Quality Assurance Code of Practice

Assessment Procedures for Programmes not compliant with the New Framework for Assessment

1. Scope

1.1. These assessment procedures apply to all taught programmes of study leading to an award of the University of Bath that are outside the scope of the New Framework for Assessment: Assessment Regulations (NFAAR). Assessment procedures for programmes of study within the scope of the NFAAR are defined within the NFAAR supplement to the University Regulations. Regulation 15.1 (c)-(g) formally defines which programmes are covered by the New Framework for Assessment, and which lie outside it.

1.2. These procedures may be varied under the terms of an Institutional Agreement where a programme of study is delivered as a collaborative initiative with a partner organisation.

1.3. This QA statement should be read in association with:

- QA12 External Examining (Taught Provision);
- QA16 Assessment, Marking and Feedback
- University Regulations — in particular noting the definition for final assessment as distinct from progress assessment (15.2 (d) & (e)), such that assessments may be progress and/or final assessments:

“Final Assessments are those assessments the results of which count in determining the award or the level of the final award (Degree, Diploma or Certificate of the University).”

“Progress Assessments are those assessments the results of which contribute to the evaluation of the candidate’s fitness to proceed from one year, or part of the programme of study, to the next.”

2. Principles and Purpose

2.1. To assure the following outcomes:

- fairness and consistency in the assessment and marking processes of students’ work within programme cohorts and between departments;
- comparability between University of Bath standards and those of other HE Institutions at the level of the discipline and institutionally, through the input of External Examiners and the arrangements for Boards of Examiners;
- attention to detail in the consideration of individual or group performance when judging grade boundaries and in relation to individual mitigating circumstances;
- clarity in relation to degree classifications, publication of pass lists and the arrangements for supplementary assessments.
3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 Boards of Studies are responsible for arranging the membership of Boards of Examiners, for receiving reports from Boards of Examiners and confirming progression or the conferment of degrees and their classification.

3.2 Heads of Departments/the School/Head of Learning Partnerships Office (LPO) are responsible for the arrangements for ensuring adequate resourcing and attendance by academic staff at Boards of Examiners and in most cases, for chairing Boards (see 5.1 and 6.1).

4. Boards of Examiners for Units and Boards of Examiners for Programmes

4.1. The Head of Department/School/LPO must nominate a secretary/officer to the Board to ensure that the necessary administrative support and procedural guidance is provided. The Dean must approve this nomination. In addition, the Head of Department/School/LPO should ensure:
   a) that the secretary/officer has received adequate training on procedural matters, including the interpretation and application of University Regulations;
   b) that, in accordance with the schedule established by the Dean, or as agreed in consultation with Academic Registry and the Learning & Teaching Enhancement Office, an observer from the University who is independent of the department/school will be in attendance at Board of Examiners for Units and/or Board of Examiners for Programmes. (The independent observer will normally be an Assistant Registrar (Faculties/School) or equivalent from outside the Faculty/School, or a member of the Academic Registry or Learning & Teaching Enhancement Office).

4.2. The Board of Studies will receive the membership of each Board of Examiners for Units and Board of Examiners for Programmes at the beginning of the academic year.

4.3. Approval of absence (in, for example, cases of illness, bereavement, or serious disruption of personal life) from either a Board of Examiners for Units or a Board of Examiners for Programmes must be sought from the Head of Department/School/Learning Partnerships. Staff members of Boards should take all reasonable steps to ensure that attendance at a Board takes the precedence it is due above other University activities, such that the need to seek approval for absence will be avoided. In approving such requests the Head of Department/School/Learning Partnerships should take account of the quorum requirements set out below (paras 5.2 and 6.3) and whether there will be sufficient academic staff in attendance to represent the interests of all students properly. Any staff member of a Board who is given permission to be absent will, where possible and appropriate, be expected to provide input to the deliberations of the Board. External Examiners, though appointed to the membership of Boards of Examiners for Units considering final assessments are not required to attend those meetings; they are, however, eligible to attend if they wish to do so and will be expected to provide input to the deliberations of the Boards of Examiners for Units to which they are appointed if they do not attend. External Examiners are expected to attend meetings of Boards of Examiners for Programmes considering final assessments.

