



## Quality Assurance Code of Practice

### Assessment Procedures for Taught Courses of Study

**This document is primarily intended for:**

Heads of Department/ School/ Learning Partnerships Office  
 Assistant Registrars (Faculty/School) or equivalents  
 Directors of Studies  
 Unit conveners

**First point of contact:** Assistant Registrars (Faculty/School) or equivalent

**Technical/specialist contact:** Academic Registry

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## 1 Purpose and scope

- 1.1 These assessment procedures apply to all taught courses of study, including apprenticeship courses, which lead to an award of the University of Bath.
- 1.2 The statement is intended for staff involved in the assessment process, particularly those involved in the preparation of and attending Boards of Examiners.
- 1.3 This statement should be read alongside other documentation related to assessment:
  - [Ordinance 15 Examiners and Examinations](#)
  - [QA12 External Examining \(Taught Provision\)](#)
  - [QA16 Assessment, Marking and Feedback](#)
  - [QA53 Examination and Assessment Offences](#)

- [Rule 2 – Conduct of Examinations](#)
- [Regulation 17](#) Conduct of Student Academic Appeals and Reviews
- [Regulation 15](#) Assessment of Undergraduate and Taught Postgraduate Courses
- The University's [Assessment regulations](#)

## 2 Principles

- 2.1 The University's assessment processes are designed to assure the standards of its awards, ensuring:
- fairness and consistency in the assessment and marking processes of students' work within course cohorts and between departments and, as appropriate, across time.
  - 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 the outcomes for students with individual mitigating circumstances.

## 3 Governance of assessment decisions

- 3.1 In accordance with [Ordinance 15](#), "Examinations for a Degree, Diploma or Certificate of the University, whether taken at one time or in sections, shall be the responsibility of a Board of Examiners. The Board of Examiners shall comprise the internal and External Examiners appointed for each of the subjects or groups of subjects included in the scope of the examination. In every subject or group of subjects in all final assessments (as defined by [Regulation 15](#)), there shall be at least two examiners, one at least of whom shall not be a member of the Academic Staff of the University."

- 3.2 The University has a three-tier structure for making assessment decisions:

**Boards of Examiners for Units (BEU)** are responsible for ensuring the academic standards for the units under its academic authority. The Board is responsible for determining whether students have met the learning outcomes and the marks they have achieved for those units (see section 6).

**Boards of Examiners for Courses (BEC)** are responsible for ensuring the standards of courses under their academic authority. They receive provisional unit marks from BEUs, and determine, for recommendation to the Board of Studies, the progression of students from one stage to another, and awards and their classifications, taking account of individual mitigating circumstances as it deems appropriate (see section 7).

**Boards of Studies (BoS)** consider the recommendations of the BECs and as delegated by Senate, approve decisions on student progression and the making of awards. Students' results, including unit marks, remain provisional until confirmed by the BoS with overall responsibility (see section 8).

- 3.3 Boards of Examiners and Boards of Studies collectively oversee the assessment process, and their roles are not restricted to the meetings of the respective bodies.
- 3.4 A Board of Examiners makes collective decisions with all members being full and equal, and no one member having primacy.

## 4 Assessment regulations

- 4.1 Decisions relating to student progression or the making of an award will be made in accordance with the regulations for the course. Each unit within the University's modularised academic framework has its own assessment requirements, assessed either within the unit or as part of an integrative assessment, which enable a Board of Examiners for Units to determine whether or not a candidate has achieved the intended learning outcomes. The appropriate place for the specific assessment requirements for a unit is in the relevant unit description.
- 4.2 Courses leading to a taught award of the University of Bath<sup>1</sup> are fully or partly compliant with the University's [assessment regulations](#). Course specifications identify which of the University's assessment regulations apply to each course.

Where exemptions to aspects of the University's assessment regulations have been agreed for a course, these are appended to the relevant assessment regulation or set out in separate course regulations and also detailed in the course specification.

