

MRes

$$\text{Overall \%} = [L_{7-T} + (L_{7-RP} \times 2)] / 3$$

For students who began their studies **after** 1 September 2017

Master's Degree and MRes

$$\text{Overall \%} = L_7$$

Where:

- L₄ is the mean mark across Level 4 modules
- L₅ is the mean mark across Level 5 modules
- L₆ is the mean mark across level 6 modules
- L₇ is the mean mark across level 7 modules
- L_{7-T} is the mean mark across taught modules in PGT programme
- L_{7-RP} is the mark for a PGT Research Project

Additional information:

Exit awards

- *The procedures in Sections A-E of this section also apply to exit awards.*
- *The overall % mark for the Postgraduate Certificate and Postgraduate Diploma (L₇) can include the Research Project.*

Bachelor's Degree (Ordinary)

- *The overall percentage mark is not calculated - the criteria for the awards do not include the overall percentage mark.*

Calculating L4, L5, L6, L7 and L7-T

- The mean marks must be based on weighted module marks (i.e. the number of credits in each module must be taken into account)
- When students transfer credits, the components of the overall percentage mark (L4, L5, L6, L7 and L7-T) must be based on modules completed at the University.
- If a programme contains more than 120 credits at Level 6, L6 must be based on all Level 6 modules
- L5, L6, L7 and L7-T can include modules at a lower level subject to the constraints in Section 0
- If internal examiners or External Examiners adjust marks for all students on a module, this should be completed before calculating the overall percentage mark.

Changes to the formulae

- Marks for elective modules must not be included in the calculations.
- The Chair of the Senate Regulations and Special Cases Committee can approve changes to the number of modules included in the calculation of the overall percentage mark if there are professional and/or statutory requirements.

Stage B. Round the Overall Percentage Mark

The overall percentage mark must be rounded to the nearest integer. Boards of Examiners must round marks as follows:

39.5% or above	=	40%
49.5% or above	=	50%
59.5% or above	=	60%
69.5% or above	=	70%

All other marks must also be rounded, for example a mark of 57.5% or above must be rounded to 58%.

Additional information:

- The guidance in this Section also applies to rounding module marks, for example, when working out if a student has met the criteria for passing the level (See Section 0) or for awards (as defined in Section C below).
- Marks must not be rounded by more than 0.5. For example, a module mark of 39.5% should be rounded to 40%, but a module mark of 39.3% should not be rounded to 40%. A mark of 39.3% must be reported as 39%.
- Marks should not be rounded more than once. For example, a mark of 59.49% should not be rounded to 59.5% and then to 60%; a mark of 59.49% should be reported as 59%.
- Component marks: The overall average mark for modules and the overall average mark for courses must be calculated using component marks rounded to one decimal place. For example, the overall mark for a degree must be calculated from module marks that have been rounded to one decimal place.
- Displaying marks: In all reports, the overall average mark for modules, the overall average mark for courses, and any other calculated marks must be displayed to one decimal place.
- Marks must not be rounded by more than 0.5. For example, a module mark of 39.5% should be rounded to 40%, but a module mark of 39.3% should not be rounded to 40%. A mark of 39.3% must be reported as 39%.

Stage C. Determine overall eligibility

To be eligible for any award, a student must have:

- Pursued credits as specified in Section 0
- Passed all Core modules (Pass Mark at Level 4-6 is 40% and the Pass Mark at Level 7 is 50%)
- Fulfilled any other conditions defined at validation.

And for HE Certificate

- Achieved an overall average of at least 40%
- Passed at least 80 credits at Level 4

And for HE Diploma

- Achieved an overall average of at least 40%
- Passed at least 80 credits at Level 5

And for Foundation Degree

- Achieved an overall average of at least 40%

For students who began their studies **before** 1 September 2015

- Passed at least 80 credits at Level 5

For students who began their studies **after** 1 September 2015

- Passed at least 100 credits at Level 5

And for Bachelor's Degree (Ordinary)

- Passed at least 60 credits at Level 6

And for Bachelor's Degree (Honours)

- Achieved an overall average of at least 40%

For students who began their studies **before** 1 September 2015

- Passed at least 80 credits at Level 6

For students who began their studies **after** 1 September 2015

- Passed at least 100 credits at Level 6

And for Graduate Certificate

- Achieved an overall average of at least 40%

For students who began their studies **before** 1 September 2015

- Passed at least 40 credits at Level 6

For students who began their studies **after** 1 September 2015

- Passed at least 50 credits at Level 6

And for Graduate Diploma

- Achieved an overall average of at least 40%

-

For students who began their studies **before** 1 September 2015

- Passed at least 80 credits at Level 6

For students who began their studies **after** 1 September 2015

- Passed at least 100 credits at Level 6

And for Postgraduate Certificate

- Achieved an overall average of at least 50%
- Passed at least 40 credits at Level 7

And for Postgraduate Diploma

- Achieved an overall average of at least 50%
- Passed at least 80 credits at Level 7

And for Master's Degree (except MRes)

- Achieved an overall average of at least 50%
- Passed at least 80 credits across taught modules

And for MRes

- Achieved an overall average of at least 50%
- Passed at least 40 credits across taught modules

Additional information:

- For some programmes, e.g. those leading to professional accreditation, students have to complete all learning outcomes.

Stage D. Determine Class

For Bachelor's Degree (Ordinary):

A Pass is awarded if a student meets the criteria specified in Stage C. A Fail is awarded if a student does not meet the criteria specified in Stage C.

For HE Certificate, HE Diploma, Foundation Degree, Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma:

Overall Average Mark*	Degree Class
70% and over	Distinction
60% – 69%	Merit
40% – 59%	Pass
0% – 39%	Fail

For Postgraduate Certificate, Postgraduate Diploma and Master's Degrees:

Overall Average Mark*	Degree Class
70% and over	Distinction
60% – 69%	Merit
50% – 59%	Pass
0% – 49%	Fail

For Bachelor's Degree (Honours):

Overall Percentage Mark	Degree Class
70% and over	First Class Honours Degree - I
60% – 69%	Upper Second Class Honours Degree – II(i)
50% – 59%	Lower Second Class Honours Degree – II(ii)
40% – 49%	Third Class Honours Degree - III
0% – 39%	Fail

All extenuating circumstances must be considered by the Board of Examiners before classifying a certificate, diploma or degree whether or not a student is borderline.

Additional information:

- If a student mark is in a fail category, the Board of Examiners must consider whether to allow resits/resubmission or to award an exit qualification (if defined for the Programme). The exit qualification can be chosen if the student has already been allowed two resit attempts or the student, in the opinion of the Board of Examiners, has not demonstrated a commitment to the programme through their attendance and/or timely submission of assessed work, and there are no extenuating circumstances that have not already been considered.

Stage E. Review Class for Borderline Students

Boards of Examiners must use all available evidence to review the class for borderline students, including extenuating circumstances. Boards of Examiners should not raise a student to a higher class if the student's average mark after rounding up is more than 2% below the lower boundary of a class. For example in a Bachelor's degree, 58% could be considered for a 2i at the discretion of the Board of Examiners. However, 57% should not be considered for a 2i. Similarly, in a Master's degree, 68% could be considered for a Distinction at the discretion of the Board of Examiners. However, 67% should not be considered for a Distinction.

A higher class must be awarded if a student fulfils one of the following criteria (where marks refer to rounded marks):

For HE Certificate, Graduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma, Postgraduate Certificate and Postgraduate Diploma

- i. Marks for at least $\frac{2}{3}$ of the credits are in the higher class.

For HE Diploma and Foundation Degree

- i. Performance in the final year of the course is consistent with the higher class. Students must be awarded the higher class if their average mark across Level 5 modules is in the higher class and if marks for at least $\frac{1}{2}$ of the credits at Level 5 are in the higher class.
- ii. Marks for at least $\frac{2}{3}$ of the credits across Levels 4 and 5 are in the higher class. Students must be awarded the higher class if they have achieved marks in the higher class in at least 160 credits across Levels 4 and 5.

For Bachelor's Degree (Honours and Ordinary)

- i. Performance in the final year of the course is consistent with the higher class. Students must be awarded the higher class if their average mark across Level 6 modules is in the higher class and if marks for at least $\frac{1}{2}$ of the credits at Level 6 are in the higher class.
- ii. Marks for at least $\frac{2}{3}$ of the credits across Levels 5 and 6 are in the higher class. Students must be awarded the higher class if they have achieved marks in the higher class in at least 160 credits (Honours Degree) or 120 credits (Ordinary Degree) across Levels 5 and 6.

For Master's degree:

- i. The mark for the Research Project is in the higher class.
- ii. Marks for at least $\frac{2}{3}$ of the credits across the taught modules are in the higher class.

Boards of Examiners can also use other information to confirm that a student should be raised to a higher class. For example, a Master's student with an average mark below 68%, after rounding-up, could be considered for a Distinction based on an exceptionally high mark for the Research Project.

Additional information:

Boards of Examiners – changing marks

- *A Board of Examiners can change a student's module mark(s). However, module marks must not be changed just to alter a student's overall average. There must be reasons for changing the module mark (For example, extenuating circumstances – See Section 12.12).*

Borderline cases

- *The criteria for dealing with borderline cases must be published in the online student handbooks.*
- *The reasons for changing the class for a borderline student must be recorded in the minutes of the Board of Examiners.*

11.12. Resits and Resubmission

Students can resit examinations and/or resubmit coursework if they have not fulfilled:

- The criteria to pass from one level to the next (See Section 0).
- The criteria to pass the programme as a whole (See Section 11.11).

Students can resit examinations and resubmit coursework twice. Boards of Examiners must offer students one of the following options:

- Resit an examination or resubmit coursework before the Board of Examiners.
- Resubmit coursework after the Board of Examiners with a deadline set by the Board.
- Resit an examination during a re-sit examination period (e.g. August).
- Register as a part-time student.
- Assessment as an external student in the following year.

For all options (i-v), the highest mark that can be given for the module is a pass mark (40% at Level 4-6 and 50% at Level 7).