4.4. The dates for all Boards of Examiners for Programmes and Boards of Studies will be published at the beginning of the academic year. External Examiners should also receive notification of the dates at the beginning of the year. The dates of all Boards of Examiners for Units should be notified to External Examiners as soon as they are agreed.
5. **Boards of Examiners for Units**

5.1. The Chair of the Board of Examiners for Units shall be the Head of Department/School or nominated member of staff. The Chair of the Board of Examiners for Units should not be the Director of Studies. In addition, membership of each Board of Examiners for Units shall include at least one internal examiner representing each unit under consideration (acknowledging that one person might represent more than one unit for which he/she is appointed). External Examiners shall be appointed to membership of appropriate Boards of Examiners for Units that will consider final assessments, such that at least one shall be a member of each Board. Where more than one External Examiner could be appointed, they may be appointed to Boards of Examiners for Units that will most benefit from their particular area(s) of expertise (for example, by subject/discipline). All members of the Board should declare any possible conflicts of interest.

5.2. All staff members of Boards of Examiners for Units are expected to attend their meetings (see para. 4.3 concerning approval for absence). The Chair of each Board will be responsible for ensuring that sufficient academic staff are in attendance to represent the interests of all students properly, and for the observance of a quorum requirement set at 50% of the membership (rounded up) and excluding External Examiners, or two members in addition to the Chair, whichever is the greater. The Chair must undertake adequate training on University regulations and procedures in order to ensure that the Board is conducted in a fair and proper manner.

5.3. The Board of Examiners for Units will be responsible for ensuring the academic standards of the units under their authority.

5.4. The Board of Examiners for Units will be responsible for the conduct of all examinations and assessments required to determine whether or not a student has successfully achieved the learning outcomes of the units under its academic authority. In accordance with Ordinance 15, all final assessments will have a designated External Examiner in addition to at least one internal examiner.

5.5. The Board of Examiners for Units will ensure that the summative assessments for a unit provide an appropriate level of academic challenge in testing that the learning outcomes have been achieved.

5.6. The Board of Examiners for Units will be responsible for the overview of the formative assessments for these units to ensure that the overall assessment burden is congruent with an effective learning strategy, although this may be delegated to an appropriate Director of Studies.

5.7. The Board of Examiners for Units will be responsible for agreeing the marks gained by students taking the units under its academic authority. The Board of Examiners for Units will also ensure that the finalised marks for individual units are an accurate reflection of the standards achieved by the candidates. Where the assessments are final assessments and the External Examiner(s) in membership of the Board of Examiners for Units does/do not attend, the External Examiner(s) will be expected to provide input to the deliberations of the Board.

5.8. In the case of a student who has failed to satisfy the assessment requirements for a unit, the Board of Examiners for Units, having due regard for the degree of failure, may recommend to
Board of Examiners for Programmes that:

a) the candidate repeat the unit and all of its associated assessments during the next academic session;
b) the candidate sit a supplementary examination or submit additional work before the start of the next academic session;
c) the candidate be compensated for a marginal failure if there is a compensatory performance across the whole academic profile.

5.9. The formal record of the proceedings of the Board of Examiners for Units, including recommendations or decisions, must be passed to the appropriate Board(s) of Examiners for Programmes.

6. Boards of Examiners for Programmes

6.1. The Chair of the Board of Examiners for Programmes shall normally be the Head of Department for the ‘home’ department of the programme or,
- in the case of the School of Management, one of the Associate Deans who shall be designated at the time of approving the membership of the Board;
- in the case of the Natural Sciences programmes, the Chair of the Programmes Committee;

The membership of each Board of Examiners for Programmes shall be approved by the Board of Studies at the beginning of each year and should include:
a) a representative group of internal examiners;
b) all appointed programme External Examiners (where final assessments will be considered);
c) the Director of Studies;
d) the nominated Placement Tutor, where the placement year counts towards the degree classification.

6.2 All members of the Board should declare any possible conflicts of interest.

6.3 All members of Boards of Examiners for Programmes are expected to attend their meetings (see para. 4.3 concerning approval for absence). The Chair of each Board is responsible for ensuring that sufficient academic staff are in attendance to represent the interests of all students properly, and for the observance of a quorum requirement set at 50% of the membership (rounded up), or two members in addition to the Chair, whichever is the greater, and always including at least one External Examiner where final assessments will be considered. The Chair must undertake adequate training on University Regulations and procedures in order to ensure that the Board is conducted in a fair and proper manner.