- 4.3 A small number of postgraduate taught courses have been granted a full exemption from the University's assessment regulations. These courses comply with [Regulation 15](#) unless exemptions have been granted. Regulations for these courses are appended to the relevant assessment regulation or set out in separate course regulations and detailed in the course specification.
- 4.4 Exit awards or an aegrotat award may be available to students who are not eligible for a full award. The requirements for exit awards are set out in the relevant course regulations. The procedures for considering aegrotat awards are set out in the relevant course regulations and/or in paragraphs 14.8 and 14.9 of the University's Ordinances.
- 4.5 University Regulations (para. 15.2) define assessments as final assessments, and/or progress assessments as follows:

**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). For an integrated apprenticeship, Student Apprentices are required to pass the End Point Assessment (EPA) to qualify for a University award and the apprenticeship award.

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<sup>1</sup> With the exception, where agreed, of validated provision (see [QA20](#) Collaborative Provision)

**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 course of study, to the next.

Where summative assessment on a course both contributes to the final award and enables the student to progress from one stage of the course to another it is categorised as both progress and final.

## **5 Administration of Boards of Examiners**

### **5.1 Establishing boards**

- 5.1.1 The BoS will ensure that sufficient BEUs and BECs are established to administer its provision effectively.
- 5.1.2 Where a course of study has substantial input from departments in more than one faculty, one BoS should be designated to receive recommendations from the BEC.
- 5.1.3 The role of the BEU may be subsumed by the BEC where a BoS agrees that this is appropriate. This will normally apply where there is no net import or export of units from the course(s) of study (i.e., where units under consideration are exclusive to that course and not taught on any other courses). Where this occurs, the Chair will be responsible for ensuring that the determination of unit marks and the determining of progression and / award decisions are undertaken as separate items of business.
- 5.1.4 The dates for all BECs and BoSs will be published at the beginning of the academic year. External Examiners should also receive notification of the dates at the beginning of the academic year. The dates of all BEUs should be notified to External Examiners as soon as they are agreed.
- 5.1.5 There should be sufficient meetings of BECs and sub-groups of BECs 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 BEC should meet in order to review the progress of students after the first semester and agree on appropriate counselling for students at risk.
- 5.1.6 The BoS will receive the membership of each BEU (see paragraph 6.1) and approve the membership of each BEC (see paragraph 7.1) at the beginning of the academic year.

### **5.2 Attendance**

- 5.2.1 All internal members of BEUs and BECs are expected to attend their meetings. Approval of absence (in, for example, cases of illness, bereavement, or serious disruption of personal life) from either a BEU or a BEC must be sought from the respective Chair. Internal members of Boards should take all reasonable steps to ensure that attendance at a Board takes the precedence it is due above other academic activities, such that the need to seek approval for absence will be avoided. In approving such requests, the respective Chair should take account of

the quorum requirements (paras 6.2 and 7.2) and whether there will be sufficient internal members in attendance to represent the interests of all students properly.

- 5.2.2 Any internal 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.

### 5.3 Key Roles

- 5.3.1 **Chair:** see 6.1 and 7.1.

- 5.3.2 **Secretary:** The Chair must nominate a secretary/officer to BEUs and BECs to ensure that the necessary administrative support and procedural guidance is provided. The Dean must approve this nomination.

- 5.3.3 **Independent Observers:** an observer from the University who is independent of the Department/School may attend identified BEUs and/or BECs. The independent observer will normally be an Assistant Registrar (Faculties/School) or equivalent from outside the Faculty/School/LPO, or, if an Assistant Registrar or equivalent is not available, an appropriate member of Academic Registry.

- 5.3.4 A risk-based approach will be taken in determining attendance of Independent Observers at any BEUs or BECs. Potential risk factors may include, for example where complex cases will be considered, those Boards that have a new Chair or following the introduction of changes to relevant University regulations or processes. At the discretion of the Dean, or as agreed in consultation with Academic Registry, random sampling of Boards for observation or spot checks may also be implemented.

- 5.3.5 The role of an independent observer is to observe the Board of Examiners and report on practice to the Faculty/School/LPO (normally to the Assistant Registrar (Faculty/School)). Independent observers are not expected to provide advice on regulatory matters (further information on this role and a template for reporting are provided in Appendix 1).