Additional information:

Options for resits and resubmission

- *Option i should only be offered if a student has achieved a module mark which will not allow them to pass from one level to the next or pass the programme as a whole. For example, a mark less than 30% in an examination that is the only form of assessment in an undergraduate module.*
- *Option iii should only be offered to an UG student who has an overall average mark over 25% and has passed modules worth at least 50 credits.*
- *Options iv and v should only be offered if there are acceptable reasons why a student can't be offered (or is unable to accept) one of the other options. Options iv and v can also be offered if a student has failed after being given one resit or resubmission under options i, ii or iii.*
- *Options iv and v can be combined – i.e. registration as a part-time student and assessment as an external student for additional credits.*
- *Students redeeming failure on a part time or external basis should be allowed one further opportunity to redeem failure if they don't achieve the mark required to progress or obtain an award after the first attempt as a part time or external student.*
- *External students can submit assessments and sit examinations but are not allowed to attend modules. External students must not be asked to complete coursework that requires specialist facilities that are only available to registered students. Alternative assessment methods may be necessary.*
- *If there are exceptional extenuating circumstances, a student can be allowed to repeat a semester or year.*
- *If the method of re-assessment is not the same as the original assessment, this should be explained at the start of each module (for example, if the original assessment was based on an activity that cannot be repeated without access to specific facilities).*
- *Students completing a programme linked to a professional qualification may not necessarily or automatically be granted the opportunity to resit or resubmit.*
- *Additional resits or resubmission may be allowed if approved for programmes at validation (e.g. to meet professional body requirements).*
- *Subject to approval at validation, PGT students can complete different taught modules (but not the Research Project) up to a maximum number of credits:*

Postgraduate Certificate	15 credits
Postgraduate Diploma	30 credits
Master's Degrees (except MRes)	30 credits
MRes	20 credits
- *If it is not possible for a student to resit examinations or resubmit coursework in the original module (for example if the module was based on a placement that can't be repeated), the student can be given an opportunity to complete an alternative module (Under option iv or v). If an alternative module is taken, the marks for examinations and coursework should not be capped and the mark for the replaced module should not be included on the student's transcript.*

Timing of resits and resubmission

- *Institutions should provide opportunities to resit examinations or resubmit coursework as soon as is practically possible, ensuring that students have a chance to progress or complete.*
- *All resits and resubmissions must be completed in the time limits for the programme (Section 0). If a student runs out of time, resits and resubmissions can only be allowed if an extension is approved.*
- *If a PGT student is unable to complete in the time limits for the programme (Section 1.1) because they had to resit or resubmit before proceeding to the Research Project, the Research Project must be submitted within the time limits or within the extension period (of no more than 3 months) granted by the Institution. A PGT student who does not submit within the time limit or extension period must, unless there are extenuating circumstances, be awarded a Postgraduate Certificate or Postgraduate Diploma (if available for the Programme).*
- *A PGT Research Project must be resubmitted within twelve months from the date when the University informs the student that the original submission failed.*

Extenuating circumstances

- *If a student is allowed to resit or resubmit because of extenuating circumstances, the mark must not be capped, and the resit or resubmission must be treated as a first attempt.*

Marks

- *After a resit or resubmission the highest mark must be used (e.g. if a student has a mark of 35% in a resit examination and had a mark of 38% at the first attempt, the mark of 38% must be used).*
- *Students should not be allowed to resit examinations or to resubmit coursework simply to improve a module mark or award class. The exceptions are:*
 - *Where resits or resubmissions are allowed in order to achieve a pass mark required by professional bodies.*
 - *Where a student at Level 5 of an undergraduate programme has achieved the criteria to progress but has module marks in the range 30-39% and wishes to attempt to raise these marks to 40%.*
 - *Where a student at Level 6 of an extended undergraduate programme has achieved the criteria to progress but has module marks in the range 30-39% and wishes to attempt to raise these marks to 40%.*

Fees

- *A fee will be charged for completing modules as an external student, registering as a part-time student and for resubmitting a PGT Research Project*

12. Assessment

12.1. General Principles

All programme learning outcomes must be assessed. The form of assessment for each learning outcome must be valid and 'fit-for-purpose'. One learning outcome may be assessed by more than one form of assessment. Several learning outcomes may also be assessed by the same method (e.g. dissertation).

Assessment is a matter of judgement, not simply of computation. Marks, grades and percentages are not absolute values. They are symbols used by examiners to communicate their judgement of different aspects of a student's work. It is important for students to understand that examiners may exercise discretion and judgement when details of all a student's marks are available.

Boards of Examiners must ensure that assessment is carried out by competent and impartial examiners, and by methods which enable them to assess students fairly.

Institutions must ensure that students are told about the assessment regulations and requirements for individual programmes of study. The assessment scheme for a programme may be subject to both institution-wide regulations and regulations specific to that programme. Students must be informed of any relevant changes to assessment regulations that occur during their period of study at the Institution.

At the beginning of each programme, students must be informed about:

- The minimum and maximum number of modules to be attempted and their level.
- The core, compulsory, optional and elective modules.
- Requirements for work experience and/or professional practice placements.
- When and how each module will be assessed.
- The contribution (weighting) of each module to the overall average mark.
- The criteria for progressing from one level to another.
- The criteria for successfully completing a programme.
- The criteria for successfully meeting the requirements of accrediting or professional bodies.

At the beginning of each module, students must be informed about:

- The relationships between the learning outcomes and assessment.
- The methods of assessment that will be used.
- The weighting of each element in the final module mark.
- The submission date(s) for coursework.
- The criteria that will be used when marking each element of assessment.

Programme organisers are responsible for checking that the assessment submission deadlines for each module in a programme are appropriately distributed over time. Where this is not the case, the programme organiser should liaise with the relevant module organisers.

For progression to the next level, and for qualification purposes, marks will be the major determinant. An individual student is not normally required to have successfully completed all the learning outcomes. A student transcript/profile should contain information regarding successful completion or otherwise of learning outcomes at the programme level. It is expected that in almost all cases, students who progress to the next level or who qualify for an award will have satisfactorily attained the learning outcomes. For some programmes, particularly those leading to professional accreditation, students may have to complete all learning outcomes and this requirement must be defined and approved at validation.

Institutions' procedures must fulfil the following requirements:

- There must be internal verification procedures to ensure that all coursework and examinations are fair. The procedures must, for example, ensure that:
 - Phrasing of questions is unambiguous
 - Module content is appropriate to complete the assessment
 - The time to complete the assessment is adequate

- Each piece of coursework should be accompanied by a signed statement by the student that the work has not been plagiarised, or otherwise unfairly produced.
- Whenever possible, examination scripts should be marked anonymously.
- Wherever possible, continuous assessment should be marked anonymously.
- A student who has achieved a pass mark in a module must not be permitted supplementary assessment in that module simply to improve his/her mark.

12.2. Responsibilities of Students

Students must:

- Inform the appropriate officer within the first four weeks of the academic session if they are unable on religious grounds, to take examinations on certain days. The Institution must, as far as is practicably possible, take account of this information when preparing the examinations timetable.
- Find out their examination schedule from the timetable published by the Institution.
- Attend examinations and submit work for assessment as required.
- Provide examiners, before the Board of Examiners meeting, with any relevant information on personal circumstances which may have affected their performance.
- Ensure that the Institution has their correct term time and home address.
- Bring their Institution-approved identity card to all examinations.
- Inform the Institution, before the beginning of each module if they wish to sit examinations and submit coursework through the medium of Welsh (*this only applies to students studying in an Institution in Wales and where the module is not normally assessed in Welsh*).

12.3. Word Limits and Length of Examinations

For modules:

- A 10 credit module must only have one summative examination.
- An examination must not be longer than 3 hours for a 10 credit module.
- Coursework must not be longer than 4,000 words for a 10 credit module.

For PGT Research Projects:

- 60 credit Research Project - maximum of 20,000 words
- 120 credit Research Project – maximum of 40,000 words

Additional information:

Amount of assessment

- *If a module is assessed by a combination of methods, the length of the examination and coursework should be adjusted. For example, in a 10 credit module assessed by an examination and an essay (both worth 50% of the module marks), the examination must not be longer than 1½ hours and the essay must not be longer than 2,000 words.*
- *Module organisers must make sure that the time required for assessments (including preparation time) plus the time spent in other activities (e.g. lectures) is 100 learning hours per 10 credit module.*

Word Limits

- *Word limits for coursework must be defined when modules are approved.*
- *Students must be given the word limits with the details of each assessment.*
- *The word limits do not include footnotes, bibliography or appendices.*
- *For modules except PGT Research Projects, the module organiser can set word limits that include footnotes, bibliography and appendices provided that students are made aware that they are included in the word limit.*

12.4. Marking Coursework that Exceeds Word Limits

Module Organisers can accept and mark work if the word count is about 10% higher than expected. Students must be informed, for any coursework, if this 10% rule will not be applied. Students must be informed about the consequences of exceeding word limits. The penalties are:

- Give a mark that takes into account the marking criteria and the extent to which the word limit has been exceeded.
- Ignore any content above the word limit, e.g. not marking any work after page 4.

12.5. Guidelines on Submitting Work in Welsh

This section applies only to students studying at approved Institutions in Wales

Every student studying at approved Institutions in Wales has the right to sit examinations and submit coursework through the medium of Welsh or English, irrespective of the language of the course. This excludes subjects where a language is the subject of study, where students must answer questions in the language which is the subject of the course.

Work submitted by a student in Welsh need not be sent for translation if the person assessing the work has a high level of competence in spoken and written Welsh and a suitable individual may be identified to double mark the work. If the work (examinations and coursework) is to be made available to the External Examiner (and the External Examiner is not Welsh speaking) then the work should be translated.

The following procedures should be followed if a marker cannot mark work submitted in Welsh or if work has to be translated before it is sent to an External Examiner:

- Students who intended to present work through the medium of Welsh (when the instruction of the course is in English) should notify the appropriate authority at the Institution. Academic departments should normally be notified at the beginning of the academic year in which the work will be presented.
- Institutions can allow students to submit drafts of their work to a translator for translation before the final version is submitted. Where this is permitted, students should normally contact the translator (directly or through a contact in the academic department) before submitting drafts, providing as much information as is practically possible regarding the date on which work will be presented for translation, the subject area and expected length of the work to be submitted. Successive drafts may be presented for translation but it is expected that work is not changed substantially, in its structure or content, between successive drafts.
- Translators should translate the work, and comment where appropriate on the overall linguistic presentation of the Welsh version of the work.
- The original marker of the examination or coursework should mark the assessment following translation. When necessary the marker may consult with the translator to discuss any particular aspects of the translation.
- For all practical work, and other work assessed by oral presentations, a process of joint assessment between the module leader and translator should occur.
- When the presentation, layout, or appearance of an assessed piece of work makes a contribution to the mark awarded for the work, these should be reflected as far as possible in the translation and the marker should take into account the presentation, layout or appearance of the original.

Translation is a significant intervention in the assessment process and carries a risk. Wherever possible, translation should be avoided by using suitably qualified assessors to mark original work in Welsh.

12.6. Verification of Marks

The purpose of verification is to:

- Check that examinations and coursework have been marked in line with the assessment brief and the marking criteria.
- Make sure that marking is fair and consistent.
- Make sure that there are similar standards across modules.

Institutions are expected to verify modules every time a module is delivered. Institutions must:

- Have procedures to decide which assessments in a module have to be verified.
- Have procedures to verify marks for assessments that do not involve written assessment, e.g. oral presentations or performances.
- Specify where sampling is not allowed and all work must be verified.
- Have procedures to deal with major differences between markers and Verifiers.
- Provide students with details of the verification procedures.

For each module, Institutions must choose one of the following options:

Ratification	<p>The Verifier must confirm that marks have been allocated as defined in the assessment brief and that appropriate feedback has been given. Unless the class size is small, the ratification is based on a sample of assessments.</p> <p><i>Examples of when it might be used:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>When the module mark does not count towards an Award.</i> • <i>When the assessment is worth a small proportion of the module marks.</i> • <i>When the assessment can be marked with little subjective judgement (e.g. multiple choice test).</i>
Moderation	<p>The Verifier must confirm that marks have been allocated as defined in the assessment brief, that appropriate feedback has been given, and that the marks are appropriate. Unless the class size is small, the moderation is based on a sample of assessments.</p> <p><i>Examples of when it might be used:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>When the module mark does not count towards an Award.</i> • <i>When there is little scope for students to vary the way in which the assessment is submitted (e.g. assessment involves completing a template report).</i> • <i>Examination with short-answer questions.</i>
Standard Double Marking	<p>The Verifier marks the assessment. The comments and marks awarded by the first marker are available to the Verifier. The Verifier can mark all or a sample of the assessments.</p> <p><i>Examples of when it might be used:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>When the module mark counts towards an Award.</i> • <i>When the assessment is worth more than 50% of the module mark.</i> • <i>When there is scope for students to address the assessment brief in various ways (e.g. essay or examination answer).</i> • <i>When a module has to be passed to meet professional body requirements.</i>
Blind Double Marking	<p>The Verifier marks the assessment without seeing either the comments or marks awarded by the first marker. The Verifier can mark all or a sample of the assessments.</p> <p><i>Examples of when it might be used:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>When the module mark counts towards and Award.</i> • <i>When the assessment is the only form of assessment for a module worth over 30 credits.</i> • <i>When the assessment provides opportunities for students to conduct independent work and/or develop original ideas (e.g. dissertation).</i>

In this table, 'assessment' is used for submitted coursework and examination answer books.