6.4 There should be sufficient meetings of the Board of Examiners for Programmes to ensure timely feedback to students on their performance at appropriate points in the academic year, as defined in QA16, Assessment, Marking and Feedback. A sub-group of the Board of Examiners for Programmes should meet in order to review the progress of students during the first semester and agree on appropriate counselling for students at risk.

6.5 Where a programme of study has substantial input from more than one Department/Faculty, one Board of Studies should be designated to receive recommendations from the Board of Examiners for Programmes.

6.6 The role of the Board of Examiners for Units may be subsumed by the Board of Examiners for
Programmes where a Board of Studies agrees that this is appropriate. This will normally apply where there is no net import or export of units from the programme(s) of study. Where this occurs, the Chair will be responsible for ensuring that the assessment of units and the progression of students are undertaken as separate items of business.

6.7 Boards of Examiners for Programmes will be responsible for determining a student’s progress or final degree classification, as appropriate, on the basis of marks finalised by the appropriate Boards of Examiners for Units and in accordance with the scheme of assessment for the programme(s) in question. The Board of Examiners for Programmes will have the discretion to take account of additional evidence in the case of candidates who achieve a borderline fail performance or candidates whose performance has been affected by individual mitigating circumstances (see also Section 8 and 11.6).

6.8 The Board of Examiners for Programmes has responsibility for the academic standards of the programmes under its authority.

6.9 The Board of Examiners for Programmes will not alter the marks agreed by a Board of Examiners for Units except in the case of error.

6.10 In the case of a student who has failed to satisfy the assessment requirements for progression to the next year, or part of their programme of study, the Board of Examiners for Programmes, having due regard to the degree of failure and the recommendations of the Board of Examiners for Units, may recommend that:
   a) the candidate be compensated for a marginal failure if there is a compensatory performance across the whole academic profile;
   b) the candidate repeat the failed unit(s) and all of the associated assessments;
   c) the candidate repeat the whole year of study, including any units for which credit has already been awarded;
   d) the candidate be required to withdraw from the programme of study.

6.11 Where a marginal failure is compensated under 6.10(a), the candidate will carry forward the actual mark achieved for the unit(s).

6.12
   a) Where a candidate on an undergraduate programme successfully retrieves failure under 6.10(b) above, credits will be awarded for the retrieved unit(s): the original mark will be recorded on the student’s transcript, and where retrieval affects a final assessment the original mark will be used in the calculation of the final degree classification;
   b) With effect from 1 June 2009, the exit summary transcript will not show marks achieved in supplementary assessment taken for the retrieval of failure, but will show a category of outcome (Pass after supplementary assessment; Condoned pass after supplementary assessment; Fail after supplementary assessment). This approach will be implemented for all students with results on SAMIS. For transcripts for students on undergraduate programmes with results not on SAMIS, with results of supplementary assessment for the retrieval of failure, the former practice of additionally recording the mark achieved at the second attempt should be retained. With effect from 1 June 2009, for students with results on SAMIS, the full transcript will show marks achieved in supplementary assessment taken for the retrieval of failure together with a category of outcome as described above;
   c) Where an undergraduate candidate successfully retrieves failure under 6.10(c) above, the marks achieved at the second attempt will be recorded on the student’s transcript and used in the calculation of the final degree classification if appropriate.
6.13

a) Where a candidate on a postgraduate programme successfully retrieves failure under 6.10(b) above, credits will be awarded for the retrieved unit(s) and a maximum mark of 40% will be awarded and used in the calculation for the determination of eligibility for the award of a Postgraduate Certificate, Postgraduate Diploma, or Masters degree with Merit or with Distinction if appropriate.

b) With effect from 1 June 2009, the exit summary transcript will not show marks achieved in supplementary assessment taken for the retrieval of failure, but will show a category of outcome (Pass after supplementary assessment; Condoned pass after supplementary assessment; Fail after supplementary assessment). This approach will be implemented for all students with results on SAMIS. For transcripts for students on postgraduate programmes with results not on SAMIS, with results of supplementary assessment for the retrieval of failure, the former practice of additionally recording the maximum mark of 40% awarded at the second attempt should be retained.

c) Where a postgraduate candidate successfully retrieves failure under 6.10(c) above, the marks achieved at the second attempt will be recorded on the student’s transcript and used in the calculation for the determination of eligibility for the award of a Postgraduate Certificate, Postgraduate Diploma, or Master’s degree with Merit or with Distinction if appropriate.

