Ada, the National College for Digital Skills

Assessment and Examinations Procedure 2021-22

The Open University Validated Awards

1. Purpose

1.1 This document set out the procedures associated with assessment and examinations at Ada, providing details about our certification and transcripts for the Open University (OU) validated awards

2. Assessment Procedures

2.1 The purpose of assessment is to measure students' learning, skills, and understanding. Assessment enables students to demonstrate that they have fulfilled the objectives of their course and achieved the required standard. Assessment also helps students to reflect on their learning, and to recognise and enhance their achievements.

Assessment in relation to credit and awards

2.2 The basis of the assessment for the OU validated awards, are by assessment of students within and/or at the end of each module. The assessment method, criteria and the marking scheme are based on the module's learning outcomes and reflect the appropriate credit level.

2.3 The compatibility and mapping of module outcomes with the aims of the relevant programme has been verified through the process of validation and are presented in the programmes' specifications.

2.4 Credit is awarded by Ada to quantify learning achieved at a given level to learners who have attained the specified learning outcomes of the module. Credit is given on the basis of module assessment. Students are awarded credit for modules passed at Levels 4, 5, or 6. No student will be required or permitted to retake a module for which they have already received credit, unless :

a) the maximum period of enrolment (see below) has expired; *or*
b) an Academic Integrity Panel has required that modules be reassessed as part of the penalty for cheating or plagiarism (see Academic Misconduct policy); or
c) a student has a supported claim for extenuating circumstances but has nonetheless passed the module. In such a case the award and progression examination board may offer the student a deferral in that module. If the student achieves a higher mark in the deferral that mark will be recorded.

2.5 The College expects all work submitted for assessment is the sole work of the individual submitting the work (except where it is a specified as a group assignment). There are defined processes, and penalties, related to poor academic practice, plagiarism, collusion and cheating in examinations. For further information see Academic Misconduct policy.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

2.6 Applicants who meet or exceed the criteria for entry to a course may be eligible for recognition of their prior learning and this will exempt them from some of the requirements for their award. The decision to admit a student onto a course is separate from the decision to recognise prior learning. The decision to recognise prior learning is taken after the decision to admit has been made. This is taken in reasonable time so the applicant can determine

whether they wish to accept the offer of a place. For more information, please see the RPL policy.

Module Assessments

2.7 The Lecturer responsible for each module establishes transparent procedures to ensure that no individual student or group of students are disadvantaged by the nature of the assessment task or the marking system used.

2.8 At Levels 5 and 6, both the setting and the marking of assessments must be moderated by external examiners. A system of internal verification of assessments, at all academic levels is implemented by the academic team.

2.9 A student's achievement in each module must be assessed so they are awarded an overall mark for each module. If an assessment covers more than one module, the assessment must be structured so that a separate overall mark can be awarded for each module.

2.10 Assessment will normally take place during the semester in which the module is offered. At or near the start of each module the relevant division must ensure that students are informed of the requirements and criteria for assessment and of the weight carried by each component of assessment.

2.11 If the assessment of a module consists of more than one component (for example formal examination and coursework) the overall module mark is calculated as a weighted average of the marks for all the components. This is based on the weightings approved through the course validation process (see the Modules' Descriptors).

2.12 A component may be further divided into sub-components, each with its own weighting in the calculation of the mark for the component.

2.13 Some components (typically assessment to demonstrate competency) may be pass/fail only, in which case the module mark will be calculated from the weighted average of the marks for components which are quantitatively assessed.

2.14 A threshold mark will normally be specified which a student must achieve in each component of assessment in order to pass the module. The minimum threshold mark for a component is normally 40% at all Levels 4, 5 and 6. No minimum mark may be specified for any sub-component of assessment.

2.15 To be awarded a pass in a module a student must:

a)   achieve an overall weighted average mark for the module of at least 40% at Levels 4, 5 or 6 and

b)   achieve the minimum threshold mark in each component of assessment for which a threshold is specified; and

c) achieve a pass standard in specified pass/fail assessments where such assessments are used.

2.16 A student registered on specific courses may be awarded a module pass with merit or distinction. In order to be awarded a pass with merit a student must normally have achieved a weighted module mark of at least 60%. In order to be awarded a pass with distinction a student must normally have achieved a weighted module mark of at least 70%.

2.17 All module marks must be computed as a numerical percentage rounded off to the nearest whole number. Marks with a decimal part below .5 will be rounded down to the nearest whole number, and marks with a decimal part above .5 will be rounded up to the nearest whole number. Students will normally be informed of their module marks following the completion of the module, in accordance with procedures published by the college. These module marks are provisional until ratified by an examination board.

2.18 The module lead who delivers a module will ensure that the dates for examinations and submission of coursework are recorded in the VLE before a module begins. The module lead will inform the students registered on the module of any change in the deadline date for coursework submission at the earliest opportunity.

2.19   Students must:
   a)   make themselves aware of these dates that are published via the VLE; *and*
   b)   attend examinations and submit work for assessment on the dates required.

