



Quality Assurance Code of Practice

Assessment Procedures for Taught Programmes 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

Queries:

First point of contact

- Assistant Registrars (Faculty/School) or equivalent

Technical/specialist contact:

- Academic Registry

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- QA35 [Appendix 1](#) Role of the independent observer (IO); [Template](#) for IO reports
- QA35 [Appendix 2](#) Agenda and minute templates and guidance (Templates 1 – 6)
- QA35 [Appendix 3](#) Attendance tables
- QA35 [Appendix 4](#) Guidance on addressing problems with assessment (including scaling and SMCs)

1 Purpose and scope

- 1.1 These assessment procedures apply to all taught programmes of study leading 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](#)
 - [QA28 Conduct of Examinations](#)
 - [QA53 Examination and Assessment Offences](#)
 - [Regulation 17 Conduct of Student Academic Appeals and Reviews](#)
 - [Regulation 15](#) Assessment of Undergraduate and Taught Postgraduate Programmes and [New Framework for Assessment supplements](#) to University 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 programme 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 Programmes (BEP) are responsible for ensuring the standards of programmes 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 BEPs 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 programme. Most programmes are compliant with the University’s common assessment framework, [The New Framework for Assessment \(NFA\)](#). 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 Undergraduate, foundation degree and honours years, and continuing professional development programmes leading to an award of the University of Bath¹ are fully or partly compliant with the requirements of the NFA:

[New Framework for Assessment: Assessment Regulations: Phase 1 for first-degree programmes \(NFAAR-UG\)](#)

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

[New Framework for Assessment: Assessment Regulations: Phases 4 & 5 for Foundation degree programmes \(NFAAR-FD\)](#)

[New Framework for Assessment: Assessment Regulations: Phase 4 for Honours Year programmes \(NFAAR-HY\)](#)

[New Framework for Assessment: Assessment Regulations: Phases 4 for Continuing Professional Development \(CPD\) framework programmes \(NFAAR-CPD\)](#)

[The New Framework for Assessment: Assessment Regulations for CPD through Online Provision \(NFAAR-PGOLC\)](#)

Where exemptions to aspects of NFAAR have been agreed these are described in Appendix 10 of the relevant NFAAR documentation and set out in full in the programme's own regulations (and summarized in the programme specification).

- 4.3 Most of the University's postgraduate taught programmes are fully or partly compliant with [New Framework for Assessment: Assessment Regulations: Phases 2 & 3 for postgraduate taught programmes \(NFAAR-PGT\)](#) or with [NFAAR-CPD](#) or [New Framework for Assessment: Assessment Regulations for CPD through Online Provision \(NFAAR-PGOLC\)](#). A small number of programmes have been granted a full exemption from the requirements of the NFAAR-PGT or NFAAR-CPD. These programmes comply with [Regulation 15](#) and, unless exemptions have been granted. Full or partial exemptions to the NFAAR-PGT are described in Appendix 10 of NFAAR-PGT and NFAAR-CPD documentation and set out in full in the programme regulations.
- 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 programme regulations and/or NFAAR. The procedures for considering aegrotat awards are set out in NFAAR documentation and 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).

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.

Progress only assessment normally applies to summative assessment in the first year of an undergraduate programme (Part 1 of NFAAR-UG).

Final assessment normally applies to summative assessment from the second year onwards (Parts 2 and 3 of NFAAR-UG) on an undergraduate programme; all summative assessment on a Foundation Degree or Honours year; and all summative assessment on a postgraduate programme.

Where summative assessment on a programme both contributes to the final award and enables the student to progress from one stage of the programme 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 BEPs are established to administer its provision effectively.
- 5.1.2 Where a programme of study has substantial input from departments in more than one faculty, one BoS should be designated to receive recommendations from the BEP.
- 5.1.3 The role of the BEU may be subsumed by the BEP where a BoS 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 (ie where units under consideration are exclusive to that programme and not taught on any other programmes). 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 BEPs 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 BEPs and sub-groups of BEPs 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 BEP 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 BEP (see paragraph 7.1) at the beginning of the academic year.

5.2 Attendance

- 5.2.1 All internal members of BEUs and BEPs 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 BEP 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 BEPs to ensure that the necessary administrative support and procedural guidance is provided. The Dean must approve this nomination.
- 5.3.3 **Independent Observers:** In accordance with a schedule established by the Dean, or as agreed in consultation with Academic Registry, the Chair should ensure that an observer

from the University who is independent of the Department/School will be in attendance at identified BEUs and/or BEPs. 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, a member of Academic Registry.

- 5.3.4 A risk-based approach will be taken in determining each schedule of observations. An independent observer must attend any BEUs or BEPs where potential risk factors have been identified, for example where complex cases will be considered. Observations in a given year would normally include those Boards that have a new Chair. A broader sample of observations would also normally be instigated 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 the 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). The reports of independent observers will form the basis of an annual evaluation of the operation of Boards of Examiners (see para 10.1).
- 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 Independent Observers are also expected to undertake training appropriate to the role.
- 5.3.8 Training and support on assessment regulations and procedures are chiefly provided by the Faculty/School/LPO and Academic Registry.²

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).

² 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/>

6.2 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.
- 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:
- determining the marks gained by students taking the units under its academic authority
 - ensuring that the finalised marks for individual units are an accurate reflection of the standards achieved by the candidates;
 - 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
 - ensuring that the summative assessments for a unit provide an appropriate level of academic challenge in testing that the learning outcomes have been achieved
 - 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 such as the independent observer) 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:

Typical range: 50.00% to 69.99%

Atypical range: 0% to 49.99% 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 University Learning, Teaching and Quality 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 programme 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 programme, 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 BEP 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 BEP. Normally, the views of the External Examiner will be taken into consideration at the BEP 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 BEP(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 Programmes

7.1 Membership

BEPs will be constituted as follows:

The Chair of the BEP will 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 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 programmes, the Chair of the Programmes Committee. For partner college programmes 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 programme (where final assessments will be considered).