6.14 The Board of Examiners for Programmes will ensure that its recommendations are formally recorded and that these recommendations are passed to the appropriate Board of Studies.

7 Boards of Studies

7.1 Boards of Studies will be responsible for confirming all decisions relating to student progression and the conferment of awards on the basis of recommendations put forward by the Boards of Examiners for Programmes.

7.2 The Board of Studies will ensure that sufficient Boards of Examiners for Units and Boards of Examiners for Programmes are established to administer its provision effectively.

7.3 The Board of Studies will consider recommendations from Boards of Examiners for Programmes and will agree decisions on progression and the conferment of awards.

7.4 The Board of Studies should have all the marks for the candidates to be considered available at its meeting, in addition to the recommendations of the Boards of Examiners for Programmes. In the event of the recommendations not being approved the results will be referred back to the appropriate Board(s) of Examiners for Programmes for reconsideration.

7.5 If, after reference back, a Board of Studies is unable to accept the further recommendation of the Board(s) of Examiners for Programmes, it shall determine the matter but shall not without the approval of Senate come to any decisions less favourable to any student than the recommendation of the Board(s) of Examiners for Programmes.

7.6 Regulation 17 sets out the procedure whereby a student may seek a review of a Board of Studies.

7.7 If a candidate is prevented by illness or other sufficient cause from presenting for, or completing, a final examination for a Degree, Diploma or Certificate, the Senate may, upon the recommendation of the Board of Studies concerned and upon such other conditions as it shall
think fit, award a Degree (with or without Honours), Diploma or Certificate provided that the candidate shall not be placed in a class or division (ordinance 14.8). Note: The procedure for the award of an Aegrotat Degree is stated in Ordinance 14.8.

7.8 Only in exceptional circumstances, known and accepted in advance by the Board of Studies, may a final year candidate be permitted to retrieve failure in order to qualify for a classified Honours Degree (Regulation 15).

8. Mitigating Circumstances

8.1 With effect from 2 November 2009, the principles and procedures governing consideration of individual mitigating circumstances in relation to assessments are set out in Individual Mitigating Circumstances & Assessment: Principles & Procedures within and outside the New Framework for Assessment: Assessment Regulations, abbreviated as IMCA.

8.2 All students and staff requiring information about mitigating circumstances and assessment should consult the IMCA document and other associated information.

9. Scaling of Marks

9.1 To satisfy the requirement that Boards of Examiners for Units will ensure that the finalised marks for individual units are an accurate reflection of the standards achieved by the candidates (para. 5.7), the Boards may routinely analyse assessment data for skewed or unrepresentative features. Scaling should only be carried out in exceptional circumstances. Examples of such exceptional circumstances might include: the scaling of an entire unit’s results if it had not been assessed on a basis comparable to that of other units; the scaling of the results for one group taking an assessment against that of another group if the first group’s opportunity had been abnormally different (such as, a fire alarm in one examination venue but not in another where the same examination was being taken).

9.2 Scaling should be undertaken only after full consideration of a prescribed set of statistical data that could support the decision. These should include -

- a comparative review of the sets of unit marks awarded over the previous three year period (where possible). This review would normally include:
  - a) the average mark before and after the proposed group moderation with comparative data from previous years,
  - b) the standard deviation before and after the proposed group moderation with comparative data from previous years;
- a review of unit marks including averages and standard deviation awarded across the programme in the same year for that cohort of students;
- custom and practice with respect to how the Board of Examiners for Units has dealt with similar cases in previous years;
- consideration of any unusual or structural mitigating circumstances that might have contributed to a significant change to the mark distribution (e.g. a change in lecturer, particular acknowledged problems with a particular question or questions on an examination paper, recorded complaints from students about the style or delivery of a particular unit).