- 5.3.6 All Chairs and Secretaries must undertake training on procedural matters, including the interpretation and application of University regulations. It is the responsibility of the Head of Department/School/LPO to ensure that Chairs and Secretaries receive adequate training. Agenda and minute templates with guidance for secretaries on the servicing of Boards of Examiners are provided in Appendix 2.

- 5.3.7 Training and support on assessment regulations and procedures are chiefly provided by the Faculty/School/LPO and Academic Registry.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Information and resources for staff on preparing to take part in an examination board can be found at: <https://www.bath.ac.uk/guides/preparing-to-take-part-in-an-examination-board/>

## 6 Boards of Examiners for Units

### 6.1 Membership

BEUs will be constituted as follows:

**Chair:** will be the Head of Department/School/LPO or nominated member of staff. If the latter, this will not normally be the Director of Studies.

**Internal examiners:** membership will 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:** External Examiners will be appointed to the membership of appropriate BEUs that will consider final assessments, such that at least one will be a member of each Board. Where more than one External Examiner could be appointed, they may be appointed to BEUs that will most benefit from their particular area(s) of expertise (for example, by subject/ discipline).

### 6.2 Attendance and quoracy

- 6.2.1 The Chair of each BEU will be responsible for ensuring that sufficient academic staff are in attendance to carry out its responsibilities effectively, and for the observance of a quorum. The quorum requirement is set at 50% of the membership (rounded up) and excluding External Examiners, or two internal examiners in addition to the Chair, whichever is the greater. Tables setting out the attendance requirements for all Boards of Examiners are provided in Appendix 3.
- 6.2.2 External Examiners are not expected to attend BEU meetings but may attend if they wish to do so. For apprenticeship courses, External Examiners for EPA are also not required to attend the BEU where EPA is discussed but may attend if they wish to do so.
- 6.2.3 All members of the Board should declare any possible conflicts of interest.

### 6.3 Role of the BEU

- 6.3.1 The BEU will be responsible for ensuring the academic standards of the units under its academic authority. Its responsibilities include:
  - a) determining the marks gained by students taking the units under its academic authority
  - b) ensuring that the finalised marks for individual units are an accurate reflection of the standards achieved by the candidates.
  - c) ensuring 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
  - d) ensuring that the summative assessments for a unit provide an appropriate level of academic challenge in testing that the learning outcomes have been achieved
  - e) the overview of the formative assessments for 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.

6.3.2 The responsibilities of the BEU extend beyond its meetings. To fulfil their responsibilities as set out in 6.3.1, BEUs:

- ensure that exam and coursework questions and other assessment tasks are set at an appropriate level and enable students to demonstrate that they have met the learning outcomes of the unit (as set out in [QA16](#))
- ensure that an appropriate marking scheme and assessment criteria are in place and that scripts have been marked according to these (as set out in [QA16](#))
- confirm that marking and moderation have been undertaken in line with [QA16](#)
- note assessment offences
- take into consideration any unusual circumstances which might have affected the outcome of the assessment
- comment on the effectiveness of the overall design of the assessment and the assessment strategy on the unit, including formative assessment, in producing results which reflect the standards demonstrated by the students
- analyse unit marks for any skewed or unrepresentative features.

#### **6.4 Preparation for the meeting**

6.4.1 An agenda should be sent to all members of the Board (and those in attendance) seven days in advance of the BEU meeting. An agenda template for BEU meetings is provided in Appendix 2.

6.4.2 Good preparation will ensure the smooth running of the BEU meeting. The Chair, Secretary and Director of Studies should meet in advance to consider any potential issues. Together with the Unit Convenor, scenarios should be prepared for those units with marks that may require scaling.

#### **6.5 Consideration of results**

6.5.1 To reach its decisions both the marks of individual students (for every component of assessment) and statistical data for each unit must be available for consideration by the BEU. The BEU reports (generated directly from the data held in SAMIS) will normally be used for this purpose. The data might be projected during the meeting and/or provided in paper format. Where results are projected sufficient paper copies should be made available for reference during the meeting, although it is not necessary to provide paper copies for every member of the BEU.

