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20: Assessment Principles & Regulations

Principles of Assessment

1. Assessment describes any processes that appraise an individual's knowledge, understanding, abilities, skills or behaviours. There are many forms of assessment, serving a variety of purposes. These include:
 - i. promoting student learning by providing the student with feedback, to help improve their performance;
 - ii. evaluating student knowledge, understanding, abilities or skills;
 - iii. providing a mark or grade which enables a student's performance to be established. The mark or grade may also be used to make progress decisions; and
 - iv. enabling the public (including employers) and higher education providers, to know that an individual has attained an appropriate level of achievement that reflects the academic standards set by the awarding institution and agreed UK norms, including the Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications. This may include demonstrating fitness to practice or meeting other professional requirements.
2. The way in which students are assessed fundamentally affects their learning. Good assessment practice is designed to be aligned with teaching and learning opportunities and to ensure that, in order to pass a unit and the overall course, students have to demonstrate they have achieved the intended learning outcomes.
3. To test a wide range of intended learning outcomes, diversity of assessment practice between and within different subjects is to be expected and welcomed, requiring and enabling students to demonstrate their capabilities and achievements within each unit and course.
4. Students need to be aware of the purposes and implications of different assessment tasks, especially the opportunities provided for them to show the extent to which they have achieved the intended learning outcomes of a unit or course. It is important that students know whether the outcomes of each assessment are to be used for formative and/or summative purposes.
5. Assessment is usually construed as being diagnostic, formative or summative. An assessment process can, and often does, involve more than one of these assessment purposes. For example, an assessment element submitted during a unit may provide formative feedback designed to help students improve their performance in subsequent

assessments. An end-of-unit assessment normally results in a summative judgement being made about the level the student has attained, but any feedback on it may also have an intended formative purpose that can help students in assessments later in their course, or on another course.

6. The University aims to ensure that assessment practices:
 - i. are fair, equitable, valid, reliable, explicit and consistent across the University;
 - ii. are secure and safeguard the standards of the awards made;
 - iii. compare to standards within the University and with other universities in the UK;
 - iv. are of equal rigour and robustness across disciplines and subject areas with varying cultures;
 - v. are aligned with the precepts of the Quality Assurance Agency UK Quality Code for Higher Education and other relevant reference points;
 - vi. are aligned with the University's Educational Principles and conform to the requirements of the Academic Framework; and
 - vii. reflect the requirements of legitimate stakeholders external to the University e.g. employers, national occupational standards, professional, statutory and regulatory bodies.

Assessment Regulations

7. These regulations apply to all taught awards as listed in the University Schedule of Awards, Annex 1 to the Academic Framework
8. Students on a validated course can only study the units on that course and may not substitute these for any other units; except, through the application of Recognition of Prior Learning or where they are studying an equivalent unit at a partner institution abroad in line with the University's Academic Framework.
9. To be eligible for an award a student must be registered on the award and complete it within the approved maximum registration period specified in the Academic Framework (section 2B).
10. All the principles set out in the section above apply to assessment of learning gained in the workplace and from learning activities derived from the working environment. Such assessments should be integrated fully into the assessment strategy for each course. Where assessment takes place in the workplace an appropriately qualified and experienced member of University staff with the relevant subject expertise must be identified to moderate any assessments on behalf of the University. Agreed and clearly documented arrangements for such assessment must be put in place between the University and employer or other partner as part of the wider partnership agreement or contract which covers the provision.
10. Practice-based standards and requirements of professional bodies may be reflected in learning outcomes where appropriate.
11. Assessment is a matter of academic judgement and not just the computation of marks. Academic judgement cannot be questioned or overturned. An award may, however, only

be made when the student has fulfilled the objectives and intended learning outcomes of the course and achieved the required academic standard.

12. The Academic Registrar has authority, delegated by Academic Board through the Learning, Teaching and Student Achievement Committee (LTSAC), to approve exceptional exemptions to the regulations and the associated policies, ensuring that the principles underlying the regulations are maintained. The Academic Registrar will report to LTSAC once a year on the exercise of this authority.