9.3 A decision to scale marks should apply to the whole group of students in respect of a common instance of assessment and not to a sub-set of the group.
9.4 Where a decision is taken to scale marks which contribute to the degree classification, the External examiner should be informed of the full circumstances of the case.

9.5 The consideration of all the available statistical data and the reasons for scaling should be clearly discussed at the Board of Examiners for Units. The reasons for the scaling, the statistical data and other information taken into account in the Board of Examiners for Units in reaching its decision should be fully recorded in the minutes of the Board.

9.6 A decision to scale marks should be reported to the Board of Examiners for Programmes and to the Board of Studies.

For additional procedural requirements and detail determined by the University Learning Teaching & Quality Committee, see Guidance for the scaling of marks for assessments

10 Award of Credit

10.1 Credit is gained for successful completion of a unit. This is normally defined as the attainment of an aggregate mark of 40% or more for the summative assessment of the unit. However, individual schemes of assessment may define threshold levels of achievement for individual components of the summative assessment.

10.2 Credit is also gained on successful re-assessment for a unit. Students who re-take and pass a unit gain the credit for the unit.

10.3 Credit may be awarded for failed units by compensatory performance where the Board of Examiners for Programmes determines that a satisfactory academic profile has been achieved during the academic year. A satisfactory academic profile normally requires a minimum threshold to be achieved in the unit for which credit is to be awarded. Individual schemes of assessment define the criteria for the award of credit by compensation.

10.4 Students are normally permitted only TWO attempts to complete the requirements for an individual unit.

10.5 Students are not normally required to re-take units for which they have already been awarded credit, except under the circumstances described in para 6.10 c) above.

11 Types and Classification of Undergraduate Degrees

11.1 Honours Degrees
Honours Degree class I 70 – 100%
Honours Degree class II.i 60 – 69%
Honours Degree class II.ii 50 – 59%
Honours Degree class III 40 – 49%
(i.e. an overall pass after following an honours degree and meeting any criterion set by the relevant Board(s) of Studies in respect to the extent and degree of individual failures)

11.2 Unclassified Honours Degree
Awarded to a candidate who has followed an honours degree course and (a) suffered a marginal fail overall, or (b) gained an overall pass mark but failed to meet the criterion set by the relevant Board(s) of Studies in respect of the extent and degree of individual failures.
11.3 **Ordinary Degree**
Awarded to a candidate who follows and passes a specially designated degree programme, the majority of which is assessed at Intermediate (I) level (FHEQ level 5). The candidate is required to gain an overall mark of at least 40%.

11.4 **Ordinary Degree with Merit**
Awarded to a candidate who follows and passes a specially designed degree programme, the majority of which is assessed at Intermediate (I) level (FHEQ level 5). The candidate is required to gain an overall mark of at least 70%.

11.5 **Aegrotat Degree**
Awarded to a candidate who is prevented by illness or other sufficient cause from completing a piece of assessment which contributes to the final classification.

There is no category of classification or Honours associated with this degree although the learning outcomes are normally assessed at either Honours (H) (FHEQ level 6) or Intermediate (I) level (FHEQ level 5).

This clause does not exempt a candidate from presenting a thesis where such is prescribed.

Consideration by the Board of Examiners for this type of award should be requested by the candidate and only recommended when it is the collective view of the Board of Examiners that the candidate possesses the same level of knowledge, skills and understanding as would have been demonstrated if the candidate had completed the final assessment. It is therefore implicit that the candidate will have completed a substantial proportion of the final year of study.

11.6 During consideration of the final degree classification only, where a candidate’s final percentage score falls 2% or less below any of the degree class boundaries, it will be at the discretion of the Board of Examiners for Programmes to consider raising the degree classification. In exceptional academic circumstances, where clear rules are articulated in the Scheme of Assessment, the Board of Examiners for Programmes may consider raising a classification where the final mark is beyond 2% and the candidate has achieved an appropriate academic profile (e.g. balance of papers, consideration of exit velocity). For the consideration of mitigating circumstances, refer to Section 8 of this statement.

