



The Open
University

Regulations for validated awards of The Open University



Effective from 1 september 2015

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION

GLOSSARY

A FRAMEWORK OF AWARDS

1.0 General

2.0 Credit

3.0 Validated Awards offered by The Open University

B. ADMISSIONS

4.0 Admissions policy and procedure

5.0 Appeals and complaints regarding the admissions process

C. MATTERS RELATING TO REGISTRATION

6.0 General

7.0 Period of registration for Open University awards

8.0 Interruption of studies

9.0 Attendance requirement

D. ASSESSMENT, PROGRESSION AND AWARD OF CREDIT

11.0 Minimum requirements for pass

12.0 Identification of requirements from professional, statutory and regulatory bodies

13.0 Submission of assessed work

14.0 Assessment scores

15.0 Determining module outcomes

16.0 Provision for *viva voce* examination

17.0 Determining progression and qualification outcomes

18.0 Grading and Classification Awards except Bachelor Honours Degrees

19.0 Bachelor Honours Degree Classification

20.0 Provision for exit awards

21.0 Posthumous and Aegrotat awards

22.0 Recognition of prior learning

E. ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

F. EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES

G. BOARDS OF EXAMINERS

25.0 Appointment of Boards of Examiners

26.0 Membership of Boards of Examiners

- 27.0 Authority of Boards of Examiners
- 28.0 Subsidiary Boards of Examiners
- 29.0 Authority of External Examiners
- 30.0 Conditions of conferment by The Open University

H. ACADEMIC APPEALS AND COMPLAINTS

- 31.0 Grounds for appeal
- 32.0 Academic Appeals and Complaints procedures
- 33.0 Action following appeal procedures
- 34.0 Appeals to The Open University

I. TRANSCRIPTS, DIPLOMA SUPPLEMENTS AND CERTIFICATES

- 35.0 Transcript
- 36.0 Diploma supplement
- 37.0 Certificates
- Appendix 1 Content of transcripts
- Appendix 2 Outline structure for the diploma supplement
- Appendix 3 Content of Certificates
- Additional Appendices

INTRODUCTION

These Regulations apply to all new student cohorts on programmes leading to an Open University (OU) validated award with effect from 1st September 2015 (or earlier if deemed appropriate by the Partner institution and the OU).

The Open University is the awarding body and the qualifications awarded are OU qualifications. However the programmes of study are developed and delivered by Partner Institutions. The Open University and its Partner Institutions have a formal relationship governed by the QAA's UK Quality Code for Higher Education which sets out expectations for academic standards, academic quality and information about higher education provision.

For students registered before the 1st September 2015, the regulations under which they originally registered will continue to apply.

For individual students who are either returning to their programme of study after an approved break from their studies or are transferring to a new or different programme, the regulations of the cohort to which they are returning, will apply.

These Regulations will be referenced in the documentation for each validated programme of study, together with any specific requirements from professional, statutory or regulatory bodies and/or local legislation (for non-UK Partner institutions), as agreed in the validation process for the programme.

In addition to these regulations each programme of study will have a Programme Handbook containing procedures and requirements that are specific to that programme.

GLOSSARY

Assessment component	An individual piece of work or a collection of pieces of work that forms a summative assessment.
Award	Open University qualification given to student following the successful completion of an approved programme of study.
Co-requisite module	A co-requisite module must be studied simultaneously with, or before, another designated module within a programme of study.
Credit	<p>A means of quantifying and recognising learning, expressed as 'numbers of credits' at a specific credit level.</p> <p>Within this document it is assumed that one credit represents 10 notional hours of learning (including individual study).</p>
Credit level	An indicator of the relative complexity, depth and autonomy of learning associated with a particular module (used in credit frameworks).
Assessment element	An assessment element is a piece of work that contributes to an assessment component.
Exit award	<p>A lower award than one for which the student is registered.</p> <p>Such an award may be conferred if a student completes part of, but not all, of the requirements of the programme for which he or she is registered.</p>
Institutional approval	The process through which an institution is judged to be a satisfactory environment for the presentation of programmes leading to The Open University validated awards. Approval is conferred for a period of up to five years.
Institutional review	The process through which an institution is critically reviewed for the purposes of confirming that it continues to meet The Open University's requirements. Approval is conferred for a further period of up to five years.
Learning outcome	What a learner is expected to know, understand and be able to demonstrate after completing a defined element of study.
Module	A self-contained, formally structured, credit-bearing unit of study with explicit learning outcomes. (Some institutions use the word 'course' to refer to individual modules.)
Module specification	A document that defines key characteristics of a module, and includes learning outcomes, models of teaching and learning, and assessment schemes.

Partner institution	An institution approved by The Open University for the delivery of validated programmes of study that lead to Open University awards.
Pre-requisite module	A pre-requisite module is one that must be successfully completed before progressing to another designated module or stage within a programme of study.
Programme	A schedule of academic study and assessment which leads to an Open University award
Programme specification	A document that defines key characteristics of an award, including learning outcomes, models of teaching and learning, assessment schemes, and how individual modules relate to qualification levels and contribute to the classification of awards.
Qualification level	One of a series of defined points in the Further and Higher Education Qualification Framework (or Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework in Scotland). They are numbered in ascending order. Qualifications at the same qualification level share characteristics and require similar achievement.
Quality Assurance Agency (QAA)	The UK government-appointed agency that safeguards the quality and standard of the higher education awards offered by UK universities. The Open University complies with the codes of practice defined by the QAA and is subject to its scrutiny.
Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)	Assessment of prior learning that has occurred in any of a range of contexts including school, college and university, and/or through life and work experiences. Once recognised through this process, prior learning can be used to gain credit or exemption for qualifications and/or personal and career development. RPL includes Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning (APCL), Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) and Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL).
Stage	A stage of programme is a collection study consisting of a total of 120 credits. In full-time programmes of study a stage is equivalent to the year of study. Stages are usually commensurate with a credit level.
Validation	The formal process whereby a new programme of study is critically appraised by The Open University, in order to establish that it meets the requirements for approval. Approval of a programme of study is for a period of up to five years before a further validation (re-validation) is required.

A FRAMEWORK OF AWARDS

1.0 General

- 1.1 The Open University validated awards are defined with reference either to the Further and Higher Education Qualification frameworks of England, Wales, and Northern Ireland (FHEQ) or to the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF), but not to both.
- 1.2 Each national qualifications framework provides a set of learning outcomes and skills expected of the holders of Open University validated awards.

2.0 Credit

- 2.1 The Open University uses a UK credit-based system for its validated awards, and it defines these awards primarily in terms of the qualification level and volume of credit required for each.
- 2.2 The main determinant for the volume of UK credit is notional learning time. This is defined as the reasonable measure of time it would take a student to achieve the learning outcomes of the activities. Total notional student learning time includes all activities required to achieve the learning outcomes of a programme, including formal study, assessment, and independent learning.
- 2.3 Notional learning time for a 'standard' full-time academic year is 1200 hours at undergraduate qualification level and 1800 hours at postgraduate qualification level. These are intended as benchmarks only, and the actual time students take to achieve the required outcomes may be shorter or longer depending on the knowledge and skills of students at entry and on their rate of progression through the programme, and the impact of any reasonable adjustments made for students with impairments.
- 2.4 A UK credit value is twice its European Credit Transfer (ECT) equivalent (e.g. a 20 UK credit module equates to 10 ECT credits).
- 2.5 Each module of a programme will be assigned a single designated credit level (module assessment is unique to a given credit level). The volume and level of credit assigned to any one module is determined and approved by The Open University at the point of validation.
- 2.6 The assignment of credit to learning should be understood in the following terms:
 - (a) Credit is allocated to a learning activity on the basis of its stated learning outcomes.
 - (b) A student will only be assigned credit after demonstration through assessment of the achievement of the stated learning outcomes. Credit cannot be assigned if no assessment has taken place or if the assessment has not been appropriately conducted.
 - (c) The number of credit points assigned is independent of the standards (grades awarded). Students achieving higher standards will not be

allocated more credit points. The higher standard will be reflected in the grade and classification of the pass.

3.0 Validated Awards offered by The Open University

- 3.1 The Open University confers the following Validated Awards although Partner institutions do not necessarily offer programmes leading to all of these awards.