Responsibilities

13. The Learning, Teaching and Student Achievement Committee (LTSAC) is responsible to Academic Board for approving the assessment regulations and for overseeing the promotion of good assessment practices across the University.
14. The schools and services that own courses are responsible for the implementation of the assessment regulation in collaboration with Academic Services.
15. Individual members of staff delivering each unit are responsible for ensuring that the quality of the teaching and learning opportunities provided will facilitate students in attaining the required standard. Staff are expected to use both formative and summative assessments that promote effective learning and are encouraged to use a range of assessment methods.
16. Course teams are responsible for ensuring that:
 - i. the amount, timing and type of summative assessments enable effective and appropriate judgements of a student's achievement of intended learning outcomes to be made;
 - ii. students have clear information about the expected standard of individual assessments and assessments are timed to ensure students have adequate time to reflect on learning and/or practical skills;
 - iii. grades/marks and feedback on assessments is provided within 20 working days of the submission deadline.
17. The Progression & Award Board has delegated authority from Academic Board to make decisions on student completion of units and on progression and awards.
18. Effectiveness of assessment practice will be monitored via student feedback, external examiner reports, course review and Assessment Boards.
19. At the beginning of each academic year of the course students will be provided with the details and planned timings of the summative assessments (number, type, weighting) for all units studied during that year.

Assessment of Units

20. All students registered for a particular unit should follow the same assessment plan and consequently take the same number of assessment elements and assessment types, although the precise assessment task may legitimately vary between student groups and students. One Progression and Award Board will ratify the marks for all the students taking that unit in the same sitting.

21. Every time a unit is offered to students it must have a defined academic session start and end date. An academic session is a specified period of time during which an academic course or a level/stage of a course is delivered and assessed; a session may be synonymous with an academic year, a calendar year or another defined period of time lasting no more than 12 calendar months and will have a specific start and finish date.
22. The first assessment attempt for all elements must be scheduled to occur before the end date of the unit.
23. The form of assessment for each unit must be specified within the unit descriptor. Where there is more than one element of assessment, the weighting attached to each element must be stated on the unit descriptor.
24. All units must be summatively assessed; they will normally be marked using the Grade Marking scale (see Annex 1). A grade or a mark must be produced for each assessment element such that an overall unit mark can be determined. Exceptionally, there may be a requirement for individual assessments to be exempt from grade marking. Such exceptions must be approved through the course approval or unit approval and course modification processes and stated on the unit descriptor.
25. Where required, units must be assigned to a Unit External Examiner. The external examiners policy (section 21 of the Academic Handbook) specifies which units must be assigned to a Unit External Examiner.
26. Students are responsible for managing their own assessment workload, but the amount, type and timing of assessments needs to be taken into account when unit and course assessment schedules are designed.
27. Unit Leaders are responsible for providing students with full details of all summative assessments, including a clear statement of the task, the learning outcomes being assessed and the assessment criteria.

Production of assessments

28. Unit Leaders are responsible for the design and production of:
 - i. assessments (i.e. assignment briefs, examination papers) that:
 - a. are explicitly aligned with the student learning experience and the intended learning outcomes;
 - b. are clear and equitable;
 - c. will facilitate students in demonstrating achievement of the unit; and
 - d. meet the assessment strategy as defined by the unit descriptor in terms of type and weighting of assessment.
 - ii. clearly defined assessment criteria for students, within the specified quality standards and timescales set by the University to allow all staff involved in the internal moderation process sufficient time to fulfil their duties.
29. The assessments and assessment criteria will be subject to Internal and, where required, external peer review. The external examiners policy (section 21 of the Academic Handbook) specifies which unit assessment must be externally reviewed.
30. All assessments are confidential until released to the students and schools/services must ensure they have appropriate procedures in place to assure the security of assessments.

Submission, receipt and return of assessments

31. Unit leaders are responsible for informing students of the submission date of assessments and the date of examinations. No extensions to submission dates will be granted unless approved through the Extenuating Circumstances policy.
32. Students must submit their own work for marking and, where practicable, keep a copy of all assignments.
33. Academic Services will ensure the safe submission of all hard-copy assignments and the availability of receipts.
34. Where work is returned to students, Course Leaders are responsible for informing the students the mechanism by which it will be returned.