When Verifiers sample work, the sample size must be:

Number of Students	Sample Size
Up to 5	all (100%)
5-10	50%
11-50	25%
51-200	10%
Over 200	20 assessments

Work can be sampled at random, but it is recommended that the sample includes work that has failed and work from across the range of marks.

If the Verifier marks a sample of work, and the Verifier is content with the first mark, then the first mark must be entered into the students' records. If the Verifier marks all assessments then the first marker and Verifier must provide an agreed mark. Institutions must have procedures to deal with differences between the first mark and Verifier mark. The procedures must state when:

- A discussion between the marker and Verifier should resolve differences.
- An agreed mark must be submitted. The agreed mark can either be for an individual student or can be based on an adjustment for the whole cohort. The mark of an individual student must only be adjusted if the marker and Verifier agree on an individual case **and** if the marker has verified all the work (i.e. not a sample of work). It is appropriate to adjust the mark for the whole cohort if there is a consistent difference between the first marker and Verifier based on the Verifier's verification of all the work or a sample of work.
- Another School procedure should be used to resolve differences (e.g. marking by third person).

Additional information:

Verification procedure

- *It is expected that Institutions have a statement that describes its verification procedures. The statement must be made available to students.*
- *Institutions must describe the verification procedure(s) that will be used for non-written work, such as performances and practical competencies. The procedures must be consistent with those described for assessments in this Section.*

Choosing first and Verifiers

- *The first marker should be the person who set the assessment.*
- *A member of staff with less experience of the subject area can act as the Verifier. An example of good practice is 'triangulation' where each member of staff is paired with at least two others for verification across a range of modules. Pairings of markers and Verifiers must be agreed before the start of each academic year. "Cosy pairs" and "perpetual reciprocal pairs" must be avoided.*

Marking PGT Research Projects

- *Supervisors may mark or verify a Master's Research Project. Marks for Research Projects must be verified as described in this section.*

Records

- *A record should be kept of the outcomes of verification, and this should be available for inspection in reviews and internal quality audits.*

External Examiner

- *The External Examiner must not be asked to act as an additional Verifier.*

12.7. Guidelines on the Submission of Assessed Work

Students should be given, at the start of each module, the deadline by which coursework is to be submitted. Deadlines should take into account student workload across modules. In modules that are assessed by continuous assessment only, the submission deadline for the final assessment should not be before day one of the assessment period at the end of the module.

For the benefit of External Examiners and to resolve disputes about timing or submission, coursework should be date-stamped when submitted by students. Students must keep an original electronic copy of any work submitted electronically.

Work submitted up to one week after the deadline must be marked but the mark must be capped at the pass mark (40% at Level 4-6 and 50% at Level 7). If there are good reasons (e.g. the requirements of

professional bodies), a mark of 0% can be given for work submitted within one week of the deadline. A mark of 0% must be given for any work submitted 1 week after the deadline. These percentage capped marks must be used for all work whether the work was originally marked on a categorical or a numerical scale. All unmarked work must be retained for Boards of Examiners.

Students can submit a Master's Research Project, at the earliest, 3 months before the end of the period of study. Applications to submit a Research Project sooner than 3 months before the end of the period of study must be approved by the Academic Registry. Research Projects must be bound (soft bound is acceptable). Two copies of the Research Project, and an electronic version must be submitted. Students must not change a Research Project after it has been submitted; a Board of Examiners can ask a student to make minor corrections to a Research Project which has been passed and can delay confirmation of the overall result until the corrections have been completed.

Any student who is likely to miss a deadline should discuss the situation with his/her personal tutor and/or the member of staff responsible for the coursework. Applications for an extension to the submission date should be made on a form approved by the Institution.

Institutions must specify, in student handbooks, the process by which personal extensions will be considered and how the decisions will be relayed to students. Students must be given general guidance in handbooks about acceptable and non-acceptable reasons for extensions. Admissible reasons for submitting work late are, for example, serious personal illness with a doctor's certificate (a self-certified medical note should not normally be accepted), the death of a relative or close friend, serious family problems such as divorce, separation and eviction. Examples of unacceptable reasons for failing to submit work on time include having exams, having other work to do, not having access to a computer, having computer related problems, being on holiday and not being able to find any books on the subject.

Institutions' procedures and processes for submitting work must:

- Provide a secure and robust system for submitting, accessing and archiving work.
- Allow accurate recording of the date and time of submission.
- Allow work to be accessed by external examiners and moderators.
- Provide means for markers to provide students with feedback and marks.

Procedures for submitting work electronically must also:

- Ensure that students are identifiable by their unique IDs.
- Define the acceptable file formats (e.g. PDF, Word, Excel, Powerpoint).
- Allow the use of plagiarism-checking software.
- Check that submitted files have not been corrupted or are incomplete.

Additional information:

- *Guidance on submitting a Master's Research project is available from the University but Institutions can provide alternative guidance to conform to discipline-specific conventions or requirements.*
- *Institutions must also provide alternative guidance if a Research Project is based on separately coded multiple modules.*

12.8. Feedback to Students on Coursework and Examinations

The purpose of assessment is to:

- Show that students have achieved learning outcomes.
- Relate student achievement to UK national standards and qualifications frameworks.
- Allow students to identify strengths and areas for improvement.

Feedback should provide students with information that enables personal academic development and that enables students to assess their progress. Feedback on coursework must help students to identify strengths and areas for improvement and must be detailed enough to explain the mark that was given. Feedback on coursework must be provided no later than four weeks from the submission deadline (excluding vacation weeks). Marks from examinations must be provided no later than four weeks from the end of the examination period. Wherever possible, submission deadlines should be set so that feedback can be provided before a vacation period. If feedback is not available after four working weeks, the Head of School (or nominee) must give students a written explanation.

Marked copies of assessments must be kept for the External Examiner. If students do not submit duplicate copies of coursework, the marked version must be kept for the External Examiner. Examination answer books should not be returned to students. However, students should have access to their marked answer books and can discuss their examination results with tutors.

Marks should be available to students electronically. Marks may be published on notice boards, by student names or IDs, but students must be allowed to opt-out from this method of publishing results. Institutions are encouraged to give students the average mark and spread of marks (e.g. range and standard deviation) for each module. Students must be informed that marks are provisional until they have been confirmed by a Board of Examiners.

Institutions must provide feedback to students following meetings of Boards of Examiners. Institutions must ensure that written comments on performance are sent to students or that staff are available for consultation (e.g. by telephone or e-mail) with students following the release of end of year results. Students should be given their results for each academic year with 8 weeks of the end of the teaching and examination period.

12.9. Retention of Assessed Work

Examination scripts and all other assessed work must be retained for 12 months after the final Board of Examiners for each course. If work cannot be retained (e.g. laboratory work books or portfolios), marks and comments must be recorded, and the records must be retained for 12 months after the final Board of Examiners for each course.

An archive of assessed work for all modules (e.g. coursework, examinations, projects and laboratory work) must be retained for reference. Samples representing a range of award classes must be retained for a period of 3 years.

Institutions should ensure that the archive of assessed work is easily accessible and is maintained and stored in good condition.

12.10. Assessment/Examination Arrangements for Disabled Students

Procedures for assessment and examinations must enable disabled students to demonstrate that they have fairly achieved the programme learning outcomes. The same academic standards must be applied to all students, regardless of disability.

Wherever possible, coursework should be accessible to allow disabled students to undertake the same coursework as others taking the same module. A variety of assessment methods will provide disabled students with the opportunity to demonstrate their learning on a par with their peers.

If an assessment is not accessible to an individual disabled student, additional arrangements (reasonable adjustments) must be put in place. Reasonable adjustments should provide disabled students with the same opportunity as their peers to demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes. This may involve making adjustments to the type, scheduling or marking of the assessment or in the time available to complete it. Alternatively, students may be given an alternative assessment. Any alternative assessment must be of the same standard, must allow students to achieve the same learning outcomes, and must present a comparable level of challenge. External Examiners must ensure that academic standards are maintained, approving any changes to coursework.

12.11. Setting and Organising Examinations

Examinations are the responsibility of academic departments in consultation with External Examiners. An External Examiner must approve all questions in examinations that contribute to an award. Module organisers must inform students of the duration of examinations and of the types of question (e.g. multiple choice, essay, and short answer) they will have to answer.

Institutions must have procedures covering:

- The confidentiality and security of examination papers.
- Processes to print sufficient copies of papers for each examination.
- The timetabling of examinations.
- Venues to provide appropriate examination conditions.
- Invigilation by appropriately qualified members of staff.
- Access to sick bay and nursing facilities where required.
- Examination provision for disabled students.
- Storage of examination papers.
- Systems for students to access past examination papers.

12.12. Dealing with Extenuating Circumstances

Students must report any extenuating circumstances (such as ill-health or bereavement) which may affect attendance, submitting work or results. The circumstances must be reported as soon as possible. Reports of illness must be supported by medical certificates or evidence from student support services. Medical certificates are acceptable if they:

- Are signed by a medical practitioner.
- Indicate the date(s) when the student was ill.
- Provide sufficient detail (without breaching confidentiality) about the illness

Non-medical circumstances (e.g. bereavement) should be reported in writing, with a description of the circumstances and when they occurred.

Boards of Examiners have the right to ask for additional information about extenuating circumstances.

Institutions must arrange assessment(s) for students who miss a deadline or examination because of extenuating circumstances. Assessment(s) must be arranged for each module that was missed. The assessment can be the same as the original or can be an alternative assessment.