Award title	FHEQ Qualification level	Overall number of credits required	Levels of credit required
Professional Certificate	4	60	60 at any UG level
Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE)	4	120	120 at level 4
Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE)	5	240	120 at level 5 120 at level 4
Foundation degree (FD)	5	240	120 at level 5 120 at level 4
Ordinary Bachelor's degree (BA, BSc, Bed, BEng) <i>[Exit Award only]</i>	6	300	60 at level 6 120 at level 5 120 at level 4
Bachelor's degree with honours (BA(Hons), BSc(Hons), Bed, BEng, LLB (Hons ¹))	6	360	120 at level 6 120 at level 5 120 at level 4
Bachelor of Music (BMus)	6	480	At least 120 Level 6 No more than 120 Level 4 Remaining credits at Levels 5 or 6
Bachelor of Osteopathy (BOst)	6	480	At least 240 Level 6 No more than 120 Level 4 Remaining credits at Levels 5 or 6
Graduate Certificate (Grad Cert)	6	60	60 at level 6
Graduate Diploma (Grad Dip)	6	120	120 at level 6

Award title (continued)	FHEQ Qualification level	Overall number of credits required	Levels of credit required
Professional Graduate Certificate of Education	6	120	120 at level 6
Postgraduate Certificate (PgCert)	7	60	60 at level 7
Postgraduate Diploma (PgDip)	7	120	Min 90 at level 7 Max 30 at level 6
Master's degree (MA, MSc, MArch, MBA, MTh, MFA)	7	180	Min 150 at level 7 Max 30 at level 6
Master of Engineering (MEng)	7	480	Min 120 Level 7 Min 120 Level 6 No more than 120 Level 4 Remaining credits at Levels 5 or 6
Taught MPhil	7	360	Minimum 240 at level 7 Remaining credits at level 6 or above
Professional Doctorate	8	540	Minimum 420 at level 8, maximum of 120 at level 7

¹ Bachelor's degree titles of BEd and BEd (Hons) are reserved for programmes of teacher education. Initial or pre-service BEd programmes include a substantial element of teaching practice, and the normal credits of such a BEd programme will be 480. The In-service BEd is designed for students who are already qualified and experienced teachers holding a Certificate in Education or equivalent qualification. Minimum credits: 180.

3.2 Students must meet all requirements set out in the programme specification approved by The Open University before a qualification is awarded.

B. ADMISSIONS

Students registering for programmes leading to awards of The Open University must have satisfied the admissions criteria approved by The Open University at validation.

4.0 Admissions policy and procedure

1. OBJECTIVES AND PRINCIPLES

- The College recruits students from a diversity of backgrounds, admitting to its programme those applicants who, by virtue of their interests, abilities, knowledge, experience and motivation, will be best assisted to realise their full academic, creative or professional potential by benefiting from the College's educational provision.*

- The College wants students to gain the highest level of award of which they are capable. Therefore the admission of each student is based on a reasonable expectation that the applicant will be able to achieve the aims and outcomes of the programme and the standard required for the award for which they wish to register.*

- This expectation can be demonstrated through a wide variety of forms of preparation, including relevant experiential learning derived from employment or voluntary work, through vocational and professional awards, as well as through conventional certificated qualifications. Where appropriate for some identified groups, offers will be contextualised to ensure all those who have the potential to benefit from higher education have the opportunity to participate.*

2. EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

The admissions process is consistent with the College's Equality and Diversity Policy and its commitment to encouraging the enrolment of students from many different backgrounds, especially from those groups currently under-represented in

further and higher education. The admissions process is fair and equitable and applies equally to all individuals. There are specific procedures for applicants declaring a disability and for applicants declaring a criminal conviction, as follows:

Applicants declaring a disability

An applicant declaring a disability on their application will be contacted and asked to complete a questionnaire with regard to their expected support needs whilst at the College. The academic decision on an application is made independent of any disability support needs. The emphasis in the disability procedure is to support the applicant as required additional support needs will be discussed with an applicant and recorded to form the basis of a support plan for the student whilst at the College.

Applicants with criminal convictions

As part of its duty of care, the College asks all applicants with unspent criminal convictions to disclose them and to provide further information where needed. A criminal conviction is not of itself an automatic cause for rejection. The emphasis in the criminal conviction procedure is not to discriminate against or further punish an applicant, but to make a responsible assessment of risk to the College's programme, other students, staff and other members of the community which may impact on the College.

3. PRE-ENTRY INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE

The College shall provide accurate, relevant and up to date information to ensure that all applicants have a realistic understanding of the programme for which they may apply and the conditions they would be expected to meet to be offered a place. The information should include as a minimum:

- Mode of delivery of modules*
- Duration of modules, and of the Academic Programme as a whole*
- Start date of the Academic Programmes*
- Professional placements*
- Module details in outline*
- Average contact time*
- Assessment methods*
- Entry requirements*
- Career opportunities and graduate employment*
- Student satisfaction survey reports*
- On-campus services and support*
- Information about local services*

4. APPLICATION

All apprentices must be interviewed, assessed and offered a position by an employer before being admitted to the degree. Although the College may receive direct applications and filter these applications before passing them to prospective employers some apprentices may apply directly to an employer. Either way, after acceptance by an employer, the College will require a formal application, which it will be processed according to the following criteria:

- All applicants can apply direct to the College through its Online Application System or send a hard copy application to the College.*
- The College will communicate with the applicant using the contact details provided on the application.*

•The deadline for application is generally six weeks before the start date of the programme.

•The deadline is suggested to ensure that an application can be processed in detail and properly, in time for applicants to prepare themselves for induction, enrolment and study. Late applications and subsequent delays in the application consideration process can be to the detriment of the student' and their engagement in their programme of study.

•Qualifications submitted in support of an application should be copies. No responsibility will be taken for the return of original certificates. The original certificates should be brought to enrolment for inspection.

•Applicant information is used primarily for the purposes of application processing. For students who are admitted to the College, the data becomes part of their student record. All data is held and processed in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act.

5. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

•In assessing the suitability of applicants for admission and the suitability of the College for the applicant, admissions staff ensures that applicants are in a position to benefit from the College's provision, that the provision will make appropriate demands of the applicant, and that the applicant's motivation for the course of study and for the institution is high.

•Recruitment and selection decisions are made using the application, references, interviews where appropriate, records of achievement and examination results

(which are interpreted in the context of the applicant's personal and educational situation).

•Admission Tutor reserves the right to interview any applicant with non-traditional qualifications or who has been out of education for a time. This is to ensure that the applicant is ready for Higher Education and to identify additional support that may be required.

•The College does not use 'Admissions Tests' for each student it recruits but some interviews may be conducted if required and interview may include short tests,

6. ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

•To be eligible for admission to a programme an applicant must satisfy the General Entry Requirement as follows:

Applicants must have one of the following:

-Two full A-Level Qualifications at grade C or above

-Level 3 (QCF) BTEC National Diploma in Information Technology, or computing related courses

-Level 2 Professional qualification in a suitable computing related area.

(students can possess a combination of these qualifications if relevant)

•Additionally, students are normally required to have a grade C in GCSE Maths and English Language or to have demonstrated ability in Maths and English in further studies.

•In exceptional cases, the College may admit students who do not satisfy the above requirements, provided that they are able to demonstrate that by virtue of other studies and/or experience, they are capable of managing their studies and benefiting from the route.

Mature students

Non-traditional or mature students (aged at least 21 by 31st December of the year of admission) who do not meet these criteria will be considered on an individual basis as an 'admissions decision'. The decision on admission will be based on assessment of the candidate's ability to successfully complete the route.

Applicants will be judged using the following criteria:

-Evidence of ability for self-organisation

-Evidence of ability to work independently

-The motivation to learn

-Interest in the subject area

-Evidence of ability to work with others

-Evidence that they will benefit from the programme of study

•The College aims to process applications and inform applicants of decisions in a timely and professional manner. In order to achieve this, the College shall:

-Acknowledge all applications on receipt of the application form

-Process all decisions as efficiently as possible

-Aim to communicate the decision within five working days where the applicant has provided all required information, or to progress the application to the next stage in cases where interviews or other additional selection methods are utilised.

-Record a reason if an applicant is rejected

-Provide the reason for rejection on receipt of a written request from the applicant

-Inform offer holders at the earliest opportunity if any significant changes are made to the programme applied for and advise of the options available

5.0 Appeals and complaints regarding the admissions process

- 5.1 Appeals against a decision not to admit an applicant to a programme of study leading to an Open University award are restricted to those that cite irregularity in the decision-making process (for example, failure to make a reasonable adjustment relating to a disability). The process for arbitrating such appeals is that which has been approved at Institutional Approval/Review. Such appeals must be initiated within four weeks of the date of the original decision.

. 7 COMPLAINTS ABOUT ENTRY DECISION

•The College treats all applications in a fair, equitable and professional manner and aims to respond to all enquiries promptly, courteously and to the satisfaction of the enquirer. The decisions on applications are final, and there is no right of appeal against them.

•In the event that an applicant is dissatisfied with the handling of their application, the College will consider a complaint against any decision only if there is substantive evidence of an irregularity in the processing of the application in question ((for example, failure to make a reasonable adjustment relating to a disability).