6.5.2 For the purposes of monitoring standards (see section 8.5), the University has designated typical and atypical ranges of mean unit marks as follows:

##### 40% pass mark units

Typical range: 50.00% to 69.99%

Atypical range: 0% to 49.99% and 70.00% to 100%

##### 50% pass mark units

Typical range: 55.00% to 69.99%

Atypical range: 0% to 54.99% and 70.00% to 100%



- 6.5.3 The Board will be provided with statistical data for each unit (including the mean unit mark, standard deviation, upper/lower quartiles, median and minimum and maximum marks) and will routinely analyse the data for skewed or unrepresentative features, taking into consideration the mean marks ranges specified in 6.5.2.
- 6.5.4 There is no requirement that mean unit marks fall within the typical range, since the BEU must ensure that the finalised marks for individual units are an accurate reflection of the standards achieved by the candidates. However, where a unit mean mark falls outside the typical range the Board must ensure that any decision not to take action (such as scaling) should be reported in the minutes with an appropriate explanation.
- 6.5.5 Where the Board considers that the marks (regardless of whether the mean falls within the typical or atypical ranges) are not an accurate reflection of the standards achieved by the students, the Board may consider taking remedial action such as scaling (see section 6.6).
- 6.5.6 Information on units with marks that are scaled or where the mean is in the atypical range will be reported to Boards of Studies and Education, Quality and Standards Committee annually (see section 8.5).

## **6.6 Addressing problems at the BEU (scaling and Structural Mitigating Circumstances (SMCs))**

- 6.6.1 When problems occur with assessment such that the recorded marks do not reflect the standards achieved by the students the Board may decide to scale the unit marks. Scaling, an adjustment of the unit marks in order to accurately reflect the standard of the candidates, 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, due to a structural problem, 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).
- 6.6.2 Scaling should be undertaken only after full consideration of a prescribed set of statistical data that could support the decision. These data should include:
- a. A comparative review of the sets of unit marks awarded over the previous three-year period (where possible). This review would normally include:
    - The average mark before and after the proposed group moderation with comparative data from previous years,
    - The standard deviation before and after the proposed group moderation with comparative data from previous years.
  - b. A review of unit marks including averages and standard deviation awarded across the course in the same year for that cohort of students.

- c. Custom and practice with respect to how the BEU has dealt with similar cases in previous years.
- d. 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).

- 6.6.3 The aim of scaling is not to reduce all unit marks to match a typical range. The BEU should take factors into consideration which might account for the average mark for a unit, for instance a small cohort, an option being taken by students outside the course, an exceptionally strong or weak cohort. If something were to go wrong with one component of the assessment for a unit, but the rest was valid and those results could be relied upon alone, the Board of Examiners for Units would consider how best to judge the standards of performances achieved on the basis of the good evidence available.
- 6.6.4 Where a decision is taken to scale the marks of students affected by abnormal assessment circumstances, the scaling must be applied to all students so affected. Such a group may be a sub-set of the whole unit cohort if other students were not affected by the abnormal assessment circumstances.
- 6.6.5 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, provided with any relevant paperwork and invited to comment on the proposed method for scaling. Scaled marks that contribute to the degree classification will not normally be determined by the BEU without the involvement of the External Examiner.
- 6.6.6 The consideration of all the available statistical data and the reasons for scaling should be clearly discussed at the BEU. The reasons for the scaling, the statistical data and other information taken into account in the BEU in reaching its decision should be fully recorded in the minutes of the Board, together with the view of the External Examiner.
- 6.6.7 A decision to scale marks should be reported to the BEC and to the BoS.
- 6.6.8 Further guidance on scaling including appropriate methods is provided in Appendix 4.
- 6.6.9 Normally, if unusual or structural mitigating circumstances (as set out in 6.6.2(d)) contribute to a significant change in the mark distribution, the BEU will take measures, for example scaling the unit marks, to ensure that the final marks reflect the standards achieved by the students. In very rare circumstances, where it is not possible for the BEU to resolve a structural problem, the process and guidance in Appendix 4 should be followed.
- 6.6.10 All affected students will be informed about instances of scaling according to the principles set out in Appendix 4.