Marking and moderation of assessments

35. All assessments must be marked by appropriately qualified staff according to the specific assessment criteria which are based on the University's generic grading and classification criteria (see Annex 1).
36. Course Leaders are responsible for ensuring that all assessments are marked and moderated in line with this policy.
37. Double Marking of assessment elements must take place at Level 6 and Level 7 replacing the need for further internal moderation:
 - i. on all major projects, dissertations and portfolios; and
 - ii. on any assessment which constitutes 100% of the weighting for units of more than 20 credit points for undergraduate courses, or 30 credit points or more for postgraduate taught courses.
38. Where the marks cannot be agreed by the two markers a third marker assigned by the head of subject or equivalent will determine the final agreed mark.
39. All schools/services and partners are subject to the Anonymous Marking policy. The policy must be adopted for all examination scripts, and for all summative course work submitted for assessment at Levels 3-7, with the exception of those identified as exempt on the unit descriptor. Exemptions from anonymous marking is approved through the course approval or unit approval and course modification processes.
40. Performance based assessments (e.g. presentations, shows, concerts etc.) should normally be marked and moderated or double marked (if required) at the time of the performance. All performances should be recorded to enable the assessments to be externally and/or internally moderated (where required).
41. Internal moderation must be undertaken by an appropriately qualified and experienced member of University staff prior to release to students. Where required, assessments must then be externally moderated; the external examiners policy (section 21 of the Academic Handbook) specifies which unit assessment must be externally moderated.
42. Internal and external moderation samples must be properly representative and include borderline cases between each band of award classification and an example of a first class/distinction piece of work and a fail where appropriate. The sample size must

represent 10% of submissions which should not be more than 15 or less than 5 (or all assignment if less than 5) assignments .for large of small units.

43. Where an internal moderator identifies a potential issue, a larger sample should be scrutinised and a second moderator requested to arbitrate if appropriate.
44. Moderators cannot change individual student grades/marks but can recommend that changes are made to the whole cohort of student grades/marks.

Group work

45. The means by which grades/marks are allocated to individual members of the group must be clearly articulated on the assignment brief and referral arrangements clearly stated on the unit descriptor.

Student peer assessment

46. Where student peer assessment is part of the summative assessment strategy, the criteria used to allocate grades/mark must be clearly articulated and the referral arrangements must be clearly stated on the unit descriptor.

Students with additional learning needs

47. Students are responsible for alerting the University to any additional learning needs as part of the enrolment process or as soon as they have been diagnosed. When notified, the University will assess the needs and determine if any additional support and special arrangements need to be put in place at the time of assessments.
48. No additional allowance can be made at the time of marking.

Student concerns with the assessment process

49. Students may not appeal against the academic judgement of examiners.
50. Where a student believes a mark has been recorded incorrectly, they should raise this under the Academic Appeal Policy (section 2M).
51. Where a student is dissatisfied with their learning and/or assessment experience they should make an immediate complaint using the student complaint procedure.

Feedback on summative assessed work

52. The University believes that students need clear feedback on assessments, at the right time, so they can learn and improve.
53. Students can expect to receive feedback on all summative assessments within 20 working days of the submission date; students will be informed if there are any exceptions to this.
54. Students are responsible for the collection of their own work and feedback.

Archiving of work

55. Submitted and marked assessments will be retained in accordance with University policies.

Unit pass mark

56. The overall unit pass mark is 40%, or where a unit is validated as pass/fail, the pass grade of pass (or its equivalent) will be used. Units with pass/fail unit outcomes are excluded from the award classification.
57. The grades/marks for all elements of assessment will be aggregated by the assessment sitting to determine the overall unit result for that sitting. For the purposes of progression and award the best mark achieved for each element will be aggregated, regardless of sitting. The unit will be deemed a pass where the aggregated unit result is 40% or above, even if individual elements are below 40%.
58. There may be a requirement for individual assessment elements to be passed in their own right. In these circumstances those elements must achieve a pass mark of 40% or more, in order for the unit to be passed. Such exceptions must be approved through the course approval or unit approval and course modification processes and stated on the unit descriptor.
59. When a unit profile at a sitting includes a 'defer', the sitting unit mark will be calculated on the marks available and regardless of the unit outcome the student will be offered an opportunity to make good the deferred element at the next sitting.
60. In line with the grade marking philosophy, unit marks ending in a 9 will be rounded up to the next decile.
61. All unit marks are calculated up or down to the nearest integer e.g. 54.4 is recorded as a unit mark of 54; 54.8 is recorded as a unit mark of 55. Award classifications are calculated using whole unit marks (integers).