•For all applicants, complaints concerning an application should be addressed to the Chief Executive Officer.

C. MATTERS RELATING TO REGISTRATION

6.0 General

- 6.1 A student who is admitted for study on a programme leading to an OU validated award must be registered for that programme with the partner institution.
- 6.2 The partner institution will submit student name and contact details to The Open University solely for the purposes of recording student details and progression information. By registering with a Partner for a programme leading to an Open University validated award the student agrees to the sharing of their information with The Open University for this purpose. The Open University will not make any contact with students unless there is a specific need in relation to their studies towards an OU validated award. It is the student's responsibility to keep their personal information up to date with their institution and to notify them of any changes or errors.

7.0 Period of registration for Open University awards

- 7.1 The period of registration will commence on the date the student registers on a programme.
- 7.2 The minimum and maximum periods within which a student will be expected to complete the programme of study and associated assessment, including the time period for any resit assessments, are those that are approved at validation.

A student cannot register for a Certificate in Higher Education (CertHE)or a Diploma in Higher Education(DipHE); these are exit awards only. Students will be awarded credit for all successfully completed modules. The following minimum and maximum periods include any extensions and periods of Leave of Absence (see section 9.0).

Certificate in Higher Education (CertHE)

The minimum and maximum academic period s of study for completion of the CertHE Programme is one year and two years, respectively from commencement.

Diploma in Higher Education(DipHE)

The minimum and maximum period of study for completion of the DipHE Programme is two years and three years, respectively from commencement.

Honours Degree

The minimum and maximum academic period for completion of the Honours degree Programme is three years and six years, respectively from commencement.

- 7.3 Subject to paragraph 7.5 below, a student will remain registered for the maximum period of the award or until they have achieved the award or the registration has been terminated, whichever comes first.
- 7.4 The period of registration may be extended if:
- (a) the student has had to resit or repeat a part of their programme of study, see Section D;
 - (b) the student has been unable to study or complete a year of study due to extenuating circumstances, see Section F;
 - (c) the student has been given permission to take a study break as described in Section 8 below.
- 7.5 A student's registration may be terminated if the student has:
- (a) committed a serious disciplinary offence or be deemed as unfit to study
 - (b) exhausted all opportunities to remedy failure or has made insufficient progress through their programme of study at the required stage;
 - (c) formally notified the institution that they wish to discontinue their studies and so discontinue their programme.
 - (d) failed to comply with their financial commitment to the partner institution

For more information, please see Section D.

Partner institution to cross reference its (OU-approved) procedure and policy

- 7.6 The date of termination recognised by The Open University will be taken as the date on which a partner institution records the student's registration as terminated.

8.0 Interruption of studies

- 8.1 A student may apply, or be required, to take a study break for a maximum period of twelve consecutive months under the agreed procedure for reasons of ill health or other extenuating circumstances (see Section F). This may be extended in exceptional circumstances as agreed between The Open University and the partner institution.

9.0 Attendance requirement

The College recognises the importance of students attending class and engaging on a regular basis with their studies to ensure they have the best possible chance of succeeding. Therefore the College expects that students as a minimum will:

- Attend all classes and academic points of contact
- Be available for and complete all forms of assessment

- Ensure they have an understanding of their programme structure and curriculum content and actively seek advice if the module and content structure is unclear;
- Use the support systems in place to seek advice and guidance if they are struggling with issues of attendance or other matters (this includes personal tutors and the learning support adviser)
- Understand the possible impact that non-attendance will have on their progression or their continued status as a student of the College;
- Inform the College of absences

Leave of Absence

A student may be authorised to take a leave of absence from their programme of study.

A student may take leave of absence from their programme of studies for a maximum of ONE year cumulatively.

A student who does not re-matriculate on the agreed recommencement date, or who has not communicated intentions towards their studies by the end of their period of leave of absence, will be deemed to have withdrawn from the programme of study.

Any module for which the first attempt assessment has not been completed at the point of leave of absence may not be resumed following return to studies; the module must be repeated. There is a financial implication for repeating a module.

D. ASSESSMENT, PROGRESSION AND AWARD OF CREDIT

10.0 The forms of assessment and its weighting and timing, and the ways in which the learning outcomes are to be demonstrated through assessment, are set out in the module and programme specifications approved by The Open University at the point of validation.

10.1 Each programme handbook contains comprehensive details of the assessment scheme as approved by The Open University in the validation process.

11.0 Minimum requirements for pass

11.1 To obtain an Open University award students are required to complete all parts of the programme's approved assessment and comply with all regulations relating to their programme of study.

11.2 The minimum aggregate pass marks for The Open University validated awards are:

40% for undergraduate programmes

50% for postgraduate programmes.

These minima apply to assessments, modules, stages and qualifications.

12.0 Identification of requirements from professional, statutory and regulatory bodies

12.1 Additional academic regulations required by any professional, statutory or recognised regulatory body will be set out in the relevant programme specification and approved by The Open University in the validation process.

13.0 Submission of assessed work

13.1 Work submitted for a summative assessment component cannot be amended after submission, or re-submitted.

13.2 Student requests for extensions to assessment deadlines will not be approved unless made in accordance with published partner institution guidelines as approved by The Open University.

13.3 Where coursework is submitted late and there are no accepted extenuating circumstances it will be penalised in line with the following tariff:

Submission within 6 working days: a 10% reduction for each working day late down to the 40% pass mark and no further.

Submission that is late by 7 or more working days: submission refused, mark of 0.

A working day is defined by the partner and submission after the deadline will be assumed to be the next working day.

14.0 Assessment scores

14.1 All undergraduate assessment will be marked on a percentage scale of 0-100.

% Scale Score	Performance Standard
70+	Excellent pass
60-69	Very Good pass
50-59	Good Pass
40-49	Pass
0-39	Fail

14.2 All postgraduate assessment will be marked on a percentage scale of 0-100. Taught postgraduate awards may include merit and/or distinction classification (see paragraph 18.1).

% Scale Score	Performance Standard
70+	Distinction
60-69	Merit
50-59	Pass
0-49	Fail

14.3 The final grade for an individual assessment component will be determined after completion of a quality assurance process (e.g. moderation, remarking) as detailed in the partner institution's OU approved policy for moderation.

14.4 Where the result of the assessment calculation creates a mark of 0.5% or greater this will be rounded up to the next full percentage point (e.g. 69.5% is rounded to 70; 59.5% to 60%; and so on). Where the calculation creates a mark below 0.5% this will be rounded down to the next full percentage point (e.g. 69.4% is rounded to 69%; 59.4% to 59%; and so on). For the purposes of rounding up or down, only the first decimal place is used.

14.5

Moderation Policy:

- *It is the College's policy that formally assessed work should be systematically moderated or double-marked, whichever is appropriate, and that anonymous marking is operated for all examinations and coursework. These procedures are designed to standardise marking and remove any unintended bias from the process.*
- *All formally assessed work must be systematically moderated or second marked. For moderation the sample should comprise 10% or a minimum of five scripts across the full spread of marks including high, middle and low performing student scripts, and for second-marking all of the scripts should be examined.*
- *Second-marking should be 'blind' to ensure that it is not unduly influenced by the first marker's marking.*
- *All non-anonymous student work must be second-marked.*
- *Dissertations should be marked by the dissertation supervisor and one other internal marker.*
- *Where there are conflicting marks arising from moderation or second-marking, the markers and moderators or first and second-markers should discuss the differences and agree a final mark. Where agreement cannot be reached the examination officer must be informed and he or she will appoint a third assessor. The results of all three assessments must then be considered by the examination officer to arrive at a final decision.*

- *Where the moderation process results in an agreed change of final module grades to the sample, this must be applied to all students within the cohort and not just the sample viewed.*

15.0 Determining module outcomes

- 15.1 The overall module mark or grade shall be determined as set out in the assessment strategy detailed in the module specification and published in the Programme Handbook.
- 15.2 A student who passes a module shall be awarded the credit for that module. The amount of credit for each module shall be set out in the programme specification and published in the Programme Handbook.
- 15.3 In order to pass a module a student must achieve the requirement of the module as set out in the module specification and published in the Programme Handbook.
- 15.4 Where a student is registered only for a module (rather than a qualification) the resit provisions set out in 17.4 (e) will apply.

16.0 Provision for viva voce examination

- 16.1 Exceptionally, viva voce examinations may be required by a Board of Examiners (with the approval of external examiners):
 - (a) to confirm the progression/result status of a student;
 - (b) to determine the result status of unusual or borderline cases;
 - (c) when there is conflicting evidence from the various assessment components;
 - (d) as an alternative or additional assessment in cases where poor performance in assessment is the result of exceptional circumstances verified through due processes.