If it is not possible to arrange the assessment before the meeting of the Board of Examiners, the Board of Examiners must make sure that the extenuating circumstances are considered. Boards of Examiners must create a sub-group to consider extenuating circumstances. The sub-group must provide the Board with recommendations about alternative assessment or changing marks. The University recommends that extenuating circumstances are categorised as specified below:

Code	Recommendation to Board of Examiners	Typically used when one or more of the following apply:
EC-01	No action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECs are not related to the student's studies. • Allowances for ECs already made, e.g. by allowing extra time or modified form of assessments. <p><i>Example: Illness that occurred after the summer assessment period.</i></p> <p><i>Example: Illness that affected Semester 1 examinations but extra time was allowed in the examinations</i></p>

EC-02	Allow an opportunity to repeat the assessment as a first-sit with no cap on the mark.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allowances for ECs have not already been made for assessments in specific module(s) • ECs apply to specific modules and there is no evidence that they had an impact beyond those specific modules. <p><i>Example: Personal/Health problems affecting a professional placement/module that is a core element of the programme.</i></p>
EC-03	Adjust marks for specific module(s) and recalculate the average mark. There should be no further change to degree class (unless the adjusted module marks result in an overall average that is in a higher class or unless EC-04 is also specified)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allowances for ECs have not already been made for assessments in specific module(s) • ECs apply to specific modules and there is no evidence that they had an impact beyond those specific modules. <p><i>Example: Injury affecting Semester 1 coursework, there are justifiable reasons why the student did not ask for extensions to submission dates, and it is not feasible to set an alternative assessment.</i></p>
EC-04	Increase degree class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student has a borderline mark. • There is evidence that the Extenuating Circumstances (ECs) had an impact beyond specific modules in which allowances were made. • Allowances for ECs cannot be made retrospectively at module level e.g. because of the form of assessment <p><i>Example: Illness that affected a Semester but that was diagnosed after the examination/assessment period.</i></p> <p><i>Example: Illness that affected the academic year. Allowances were made on the basis of symptoms but a severe condition was diagnosed after the examination/assessment period.</i></p>
EC-05	Defer decision until further details are available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further details/confirmation of the ECs have been requested • A decision can be made at another Board of Examiners (e.g. deferral from a Level 5 Board to a Level 6 (final) Board of Examiners) <p><i>Example: Evidence provided by the student is insufficient or the student is waiting for medical confirmation of ECs.</i></p>

Boards of Examiners must not change students' marks achieved in earlier years and previously confirmed by a Board of Examiners unless, for defined reasons, students have been informed that previously issued results are provisional.

Additional information:

EC-05

- *If EC-05 is chosen, students should be given a deadline for providing the additional information. The Board of Examiners should agree and record the outcome that can be approved by the Chair if satisfactory additional information is provided.*

12.13. Guidelines on the Use of Viva Voce Examinations

All students must be treated fairly, without being advantaged or disadvantaged by the use of *viva voce* examinations.

Viva voce examinations must only contribute to marks if this has been approved for programmes at validation.

Viva voce examinations can be conducted by External Examiners on all or a sample of students. The purpose is to assist an External Examiner to moderate a programme. Evidence from these examinations must not be used as part of a Board of Examiners' consideration of individual students. However, the evidence can be used by External Examiners when commenting about the general standards of the programme. External Examiners can use evidence from *viva voce* examinations to recommend adjustments to the marks of all students in a cohort – such adjustments can only be applied at a module level. Such a recommendation must then be considered by the Board of Examiners. A *viva voce* examination should not be used as the basis for reducing an individual student's mark or an individual student's award classification.

Viva voce examinations must not be used by Boards of Examiners when classifying borderline students unless the *viva voce* examinations formed part of the assessment structure for a programme.

Interviews with students can be arranged at the request of the Chair of the Board of Examiners. The interviews can be arranged to obtain further information from a student about matters such as unexpected results or extenuating circumstances. The interviews must not be called *viva voce* examinations. Information from the interview can be considered by the Board of Examiners. The interview must not disadvantage the student.

12.14. Categorical Marking

Assessment can include examinations, class tests and coursework (essay, laboratory, report, project etc.). Work must be marked using a categorical scale:

Categorical Mark	Foundation Degrees HE Cert and HE Dip	Undergraduate Degree Level	Master's Level	Equivalent % Mark
A*	Distinction	First Class	Distinction	95
A+				87
A				80
A-				74
B+	Merit	Upper Second Class	Merit	68
B				65
B-				62
C+	Pass	Lower Second Class	Pass	58
C				55
C-		Third Class	Fail	52
D+				48
D	Fail	Fail	Fail	45
D-				42
E+				38
E				35
E-				32
F1				25
F2				15
F3				5
F4	0			

A categorical mark of A**, equal to a mark of 100, can also be used.

The Pass mark for a single module at Levels 4-6 = 40% and at Level 7 = 50%.

Additional information:*Marking Criteria*

- The criteria associated with degree classes and categorical marks are in Appendix 3. -. Generic criteria to be used in module outlines are in Appendix 4

Categorical and percentage marks

- Marking as a percentage is allowed if the subject or assessment demands and where relatively small differences in performance can be discerned with accuracy. Examples of where marking numerically is possible include:
 - Subject areas where answers/coursework involving computation will lead to numerical marks across the whole range of marks from 0%-100%.
 - Multiple choice tests/examinations where the sum of marks over a large number of individual questions will lead to percentage marks across the whole range of marks from 0%-100%.
 - Coursework/examinations consisting of sections, each of which is marked out of a pre-defined number. For example, an examination consisting of short answer questions, each marked out of 10. In such cases the marking of each question, although as a number, is effectively categorical; i.e. the mark is one chosen from a scale with 11 categories from 0-10. The sum of marks over these individual questions will lead to percentage marks across the whole range of marks from 0%-100%.
- In some cases, particularly grading of professional practice placements, pass/fail grades can be used without subdividing the pass or fail grades into further categories. However, even where only a pass/fail mark is given, it is expected that students will be provided with detailed feedback on the work.
- Module marks must be calculated as percentages.

Reporting marks to students

- Marks must be reported to students consistently. Marks reported as a categorical mark on one occasion should not subsequently be reported as a percentage.
- Overall module marks must be reported to students as percentages.
- Marks for components must be reported as categorical or numerical, depending on how the component was marked.

Pass marks

- Students cannot pass from one level to another with module marks below 30% at Levels 4-6 and below 40% at Level 7 (See Section 0).

12.15. Guidelines on Categorical Marking

A mark must be chosen from the available categories (Section 12.14) without first thinking of a percentage mark. It might help markers to think which degree class would be appropriate for the work and to grade within that class. For example, work of upper second class standard, approaching the standards needed for first class would be given a B+ mark.

Institutions must not use systems where markers award percentage marks that are converted to the categorical scale as an administrative function. This process would eliminate the potential benefits of categorical marking and creates an unnecessary step with its own risks of conversion and transcription errors.

Institutions must have procedures to make sure that any calculations involving categorical marks are consistent and accurate. Institutions must not use procedures that attempt to derive an average categorical mark by purely subjective means. There are cases where the average is obvious. For example, in an examination paper with three equally weighted questions. If the marks for the three questions are A+, A and A-, the average will be A. However, beyond the simplest examples, it is not possible to reliably and consistently determine the average categorical mark by a subjective or intuitive method.

Markers must not replace the percentage mark derived using the values given in Section 12.14. For example, if the categorical mark A- is given, this must be converted to 74%. Markers should not replace the mark given to raise it to a higher mark in the A- band. If a marker believes that 74% is inappropriate, the marker should consider whether an A rather than A- should have been given. The only exceptions include situations where numerical marks may be given with a high degree of accuracy because the numerical marks are linked to externally defined criteria/standards or to professional standards/experience.

12.16. Generic Module Achievement Criteria

The module achievement criteria in this section provide students with guidance on what they must achieve in order to meet the requirements for particular grades and to meet the learning outcomes. These criteria can be included in student handbooks and/or module guides. The module achievement criteria are intended as generic 'baseline' standards. **Institutions are encouraged** to adapt the criteria to link them as closely as possible to particular assessments. For example, for an assessment based on a field visit, these generic standards may be less helpful to a student than criteria written specifically for the assessment. The criteria

must also be used carefully in relation to the level of study. For example, knowledge and understanding have to be judged at the appropriate level. A student at Level 4 (year 1) might be required to display evidence of knowledge which is excellent, but the same evidence might not be judged to be excellent for a student at Level 5 (year 2). Similarly, a student at Level 4 may display originality by using ideas that are presented and considered at a higher Level. Conversely, to demonstrate originality at level 7, a student would have to present largely original ideas or ideas based on recent publications that were not part of the taught component of a module.

To achieve Grade A the assessment must:

- Demonstrate comprehensive knowledge and detailed understanding of the subject area.
- Demonstrate extensive background study.
- Be well structured and highly focussed.
- Contain logically presented and defended arguments.
- Be free of factual/computational errors.
- Include significant elements of original interpretation.
- Demonstrate an ability to identify, develop and present new links between topics.
- Include new approaches to analysing and/or explaining a problem.
- Be presented to very high standards with very accurate communication.

To achieve Grade B the assessment must:

- Demonstrate strong knowledge and understanding of most of the subject area.
- Demonstrate evidence of background study.
- Be well structured and focussed.
- Contain coherently presented arguments.
- Be mostly free of factual/computational errors.
- Include some elements of original interpretation.
- Describe well known links between topics.
- Analyse and/or explain problems using existing methods/approaches
- Be presented to high standards with accurate communication.

To achieve Grade C the assessment must:

- Demonstrate knowledge of key areas/principles.
- Have some, if only limited, evidence of background study.
- Be focussed on the question (assessment brief) with only some irrelevant material and weaknesses in structure
- Attempt to present relevant and logical arguments.
- Not contain a large number of factual/computational errors.
- Describe major links between topics.
- Attempt to analyse and/or explain problems.
- Be free of major weaknesses in presentation and accuracy.

To achieve Grade D the assessment must:

- Demonstrate knowledge of some key areas/principles.
- Have some, if only limited, evidence of background study.
- Attempt to present an answer on the question (assessment brief) with only some irrelevant material and weaknesses in structure
- Attempt to present relevant and coherent arguments.
- Not contain a large number of factual/computational errors.
- Describe some links between topics.
- Provide some analysis and/or explanation of problems.
- Demonstrate an attempt to avoid major weaknesses in presentation and accuracy.

The assessment will be given Grade E-F if it does not fulfil the associated learning outcomes and contains:

- Insufficient detail.
- Deficiencies in knowledge even of key areas/principles.
- No evidence of understanding, even of the main areas.
- No evidence of background study.
- Tangential material, lacking a coherent structure.
- No arguments.

- Many factual/computational errors.
- No original interpretation.
- No description of links between topics.
- No attempt to solve problems.
- A weak presentation with many inaccuracies.

12.17. Marking Criteria

The marking criteria are intended as 'baseline' standards. If Institutions develop their own marking criteria they should not make their expectations higher than those conveyed by the table below. Institutions must not amend the columns containing the Categorical Mark, the associated Degree classes and the General Overview.

The table provides general criteria. The criteria must be used in a way that reflects the links between the assessments, module learning outcomes, programme learning outcomes and subject benchmark statements. The criteria must also be used carefully in relation to the level of study. For example, knowledge and understanding have to be judged at the appropriate level. A student at Level 4 (year 1) might display evidence of knowledge which is excellent, but the same evidence might not be judged to be excellent for a student at Level 5 (year 2). Special attention should be given to the criteria that are in italics in the table. They should be judged carefully in relation to the level at which a student is studying. For example, a student at Level 4 may display originality by using ideas that are normally presented and considered at a higher Level. Conversely, to demonstrate originality at level 7, a student would have to present largely original ideas or ideas based on recent publications that were not part of the taught component of a module.