11.7 **Exit awards**
Unless otherwise specified in approved programme regulations, and with effect from the 2014/15 academic year, exit awards of Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE) and Diploma of Higher Education (DiplHE) will be available for award from first-degree programmes. Either award will be made, as appropriate, to any student who is not eligible to receive a degree award, or is either obliged or wishes to leave prematurely, subject to meeting the relevant award requirements. The scope for a premature exit award will be based on any relevant credit accrued for units passed during the period of study on the programme. The units must be credit-bearing units, at the appropriate level or above, approved by the University of Bath, and taken either as part of the student’s degree programme or as extra-curricular credit-bearing units. Condonable fails may not be counted. Credit achieved through a placement or study abroad cannot contribute to either award, unless explicitly stated otherwise in the relevant Programme Regulations.

- The Diploma of Higher Education (Dipl HE) will be awarded to a student who has passed units worth at least 120 credits, with at least 48 credits at level 5 or higher and the rest at level 4 or higher. (Credit achieved through a placement or study abroad cannot contribute
to either award, unless explicitly stated otherwise in the relevant Programme Regulations.)

- The Certificate of Higher Education (Cert HE) will be awarded to a student who has passed units worth at least 60 credits, all at level 4 or higher. (Credit achieved through a placement or study abroad cannot contribute to either award, unless explicitly stated otherwise in the relevant Programme Regulations.)

12 Publication of Pass Lists

12.1 When the Board of Studies has approved the recommendations of the Boards of Examiners for Programmes, a list of successful candidates shall be posted on the Departmental/School notice board, a copy being sent to the Student Records and Examinations Office.

12.2 All official pass lists will be signed by the Chair of the Board of Studies prior to publication. Where provisional pass lists are published, it must be clear that they are still subject to confirmation by the Board of Studies.

12.3 Candidates who are required to sit supplementary examinations, or to undertake extra work, and candidates who have failed, will be notified individually by the Head of Department/School/ Learning Partnerships Office or a nominated deputy.

12.4 The results of supplementary examinations and assessment will be published on the authority of the Chair of the Board of Studies subject to ratification by the Board.

12.5 Marks awarded for examinations, and for all assessments which form part of the approved scheme of studies, will be disclosed to students on an individual basis for all years of assessment, in accordance with the procedures approved by Senate and as set out in QA16 Marking, Moderation and Feedback to Students.

13 Monitoring and Review

13.1 The University Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee will consider periodic reports from the Director of Academic Registry on the operation of the assessment procedures both outside and within the New Framework for Assessment: Assessment Regulations.
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| **Senate** | Minutes 10306, 11358, 11457, 11558, 12147 |
| **(New Framework for Assessment: Assessment Regulations (NFAAR))** | 9 April 2008, Minute 12740 |
| | 11 June 2008, Minute 12782 |
| | 14 April 2010, Minute 13110 |
| | 8 June 2011, Minute |
| **Individual Mitigating Circumstances & Assessment (IMCA)** | 21 October 2009 Minute 13005 |
| | 9 June 2010, Minute 13141 |
| **Chairing of Boards of Examiners for Programmes** | 9 June 2010, Minute 13144 |
| **Quality Assurance Committee** | Minutes 318, 491(c), 623(1), 665(1) |
| | 1 July 2008, Minute 857(7), (8) |
| | 3 July 2009, Minute 976(7) |
| | 29 September 2009, Minute 1009 |
| | 13 July 2010, Minute 1095(6) |
| **University Learning Teaching and Quality Committee** | 14 February 2011, Minute 67 (Chair’s Action) |
| | 13 July 2011, Minute 120 |
| | 10 July 2012, Minute 279 |
| | 6 November 2012, Minute 336 |
| | 9 July 2013 Minute 42 |
| | 8 July 2014 Minute 552 |
| **QA15** | Regulation 15 |

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate Commonality Report</td>
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<td>Postgraduate Commonality Rules</td>
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<td>New Framework for Assessment: Assessment Regulations Individual Mitigating Circumstances &amp; Assessment: Principles and Procedures within and outside NFAAR</td>
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<th><strong>QA16: Assessment, Marking and Feedback</strong></th>
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<td>QAA Quality Code Chapter B6: Assessment of students and the recognition of prior learning</td>
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