17.0 Determining progression and qualification outcomes

17.1 Module prerequisites and co-requisites

- 17.1.1 The paths through which students are required to progress through the programme, and the elements identified as compulsory or optional, are set out in the programme specification and approved in the validation process.
- 17.1.2 Pathways through any programmes offered by partner institutions may require students to complete prerequisite or co-requisite modules.

17.2 Stage requirements

- 17.2.1 Each of the stages of an undergraduate programme is expected to consist of a total of 120 credits.
- 17.2.2 In cases where Programmes are not divided into stages (for example, most postgraduate programmes and undergraduate programmes of 120 credits or less) the provisions below apply to the whole programme.
- 17.2.3 In order to complete and pass a stage of a programme, a student must acquire the total credit set out in the programme specification at the approved qualification level for the award, or have been exempted through advanced standing, or through the implementation of the processes covering extenuating circumstances (see Section F).
- 17.2.4 The credit value of each module contributing to a stage determines its weighting in the aggregation of credit for a stage.
- 17.2.5 Where a student fails a module, the following may apply in the first instance:
- (i) Resit (see 17.3 below) – a second attempt at an assessment component following a failure at first attempt.
 - (ii) Compensation (see 17.4 below) – the award of credit by the Board of Examiners for a failed module(s) on account of good performance in other modules at the same credit level where the learning outcomes have been met.

17.3 Resit provision

- 17.3.1 Resit provision is subject to all the following conditions:
- (a) A student may resit the failed assessment components of a module only once. Where there are extenuating circumstances, the Board of Examiners has discretion to decide whether a further assessment opportunity shall be permitted, unless explicitly prohibited in the rules for the programme, as approved in the validation process.
 - (b) A student who does not complete the resit by the date specified shall not progress on the programme, except in cases where the process for allowing extenuating circumstances has been followed.
 - (c) Resits can only take place after the meeting of the Board of Examiners or following agreement by the Chair and the External Examiner of the Board.
 - (d) A student who successfully completes any required resits within a module shall be awarded the credit for the module and the result capped at the minimum pass mark for the module.

17.4 Compensation

17.4.1 Unless otherwise stated in the approved programme specification, compensation will be applied when the following conditions are met:

- (a) No more than 20 credits, or one sixth of the total credits, whichever is greater, can be compensated in any one stage of an undergraduate or postgraduate programme.
- (b) Compensation is not permitted for modules within awards of less than 120 credits in total.
- (c) It can be demonstrated that the learning outcomes of the qualification level have been satisfied. The process for evaluating cases will be identified in the programme specification.
- (d) A minimum mark of no more than 5 percentage points below the module pass mark has been achieved in the module to be compensated.
- (e) Taking the module mark to be compensated into account, an aggregate mark of 40% has been achieved for the qualification level of the undergraduate programme (except in the case of MEng Level 7 where an aggregate mark of 50% has been achieved).
- (f) In the case of postgraduate programmes, taking the module mark to be compensated into account, an aggregate mark of 50% has been achieved.
- (g) No compensation shall be permitted for any core project/dissertation module, as defined in the programme specification.
- (h) A student who receives a compensated pass in a module shall be awarded the credit for the module. The original component mark(s) (i.e. below the pass mark) shall be retained in the record of marks and used in the calculation of the aggregate mark for the stage or qualification.

17.5 Options for the repeat of study

17.5.1 If, having exhausted all permitted resit and compensation opportunities, a student is still unable to pass, the Board of Examiners may, at its discretion, permit one of the following repeat options:

- (a) Partial repeat as fully registered student:
 - (i) The student is not permitted to progress to the next stage of the programme but must repeat the failed modules and/or components in full during the following academic year,
 - (ii) The student has full access to all facilities and support for the modules and/or components being repeated,
 - (iii) The marks that can be achieved for the modules and/or components being repeated will be capped at the module and/or component pass marks,
 - (iv) The student retains the marks for the modules and/or components already passed,
 - (v) No further resit opportunities are permitted.
- (b) Partial repeat for assessment only:

- (i) As in paragraph 17.5.1(a) except that access to facilities and support will be limited to certain learning resources for the module(s) and/or component(s) being repeated. Participation will only be allowed for relevant revision sessions and assessments.
- (c) Full repeat:
 - (i) This is only permitted where the student has extenuating circumstances;
 - (ii) The student does not progress to the next stage of the programme but instead repeats all the modules in the current stage during the following academic year,
 - (iii) The student has full access to all facilities and support,
 - (iv) The marks that can be achieved are not capped, and the student is normally entitled to the resit opportunities available. However, a student is not able to carry forward any credit from previous attempts at the stage.

17.5.2 Where resit, compensation and repeat opportunities have been exhausted, a Board of Examiners may recommend a student for an exit award as defined in Section 20 below.

18.0 Grading and Classification Awards except Bachelor Honours Degrees

- 18.1 Validated taught awards, including Masters' degrees, consisting of at least 120 credits at FHEQ level 4 (SCQF 7 for Scotland) or above may be awarded with Merit or Distinction with the exception of honours degrees where the award of Merit or Distinction will not apply.
- 18.2 For the award of Distinction, the overall aggregate mark will be 70% or above.
- 18.3 For the award of Merit, the overall aggregate mark will be 60% - 69%.
- 18.4 Where the final result of the classification calculation creates a mark of 0.5% or greater this will be rounded up to the next full percentage point (e.g. 69.5% is rounded to 70%; 59.5% to 60%; and so on). Where the calculation creates a mark below 0.5% this will be rounded down to the next full percentage point (e.g. 69.4% is rounded to 69%; 59.4% to 59%; and so on). For the purposes of rounding up or down, only the first decimal place is used.

19.0 Bachelor Honours Degree Classification

- 19.1 Classification of bachelor degrees will be based on the average mark across all modules within Stage 3 (usually Credit Level 6) and Stage 2 (usually Credit Level 5) at a ratio of 2:1 respectively unless the requirements of a Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) state otherwise.

19.2 Honours degrees are classified as:

First class	Aggregate mark of 70% or above
Upper Second class	Aggregate mark between 60% and 69%
Lower Second class	Aggregate mark between 50% and 59%
Third class	Aggregate mark between 40% and 49%

19.3 Where students have directly entered a Qualification Level 6 top-up award (e.g. having previously undertaken a Higher National Diploma (HND) or Foundation Degree (FD) award) the calculation for the honours classification will be based solely on all credits at Credit Level 6.

19.4 Performance in work for which an award of credit for prior learning has been made is not taken into account in the calculation of the final award. See section 22 for rules related to credit for prior learning.

19.5 Where the final result of the classification calculation creates a mark of 0.5% or greater this will be rounded up to the next full percentage point (e.g. 69.5% is rounded to 70%; 59.5% to 60%; and so on). Where the calculation creates a mark below 0.5% this will be rounded down to the next full percentage point (e.g. 69.4% is rounded to 69%; 59.4% to 59%; and so on). For the purposes of rounding up or down, only the first decimal place is used.

20.0 Provision for exit awards

20.1 Programmes must make provision for exit awards at intermediate stages, for which clear learning outcomes must be stated and laid out in programme specifications approved by The Open University in the validation process.

21.0 Posthumous and Aegrotat awards

21.1 Should a student be prevented by illness, or other circumstances, from completing the final assessed component of the programme, the board of examiners, having considered the relevant evidence (including medical certification) may make a recommendation that an Aegrotat award be made. Such exceptions are limited to students who are permanently unable to continue their studies and are registered for the final module that would complete a qualification, and have been assessed on at least part of the module. The board must be satisfied that the student's prior performance shows beyond reasonable doubt that they would have passed but for the illness, or other circumstances.

21.2 Posthumous awards are permitted for all programmes. The classification for such awards is based on past performance and is recommended to the Open University Ratification Panel for approval.

22.0 Recognition of prior learning

22.1 Students who are able to demonstrate that they have already fulfilled some of the learning outcomes of the programme by means other than attendance on the planned programme, and will be able, by completing the remaining requirements,

to fulfil the learning outcomes of the programme and attain the standard required for the award, may be admitted with advanced standing, thus exempting them from some modules or stages of the programme.

If the student's prior learning is not certificated, the partner institution itself will assess the student's learning directly, either by requiring the applicant to take the normal progression assessments of the programme or by some other appropriate form of assessment. This will be laid out in the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) policy and procedure as approved by OU at Institutional approval or review.