Categorical Mark	Degree Class Undergrad.	Degree Class Master's Degree	General overview Within Degree Class	Primary Marking Criteria	Secondary Marking Criteria
A*	First Class	Distinction	Outstanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprehensive knowledge <i>Detailed understanding of the subject area</i> <i>Extensive background study</i> Highly focussed answer and well structured Logically presented and defended arguments No factual/computational errors <i>Original interpretation</i> <i>New links between topics are developed</i> <i>New approach to a problem</i> Excellent presentation with very accurate communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exceeds expectations for most primary criteria <i>Complete command of subject and other relevant areas</i> <i>Ideas/arguments are highly original</i>
A+			Excellent		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exceeds expectations for some primary criteria <i>Complete command of subject</i> <i>Ideas/arguments are highly original</i>
A			Good		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meets all primary criteria Command of subject but with minor gaps in knowledge <i>Ideas/arguments are mostly original</i>
A-			Meets requirements of Class		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meets most but not all primary criteria Command of subject but with some gaps in knowledge <i>Ideas/arguments are mostly original</i>
B+	Upper Second Class	Merit	Good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong knowledge Understands most but not all of the subject area <i>Evidence of background study</i> Focussed answer with good structure Arguments presented coherently Mostly free of factual/computational errors Some limited original interpretation Well known links between topics are described Problems addressed by existing methods/approaches Good presentation with accurate communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exceeds expectations for some primary criteria Command of subject but with gaps in knowledge <i>Some ideas/arguments are original</i>
B			Mid-Level		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meets all primary criteria Strong factual knowledge and understanding Ideas/arguments are well presented but few are original
B-			Meets requirements of Class		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meets most but not all primary criteria Strong factual knowledge with minor weaknesses in understanding Most but not all ideas/arguments are well presented and few are original

Categorical Mark	Degree Class Undergrad.	Degree Class Master's Degree	General overview Within Degree Class	Primary Marking Criteria	Secondary Marking Criteria
C+	Lower Second Class	Pass	Good within the Class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge of key areas/principles Understands the main elements of the subject area <i>Limited evidence of background study</i> Answer focussed on question but also with some irrelevant material and weaknesses in structure Arguments presented but lack coherence Has several factual/computational errors <i>No original interpretation</i> <i>Only major links between topics are described</i> Limited problem solving Some weaknesses in presentation and accuracy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exceeds expectations for some primary criteria Strong factual knowledge with some weaknesses in understanding Ideas/arguments are limited but are well presented
C			Mid-Level		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Matches all primary criteria <i>Moderate factual knowledge with some weaknesses in understanding</i> Ideas/arguments are limited with weaknesses in logic/presentation
C-			Meets requirements of Class		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Matches most but not all primary criteria Moderate factual knowledge with several weaknesses in understanding Ideas/arguments are limited with weaknesses in logic/presentation
D+	Third Class	Compensatable Fail	Good within the Class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge of key areas/principles only Weaknesses in understanding of the subject area <i>Limited evidence of background study</i> Answer only poorly focussed on question and with some irrelevant material and poor structure Arguments presented but lack coherence Several factual/computational errors <i>No original interpretation</i> <i>Only major links between topics are described</i> Limited problem solving Many weaknesses in presentation and accuracy For PGT - Insufficient to fulfil the associated learning outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exceeds expectations for some primary criteria <i>Moderate factual knowledge with several weaknesses in understanding</i> A few ideas/arguments are presented but with weaknesses
D			Mid-Level		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Matches all primary criteria Limited factual knowledge with several weaknesses in understanding <i>Very few ideas/arguments are presented</i>
D-			Meets requirements of Class		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Matches most but not all primary criteria Limited factual knowledge with many weaknesses in understanding Very few ideas/arguments are presented and with errors in logic/presentation

Categorical Mark	Degree Class Undergrad.	Degree Class Master's Degree	General overview Within Degree Class	Primary Marking Criteria	Secondary Marking Criteria
E+	Compensatable Fail	Fail	Good within the Class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insufficient to fulfil the associated learning outcomes <i>Deficiencies in knowledge even of key areas/principles</i> No evidence of understanding, even of main areas <i>Very limited evidence of background study</i> Answer relies on tangential material and lacks a coherent structure No arguments presented Many factual/computational errors No original interpretation No links between topics are described No attempt to solve problems The presentation is weak containing many inaccuracies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exceeds expectations for most primary criteria Very limited factual knowledge with many weaknesses in understanding Weak attempt to answer/address question
E			Mid-Level		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exceeds expectations for some primary criteria Major gaps in knowledge/understanding Weak attempt to answer/address question
E-			Meets requirements of Class		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Matches all primary criteria Very limited evidence of knowledge/understanding Ideas/arguments are largely irrelevant to question
F1	Fail	Fail	Good within the Class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insufficient to fulfil the associated learning outcomes <i>No evidence of relevant knowledge or understanding</i> <i>No evidence of background study</i> Answer relies on irrelevant material and lacks a coherent structure No arguments presented or arguments are not relevant to the assessment Many factual/computational errors No attempt at interpretation No links between topics are described No attempt to solve problems or to address the assessment brief The presentation is very weak containing many inaccuracies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exceeds expectations for most primary criteria No evidence of knowledge/understanding Only limited evidence of an attempt to answer the question
F2			Mid-Level		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exceeds expectations for some primary criteria No evidence of knowledge/understanding Very limited evidence of an attempt to answer the question
F3			Meets requirements of Class		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Matches all primary criteria No evidence of knowledge/understanding and/or evidence of misunderstanding No attempt to answer/address the question
F4			Does not meet requirements of Class		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Matches very few primary criteria No evidence to demonstrate even cursory knowledge or understanding No attempt to answer/address question

13. Student Support and Guidance

13.1. Student Support Services

Institutions are expected to provide support services to assist students and to enhance their experiences of studying on higher education courses. The support services must:

- Be developed and managed holistically, within the context of an Institutional strategy for student support.
- Be monitored on a regular basis by mechanisms that report to the Institution's senior officers and/or management committees.
- Gather and respond to students' views on the services provided.
- Provide impartial advice.
- Respect student confidentiality.
- Assist learning, facilitate students' personal development, and safeguard and improve student's health and wellbeing.
- Define the roles and responsibilities of centrally provided services and of academic departments to avoid unnecessary duplication and gaps in student support.
- Be tailored to the specific needs of higher education students and be sufficiently distinct from the services offered by the Institution to any other students.
- Address the needs of all higher education students without a disproportionate emphasis on specific groups of students.
- Address the needs of on-campus, full-time students and the needs of off-campus, part-time and distance learning students.
- Be accessible to all students irrespective of the location or mode of study.
- Have appropriately trained staff, including where necessary, staff trained to professional standards and accredited by professional bodies.

It is expected that the support services available at the Institution will include:

- Library and information services
- Personal development planning
- Computing, information technology and e-learning support
- Learning support for disabled students
- Financial advice
- Counselling, mental health and wellbeing
- Careers and employability
- Accommodation and housing
- Registration and academic records
- Pastoral/personal tutor support

13.2. Career Education, Information and Guidance

Careers Education, Information and Guidance (CEIG) includes a range of activities and services including employability skills, personal development, career planning, career management, volunteering and work based learning. CEIG must be embedded within the overall teaching and learning experience in addition to any careers information and guidance service available at the Institution.

Institutions must:

- Ensure that there are resources available to support CEIG.
- Develop appropriate targets and benchmarks for CEIG provision and services.
- Support and monitor CEIG services through relevant strategies.
- Ensure that CEIG is represented in appropriate internal decision-making forums.
- Ensure that CEIG services respond to developments and changes in the global employment market.
- Develop links with external partners and employers.
- Promote the value of work experience, work related learning and entrepreneurship.
- Promote volunteering.
- Work with employers and external partners to disseminate information about job opportunities.

The goals of CEIG services must be to:

- Provide students with the skills and ability to manage their own life-long process of learning, personal development and career management.
- Prepare students for, and make effective decisions about, their futures based on a clear understanding of themselves in relation to present and future opportunities.
- Enable students to recognise, develop and acquire employability skills to compete successfully within the labour market.
- Enable students to develop enterprise, entrepreneurship and employability related skills.

13.3. Placement Learning

Introduction

Placements are considered valuable to students and employers. Placements provide an opportunity for the transfer of knowledge and the development of skills. Placements may assist students with the transition into work, the application of theory and provide opportunities to improve their employability. Institutions must have policies covering placement learning that conform to the principles outlined in this section and to all relevant legislation.

Where a course includes a compulsory placement learning period, this should be clearly indicated in the Prospectus (or its equivalent). Information should also be given on whether or not placements are found for the student by the Institution and where placements are likely to be located.

Responsibilities of Designated Staff

Institutions are expected to have a designated permanent member(s) of staff responsible for the approval and/or arrangement of placements. The staff may be located in central and/or academic departments but the Institution's policies and procedures must define the responsibilities of all staff. Staff involved in approval and organisation of placements must:

- Have received appropriate training.
- Have instruction on how to conduct risk assessments.
- Be familiar with the Institution's policies and procedures on provision for disabled students.
- Must attend periodic staff development courses to enable them to fulfil their role.
- Play a proactive role in securing placements for disabled students to ensure that relevant learning outcomes can be achieved.
- Provide guidance and information to students about potential placement opportunities.
- Assist students to approach employers and apply for placements.
- Ensure that any checks required by law or by placement providers are completed before the placement.
- Ensure that the placement provider meets the Institution's criteria for approval.
- Ensure that students have access to academic and other support whilst on placement.
- Keep records of each stage of the placement approval and monitoring process.
- Ensure that it is safe for students to travel and attend placements abroad.
- Review individual placements and procedures as part of annual and periodic monitoring processes.

The Suitability of Placement Providers

Institutions must define criteria by which to judge the suitability of placement providers. The criteria must include:

- Health and Safety policy and procedures.
- Insurance policy.
- Procedures for risk assessments.
- Registration with statutory or professional bodies.
- Induction processes for students.
- Opportunities for students to fulfil the learning outcomes (including any professional or statutory requirements).
- Provision for a placement supervisor/mentor to provide support to the student.

- The competency of any staff involved in the assessment and/or evaluation of the student whilst on placement.

Institutions' procedures must include mechanisms to check that the criteria have been met before placements begin.

Learning Contracts

An Agreement (Learning Contract) must be signed by the Institution, student and placement provider. The Learning Contract must outline the obligations of all three parties. It will also contain details of the learning outcomes expected of the student and the support that will be provided to the student whilst on placement.

The Agreement must include the following details:

- Contact details of each party including telephone numbers and email addresses.
- Roles and responsibilities of each party.
- Intended learning outcomes for the student.
- Details of coursework and/or observations.
- Student profile and support arrangements for disabled students.
- Procedure for problem management.
- Complaints procedure.
- Arrangements for monitoring visits.
- Travel and other insurance.
- Placement requirements (e.g. Working hours and dress code).
- Legal and/or ethical considerations (e.g. Client or patient confidentiality).
- Occupational health considerations or requirements, including immunisation.
- Specific contractual, intellectual property rights or legal obligations.
- Additional language or skills preparation where required.

Information to be Given to Students

Students must be informed about:

- Any academic requirements of a placement.
- How placements are obtained, arranged and approved.
- How disabled students can be supported.
- The services that will be available to them whilst on placement.
- The need to adhere to conditions specified by the Placement Provider and by the Institution (e.g. medical screening or workplace rules).
- Their rights to a safe placement environment and of their rights to be treated in accordance with applicable legislation.
- The completion of the Learning Contract.
- Any compulsory Health and Safety briefings provided by the Institution.
- Any documents that must be signed (e.g. checklists or Health and Safety guidance).
- How to record the work undertaken on placements.
- Their responsibilities as representatives of the Institution and the University
 - Towards the placement provider and its customers, clients, patients, and employees
 - For managing their learning and professional relationships
 - For recording their progress and achievements
 - For alerting the placement provider and institution to problems with the placement that might prevent the progress or satisfactory completion of the placement
- Opportunities to reflect on their learning experience and to discuss the placement experience.