## 6.7 The role of the External Examiner on BEUs

- 6.7.1 As full members of BEUs considering final assessments, External Examiners must be involved in agreeing the marks for units. This includes consultation on the setting of, and assessment criteria and/or model answers for, all examination questions and, where they make a significant contribution, coursework questions and other assessment tasks (see section 7, [QA12](#), for the role of External Examiners in assessment). Where there are no unusual circumstances (e.g., scaling), their input on assessed work and unit marks may be deferred until the meeting of the relevant BEC. Normally, the views of the External Examiner will be taken into consideration at the BEC for finalist students. Where the BEU considers that the marks are not an accurate reflection of standards achieved by the students and therefore proposes taking remedial action (such as scaling), the External Examiner should be consulted (for marks contributing to the degree classification) and their input received before the marks are determined (see paras 6.6.5 and 6.6.6 above).

## 6.8 Recording of the outcomes

- 6.8.1 The proceedings of the BEU and its recommendations and/or decisions, including the rationale for decisions, will be formally recorded (a template for BEU minutes is provided in Appendix 2). The minutes must be signed by the Chair. The views of those unable to attend the meeting should be recorded as appropriate. The decisions of the Board should be made available, on request, to all members who were unable to attend the meeting.
- 6.8.2 The Secretary to the BEU will forward unit marks to the appropriate BEC(s), including the formal record of the proceedings of the BEU and its recommendations and/or decisions.
- 6.8.3 The Chair should remind members of the BEU that the decisions and discussions of the Board are confidential and unit marks (provisional or final) should not be revealed to students before they are able to view them on SAMIS.

## 7 Boards of Examiners for Courses

### 7.1 Membership

BECs will be constituted as follows:

**The Chair** of the BEC will normally be the Head of Department for the 'home' department of the course or, in the case of the School of Management, one of the Directors of Teaching who will be designated at the time of approving the membership of the Board or, in the case of the Natural Sciences courses, the Chair of the Courses Committee. For partner college courses managed by the LPO, the Chair will be the Head of the LPO or a suitable person nominated by the Head of LPO.

**Internal examiners:** a representative group of internal examiners.

**External Examiners:** all External Examiners appointed to the course (where final assessments will be considered). For apprenticeship courses, External Examiners for the period of on programme training and assessment and EPA are required to attend.

### **The Director of Studies**

**The nominated Placement Tutor**, where the placement year counts towards the degree classification.

## **7.2 Attendance and quoracy**

7.2.1 The Chair of each BEC is responsible for ensuring that sufficient academic staff are in attendance to carry out its responsibilities effectively, and for the observance of a quorum. The requirement is 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 awards are to be considered (with the exception of those cases set out in paragraphs 7.7.3 and 7.7.12-7.7.16). External Examiners are not required to attend BECs only considering the progression of students unless the course is new and therefore there is no finalist BEC (see para 7.7.3). External Examiners for the period on-programme training and assessment of apprenticeship courses are also not expected to attend BECs considering the progression of Student Apprentices only (where awards will not be considered) unless confirmation of the apprentice's achievement of the academic requirements at Gateway prior to progressing to EPA is being considered. Tables setting out the attendance requirements for all Boards of Examiners are provided in Appendix 3.

7.2.2 Members of the Board should declare any possible conflicts of interest.

## **7.3 Role of the BEC**

7.3.1 The BEC has responsibility for the academic standards of the courses under its authority.

7.3.2 BECs are responsible for determining progression and the making of awards in respect of students registered on courses of study under their academic authority and recommending such decisions to the Board of Studies for approval. They take account of individual mitigating circumstances, specific rules of which are outlined in our assessment regulations or in the Individual Mitigating Circumstances and Assessment document. See [Assessment Regulations](#) for details of the IMC procedures that apply to specific courses.

7.3.3 BECs determine a student's progression or final degree classification, as appropriate, based on marks determined by the appropriate BEUs and in accordance with the scheme of assessment for the course(s) in question (normally following the requirements of the relevant NFAAR for the type of course).

7.3.4 The meeting of the finalist BEC, where the External Examiner is present, should include a discussion of the course overall, including standards and future developments.