- 22.2 A student admitted on the basis of uncertificated learning and experience or through prior certified learning is subject to the same principles of admission as all other students on that programme. Subject to the requirements of any Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) requirements the partner institution has discretion to admit a student with exemption from certain elements of the programme or with specific credit.
- 22.3 A student may be awarded credit for prior learning (certified, experiential or uncertified), towards the requirements of a named award up to 50% of the total credit requirements for that award.
- 22.4 Students entering a validated qualification level 6 'top-up' programme, comprising 120 credits and designed to build on a lower credit bearing award, may not enter the programme with credit. (See section 19.3 on calculation of classification.)
- 22.5 Credit for prior learning (certified, experiential or uncertified) is not allowed at, the final stage (credit level 6) of a Bachelor's Degree or for the thesis/dissertation module on a Masters programme.

E. ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

- 23.0 Academic misconduct is defined as any improper activity or behavior by a student which may give that student, or another student, an unpermitted academic advantage in a summative assessment. In investigating and dealing with cases of suspected misconduct, partner institutions will follow the policies and processes approved at Institutional approval or review.
- 23.1 The following is a non-exhaustive list of examples of academic misconduct which will be considered under these Regulations:
- 23.2 Plagiarism: representing another person's work or ideas as one's own, for example by failing to follow convention in acknowledging sources, use of quotation marks, etc. This includes the unauthorised use of one student's work by another student and the commissioning, purchase and submission of a piece of work, in part or whole, as the student's own.
- Note: Where a student has an acknowledged learning disability, a proof-reader may be used to ensure that the student's meaning is not misunderstood as a result of the quality and standard of writing, unless a partner institution policy specifically prohibits this. Where permitted, a proof-reader may identify spelling and basic grammatical errors. Inaccuracies in academic content should not be corrected nor should the structure of the piece of work be changed.
- 23.3 Collusion: cooperation in order to gain an unpermitted advantage. This may occur where students have consciously colluded on a piece of work, in part or whole, and passed it off as their own individual efforts or where one student has authorised another to use their work, in part or whole, and to submit it as their own.
- Note: legitimate input from tutors or approved readers or scribes is not considered to be collusion.
- 23.4 Misconduct in examinations (including in-class tests).
- 23.5 Processes for dealing with Academic misconduct and the penalties

1 General

1.1 The College takes a serious view of all acts of academic misconduct. Such acts are considered dishonest and as attempts to gain unfair advantage. Acts of academic misconduct can take many forms. They are likely to fall into one or more of the following categories:

- *Plagiarism - taking the work of another person or source and using it as if it were one's own*
- *Self-plagiarism (or double submission) – resubmitting previously submitted work on one or more occasions (without proper acknowledgement) including work submitted for credits at a previous institution*
- *Collusion - working with others on tasks that should be carried out on an individual basis*
- *Falsifying experimental or other investigative results*
- *Taking unauthorised material (including electronic devices) into an examination*
- *Contracting another person to produce a piece of assessed work*
- *Producing a piece of assessed work for another person*
- *Copying from, or communicating with, another examination candidate during an examination*

1.2 The College has a responsibility to take appropriate steps to make students aware of the nature of academic misconduct, particularly during their first year of study, but also periodically thereafter. However, it is the responsibility of students individually to ensure that they sufficiently understand what is involved. The College regards this as an essential part of the learning process and does not accept ignorance as a defence.

1.3 Dissertations and any form of assessment submission must carry a signed pro-forma statement that the student understands the nature of academic misconduct, is aware of the College's policy and confirms that what is submitted is all their own work.

1.4 The following statement should be used by teaching staff on their assessment submission cover sheets or on the assessment/question paper if a cover sheet is not used:

“Work which is submitted for assessment must be your own work. All students should note that the College has a formal policy on academic misconduct which can be found on VLE.”

1.5 All instances of academic misconduct in exams, class tests and all other assignments will be considered together, and will count cumulatively in the application of the set penalties

2 Plagiarisms

2.1 Definitions

To plagiarise is to represent as one’s own the intellectual property of another. The Online Oxford English Dictionary definition of plagiarism is as follows:

“the practice of taking someone else’s work or ideas and passing them off as one’s own”

Accordingly, the reproduction in a submitted assignment of another’s work without due acknowledgement is plagiarism since the writer is presenting as original work what is in fact copying. When the assignment is submitted for assessment, plagiarism is the equivalent of cheating in an examination.

Such unacknowledged indebtedness is plagiarism whether the source is reproduced word-for-word or is paraphrased. It is plagiarism whether the passage is brief or extensive, and whether the source is printed, electronic or hand-written.

Self-plagiarism can arise from a student using his or her own previous work. Self-plagiarism includes using work that has already been submitted for assessment at this university or for any other academic award and is treated as plagiarism

2.2 Due Acknowledgement

2.2.1 It is not sufficient merely to list a source in an appended bibliography, or in the body of an assignment to express a general indebtedness. To avoid plagiarism, all sources must be specifically, precisely and accurately referenced in accordance with good academic practice.

2.2.2 When a source is directly quoted word-for-word, the passage quoted should be placed within quotation marks or indented and the source accurately referenced, in parenthesis, in a footnote, or in an endnote, according to a recognised system. There must be no ambiguity about where the quotation ends or begins.

2.2.3 The source of any data cited (e.g. figures, tables, charts) should be made explicit. When ideas, or an argument, are reproduced from a source in a general or paraphrased way, the source must be acknowledged. When submitted work is dependent upon a lecture or tutorial for its argument, this fact must be acknowledged.

2.2.4 In the case of group work submitted for assessment, the relevant module information will make clear whether the submission is collective or individual. In the case of a collective submission, indebtedness to sources must be acknowledged in the usual way, but it is not necessary for work to be attributed to individual members of the group. In the case of individual submissions resulting from group or collaborative work, it is the responsibility of each individual student to make sure that the submission is his or her own work. Acknowledgement

should be made to the contribution of other members of the group when this is drawn upon.

2.3 Procedures

2.3.1 All students in all years of study for all modules are allowed open access to the College's approved plagiarism detection software with multiple submissions on all text based assignments.

2.3.2 Final copies of all text based assignments must be submitted through the VLE by the due date for that assignment. (. In case of an off-line submission, students are required to provide the module leader with the softcopy the assessment (e.g. code-listing, etc.) within seven working days following the submission date for plagiarism check purposes.)

2.3.3 Formal procedures should be instituted against a student where the relevant unacknowledged source can be established or there is evidence from the student's previous portfolio of work (including assignments and examination scripts) that work is not the student's own.

2.3.4 The formal procedures requires that the student should be invited to attend a meeting with the Examination Officer and the module leader. The student may be accompanied by a person of their choosing. The purpose of the meeting is to confirm the occurrence of plagiarism and the classification of the offence, explain the penalty system, and counsel the student about all forms of plagiarism. It is not the business of the meeting to seek to determine motivation. An Academic Misconduct Report Form should be completed and submitted by the examination officer within one week of the meeting. Submitting the form attaches it to an e-mail which is sent to the student as a record of the meeting and also to the admin office

so that the offence can be recorded and the appropriate penalty applied. The admin officer will inform both the student and the module leader of the final penalty to be applied.

2.3.5 The failure of the student(s) to attend this meeting does not prevent the examination officer from taking appropriate action in accordance with this policy. Where a student has documented good cause for being unable to attend the proposed meeting, but indicates that they wish to attend, a suitable revised meeting date must be arranged.

2.3.6 All instances of proven plagiarism should be notified to the relevant Board of Examiners.

2.3.7 The same procedure is followed in cases where two or more students submit similar or identical work. However, it is recognised that in such cases, whilst the fact of plagiarism is clear, it may not have been possible to determine culpability prior to the meeting. In such cases, the meeting itself will serve as a forum in which to establish the facts and determine culpability.

2.4 Penalties

2.4.1 The general principle is that the penalty should be appropriate to the scale of the offence.

2.4.2 When a first offence occurs for students in their first year of study at The Ada College for Digital Skills, and two or more assessments are submitted simultaneously or in close succession, the student must be counselled about the first offence, have time to take this on board and rectify their poor academic practice in subsequent assessments before a second penalty can be applied. For

all other simultaneous offences in all other years, these cases should be reported to the College, who will determine the penalty to be applied.

2.4.3 Where it becomes apparent to the Examinations Office that a student in their first year of study at Ada College has been penalised for plagiarism on different modules in the same semester, the Examinations Officer will inform the leader of the module to which the penalty will apply and will also report this to the Board of Examiners. The assignment with the later due date will be counted as a second or subsequent offence. The Examinations Officer will inform the student of the decision.

2.4.4 The Examinations Officer will refer cases that reach the trigger points, set out in the table of penalties, to the Registry. A student required to withdraw from registration for the degree will be entitled to any award for which he or she is qualified.

2.4.5 Normally a student may be permitted to repeat or substitute a module which has been failed because of a penalty for plagiarism, if that failure precludes the student from graduating.

2.4.6 Normally a student may be permitted to resubmit their dissertation which has been failed because of a penalty for plagiarism (up to a maximum of 15 penalty points). The resubmission would be on the existing topic and the mark would be capped at 50.