Procedures to Deal with Problems

Help and advice on what to do if something goes wrong on a placement should be readily available to students. If problems emerge regarding the outcomes of the placement or regarding the general arrangements for the placement, in the first instance students should contact the person acting as their supervisor/mentor. If this is not appropriate, or if the situation remains unresolved, the student should contact the Institution as soon as possible.

If the student should find himself/herself in a situation where he/she is concerned about his/her wellbeing and/or personal safety the student should:

- a. Attempt to resolve the matter with the supervisor/mentor.
- b. Where it is not appropriate to discuss the matter with the supervisor/mentor, or where an attempt to resolve the matter has not been successful, the student should contact the Institution.
- c. Where it is not possible to resolve the matter by the actions described in (a) or (b), the student is advised to leave the placement until contact with the Institution can be established.
- d. If suspension of the placement is not possible (e.g. if the student is on an overseas placement and alternative accommodation is not available) students may terminate a placement but should then inform the Institution as soon as possible so that an alternative placement or equivalent provision can be arranged.

The wellbeing and personal safety of student is the priority, but students must be prepared to justify their actions if they leave or terminate a placement without prior approval from the Institution.

Institutions must have procedures to arrange alternative placements or alternative and equivalent learning experiences if a placement is terminated early for justifiable reasons. If a student withdraws from a placement without a justifiable reason, Institutions are not obliged to arrange an alternative placement immediately and a mark of zero should be recorded for the placement. Boards of Examiners should then determine whether, under the regulations for supplementary assessment, the student may resume the placement, restart the placement or undertake a different placement.

Complaints by Placement Providers or Students

Institutions must have procedures that explain how placement providers and students can complain about any aspect related to a placement. Institutions must:

- Include the complaints procedures, or references to the relevant documents, in the Learning Contract.
- Keep records of complaints and of the actions taken.
- Investigate and respond to reasonable complaints.

Institutions must have procedures to respond immediately to any complaints of harassment and/or discrimination. Institutions must also have procedures to postpone or terminate placements if the student is in danger or if the placement provider fails to ensure that the student will not face further harassment and/or discrimination. If a placement has been postponed or terminated, or where complaints/concerns have been raised following a placement, the Institution must:

- If there are other students on the placement, undertake a risk assessment to determine whether the placement for the students should be postponed or terminated.
- Determine whether to continue to send students on the placement.

Where action is taken to remove students from a placement or to stop sending students on a placement, the Institution should inform the University's Academic Registrar who may then provide advice to University departments and other institutions regarding the placement provider. The University reserves the right, at the discretion of the Registrar, to draw to the attention of the appropriate authorities, organisations or institutions any instances that have resulted in cessation of the University's involvement with a placement provider.

Site Visits

For low risk placements of up to a month a site visit by a representative of the Institution is recommended but not required. All other placements must be visited at least once during the placement. During the visit, the placement must be reviewed to assess if the conditions in the Learning Contract are being met.

Insurance

Institutions must ensure that their insurance policies provide adequate cover for students undertaking placements. Particular attention should be given to ensuring that:

- There are no activities or periods where a student is not covered by the Institution's insurance policy or the placement provider's policy.
- Students are advised if they have to arrange their own insurance for any activity or period (e.g. their own travel insurance for leisure or sporting activities undertaken before, during or immediately after a placement).
- The placement provider's insurance provides cover for students and that students are not excluded for some reason.
- Insurance policies cover potential liability for injuries to students and for accidental injury or accidental damage caused by students.

13.4. Provision for Disabled Students

Institutions must comply with all relevant legislation and good practice in relation to disabled students. Institutions outside the UK must have systems that meet all national requirements and that are comparable to those expected of Institutions operating under UK legislation. The Institution must have policies and systems to:

- Prevent any individual from receiving less favourable treatment on grounds of religious or political beliefs, gender, sexual orientation, family circumstance, race or ethnic origin, nationality, age, social or economic class, or disability.
- Prevent any individual from being disadvantaged by any condition or requirement which is not relevant to good practice and cannot be shown to be justifiable.
- Promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people.
- Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful.
- Eliminate harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability.
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people.
- Encourage participation by disabled people in public life.
- Take steps to meet disabled peoples' needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.
- Widen access to underrepresented groups.
- Respond to the individual needs of disabled students.
- Consider the requirements of students with a wide range of impairments in all decisions and activities.
- Anticipate appropriate adjustments so that facilities, services and teaching programmes are designed to be accessible so that only minimal adjustments need to be made for individuals.
- Ensure that programme specifications have no unnecessary barriers to access by disabled people.
- Ensure that all publicity material, about facilities and courses, give sufficient information to enable disabled students to make informed decisions about the ability of an individual to complete a programme.
- Ensure that staff members who advise applicants are aware of any aspects of programmes that may create barriers or be inaccessible to students with particular impairments.
- To assist disabled students to access funding to support their studies.

Institutions' policies and systems must apply to all aspects of students' experiences including admissions, the curriculum, teaching, learning, facilities and support. Institutions must ensure that provision and structures take into account the full range of barriers, both physical and attitudinal, which disabled applicants and students may face. Institutions must recognise that disabled students are an integral part of the academic community and that accessible provision is not an additional but a core element of its overall service.

Institutions are expected to review their policies and procedures on a regular basis to evaluate what has been achieved and to plan improvements and enhancements. There must be defined mechanisms for ensuring that reviews are conducted and reported through the Institutions' committee and management structures.

Institutions must have systems whereby applicants and current students can disclose a disability. All disabled applicants and students who meet the academic criteria for a programme, and where applicable professional

requirements, should be offered an opportunity for private discussion about the course and possible adjustments.

For some courses it may be necessary to define competence standards (e.g. academic or medical). Competence standards must be clearly defined and must be a distinct requirement for the particular course. Although competence standards cannot justify direct discrimination, they may justify less favourable treatment of a disabled person where the standard is genuine, is applied equally to all people, and its application is proportionate to the aim sought. Wherever possible, competence standards should be framed in such a way that they are related to specific tasks and outcomes, rather than categories of jobs or access to a profession in general.

Institutions must have structures and procedures to allow Personal Learning Support Plans (PLSPs) to be created. PLSPs outline the learning support and reasonable adjustments for individual students. They ensure that the student and the Institution are clear about what provision is required. There must be mechanisms for the Institution to gain explicit consent from the student to draw up PLSPs and to disseminate selected details from the Plans to staff responsible for making any adjustments. Each PLSP must be informed by a full study needs assessment. An ongoing review of provision must be built into the plan to ensure that any changing needs are met.

13.5. Support for Dyslexic Students

Institutions must have mechanisms to support students who have been formally assessed as dyslexic. The assessment may be longstanding and disclosed by the student as part of the application process. Students may also be assessed after they have started their course. It is expected that Institutions will support dyslexic students by centrally provided services and through academic departments.

It is expected that the support available to dyslexic students will include:

- Guidance on coursework and assessment criteria.
- Adjustments to teaching and assessment methods.
- Timely and constructive feedback on written work.
- Development of study skills to help students to produce written work.
- Practical and administrative help, particularly to apply for any relevant allowances or grants.
- The use of assistive technologies/equipment.
- Mechanisms to identify the work of dyslexic students so that it can be marked for content and ideas. Work should not be marked for aspects which are not critical to the demonstration of achievement.

The support provided to dyslexic students must not involve:

- Repeated allowances/adjustments for the same work (e.g. Boards of Examiners should not normally consider dyslexia as an extenuating circumstance affecting examinations if adjustments have already been made by allowing extra time for the examinations and/or taking dyslexia into account when marking).
- Tutors or support staff:
 - Adding material/content to students' written work
 - Rewriting students' work
 - Making alterations which substantially eliminate a student's own contribution

13.6. Fitness to Study

Institutions must have a procedure to suspend the studies of students who are causing significant concern because of ill-health and/or presenting a risk of harm to themselves or others. Students who present with difficulties should, wherever possible, be considered from a supportive perspective.

It is expected that the procedure will refer to:

- Routes to report concerns.
- Examples of behaviour/circumstances that might indicate a cause for concern.
- Informal and informal mechanisms to address concerns.
- Guidance on when cases must be referred to emergency/medical services.
- Who has authority to suspend studies on the ground of fitness.
- Process for return to study.

13.7. English Language Support for students

Institutions must have procedures to provide English language support for international students. One way of providing support is through language and skills courses that students can take as part of their studies. The support provided by the Institution must be consistent with the following guidelines:

- The support must not result in work that is above the level the student could produce unaided.
- Students should receive detailed language advice/support on no more than one chapter of a dissertation or research project and ideally in the early stages of writing.
- Plagiarism must be explained in handbooks and induction sessions, placing particular emphasis on acceptable practice in a UK higher education context.
- Students must acknowledge on all coursework if they have used correction services outside the Institution and specify the extent and nature of the corrections.

13.8. Pastoral Support

Pastoral support must be a shared responsibility between students, tutors, central service departments, the Students' Union (or its equivalent) and academic departments. The support provided by the Institution must provide:

- Students with access to personal support through a named Personal Tutor or the equivalent (e.g. members of a dedicated personal support team).
- Students with regular meetings with the tutor.
- Systems to monitor the delivery and effectiveness of pastoral care on a regular basis.
- The opportunity for students and tutors may request a change of tutor/tutee on a "no blame" basis.
- Training to new and existing staff undertaking a personal tutor role.
- Support systems for tutors.
- Support services to which students can be referred.
- Mechanisms to organise emergency case meetings where staff have serious concerns about a student's mental health and wellbeing.
- Encouragement to students to participate in extra-and co-curricular activities and events that may enhance their employability.

13.9. Student Complaints and Appeals

General Principles

Institutions must have procedures to respond to student complaints and appeals. The complaints and appeals procedures must be based on the following principles:

- Institutions must maintain a record of all complaints and appeals.
- Every student has a right to complain or appeal against any service, academic assessment, academic or administrative procedure, perceived discrimination or harassment.
- There must be clearly-documented procedures for dealing with complaints and appeals.

- Complaints and appeals procedures must be non-discriminatory and unbiased.
- Complaints and appeals procedures must ensure privacy and confidentiality.
- The aim must be to resolve complaints and appeals as quickly as possible.
- Complaints should be addressed informally in the first instance, as close to their source as possible, and involving the individuals most directly concerned.
- Formal complaints should only be lodged and pursued if it has not been possible to resolve the issues informally.
- Any disappointment with the eventual resolution should not be aggravated by the processes used to consider the complaint or appeal.
- Complaints and appeals should not be made lightly or maliciously.
- Complaints and appeals should be made by individual students and pursued individually on a case by case basis (i.e. general complaints by groups of students should be resolved by discussion or by appropriate committees and should not be processed as a "group complaint" via the complaints procedure).
- Complaints and appeals should normally be made by the student unless the student has authorised someone to act on his/her behalf.
- Students have the right to receive reasons for decisions following consideration of a complaint or appeal and to be informed of the opportunity for further appeal.
- For any meeting or correspondence in connection with a complaint or appeal, students may be accompanied and/or represented (e.g. by an officer of the Students' Union, a personal tutor, a family member or a friend).
- If a student feels that a complaint or appeal has not been dealt with satisfactorily by the Institution, the student may pursue a complaint under the University's Student Grievance Procedure by submitting a formal complaint.
- Students who remain dissatisfied after a complaint has been considered by the University, and after a Completion of Procedures letter has been issued, may complain to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator.
- Institutions must not issue Completion of Procedures Letters, as required by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator, for any procedures involving students studying for an University award.