Late submission of coursework

62. Coursework, which is submitted no later than five working days after the original submission date, without an approved extension request, will be marked as normal and the mark will be capped at 40%.
63. Coursework submitted for the first assessment attempt more than five working days after the scheduled hand-in date will be treated as a non-submission and awarded a mark of zero.
64. For referral work there is no late submission period, with the exception of any approved Extenuating Circumstances applications. Any referral work submitted after the scheduled hand in date will be treated as a non-submission and awarded a mark of zero.
65. Students who submit after five working days of the deadline submission date, with or without an approved extension request, will not have their assessment marked. The assessment will be regarded as a non-submission for assessment purposes.

Extension of an assessment submission deadline date

66. Students may submit a request for an extension to an assessment submission date where Extenuating Circumstances have impacted on their learning and where a later submission would put them in a position of being 'fit to study' and to complete the work.

67. All approved extension requests will result in the student having an additional five working days from the original deadline date in which to submit their assessment.

Non-submissions

68. Students are required to make a credible and reasonable attempt at all assessments by showing that:
- a) the work is in the form required by the assessment brief; and
 - b) the academic content of the assessment addresses the specified topic.
69. Submissions which do not meet these criteria will be regarded as a non-submission for assessment purposes and awarded a mark of zero.

Compensation

70. Compensation is the process by which an assessment board, in consideration of the student's overall performance in a unit of study and their engagement on a course recommends that credit be awarded for a unit in which the student has failed to satisfy the assessment criteria, in order to enable the student to progress to the next level or be awarded the appropriate qualification.
71. Compensation will be used to re-dress marginal failure where a student has obtained a minimum mark of 30% in each assessment element in the unit being considered for compensation.
72. Compensation can only be used when a student has attempted all assessments for a given sitting across all units at that level.
73. At levels 3-6 and additionally level 7 of Integrated Master's courses compensations will be permitted up to 20-credit points (whole units only) per level.
74. At level 7 (not including Integrated Master's courses) compensation will be permitted up to 30 credit points (whole units only).
75. Students studying a unit, which is not part of the defined course structure may not be compensated in that unit.
76. Compensation may not be applied to units where a student has failed an element which has been designated as 'must pass' or where a student has failed the unit as a result of receiving an academic misconduct penalty of failing the unit with no right to resit.
77. Compensation will be applied automatically when all the above criteria for compensation have been met. Where students are eligible for compensation in more than one unit at that level, the unit with the highest average mark will be compensated. If, exceptionally, a Director or Head considers a compensation decision should not be applied then they must apply to the Academic Registrar for an exemption from this regulation.
78. For part-time courses compensation will be awarded at the end of defined stage, which may be before all the units at a level have been completed.

Progression

Progression on Extended Degrees

79. A student may progress from the extended year (level 3) to level 4 with 100 credits as long as the failed units(s) do not include any 'must pass' elements.
80. Students will not be required to be reassessed in the failed 20 credits. Credits gained at level 3 do not count towards the credit requirements for the final degree.

Progression on Undergraduate (including Integrated Master's) Degrees

81. Students on a full-time course can proceed to the next level of the course with a maximum of 20 referred/deferred credits from the current level. Students cannot progress to the next level/stage with an irretrievably failed unit where all its reassessment opportunities have been exhausted.
82. Students on a part time course can proceed to the next stage of the course with a maximum of 20 referred/deferred credits. The part-time course structure, including details of each stage, is approved as part of course approval.
83. Additionally, Integrated Master's students must achieve an average of 50% or higher at level 5 in order to progress to level 6 of the Integrated Master's course. Students who do not achieve this will have their registration transferred to the appropriate bachelors course.
84. Students who are unable to progress to the next level/stage will be required to retake the failed units.
85. Final year, level 6 students who are referred in 20 credits or less after the resit period and cannot be compensated in the failed unit(s) will be offered the opportunity to have two further referral attempts at the failed assessment elements or accept the exit award for which they are eligible. Where a student fails to notify the University of their choice within 10 working days they will be given the appropriate award.
86. Students who achieve less than 100 credits at level 6 after the resit period will be offered the option to retake the failed units or accept the exit award for which they are eligible. Integrated Master's students will have their registration transferred to the appropriate bachelors course. Where a student fails to notify the University of their choice within 10 working days they will be given the appropriate award.