2.4.7 In a case where two or more students submit similar or identical work and culpability cannot be established, the penalty shall be applied equally to both students.

2.4.8 All decisions relating to academic misconduct are communicated to the student by Student Administration via the student's college e-mail account.

2.4.9 The College has based its penalties for academic misconduct on the work undertaken by plagiarismadvice.org and the AMBeR project. Penalties listed below, relate to a points-based tariff system to ensure consistency and fairness in the handling of academic misconduct.

Assign points based on the following criteria

AMOUNT / EXTENT

Below 5% AND less than two sentences 80 points

Between 5% and 20% OR more than two sentences but not more than two paragraphs 105 points

Between 20% and 50% OR more than two paragraphs but not more than five paragraphs 130 points

Above 50% OR more than five paragraphs 160 points

Submission purchased from essay mill or ghostwriting service 225 points

Points Available Penalties

280 – 329 • No further action beyond formal warning

330 – 379 • Assignment awarded 0% - resubmission required, with no penalty on mark

380 – 479 • Assignment awarded 0% - resubmission required but mark capped or reduced

480 – 524 • Module awarded 0% - re-sit required, but mark capped or reduced

525 – 559

- *Award classification reduced*
- *Qualification reduced (e.g. Honours -> no Honours)*
- *Expelled from institution but credits retained*
- *Expelled from institution with credits withdrawn*

560+

- *Qualification reduced (e.g. Honours -> no Honours)*
- *Expelled from institution but credits retained*
- *Expelled from institution with credits withdrawn*

3. Examinations and Class Tests

3.1 *The Regulations on Examination Procedures state “that to make use of unfair means in any College examination or test, or to assist another student to make use of such unfair means is an academic offence”*

3.2 *The use of scrap paper within the examination room is not permitted. Candidates may make any rough notes in the booklets provided by the College in the examination room. Any other paper, or other such material that may contain notes or prompts of any sort on a candidate's desk or person, will be identified as unauthorised. Possession of unauthorised material is classed as academic misconduct.*

3.3 *Unless authorised, possession or use of mobile phones and other electronic devices in the examination room, or during a respite break from an examination room, is strictly prohibited.*

3.4 *If an invigilator suspects irregularity in the conduct of a candidate within, or during a respite break from, the examination room, the invigilator will inform the*

candidate, remove any possible prohibited material and endorse the candidate's answer book. The candidate will be allowed to complete the examination and at the end of the examination the invigilator will inform the candidate that, in accordance with exam regulations,

3.5 A report will be made to the Examinations Office to include a record of observed usage of prohibited material, and that the student will be called to a meeting at a later date. Personal electronic equipment should be returned to the candidate at the end of the examination. In the event that the student refuses to hand over the prohibited material, the student will be asked to leave the examination. Invigilators should ensure that there is minimal disruption to other examinees.

3.6 The College Examinations Office shall receive a report from the invigilator as soon as possible after the event, and instances of academic misconduct will be recorded on the College's Register.

3.7 In all cases of infringement the student should be invited to attend a meeting with the Examination Officer and one other member of staff. The student may be accompanied by a person of their choosing. The purpose of the meeting is to confirm the academic misconduct and the classification of the offence, explain the penalty system and counsel the student about all forms of academic misconduct. It is not the business of the meeting to seek to determine motivation. An Academic Misconduct Report Form should be completed and submitted by the Examination Officer, within one week of the meeting. Submitting the form attaches it to an e-mail which is sent to the student as a record of the meeting and also to Registry so that the offence can be recorded and the appropriate penalty applied. Registry will inform both the student and the module leader of the final penalty to be applied. All instances should be notified to the relevant board of examiners.

3.8 The failure of the student to attend this meeting does not prevent the Examination Officer from taking appropriate action in accordance with this policy. Where a student has documented good cause for being unable to attend the proposed meeting, but indicates that they wish to attend, a suitable revised meeting date must be arranged.

F. EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES

- 24.0 The Open University recognises that students may suffer from a sudden illness, or other serious and unforeseen event or set of circumstances, which adversely affects their ability to complete an assessment, or the results they obtain for an assessment. In such cases the partner institution's extenuating circumstances procedures will be applied, as approved in institutional review.
- 24.1 A student who is prevented from attending or completing a formal assessment component or who feels that their performance would be (or has been) seriously impaired by extenuating circumstances, may submit a deferral request. Further information is available from the partner institution.

Personal Mitigating Circumstances

The Ada College recognises that students may suffer from a sudden illness, or other serious and unforeseen event or set of circumstances, which adversely affects their ability to complete an assessment, or the results they obtain for an assessment.

Personal Mitigating Circumstances are situations or circumstances of a serious nature (i.e. not day-to-day minor illnesses or circumstances you could have easily avoided through prior planning). If you believe that they have adversely affected your ability to submit coursework on time or to submit it at all or to attend an exam, then you may wish to bring them to the attention of the examiners. The

circumstances might include serious illness, bereavement or any personal issue that has affected you for a significant period of time during your studies and/or during the examination period and has had a recognisable effect on your studies and assessments. PMC requests can only be submitted for:

- Late submission*
- Non-submission*
- Non-attendance at an exam or similar type of assessment*

Normally PMC requests cannot be submitted because you feel that your mitigating circumstances have affected the standard of work you have already submitted or your performance in an exam you have already sat.

In the normal course of your studies you should talk to your personal tutor about problems that are affecting your studies and/or your life at home. You may wish the College to take account of these circumstances in a formal way when the Academic Board is making decisions about your progression or award. If so, it is your responsibility to complete a Personal Mitigating Circumstances (PMC) form to explain the nature of your circumstances and how these have affected your assessments.

You must submit a PMC form together with relevant evidence (Medical evidence submitted in support of a claim for extenuating circumstances should be provided by a qualified medical practitioner) before the published deadline for the assessment submission or the date of the examination within 7 calendar days, whichever is sooner. If a student fails, without good cause, to provide the College with information about mitigating circumstances within the timescales specified above, the College has authority to reject the request on those grounds. Before

submitting a PMC form, please make sure you understand the procedure properly.

Guidance notes are available on the PMC form.

PMC requests are considered by the Teaching, Learning & Assessment Committee (TLAC) who will verify the authenticity of any evidence submitted and then make recommendations to the Board of Examiners (BoE). Upon receipt of recommendations from the TLAC for investigating mitigating circumstances, the BoE will decide whether to:

a) provide a student with the opportunity to take the affected assessment(s) as if for the first time i.e. a 'sit' or 'submit', allowing them to be given the full marks achieved for the examination or assessment, rather than imposing a cap;

b) waive late submission penalties;

c) determine that there is sufficient evidence of the achievement of the intended learning outcomes from other pieces of assessment in the module(s) for an overall mark to be derived;

d) note the accepted extenuation for the module(s) and recommend that it is taken into account at the point of award and classification.

- The Board of Examiners, depending on the circumstances, may exercise discretion in deciding on the particular form any reassessment should take.

Options are a viva voce examination, additional assessment tasks designed to show whether the student has satisfied the programme learning outcomes, review of previous work, or normal assessment at the next available opportunity. The student will not be put in a position of unfair advantage or disadvantage: the aim will be to enable the student to be assessed on equal terms with their cohort.

-The module marks released following the meeting of the Board of Examiners should clearly identify results where extenuation has been considered and applied.

-If a student fails, without good cause, to provide the TLAC with information about extenuating circumstances within the timescales specified, the TLAC has authority to reject the request on those grounds.

- 24.2 Students are responsible for ensuring that the partner institution is notified of any extenuating circumstances at the time they occur and for supplying supporting documentation by the published deadline.
- 24.3 If a student is unable to attend an examination or other assessment event because of extenuating circumstances, they must inform the Partner institution as soon as possible and provide supporting evidence before published deadlines or within 7 calendar days, whichever is sooner. If a student cannot submit evidence by published deadlines, they must submit details of the extenuating circumstances with an indication that evidence will be submitted within 7 calendar days.
- 24.4 Medical evidence submitted in support of a claim for extenuating circumstances should be provided by a qualified medical practitioner.
- 24.5 The partner institution will verify the authenticity of any evidence submitted.
- 24.6 Upon receipt of recommendations from the panel or body responsible for investigating extenuating circumstances, the Board of Examiners, or its subsidiary board, will decide whether to:
- (a) provide a student with the opportunity to take the affected assessment(s) as if for the first time i.e. a 'sit' or 'submit', allowing them to be given the full marks achieved for the examination or assessment, rather than imposing a cap;
 - (b) waive late submission penalties;
 - (c) determine that there is sufficient evidence of the achievement of the intended learning outcomes from other pieces of assessment in the module(s) for an overall mark to be derived;
 - (d) note the accepted extenuation for the module(s) and recommend that it is taken into account at the point of award and classification.
- 24.7 The Board of Examiners, depending on the circumstances, may exercise discretion in deciding on the particular form any reassessment should take. Options are a viva voce examination, additional assessment tasks designed to show whether the student has satisfied the programme learning outcomes, review of previous work, or normal assessment at the next available opportunity. The student will not be put in a position of unfair advantage or disadvantage: the aim will be to enable the student to be assessed on equal terms with their cohort.