## **7.4 Preparation for the meeting**

- 7.4.1 An agenda should be sent to all members of the Board and those in attendance seven days in advance of the BEC meeting. The standard agenda for BECs is provided in Appendix 2.
- 7.4.2 Good preparation will ensure the smooth running of the meeting of the BEC. The Chair, Secretary and Director of Studies should meet in advance to consider any potential issues. Appropriate consideration should be given to potential outcomes for students with IMCs.

## **7.5 Consideration of results**

- 7.5.1 To reach its decisions the following should be available for consideration by the BEC:
- minutes from the relevant BEU meeting(s).
  - unit marks for all students for the stage of the course under consideration.
  - statistical data for the units under consideration; and
  - overall course and/or stage averages for each student in the cohort being considered.
- 7.5.2 BEC reports generated directly from the data held in SAMIS will be used for this purpose.
- 7.5.3 The data may be projected during the meeting and/or provided in paper format. Where results are projected sufficient paper copies should be made available for reference during the meeting, although it is not necessary to provide paper copies for every member of the BEC. For the purposes of projection, summary reports might be used displaying the course outcome (progression or final result but not showing unit marks) for each student who is expected to:
- progress to the next stage of the course; or
  - graduate or
  - undertake reassessment in order to progress/graduate.

All unit marks must be displayed for students with all other possible outcomes.

- 7.5.5 The BEC will not alter the unit marks agreed by a BEU except in the case of error. If, in exceptional circumstances, for instance following the input of an External Examiner, the BEC concludes that the marks agreed by the BEU may not be an accurate reflection of standards, the BEU should be reconvened.

## **7.6 Consideration of students with Individual Mitigating Circumstances (IMCs)**

- 7.6.1 Where an IMC panel has identified that a student has significant IMCs which have impacted on their performance, a BEC, within the set/established parameters, will use its discretion to determine the progression or award outcome. Appropriate consideration should be given to each case, where necessary, using the tools provided to assist the Board in its deliberations.

## 7.7 The role of the External Examiner(s) at a BEC

- 7.7.1 Normally all External Examiners will attend the finalist BEC of the course to which they have been appointed. Exemptions from this requirement (see paras 7.7.2 and 7.7.5) must be approved by the Dean, or the Chair of Education, Quality and Standards Committee (EQSC) as appropriate. Where there is more than one External Examiner on a course, with responsibility for different units, they are expected collectively to comment on and provide an effective overview of the course.
- 7.7.2 At least one External Examiner must be in attendance at a BEC considering making an award, for quoracy to be achieved (for routine exceptions to this requirement see paragraphs 7.7.3 and 7.7.12-7.7.16). In circumstances where a BEC is considering more than one course, an External Examiner for each course must be in attendance. Any exemptions from this requirement must be approved by the Chair of EQSC.
- 7.7.3 On a new course, where there is no finalist BEC, External Examiners will be expected to attend the BEC considering the progression of students taking final/progress assessments.
- 7.7.4 On multidisciplinary courses (where units are drawn from several departments) the External Examiner(s) appointed to the course is expected to represent the interests of the course as a whole, receiving input from other External Examiners where necessary.
- 7.7.5 An External Examiner who is unable to attend the finalist BEC meeting of the course to which they have been appointed, must have agreed their non-attendance in advance with the Head of Department/School/LPO concerned. Alternative arrangements for their involvement in the Board should be approved by the relevant Dean on the recommendation of a Head of Department/School/LPO and recorded in the minutes of the BoS. The arrangements thus approved must ensure:
- Full provision of documentation to the External Examiner(s) in question in a timely manner.
  - Their written comments on the course (as specified in para 7.7.9) must be provided.
  - The formal involvement of the External Examiner(s) in question in the decision-making of the Board and in the record of its decisions.
- 7.7.6 Prior to attending the meeting of the BEC External Examiners must have had an opportunity to view assessed work on all units, as appropriate (see [QA12](#) para 7.4 and 7.8), on the course, which contribute to the final award. External Examiners are only expected to review and comment on those units which they have been assigned. The approach to sampling and a representative sample should be agreed with the External Examiner as set out in [QA12](#) paragraph 7.8.
- 7.7.7 In determining the approach to sampling the needs of the discipline should be taken into consideration. External Examiners must be given sufficient time to

review assessed work to form an opinion. Samples might be sent to the external well in advance or provided to them for the BEC meeting.