Progression on part-time Master's Degrees

87. Students on a part time master's course can proceed to the next stage of the course with a maximum of 30 referred/deferred credits. The part-time course structure, including details of each stage, is approved as part of course approval.

Reassessment

Definitions

88. Refer: The student is required to attempt the failed assessment element(s) only. Students are not expected to attend tutorials and the University is not expected to

provide tutorials for referral assessment. The marks for referred assessments will be capped at the pass mark.

89. Deficit unit: This refers to the unit which was not passed after the referral period but the student was able to proceed to the next level/stage with that deficit. Students will be required to undertake the assessments that have not been passed in this unit at the next available opportunities and the results will be capped at the pass mark.
90. Repeat unit: This refers to a unit which was not passed after the referral period and the student was not able to proceed to the next stage /level. The unit must be attempted again with attendance. Students will be assessed in the unit as if for the first time; grades/marks will not be capped and grades/marks from the original attempt will not be carried forward. Penalties are applied in line with standard unit regulations. Students cannot progress with a failed repeat unit as they become an irretrievably failed unit.
91. Irretrievably failed: Where all attempts on a unit have been taken and the unit has not been passed. Students cannot progress to the next level/stage where they have irretrievably failed a unit and will be offered the appropriate exit award or institutional credits.
92. Defer: The student's application for extenuating circumstances against an assessment element was approved and therefore they will be permitted to take those assessments again at the next available opportunity without any additional penalty; existing penalties will remain.

Reassessment opportunities

93. Where students have failed to achieve a pass mark for the unit they shall be offered one referral attempt for each failed element, except where the recommendation of a Student Academic Misconduct Inquiry Panel invokes a 'no right to re-sit' academic penalty.
94. Students shall not be able to re-attempt any passed elements of assessment except where students are required to repeat a unit or where an academic misconduct penalty of fail unit has been recommended.
95. Students must attempt the referred assessments at the next referral period as indicated at the time of results publication.
96. Students who, after the referral period, did not pass the unit but are eligible to proceed with deficit credits will be granted two further referral attempts on the failed assessment element(s). Deficit units that have not been passed after the final attempt will be classified as an irretrievably failed unit. Students cannot progress to the next level/stage with an irretrievable failure.
97. Students who, after the resit period, are unable to progress shall be permitted one opportunity to repeat the failed unit(s), except where the recommendation of a Student Academic Misconduct Inquiry Panel invokes a 'no right to re-sit' academic penalty. Students must register for the repeat unit(s) and attempt all assessment elements.
98. Students who have failed to achieve a pass mark for the repeat unit(s) shall be offered one final referral attempt for each failed element, except where the recommendation of a Student Academic Misconduct Inquiry Panel invokes a 'no right to re-sit' academic penalty.

99. Where one or more assessment element of an optional unit has been failed at the first attempt the student shall have the right to substitute, once during the period of their registration, another available option and to be taught and assessed in that option, as if for the first time; unless the failure was as a result of receiving an academic misconduct penalty of failing the unit with no right to resit. This option is not available to students who have submitted any referral assessments for the optional unit they wish to transfer from. Subject to availability, students will start the new unit the next time it is delivered, this must be within 2 weeks of the unit's start date unless a strong academic rationale is provided and approved by the relevant Head of Subject.
100. Where a student is referred in an assessment element as a result of a proven case of academic misconduct, they must make a valid attempt at the referred element. If no valid attempt is made, the unit mark will be capped at F2 (Fail).
101. Where a student has submitted Extenuating Circumstances which have been accepted, they will be offered a deferral, that is, another attempt to take the missed assessment element. In such cases, the deferred assessment element will be marked as normal and the actual mark awarded. In cases where a deferral is offered in respect of a referred assessment, the mark will be capped at 40%.
102. Where a student has passed a unit, but been deferred in an element they will be offered the opportunity to take the deferred element.