- 24.8 The module marks released following the meeting of the Board of Examiners should clearly identify results where extenuation has been considered and applied.
- 24.9 If a student fails, without good cause, to provide the responsible body with information about extenuating circumstances within the timescales specified in the partner institution policy, the responsible body has authority to reject the request on those grounds.

G. BOARDS OF EXAMINERS

25.0 Appointment of Boards of Examiners

- 25.1 For every programme (or subject area in a Liberal Arts or Combined Studies programme) leading to a validated award of The Open University there will be a Board of Examiners whose constitution (including a note of those members constituting a quorum) and terms of reference will have been approved by The Open University as part of the Institutional approval and review process.
- 25.2 In the case of large modular programmes, there may be subsidiary boards with designated responsibility for a cognate group of units or subjects. Where this is the case, the relative responsibilities, powers and terms of reference of the different boards will have been approved by The Open University (as part of the Institutional approval and review process).

26.0 Membership of Boards of Examiners

- 26.1 The Academic Board (or equivalent body) of the partner institution is required to agree the actual membership of Boards of Examiners, at the start of each academic year.
- 26.2 All External Examiner(s) for the programme/subject area will be members of the board. In the case where institutions have many External Examiners then Chief External Examiners only will be required to be members.
- 26.3 Under no circumstances may a student of the partner institution of The Open University or studying for an award of The Open University be a member of, or attend, a Board of Examiners. A person who is otherwise qualified to be an internal examiner for a programme, for example as a member of academic staff or as an approved External Examiner, and is coincidentally registered as a student on another programme either at the same institution or elsewhere, will not be disqualified from carrying out normal examining commitments.
- 26.4 The Chair of the Board of Examiners will be a senior member of staff, commonly a Head of Department or Dean of Faculty, not directly involved in the delivery of the programme/subject area or the assessment of students in the programme or subject area considered by the Board of Examiners, or delegated nominee.
- 26.5 The Registrar (or equivalent) or a nominee at the partner institution – acting with the authority of the Secretary to the Academic Board – should normally be appointed as Secretary to the Board of Examiners.
- 26.6 A member of The Open University staff must be present at any Board where final decisions on recommendations for an Open University award is made and where decisions about progression are made. Although not normal practice The Open University reserves the right to Chair the Board of Examiners or any subsidiary boards.

1. Each Programme Board of Examiners must include:

- a) A Chair**
- b) A Deputy Chair**
- c) One Internal Examiner for each main subject area covered**
- d) A Faculty Representative (as a non-voting observer)**
- e) A named secretary (as a non-voting attendee)**
- g) The OU representative**

2. Where the Chair of the Board considers it appropriate, an Internal or External Examiner may be appointed to examine across more than one subject area.

3. Other Faculties involved with the delivery and examination of a programme may be represented by an appropriate Faculty Representative.

4. The secretary to the Board should be responsible for coordinating all communications with Internal Examiners and External Examiners.

Quoracy

1. The minimum number of examiners permissible at a full meeting of a Programme Board of Examiners is either five members or one fifth of the membership, whichever is the higher number. This must include the Chair or Deputy Chair and at least one External Examiner for each main subject area covered.

2. The above quoracy also applies, where authority is delegated to a sub group to consider resit or deferred students.

Candidate Anonymity

1. All marks, progression decisions and awards considered by a Programme or Faculty Board of Examiners must be considered on an anonymous basis.

Confidentiality

1. All Programme and Faculty Board members have the following responsibilities:

a) To preserve absolutely the secrecy of unseen written examination papers at all stages until the papers have been completed by candidates in accordance with the instructions prescribed by Ada.

b) To preserve confidentiality in respect of the proceedings of the Programme or Faculty Board of Examiners.

c) To preserve confidentiality in respect of final awards until results have been formally published.

d) To comply with the Data Protection Act 1998 in accordance with the instructions of Student & Registry Services and Ada's data protection policy.

Conflicts of Interest

1. Examiners, whether Internal, Assistant Internal or External, who have a personal or professional conflict of interest should not be appointed to a Programme Board of Examiners.

2. External Examiners who have any current teaching or other collaborative activity with the staff or students examined by a Programme Board of Examiners may not be appointed

3. Examiners should also declare any interest in the future research supervision of a student. Such an interest will not debar an examiner from the assessment of that student but should be declared when that student's results are being discussed at the Programme Board of Examiners meeting.

27.0 Authority of Boards of Examiners

27.1 The Board of Examiners is authorised to determine the progression of students in accordance with these academic regulations and to recommend progression or the conferment of validated awards of The Open University.

- 27.2 All decisions related to a student's progression, final results, and awards, will be approved by a properly constituted Board of Examiners.
- 27.3 No other body has authority to recommend conferment of an award or progression, nor to amend the decision of an approved and properly constituted Board of Examiners acting within its terms of reference and in accordance with the regulations for the programme of study. A Board of Examiners may, however, be required to review a decision, or may have that decision annulled under the Appeals procedure.

28.0 Subsidiary Boards of Examiners

- 28.1 Any subsidiary board of examiners (with designated responsibility for a cognate group of units or subjects) will include at least one approved External Examiner.
- 28.2 The rights and duties of External Examiners on subsidiary boards are the same as those of External Examiners on the parent board except that the subsidiary board of examiners only makes recommendations to the parent board.
- 28.3 Subsidiary boards will exercise responsibility for assessing students but will not make decisions on progression or awards. These will remain the responsibility of the parent Board of Examiners.
- 28.4 Once a subsidiary board has confirmed marks or grades for a student these will not normally be varied by the parent board – although the parent board retains the authority to reach its own conclusion on the overall performance and grading of each student. It follows that, while a subsidiary board will be charged with recommending arrangements for reassessment of a failed student, only the parent board – having confirmed the fail and determined a student's right to retrieve – can approve the reassessment arrangements.

29.0 Authority of External Examiners

- 29.1 External Examiners are appointed by, and report to The Open University. The terms under which they engage with the partner institution and the programmes to which they are appointed are those determined by The Open University.

30.0 Conditions of conferment by The Open University

- 30.1 The OU may approve conferment of a validated award when the following conditions are satisfied:
- (a) The student has been a registered student at a partner institution at the time of the assessment for an award and the appropriate fee to The Open University has been paid by the institution.
 - (b) Details of the student's full name, full postal address, email address, telephone numbers, date of birth, gender, programme of study, award and all required information have been forwarded to The Open University.

- (c) The institution at which the student has been registered has confirmed that the student has completed a programme of study approved by The Open University as leading to the award being recommended.
- (d) The award has been recommended by a Board of Examiners convened, constituted and acting under regulations approved by The Open University and including all members appointed by The Open University as External Examiners for the programme.
- (e) The recommendation of the award has been signed by the Chair of the Board of Examiners, the External Examiners and The Open University's representative at the Board of Examiners, confirming that the assessments have been carried out in accordance with the requirements of The Open University and that the recommendations have received the written approval of the External Examiners.

H. ACADEMIC APPEALS AND COMPLAINTS

31.0 Grounds for appeal

- 31.1 There shall be no appeal against an assessment result determined in accordance with paragraph 15.1 above, except on the grounds that the approved policy for moderation has not been followed.
- 31.2 A student may appeal against a decision of a Board of Examiners made under section G 27 and 28 above, only if one or more of the following grounds apply:
- (a) Where the student provides written evidence in support of a claim that performance in the assessment was adversely affected by extenuating circumstances which the student was unable or, for valid reasons, unwilling to divulge before the Board of Examiners reached its decision; or
 - (b) Where there is prima facie evidence, whether provided by the student or otherwise, that:
 - (i) there has been a material administrative error; or
 - (ii) the examinations or other assessments were not conducted in accordance with the regulations for the programme and/or special arrangements formally agreed; or
 - (iii) some other material irregularity relevant to the Board of Examiner's decision has occurred.
- 31.3 Disagreement with the academic judgement of a Board of Examiners cannot of itself constitute grounds for an appeal.
- 31.4 An appeal must be made within the time limits and in the manner prescribed in the partner institution's approved appeals procedure set out in paragraph 32 below.
- 31.5 A formal complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction with a service provided or the lack of a service. It must relate to services that students were led to believe would be provided. Students should refer to procedures set out in paragraph 32 below.
- 31.6 Where the student raises a matter of concern that does not meet the grounds for appeal under this paragraph, the matter may be dealt with as a formal complaint. Please note that, even in the event that a complaint is upheld, where there is no right of appeal, an assessment result made under paragraph 15.1 or a decision of a Board of Examiners made under section G 27 and 28 cannot be changed.