7.7.8 External Examiners must be provided with a complete set of individual student marks and statistics for each unit.

7.7.9 The role of the External Examiner is described in full in [QA12](#) External Examining (taught provision). At the BEC meeting External Examiners will be expected to comment on the quality and standards of the course paying attention to:

- the quality and validity of assessments at the design stage, including the quality of assessment criteria and the approval of questions
- the quality of the marking and grading processes, including the quality of marking, moderation/double marking, scaling, etc
- the application of relevant assessment regulations
- the fairness of examining, and examination board processes including the application of the IMCA
- the consistent use of marking boundaries for units and helping Departments/the School to calibrate their marking
- verifying that the standards achieved by students are appropriate to the level of study
- confirming that the academic standards sought and achieved are comparable with other universities in the United Kingdom
- the structure, coherence and content of the course and its recent development
- opportunities for enhancement.

7.7.10 External Examiners should be given the opportunity to meet with teaching staff and, where possible, students. Once decisions regarding awards have been made, the Chair will normally invite academic staff, who are not members of the Board, to join a general discussion of the course with the External Examiner.

7.7.11 Normally External Examiners base their judgements on samples of work and they are not expected to view the work of every student. Therefore, if the External Examiner has already had the opportunity to comment on the standard of assessed work relating to a particular cohort, the external is not normally expected to view the work of, or attend the BEC for, small numbers of individual students in that cohort who for various reasons (extensions, undertaking supplementary assessment) have been delayed in their progression through the course.

#### 7.7.12 **External Examiner input in generic undergraduate exit awards**

External Examiners are not expected to be involved in the assessment of first year (NFAAR-UG Part 1) work or extra-curricular units contributing to the CertHE and DiplHE as it is inferred from their endorsement of final assessments relating to the full award that standards on all units contributing to the exit awards are appropriate.

The award of CertHE or DiplHE may be recommended to the BoS without an External Examiner present. External Examiners are not expected to look at the work of individual students being considered for a CertHE or DiplHE but, with the exception of first year work and extra-curricular units, they must have had the

opportunity to comment on assessed work (across the cohort) associated with the units that make up the CertHE or DiplHE. This means that normally exit awards will be made at or following Semester 2 BECs.

#### **7.7.13 External Examiner input in supplementary assessment**

External Examiners are not expected to be present at, or to have input in, BEUs/BECs for supplementary assessments, whether awards are to be considered. This is on the basis that the external would have had an opportunity to judge standards earlier in the cycle (e.g., seeing most of a student's performance in June/July and then agreeing an award after the taking of a supplementary Designated Essential Unit in late August).

#### **7.7.14 External Examiner input in postgraduate exit awards**

For a postgraduate exit award to be made External Examiners must have had the opportunity to review assessed work (across the cohort) associated with the units which contribute to the exit award. However, it is not necessary for them to review the work of individual students being considered for an exit award or to be present at the BEC where the award is considered. Normally exit awards will be made at the final BEC for the course where the External Examiner is present.

7.7.15 On their appointment, External Examiners will be informed of the University's approach to their involvement in supplementary assessment and the consideration of exit awards. If they would like greater involvement than is proposed, then they can inform the Head of Department of this.

### **7.8 Recording of the outcomes**

7.8.1 The proceedings of the BEC and its recommendations should be formally recorded (a template for BEC minutes is provided in Appendix 2). The Chair must sign the minutes of the meeting before they are submitted to the BoS. The views of those unable to attend the meeting should be recorded as appropriate. The decisions of the Board should be made available, on request, to all members who were unable to attend the meeting.

7.8.2 The recommendations (the minutes and a refreshed BEC report showing the final decisions of the BEC) of the BEC should be passed to the appropriate BoS.

7.8.3 The Chair should remind members of the BEC that the decisions and discussions of the Board are confidential, and progression or award decisions should not be revealed to students before they are able to view them on SAMIS.