Awards

103. For the list of awards available see section 2B, Annex 1.

Conferment of awards of students admitted with advanced standing or awarded credit through RPL or a study abroad programme

104. Progression & Awards Boards will take account of the credit value of the exempted stage/level in judging a student's eligibility against the thresholds set for conferment of University awards. When calculating the final classification/result, only the units assessed at the University will be counted - no grades/marks for the exempted stage(s)/level(s) will be awarded.
105. When a student has been given credit for prior learning or through a study abroad programme, Progression & Awards Boards will take account of that credit in judging the student's eligibility against the credit thresholds set for conferment of University awards.
106. Classification of awards will be calculated using the method for that award type as detailed in the sections below.
107. Where, for undergraduate students, the calculation method includes discounting of units and the student has 60 or more credits at level 5 then discounting will be applied in line with the undergraduate classification method (detailed below) using only those units and credits studied at the University.
108. Where, due to recognition or prior learning, or direct entry to level 6, undergraduate students have less than 60 credits at level 5 or only level 6 credits gained at the University the award classification will be calculated using the method used for 'top-up' degrees (detailed below).

Award of a Bachelors Degree

109. In order to complete a Degree with Honours students shall satisfy the requirements associated with such an award as set out in the course specification.
110. Students may be considered for an Honours degree, having been assessed in and been awarded 360 credits. Students must have been assessed in all units¹.
111. Where a student has been assessed in 360 credits, and has achieved at least 300 credits, the student will be eligible for the award of an Ordinary degree.
112. 'Top-up' degree students may be considered for an Honours degree, having been assessed in and awarded 120 credits. Student must have been assessed in all units¹.
113. 'Top-up' degree students who have been assessed in 120 credits, and have achieved at least 60 credits, will be eligible for the award of an Ordinary degree.

Classification of Bachelors Degree

114. 'Top-up' degree classifications will be calculated using the weighted average unit marks for the best 100 credits at level 6.
115. For all other degrees the classification mark will be calculated using the weighted average unit marks for the best 100 credits at level 6 (weighted at 70%) combined with the best 100 credits from the remaining credits at levels 5 and 6 (weighted at 30%). Classification averages are calculated to two decimal places.
116. The calculated overall classification mark will determine the Honours classification awarded, the classification boundaries are:
 - a) 69.50% or more: First Class
 - b) 59.50% - 69.49%: Second Class (First Division)
 - c) 49.50% - 59.49%: Second Class (Second Division)
 - d) 39.50%-49.49%: Third Class

Award of an Integrated Master's Degree

117. In order to complete an Integrated Master's course students shall satisfy the requirements associated with such an award as set out in the course specification.
118. Students may be considered for an Integrated Master's degree, having been assessed in and been awarded 480 credits. Students must have been assessed in all units².

Classification of Integrated Master's Degrees

119. Integrated Master's degree classification mark will be calculated using results from levels 5, 6 and 7 as follows (classification averages are calculated to two decimal places):
 - a) the average unit mark for level 7 (weighted at 50%); plus
 - b) the weighted average unit marks for the best 100 credits at level 6 (weighted at 30%); plus

¹ Credit awarded through the Recognition of Prior Learning process is assessed credit

² Credit awarded through the Recognition of Prior Learning process is assessed credit

- c) the weighted average unit marks for the best 100 credits remaining at levels 5 and 6 (weighted 20%).
120. The calculated overall classification mark will determine the classification awarded, the classification boundaries are:
- a) 69.50% or more: First Class
 - b) 59.50% - 69.49%: Second Class (First Division)
 - c) 49.50% - 59.49%: Second Class (Second Division)
 - d) 39.50% - 49.49%: Third Class

Award and classification of Foundation Degrees

121. A student will be awarded a 'Pass' for obtaining 120 credits at level 4 and 120 credits at level 5.
122. A Foundation Degree with 'Merit' will be awarded if a student has achieved a weighted level average of 59.5% at level 5.
123. A Foundation Degree with 'Distinction' will be awarded if a student has a weighted level average of 69.5% at level 5.
124. For students admitted with RPL credits or advanced standing, only the level 5 units studied at Southampton Solent University will be considered in the classification.