32.0 Academic Appeals and Complaints procedures

1. General

An appeal is a request for a review of a decision of an academic body charged with making decisions on student progression, assessment and awards. A complaint is different, and arises from a specific concern about the adequacy or quality of the provision of a programme of study or related academic service. The College believes that students should be able to raise matters of concern without fear of disadvantage and in the knowledge that their privacy and confidentiality will be respected as will that of members of staff.

2. How to make an appeal

You are strongly encouraged to discuss any matters leading you to consider appealing with your Personal Tutor before submitting a formal appeal. Depending on the circumstances, your personal tutor may be able to help you resolve your concerns in consultation with the Board of Examiners without the need for you to make a formal appeal. If you decide to appeal, you may wish to seek advice on completing the Appeal Form with your personal tutor.

3. Timescale for appeals

Your appeal must be submitted in writing to the CEO's Office within one calendar month of the date of the letter notifying you of the decision against which the appeal is directed. The College aims to deal with appeals as quickly as possible. However, you should be aware that it may take some time before your appeal is resolved. You may be asked to provide further information before your appeal can be considered

4. Action following appeal procedures

The student will be sent a written statement setting out the decision that has been made and the reasons for reaching that decision, together with any actions required by the student or the College to follow up and implement that decision.

The outcome will be either to:

- rescind the original decision, or*
- vary the original decision, or*
- reject the appeal.*

The written statement will also include details of any further right of appeal available to the student if they remain dissatisfied with the final outcome of the College's procedures. This will include, where applicable, the right to appeal to The Open University

5. Complaints Handling Procedure

The College is committed to providing all its users with high quality services and we aim to do so fairly and efficiently. However there may be times where a student, feels that his/her expectations have not been met. Where this happens, our procedures aim to make it as easy as possible for users to submit a complaint. The procedures and guides listed describe our complaints procedure and how to make a complaint. You can complain about things like:

- The quality and standard of any service we provide or fail to provide*
- The quality of our facilities and learning resources*
- The quality and standards of academic services and personal support services available to you*
- Failure of the College to follow appropriate administrative processes*
- Unfair treatment or inappropriate behaviour by a student or staff member.*

You can make your complaint in writing by completing the complaint form, available on VLE. We have a two-stage complaints procedure. We will always try to deal with your complaint quickly. But if it is clear that the matter will need a detailed investigation, we will tell you and keep you updated on our progress.

Stage 1: frontline resolution

We will always try to resolve your complaint quickly, within five working days if we can. If you are dissatisfied with our response, you can ask us to consider your complaint at Stage 2.

Stage 2: investigation

We will look at your complaint at this stage if you are dissatisfied with our response at Stage 1. We also look at some complaints immediately at this stage, if it is clear that they are complex or need detailed investigation.

We will acknowledge your complaint within three working days. We will give you our decision as soon as possible. This will be after no more than 20 working days unless there is clearly a good reason for needing more time.

33.0 Action following appeal procedures

- 33.1 The student will be sent a written statement setting out the decision that has been made and the reasons for reaching that decision, together with any actions required by the student or the partner institution to follow up and implement that decision. Partner institutions will align to Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) timelines. The written statement will also include details of any further right of appeal available to the student if they remain dissatisfied with the final outcome of the institution's procedures. This will include, where applicable, the right to appeal to The Open University under paragraph 34 below.

34.0 Appeals to The Open University

- 34.1 There shall be a final right of appeal to The Open University against a decision of a Board of Examiners only if the appeal is against a decision related to either:

- (a) progression from one stage to another of the programme to the next; or
- (b) a final award;

and both of the following criteria are met:

- (a) all appropriate internal procedures at the partner institution have been exhausted;
- (b) there are reasonable grounds to believe that the partner institution's internal procedures and regulations for dealing with appeals were not implemented correctly or fairly.

The procedure for appealing to The Open University is set out in The Open University Handbook for Validated Awards.

I. TRANSCRIPTS, DIPLOMA SUPPLEMENTS AND CERTIFICATES

35.0 Transcript

- 35.1 The transcript is produced by the partner institution and provides a comprehensible verifiable record of a student's learning. The standard content of a transcript is listed in Appendix 1 of these Regulations.
- 35.2 The transcript is issued to the student after each stage of their programme is completed.
- 35.3 If a student has completed only a part of a programme of study, without fulfilling the full requirements for an award, a transcript is issued.

36.0 Diploma supplement

- 36.1 The diploma supplement is issued to a student solely on the successful completion of a qualification.
- 36.2 The diploma supplement is produced by the partner institution and provides students who have completed an Open University validated award with a formal, verifiable and comprehensive record of learning and achievement. The standard content of a diploma supplement are set out in Appendix 2 to these Regulations.

37.0 Certificates

- 37.1 The Open University issues a certificate for each conferred award. The standard content of a Certificate for a validated award is set out in Appendix 3 to these Regulations.
- 37.2 Students awarded any qualification of The Open University, will be issued with a certificate in respect of that qualification in the name held in formal records at the point when the qualification is conferred. A certificate will not be amended or

reissued in a different name if a change of name is notified after the date the qualification is conferred, except in the case of an error by The Open University in recording personal details, or if a valid request is made under the Gender Recognition Act 2004. A duplicate certificate will be issued in the same name as the original certificate (unless amended as above), even if a change of name may subsequently have been notified.

Content of transcripts

Partner institutions will present the information in the format that they consider to be most appropriate. The minimum requirements for the content of transcripts of The Open University validated awards are:

- (a) Student details
- (b) Details of the qualification, including any professional, statutory or regulatory body accreditation or recognition.
- (c) Up-to-date details of learning and achievement, i.e. modules or units studied, credits awarded, marks or grades achieved and the date and year in which credits were awarded.
- (d) Up-to-date details of non-completion, including the number of attempts taken to complete a module.
- (e) Other types of learning, e.g. study abroad, work placement and work experience, accreditation of prior certificated and experiential learning, or accreditation of key skills.

Outline structure for the diploma supplement

The following information will be given in the diploma supplement:

1 Information identifying the holder of the qualification

- 1.1 Family name(s)
- 1.2 Given name(s)
- 1.3 Date of birth (day/month/year)
- 1.4 Student identification number or code (if available)

2 Information identifying the qualification

- 2.1 Name of qualification and (if applicable) title conferred (in original language)
- 2.2 Main field(s) of study for the qualification
- 2.3 Name and status of awarding institution (in original language)
- 2.4 Name, address and status of institution (if different from 2.3) delivering studies
- 2.4a Principal location of study (if different from 2.4 above)
- 2.5 Language(s) of instruction/examination

3 Information on the level of the qualification

- 3.1 Level of qualification
- 3.2 Official length of programme
- 3.3 Access requirements(s)

4 Information on the contents and results gained

- 4.1 Mode of study
- 4.2 Programme requirements
- 4.3 Programme details (e.g. modules or units studied) and the individual grades/marks/credits obtained
- 4.4 Grading scheme and, if available, grade distribution guidance
- 4.5 Overall classification of the qualification (in original language)

5 Information on the function of the qualification

- 5.1 Access to further study
- 5.2 Professional status (if applicable)

6 Additional information

- 6.1 Additional information
- 6.2 Further information sources

7 Certification of the supplement

- 7.1 Date
- 7.2 Signature of official certifying the diploma supplement
- 7.3 Capacity
- 7.4 Official stamp or seal of partner institution

8 Information on the higher education system

For this field, Partner institutions will adopt the standard description adopted by the rest of The Open University.

Content of certificates

A validated award certificate conferred under the Charter of The Open University records:

- (a) the name of the Partner institution at which the student has been registered, together with the name of any other institution sharing responsibility for the student's programme of study
- (b) the student's full name as given on the list of recommendations submitted to The Open University by the institution at which the student was registered. For gender reassignment, The Open University will require proof of the new identity before a new certificate is issued.
- (c) the award
- (d) the title of the programme, as approved by The Open University
- (e) the language of instruction and assessment, where this is not English
- (f) an approved endorsement, where appropriate, that the programme of study was in sandwich mode
- (g) the date the award was conferred.

The Open University validated award certificates conform with specific design requirements of The Open University.

Additional Appendices

Additional Appendices to be inserted here and run on

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Issued 15.10.2014

Designed by LTS Media Corporate team
Front cover image © laflor iStock.com

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