## **8 Boards of Studies**

### **8.1 Role of Board of Studies**

8.1.1 A BoS is responsible for confirming all decisions relating to student progression and the making of awards on the basis of recommendations put forward by its constituent BECs.

8.1.2 The membership and attendance requirements of a BoS are set out in its standing orders.



## **8.2 Consideration of results**

- 8.2.1 A BoS will consider the recommendations of the BEC and will approve decisions on progression and making of awards by the authority of Senate.
- 8.2.2 A BoS will not normally approve any recommendation to require a student to withdraw from the University at the end of the first semester unless they are a postgraduate taught student who has failed to meet the persistent generic rules for postgraduate taught courses (as described in the relevant assessment regulations) and are therefore unable to continue their course.
- 8.2.3 The BoS should have all the unit marks for the academic stage under consideration available at its meeting, in addition to the recommendations of the BECs.
- 8.2.4 In the event of the recommendations not being approved the results will be referred to the appropriate BEC(s) for reconsideration. If, after reference back, a BoS is unable to accept the further recommendation of the Board(s) of Examiners for Courses, it will determine the matter but will not without the approval of Senate come to any decisions less favourable to any student than the recommendation of the BEC.
- 8.2.5 The Chair of the BoS will sign the official record of the results for those students under consideration, prior to the publication of the final results as recorded on SAMIS.

## **8.3 Student academic appeals**

- 8.3.1 A student may appeal against a BoS's decision on any of the grounds and according to the procedures given in Regulation 17. BoSs will also be responsible for the consideration of student academic appeals in accordance with the procedures outlined in Regulation 17.

## **8.4 Aegrotat awards**

- 8.4.1 If a candidate is prevented by death, illness or other sufficient cause from presenting for, or completing, a final assessment for the Degree, Diploma or Certificate, Senate may, upon the recommendation of the BoS concerned and upon such other conditions as it shall think fit, confer the award of an Aegrotat Degree (with or without Honours), Diploma or Certificate but may not place the candidate in a class or division, in accordance with the procedures for the award of an Aegrotat Degree stated in Ordinances 14.8 and 14.9.

## **8.5 Monitoring of standards**

- 8.5.1 BoSs are responsible for the monitoring of standards on all courses under their academic authority.
- 8.5.2 Once a year BoSs are expected to report to Education, Quality and Standards Committee on units which had mean marks in the atypical range (see para 6.5.2)

or were scaled in the previous examination period. The report will include the following information:

- a) units with marks that were scaled including the mean mark before and after scaling, the reason for scaling, and whether marks on the unit have been scaled or whether units had mean marks in the atypical range in the last three years.
- b) units in the atypical range with marks that were not scaled together with the mean mark for the unit, the reason for not taking any action, and whether the units under consideration have had mean marks in the atypical range (or were scaled) in the last three years.

8.5.3 The reports specified in 8.5.2 will be made available to the student academic representatives on the BoS.

## 9 Publication of results

- 9.1 Once a BoS has approved the recommendations of the BECs, Academic Registry will, on a specified date, make the progression / award decisions recorded on SAMIS available to students.
- 9.2 Students who are required to sit supplementary examinations, or to undertake extra work, and students who have failed, will be notified individually by the Head of Department/ School/LPO or a nominated deputy.
- 9.3 The results of supplementary examinations and assessment will be published on the authority of the Chair of the BoS subject to ratification by the Board.
- 9.4 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 Assessment, Marking and Feedback](#).

## 10 Monitoring of processes

- 10.1 BoSs will be expected to report annually to Education, Quality and Standards Committee on the operation of Boards of Examiners.

## Statement Details

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	<i>New Framework for Assessment: Assessment Regulations (NFAAR)</i> 9 April 2008, Minute 12740 11 June 2008, Minute12782

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	<i>Individual Mitigating Circumstances &amp; Assessment (IMCA)</i> 21 October 2009 Minute 13005 9 June 2010, Minute 13141
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<b>Related Documentation:</b>	<a href="#">Regulation 15</a> <a href="#">Assessment regulations</a> <a href="#">QA12 External Examining (Taught Provision)</a> <a href="#">QA16 Assessment, Marking and Feedback</a> <a href="#">QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education</a>
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