Complaints

The aim must be to resolve complaints informally. Matters can often be resolved informally if they are raised in a timely and reasonable manner. The Institution's procedures must ensure that complaints are dealt with as quickly as possible. Procedures must contain indicative time-limits for each stage. In the event of a delay at any stage, students must be kept informed in writing and must be given an estimated timescale for consideration of the complaint. The complaints procedure must include an informal and informal resolution processes. If a student has concerns about any aspect of his/her course, teaching and learning facilities, or support services, the matters should be discussed in the first instance with a member of staff who is associated with delivering the service. Alternatively, the concerns may be discussed with the student's tutor or other appropriate member of staff. The concerns should be presented orally or in writing as soon as practicably possible. If the student is not satisfied with the response following the initial informal process then the student should bring his/her concerns to the attention of the head of the relevant department. The concerns should be presented in writing and should include a clear statement of the remedy being sought. The head of department must provide the student with a response, with details of any actions taken.

If the student is not satisfied with the response from the head of department a formal procedure should be followed. The first stage of the formal procedure should involve consideration by a Senior Officer (equivalent to a Pro Vice-Chancellor or Vice-Principal) or nominee. When submitting a formal complaint, students must provide the following information:

- Precise details of the complaint.
- An indication of the steps taken to resolve the complaint informally.
- An explanation of why the student is still dissatisfied.
- A clear statement of the remedy being sought.
- The student's full name and signature.

If insufficient details have been provided, or if there is insufficient evidence to show that an attempt has been made to resolve matters informally, the Senior Officer or nominee should contact the student to explore avenues to address the issues raised in the complaint. The Senior Officer or nominee must conduct

enquiries to determine whether a case for a formal investigation exists. If a case has not been established, the Senior Officer or nominee must inform the complainant and, where appropriate, provide advice and information. There must be a route for students to appeal against the decision of the Senior Officer, normally by writing to the Vice-Chancellor/Principal of the Institution. The Vice-Chancellor/Principal may make such enquiries as he/she considers appropriate, and his/her decision must be final. If a case has been established, a panel of enquiry should be convened to consider the complaint. The composition of the Panel must be defined in the complaints procedure and it is expected that the Panel will include at least one of the Institutions' Senior Officers and at least one external member. It is expected that the Panel's recommendations will be approved by the Vice-Chancellor/Principal before implementation.

Any complaints about the University's services should be referred to the University for consideration under the University's Student Grievance Procedure.

Appeals

Institutions must have procedures for students to appeal against Boards of Examiners' decisions. The procedures must define timescales for submitting and processing applications. Appeals which question the academic judgement of examiners must not be allowed. Appeals must be considered on the following grounds only:

- An arithmetical or other factual error by the examiners.
- Exceptional personal circumstances, not previously taken into account by the examiners, which had an adverse effect on the student's academic performance (In appeals based on these grounds the appellant must show good reason why such circumstances were not made known to the Examination Board before its meeting).
- A defect or irregularity in the conduct of the assessment/examinations.

The University recommends, but does not explicitly require, that appeals procedures are structured so that there is a confirmation (or verification) and appeals stage. Confirmation is a process by which students can check that:

- Published results are free of arithmetical or other errors of fact.
- The examiners were aware of exceptional personal circumstances reported by the student prior to the meeting of the Board of Examiners.
- The examiners were aware of defects or irregularities in arranging or conducting examinations/coursework and which might, in the student's opinion, have affected his/her marks.

Requests for confirmation must be considered by the Chair of the Board of Examiners or nominee. The Chair of the Board of Examiners may take one of the following actions:

- If there have been procedural errors and/or mitigating circumstances were not properly considered - arrange for the Board of Examiners to reconsider the student's results.
- If there have been no procedural errors and/or mitigating circumstances were properly considered - inform the student of his/her right to appeal.

If Institutions have a confirmation procedure, appeals should only be allowed after the confirmation procedure has been completed. Institutions' procedures must identify a Senior Officer (normally Pro Vice-Chancellor or Vice-Principal) or nominee who will consider appeals. The Senior Officer or nominee should reject appeals which:

- Are based on factors known to the Board of Examiners when the student's results were considered.
- Introduce new information which could have been reported by the student before the meeting of the Board of Examiners.

If the Senior Officer decides that there is a case to be considered, it may be referred to an Appeal Board. The composition of the Appeal Board must be defined in the Appeals Procedure. The Appeal Board may decide to:

- Reject the appeal and conclude that no further action is necessary.
- Refer the case to the Board of Examiners for reconsideration.

14. Student Voice/Representation

Institutions must allow and facilitate opportunities for students, as a body or as cohort groups, to form an independent body to represent students and to campaign on behalf of students (e.g. students' union, guild or association). The procedures and structures adopted at the Institution must comply with national and/or regional legislation regarding Students' Unions (or their equivalent). Institutions must ensure that officers, delegates and representatives of the student body are chosen democratically. Within the constraints imposed by legislation it is expected that students will:

- Be able to create a company or organisation to manage the facilities, staff and activities of a Students' Union (or its equivalent).
- Be able to create a body to promote the general interests of students and to arrange academic, social or other activities.
- Be represented on groups or committees responsible for facilities, teaching and quality assurance of higher education programmes at the Institution.
- Participate in staff-student committees in academic departments.
- Have opportunities to provide feedback, via questionnaires or surveys, on the quality of teaching and other services.
- Participate in external surveys as requested by the Institution or the University.
- Be able to create structures to provide support to individual students to pursue grievances against the Institution, and where appropriate, organisations or individuals outside the Institution.
- Represent students in reviews and audits conducted by the University.
- Become affiliate members of regional or national student organisations.

Institutions must ensure that students on the University's validated programme(s) are represented in the wider student body and have opportunities to raise concerns specific to their courses and needs. The University recommends the establishment, preferably within the Students' Union or its equivalent, of groups to represent the interests of higher education students.

15. Awards and Certificates

15.1. Data Transfer

Institutions must provide the University with student records as defined in this Section or as defined by the agreement between the University and the Institution. Data must be transferred electronically using text files or any other common format (e.g. Excel file or Access database).

Data is transferred on two occasions in each academic year:

- Registration records (normally before 1 December)
- Completion records (normally after Boards of Examiners' meetings and before 1 July)

The data must include:

For Registration and Completion Records	
Student name Student ID Date of birth Gender Student's home address Email address Name of award (i.e. BA, BSc etc.) Programme title Language for correspondence (Institutions in Wales only)	
+ For Registration Records	+ For Completion Records
Year of study Student's term-time address	Date of Board of Examiners Classification of award Date of ceremony (if applicable)*

* See Section 15.4

15.2. Producing and Issuing Certificates

The University is solely responsible for producing and issuing certificates to students who successfully complete validated programmes. Students on validated programmes may not, unless by prior agreement of the University:

- Enrol concurrently for any other programme at the University or validated by the University.
- Submit the results of any of the work conducted as part of a University validated programme to gain credit as part of any other award.
- May not be awarded a qualification of the Institution, or any other institution, based simply on the fact that he/she has successfully completed the requirements of a University validated programme.

Certificates for validated programmes are produced by the University's Academic Registry. Certificates will only be produced by the University when it has received evidence from the Institution that students have successfully completed their programme. The Institution is not authorised to produce certificates for programmes validated by the University.

Certificates normally contain the following information:

- The University's name
- University Crest
- Name of award in full
- Programme title
- Full name of student
- Date when student was admitted to the degree
- Name and signature of the Vice-Chancellor

- Certificate number
- A stamp to make it evident if a certificate is a replacement
- A statement to confirm that the name and location of any other higher education provider involved in the delivery of a programme and the principal language of study and assessment is specified on the transcript.

Certificates contain security features that may be used by the University to verify that a certificate is genuine, for example, watermarked paper and microtext.

Award names and programme titles that appear on certificates will be exactly as agreed when a programme was validated. If there are justifiable reasons, the University may permit a programme title to be changed. However, unless by agreement between the student and the University, the programme title that will appear on the student's certificate must not be modified once the student has enrolled for the first year of the programme. Only the approved programme title, as recorded for the student by the University, will be printed on the certificate.

The name that appears on the certificate will be the full legal name of the student as recorded by the University. Requests to amend a name after a certificate has been issued (e.g. due to marriage or change of name by deed poll) will normally be rejected. In exceptional circumstances a request received within 28 days of a certificate being awarded may be approved if the student provides a reasonable explanation why his/her name had not been changed before the certificate was issued.

Requests by Institutions or by students to change the award or programme title, student name, any other details printed on the certificate, or any features on the certificate will normally be rejected. Such requests will only be considered in cases where there is evidence that the details printed on the certificate are incorrect.

For students whose results are sent to the University following Board of Examiner meetings in May-June, certificates will normally be issued between October and December. If results are sent to the University at other times, certificates will be issued as soon as is practicably possible. The admittance date (i.e. the date when the student "officially" received the award) will be the first day of the month following processing of the award.

Certificates posted to an address in the UK are normally sent by Royal Mail second class delivery. All certificates posted to an address outside the UK are normally sent by Royal Mail "Signed for" delivery or its equivalent (so that their receipt/return can be tracked). Certificates will be posted to a student's current permanent home addresses as recorded by the University. If no such address exists, or is out of date, the certificate will be kept in the Academic Registry until the student contacts the University.

Institutions may request that certificates are sent to the Institution for distribution to students at an award ceremony as described in Section 15.3. Certificates that are not given to students at an award ceremony should be returned to the University for posting.

If a certificate does not reach a student, and it can be demonstrated that the University is at fault, a copy of the certificate will be sent free of charge. If the Institution or the student has failed to provide the University with the correct address, an administrative charge will be made for issuing a replacement certificate.

If a student loses his/her certificate, a replacement may be issued if the student provides a statement to confirm that the original is lost/damaged. A charge will be made for replacement certificates. Replacement certificates will be marked "Duplicate". The replacement certificate may differ in format and style to the one that was issued originally but will contain the same information. Replacement certificates are normally issued within six weeks.

The University will respond to any reasonable requests to confirm that a certificate is genuine. The University will only respond to requests if there is clear evidence that the person seeking confirmation has been provided with a valid copy of the certificate. This will normally be determined by referring to the certificate number, and any other parts or features of the certificate that are deemed to be appropriate. If a student has given a third party a copy of the certificate, this will be taken as an indication that there is permission for the University to verify the certificate.

If a student is dissatisfied with any aspect related to the production or issuing of his/her certificate, then in the first instance, the student should contact the University's Awards Coordinator to discuss their concerns. If the matter is still not resolved to the student's satisfaction, then a complaint may be submitted using the University's Student Grievance Procedure.