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 BEP 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 BEPs only considering the progression of students unless the programme is new and therefore there is no finalist BEP (see para 7.7.3). 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 BEP

- 7.3.1 The BEP has responsibility for the academic standards of the programmes under its authority.
- 7.3.2 BEPs are responsible for determining progression and the making of awards in respect of students registered on programmes of study under their academic authority, and recommending such decisions to the Board of Studies for approval. They take account of individual mitigating circumstances in accordance with the provisions referenced in [Individual Mitigating Circumstances & Assessment: Principles & Procedures within & outside the New Framework for Assessment: Assessment Regulations](#) (IMCA).
- 7.3.3 BEPs determine a student's progression or final degree classification, as appropriate, on the basis of marks determined by the appropriate BEUs and in accordance with the scheme of assessment for the programme(s) in question (normally following the requirements of the relevant NFAAR for the type of programme).
- 7.3.4 The meeting of the finalist BEP, where the External Examiner is present, should include a discussion of the programme 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 (such as the independent observer) seven days in advance of the BEP meeting. The standard agenda for BEPs is provided in Appendix 2.
- 7.4.2 Good preparation will ensure the smooth running of the meeting of the BEP. 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 BEP:
- minutes from the relevant BEU meeting(s);
 - unit marks for all students for the stage of the programme under consideration;
 - statistical data for the units under consideration; and

- overall programme and/or stage averages for each student in the cohort being considered.

7.5.2 BEP 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 BEP. For the purposes of projection, summary reports might be used displaying the programme outcome (progression or final result but not showing unit marks) for each student who is expected to:

- progress to the next stage of the programme; 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 BEP 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 BEP 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 BEP, within the parameters set/established by the [IMCA](#), 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 BEP

7.7.1 Normally all External Examiners will attend in person the finalist BEP of the programme 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 University Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee (ULTQC) as appropriate. Where there is more than one External Examiner on a programme, with responsibility for different units, they are expected collectively to comment on and provide an effective overview of the programme.

7.7.2 At least one External Examiner must be in attendance in person at a BEP 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 BEP is considering more than one programme, an External Examiner for each programme must be in attendance. Any exemptions from this requirement must be approved by the Chair of ULTQC.

7.7.3 On a new programme, where there is no finalist BEP, External Examiners will be expected to attend the BEP considering the progression of students taking final/progress assessments.

7.7.4 On multidisciplinary programmes (where units are drawn from a number of departments) the External Examiner(s) appointed to the programme is expected to represent the interests of the programme as a whole, receiving input from other External Examiners where necessary.

- 7.7.5 An External Examiner who is unable to attend in person the finalist BEP meeting of the programme 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.
 - Contemporaneous remote involvement in the meeting of the Board (eg, through the use of a video or audio link), or where this is not possible, their written comments on the programme (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 BEP 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 programme, 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 when they visit the University for the BEP 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 BEP meeting External Examiners will be expected to comment on the quality and standards of the programme 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 programme and its recent development
 - opportunities for enhancement.
- 7.7.10 During their visit, 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 programme with the External Examiner.

7.7.11 If assessed work relating to the progression of non-final year students taking final assessments is not available at the visit of the External Examiner, a sample should be agreed with the External Examiner and sent to them for consideration following the finalist BEP.

7.7.12 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 BEP 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 programme.

7.7.13 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 BEPs.

7.7.14 External Examiner input in supplementary assessment

External Examiners are not expected to be present at, or to have input in, BEUs/BEPs for supplementary assessments, whether or not 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).

7.7.15 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 BEP where the award is considered. Normally exit awards will be made at the final BEP for the programme where the External Examiner is present.

7.7.16 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 BEP and its recommendations should be formally recorded (a template for BEP 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 BEP report showing the final decisions of the BEP) of the BEP should be passed to the appropriate BoS.
- 7.8.3 The Chair should remind members of the BEP 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 BEPs.
- 8.1.2 The membership and attendance requirements of a BoS are set out in its [terms of reference](#).

8.2 Consideration of results

- 8.2.1 A BoS will consider the recommendations of the BEP 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 programmes (as described in NFAAR-PGT) and are therefore unable to continue on their programme.
- 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 BEPs.
- 8.2.4 In the event of the recommendations not being approved the results will be referred to the appropriate BEP(s) for reconsideration. If, after reference back, a BoS is unable to accept the further recommendation of the Board(s) of Examiners for Programmes, 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 BEP.
- 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 programmes under their academic authority.
- 8.5.2 Once a year BoSs are expected to report to University Learning, Teaching and Quality 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 BEPs, 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 University Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee on the operation of Boards of Examiners. This evaluation of Boards will be based on the reports of the Independent Observers (see para 5.3.3).

Statement Details																			
Issue Version:	2.17																		
Date:	November 2019																		
Antecedents:	Undergraduate Modularisation Working Party																		
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Related Documentation:	New Framework for Assessment: Assessment Regulations Boards of Examiners - resources webpage New Framework for Assessment: Assessment Regulations Individual Mitigating Circumstances & Assessment: Principles and Procedures within and outside NFAAR http://www.bath.ac.uk/registry/imc/ QA12 External Examining QA16 Assessment, Marking and Feedback QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education. Advice and Guidance: Assessment
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