Award and classification of Higher Nationals

125. In accordance with Pearson Education Limited regulations, units are awarded a grade of Fail, Pass, Merit or Distinction. Where percentages are used the following will apply:
- a) Pass: 40% - 59.9%
 - b) Merit: 60% - 69.9%
 - c) Distinction: 70%+
126. A maximum grade of Pass will be awarded for a referred element that has been completed satisfactorily. Assessment elements passed at the first attempt or deferred will be awarded the earned mark and the overall unit grade calculated as normal. Any referred elements that have been passed will be capped at 40% (pass) and the normal aggregation rules followed to determine the unit grade.
127. The classification mark for HNC awards is determined by calculating the level average from all units at level 4 using the numerical marks achieved for each unit.
128. The classification mark for HND awards is determined by calculating the level average from all units at level 5 using the numerical marks achieved for each unit.
129. The calculated level average will determine the classification awarded, the classification boundaries are:
- a) 69.50% or more: Distinction
 - b) 59.50% - 69.49%: Merit
 - c) 39.50% - 59.49%: Pass

Award and classification of Postgraduate Certificate

130. In order to obtain the award of Postgraduate Certificate (PgC) students must have been awarded 60 credits at level 7.
131. A Postgraduate Certificate award with Merit will be awarded if a student has achieved an average of 59.5% or higher across the 60 credits at level 7.
132. A Postgraduate Certificate award with Distinction will be awarded if a student has achieved an average of 69.5% or higher across the 60 credits at level 7.
133. The only classification available for a Postgraduate Certificate award received as an exit qualification is Pass.

Award and classification of Postgraduate Diploma

134. In order to obtain the award of Postgraduate Diploma (PgD) students must have been awarded 120 credits at level 7.
135. A Postgraduate Diploma award with Merit will be awarded if a student has achieved an average of 59.5% or higher across the 120 credits at level 7.
136. A Postgraduate Diploma award with Distinction will be awarded if a student has achieved an average of 69.5% or higher across the 120 credits at level 7.
137. The only classification available for a Postgraduate Diploma award received as an exit qualification is Pass.

Award and classification of Master's Award

138. In order to obtain the award of a Master's degree, students must have been awarded 180 credits.
139. A Master's degree will be awarded with Merit if a student has achieved a level average of 59.5% or higher.
140. A Master's degree will be awarded with Distinction if a student has achieved a level average of 69.5% or higher.

Undergraduate and Postgraduate Exit awards

141. A student who withdraws or is withdrawn from a course, will be granted credit points for those units completed successfully at the University or been awarded through the Recognition of Prior Learning, except where credit has been withdrawn as a result of an academic misconduct penalty.
142. Exiting students who have shown they have achieved the specified learning outcomes for an award at a lower level than that which they were originally registered on will be granted that award.
 - a) Foundation Certificate for successful completion of at least 120 credits at level 3 or higher;
 - b) Certificate of Higher Education for successful completion of at least 120 credits, of which 90 credits or more must be at level 4 or higher;

- c) Diploma of Higher Education for successful completion of at least 240 credits, of which a minimum of 90 credits or more must be at level 5 or higher;
- d) Bachelors degree for successful completion of at least 360 credits, of which a minimum of 90 credits must be at level 6 or higher (only applies to Integrated Masters courses);
- e) Postgraduate Certificate of Higher Education for successful completion of at least 60 credits at level 7;
- f) Postgraduate Diploma of Higher Education for successful completion of at least 120 credits at level 7.

143. Students who were admitted onto a course with advance standing and withdraws or is withdrawn from the course will not be eligible for an exit award at a lower level than the level they were admitted to.

Posthumous Awards

- 144. An award may be conferred posthumously where a student was close to completing their course of study. The relevant Progression and Award Board will consider each case on an individual basis.
- 145. No classification shall be awarded in the case of a posthumous award.
- 146. The Certificate or Diploma of Higher Education may also be conferred as a posthumous award.

Aegrotat Awards

- 147. An Aegrotat award may be conferred where a student was close to achieving an award but due to illness or other valid reason, as approved by the Academic Registrar, is unlikely to be able to complete their studies within the maximum registration period. The relevant Progression and Award Board will consider each case on an individual basis.
- 148. Where a student is receiving an Aegrotat postgraduate or undergraduate/Foundation degree no classification shall be awarded.
- 149. The Diploma of Higher Education and Postgraduate Diploma may also be conferred as an Aegrotat Diploma of Higher Education.
- 150. Aegrotat awards for students on other courses may be conferred in certain exceptional circumstances.