15.3. Transcripts

Institutions must provide a transcript for each student to record the modules completed and the credits and marks achieved on the programme. Transcripts must be produced in accordance with the requirements of the Higher Education Achievement Report and Diploma Supplements and must include:

- Name and location of the Institution
- Principal language of study and assessment
- Information identifying the qualification
- Information on the level of the qualification
- Information on the contents of the programme and the results gained
- Information on the function of the qualification including, where applicable, professional accreditation
- Official certification

15.4. Admission of Students to Degrees and Other Awards

Institutions may arrange ceremonies to celebrate students' achievements. Certificates produced by the University may be presented at the ceremonies. The arrangements for ceremonies must be approved by the University's Academic Registrar. Any costs incurred by the University related to participation in a ceremony must be agreed in advance. At the ceremony graduates and diplomates are entitled to wear the appropriate academic dress (including gown, hood and cap) as specified by the University.

Students who have completed validated programmes will normally graduate in absentia. Under the University's regulations only the Vice-Chancellor (or in exceptional circumstances a nominated senior officer of the University) is authorised to admit students to degrees and other qualifications. Institutions must not, either explicitly or implicitly, create the impression that students are admitted to their degrees or other qualifications by the Institution or its officers.

If by special arrangement the University's Vice-Chancellor attends a ceremony organised by an Institution, students may be admitted to their degrees and other qualifications in person during the ceremony in accordance with the University's regulations.

The University reserves the right to bar a student from attending a ceremony arranged by the Institution in relation to a University award if it considers it appropriate to do so.

Students to whom a degree or other qualification of the University is awarded become members of the University Alumni.

16. Agreement and Financial Arrangements

An Agreement must be signed between the University and the Institution. Normally, there will be one agreement covering all the validated programmes delivered by the Institution. Agreements will be renewed whenever new programmes are validated or when programmes are revalidated. The Agreement must set out the rights and obligations of both parties. The terms of the Agreement must be discussed and agreed in parallel with the approval and validation process. The agreement will be drawn up by the Academic Registrar or nominee in consultation with the Institution. It will be signed on behalf of the University by the Vice-Chancellor (or his/her nominee) and by the Principal (or equivalent) at the Institution.

The term of the Agreement will be defined and the agreement will be reviewed at the end of the term by the University's Academic Registrar (or nominee) and his/her counterpart at the Institution.

The Agreement must contain details of the costs to the Institution and when payments are due. The costs of Institutional approval and programme validation will be subject to negotiation between the University and the Institution on a case by case basis, and without reference to the financial arrangements between the University and any other institution. The University will exercise its rights to agree costs that are appropriate to each case, depending on how the proposed collaboration meets its strategic objectives and depending on the resources required to approve and manage the agreement. The University may apply a non-refundable charge for Institutional approval regardless of the outcome of the approval Panel.

Template Agreements are available from the University's Academic Registrar.

17. Termination Agreement

The Agreement between the University and the Institution may be terminated by either party giving not less than twelve months notice. Any conditions (e.g. delays in payments to the University) that might lead to termination of the Agreement within a shorter notice period must be defined in the Agreement. Those authorised to terminate the Agreement are the Vice-Chancellor and the Institution's Authorised Officer.

In the event of termination, the parties will normally enter into a Termination Agreement which must set out the responsibilities and rights of both parties and of students. The Termination Agreement must remain in force (but only so far as may be necessary) until all students enrolled on the validated programmes have completed their studies, have transferred to alternative programmes, have withdrawn, or until the time periods allowed for their studies have expired. The Termination Agreement must also detail any outstanding financial commitments and all costs due during its term.

Template Termination Agreements are available from the University's Academic Registrar.

18. Data Management and records

Institutions are responsible for maintaining students' records and for managing data in accordance with this Manual.

The University will maintain records that include lists of:

- Current and previously approved Institutions
- Current and previously validated programmes
- Current and past students and the classification of their awards

The University will retain copies of all institutional approval and programme validation documents. The documents will be kept for 5 years after the termination of an Agreement or the end of a Termination Agreement, whichever is the most recent.

19. Welsh Language Policy

This section applies to approved Institutions in Wales.

Institutions in Wales must have a Welsh Language Policy constructed in-line with extant legislation and/or policy. Institutions' Welsh Language Policies must ensure that students on the University's validated programmes have the same opportunities as any other University student and must be consistent with the following principles:

- Students must have access to personal support from Welsh-speaking members of staff.
- Students should be able to access support services through the medium of Welsh
- Students may take examinations and submit coursework through the medium of Welsh (subject to the conditions in Section 12.5).
- Correspondence with individual students must be conducted in the students preferred language (Welsh or English). Students must be asked to indicate when they enrol at the Institution in which language they would like to receive correspondence.
- Publicity material for students (e.g. Prospectus) must be available in Welsh and English.
- Welsh Medium teaching and learning (and related activities) must be monitored and reviewed in the same way as any other teaching and learning activities, and in accordance with the requirements of this Manual.

20. Glossary of Terms

Academic Department	Section of the Institution primarily responsible for delivering a programme.
Approval Panel	Panel that considers an application by an Institution wishing to offer programmes leading to University awards.
Assessment	Process to judge the achievement of students and to determine whether they have fulfilled module and programme learning outcomes. Assessment is also used as a noun to describe activities (e.g. examinations, coursework that will be assessed).
Assessment Criteria	Descriptions of what a student is expected to achieve in order to demonstrate that a Learning Outcome has been met.
Award	Type of qualification (e.g. Bachelor of Arts, BA).
Benchmark Statements	Statements published by the QAA, which represent general expectations about standards for the award of qualifications at a given level in a particular subject area.
Boards of Examiners	Boards responsible for assessment, progression and classification of awards.
Boards of Studies	Boards responsible for academic matters related to programmes.
Certificate of Higher Education	Qualification at Level 4 with at least 120 credits.
Class Assessment	See Test
Classification	Category (class) of award (e.g. pass/fail or First, Upper Second etc.).
Compensatable Mark	A module mark between 30% and 39%.
Compulsory Module	Module that must be taken by all students on a Programme.
Core Module	Module that must be taken by all students on a Programme and must be passed (mark of at least 40%) before the student can proceed to the next year (level).
Co-requisite	Module which must be studied concurrently with another module as defined for modules and/or programmes.
Credit	Measure of learning outcomes achievable in notional hours. 1 credit is equivalent to 10 notional hours.
Credit Level	See Level of Credit, Level 4, Level 5, Level 6 and Level 7
Coursework	Any assessment which is not an Examination or Test.
Department	See Academic Department
Diploma of Higher Education	Qualification at Level 5 with at least 240 credits.
Elective Module	Module (usually chosen from a suite of modules) that does not contribute to the calculation of the Overall Percentage Mark.
Enrolment	The process by which a student formally enrolls for a named award of the University.
Examination	Assessment completed on a defined date and with fixed time-limits in an examination hall under strict supervision and with clearly defined conditions and rules of conduct. Examinations are normally arranged by the Institution in Examination Periods at the end of Modules.

Examination Period	Period which is set aside for the conduct of examinations.
Examining Board	See Board of Examiners
External Examiner	Independent and impartial advisor providing informed comment on standards and student achievement.
Formative Assessment	Assessment that provides information about the strengths and needs of students but does not contribute to module marks.
Foundation Degree	Qualification at Level 5 with at least 240 credits.
Honours Degree	Qualification at Level 6 with at least 360 credits
In-Course Assessment	See Coursework
Institution(s)	Institution(s) approved or seeking approval to offer programmes validated by the University. "Institution" and "Institutions" are used interchangeably, depending on context
Institution's Authorised Officer	Officer authorised by an Institution to terminate the agreement with the University and to resolve disputes related to the agreement.
Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)	Intellectual and industrial property rights as defined in the agreement between the University and the Institution.
Learning Outcomes	Statements, at programme and module level, of what a student can be expected to know, understand and/or do as a result of a learning experience.
Level 4	Achievement at Level 4 reflects the ability to identify and use relevant understanding, methods and skills to address problems that are well-defined but complex and non-routine. It includes taking responsibility for overall courses of action as well as exercising autonomy and judgement within broad parameters. It also reflects understanding of different perspectives or approaches within an area of study or work. (CQFW. 2009. Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales 2009-2014)
Level 5	Achievement at Level 5 reflects the ability to identify and use relevant understanding, methods and skills to address broadly-defined, complex problems. It includes taking responsibility for planning and developing courses of action as well as exercising autonomy and judgement within broad parameters. It also reflects understanding of different perspectives, approaches or schools of thought and the reasoning behind them. (CQFW. 2009. Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales 2009-2014)
Level 6	Achievement at Level 6 reflects the ability to refine and use relevant understanding, methods and skills to address complex problems that have limited definition. It includes taking responsibility for planning and developing courses of action that are able to underpin substantial change or development, as well as exercising broad autonomy and judgement. It also reflects an understanding of different perspectives, approaches or schools of thought and the theories that underpin them. (CQFW. 2009. Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales 2009-2014)
Level 7	Achievement at Level 7 reflects the ability to reformulate and use relevant understanding, methodologies and approaches to address problematic situations that involve many interacting factors. It includes taking responsibility for planning and

	<p>developing courses of action that initiate or underpin substantial change or development, as well as exercising broad autonomy and judgement. It also reflects an understanding of relevant theoretical and methodological perspectives and how they affect their area of study or work.</p> <p>(CQFW. 2009. Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales 2009-2014)</p>
Level of Credit	Threshold standard of achievement within a hierarchy of levels. Levels of Credit and Qualifications are defined in this Manual according to the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (2nd Edition, 2008) (FHEQ) and the Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales 2009-2014 (CQFW)
Master's Degree (Taught)	Qualification at Level 7 with at least 180 credits.
Moderator	Person appointed by the University to oversee the delivery of programmes and the procedures used to monitor and record the progress and achievement of students
Module	Discrete and coherent block of learning that forms part of a Programme.
Module Review	Process to consider the effectiveness of a module during the previous year and development plans for the following year.
Optional Module	Module named in the Programme Specification and chosen from a suite of modules.
Ordinary Degree	Qualification at Level 6 with at least 300 credits
Outcomes	See Learning Outcomes
Overall Percentage Mark	Weighted average mark across all modules that contribute to an award and the mark used as the main determinant to classify an award.
Postgraduate Certificate	Qualification at Level 7 with at least 60 credits
Postgraduate Diploma	Qualification at Level 7 with at least 120 credits
Pre-requisite	Module in which a student must have received credit in order to proceed to a subsequent specified module or modules.
Programme	Scheme of study validated by the University and having specified Core, Compulsory, Optional and Elective Modules as defined in a Programme Specification.
Programme Approval Panel	See Validation Panel
Programme Review	Process that considers the overall effectiveness of a Programme during the previous year and development plans for the following year.
Programme Specification	Validated description of a Programme presented in a defined format.
Progression	Stage through which a student is allowed to proceed from one year (level) to the next
Qualification	See Award
Registration	The process by which enrolled students become 'registered' students for the current academic session. Students must re-register for each academic year of their studies.
Scheme of Study	See Programme
Students (or individually a Student)	Individuals pursuing a Programme at the Institution leading to an award of the University.

Supplementary assessment	Assessment to redeem failure.
Taught Postgraduate Programme	See Master's Degree
Termination Agreement	Agreement between the University and an Institution that is put in place when validated provision is terminated.
Test	Assessment completed on a defined date and with fixed time-limits under strict supervision and with clearly defined conditions and rules of conduct. Tests are normally arranged by module organisers within the teaching timetable.
Validation Panel	Panel that considers Programme proposals submitted by approved Institutions.