Attempts at Assessment

2.20 A student will be deemed to have made a first attempt at each component or subcomponent of assessment (coursework and examination) at the due date, whether or not the attempt has been made. A student who fails to submit a component or sub-component of assessment as required will be awarded a mark of 0% for that component or sub-component of assessment.

2.21 Where a student has not successfully completed the assessment for the module a resit opportunity is allowed. For a resit, the form of the re-assessment must be equivalent to the original assessment and internally verified. The form the reassessment will take must be made explicit to the student. If we have accepted a claim for extenuating circumstance the first resit opportunity will be regarded as a first attempt. Students are expected to attempt the assessment at the next available opportunity. If the student does not attend the examination or submit the coursework at that time unless they have further extenuating circumstances accepted they will be deemed to have made an attempt at the assessment and be awarded a mark of 0%.

2.22 Where a student has been required to repeat a module and there are no other regulatory requirements to prevent it, they will be permitted a first attempt at assessment of the repeated module and a resit opportunity. Students are not usually allowed to register more than twice on any module including deferral and referral opportunities.

Submission of Assessment

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

2.24 Students must submit assessments electronically, unless the type of assessment makes it impossible to do so. The relevant module guide will inform students of the format(s) that they are expected to use. It is a student's responsibility to ensure that they have back-up copies of any work submitted. Failure of IT equipment will not be accepted as a reason for non-submission, incomplete submission of an assessment or (normally) as an extenuating circumstance.

2.25 Student requests for extensions to assessment deadlines will not be approved unless made in accordance with the college guidelines as approved by The Open University.

Late Submission of Assessment

2.26 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 deducted from the overall marked score 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.

2.27 A student who is unable to submit a written coursework assignment by the specified deadline may submit up to two weeks late. Coursework not submitted by the published deadline but, following notification, is submitted within two weeks (ten working days) of the published submission date will be marked by an appropriate member of staff and will have their marks capped at the pass mark (40%).

2.28 A successful claim for extenuating circumstances may mean the capping is not applied (please see Personal Mitigating Circumstances Policy). A valid extenuating circumstance claim means the Ada has discretion to remove the cap where assessment and feedback make this reasonable.

2.29 Work submitted more than two weeks after the published deadline date will receive a mark of 0% (zero).

2.30 Resubmission of coursework and forms of assessment such as group work, presentations and class tests are not covered by this regulation and must be completed on time. A successful claim for extenuating circumstances may mean that the student is able to submit the work at a later date.

2.31 Students unable to submit course work by the published submission date must notify the university prior to the submission date using the Extension Request form. Any other form of notification, such as an email, is not acceptable.

2.32 Students registered with Disability and Dyslexia Support (DDS) may be entitled to submit up to two weeks (ten working days) after the deadline, subject to the agreement of their individual support plan, and the mark will not be capped. Students will need to show that they are registered with DDS when they notify the university that their coursework will be late. DDS registered students who do not submit within two weeks (ten working days) will be awarded 0% (zero).

Assessment Moderation

2.33   The final grade for an individual assessment component will be determined after completion of a quality assurance process (e.g. moderation, remarking). It is Ada'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.

- o   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.

- o   Second-marking should be 'blind' to ensure that it is not unduly influenced by the first marker's marking.

- o   All non-anonymous student work must be second-marked.

- o   Dissertations should be marked by the dissertation supervisor and one other internal marker.

- o   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.
- o   Where agreement cannot be reached the Head of Degree Programmes must be informed and he or she will appoint a third assessor. The results of all three assessments must then be considered by the Head of Degree Programmes to arrive at a final decision.

- o   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.

3. Examinations Procedures

3.1 A summary of the rules for examination candidates are displayed in every examination room.

Preparation of Examination Papers

3.2 Examination papers are prepared within the timetable set out in the assessment calendar.

3.3 Examination papers that contribute directly to an academic award are sent in draft to the external examiner for comment. Draft papers for both first sit and resit examinations are prepared and sent for comment to the external examiner at the same time.

3.4 The academic member of staff responsible for the examination paper is responsible for checking and certifying the accuracy of the final version of the paper.

3.5 The Examinations Officer must:
- arrange secure storage of draft and final approved examination papers and the copying of the final approved version of all examination papers;
- ensure that examination papers are available for collection on the day of the examination.

3.6 No unauthorised member of staff can copy any papers before the day of the examination.

3.7 The role of module lead is to write the examination paper (or arrange for it to be written) to respond to the comments of the external examiner and to check and certify the accuracy of the final paper. The module lead will determine what aids are permitted in the examination.

Timetable for Examinations

3.8 The Examinations timetable is published on the VLE. All exams are held in the examination periods set out in the assessment calendar.

3.9 Examinations for modules offered as part of degree Programmes must be scheduled within the normal teaching block for the module. In exceptional cases, with specific authorisation, they can be held outside the normal teaching block.

3.10 The Examination Officer arranges for specified rooms to be set aside for examination use. These rooms may only be used for examinations during the examinations period, and may not be used for teaching on courses that continue during the examination period.

3.11 It is a student's responsibility to be aware of the Examinations timetable.

Invigilation

3.12 The college is responsible for ensuring that invigilators are appointed for all examinations and that suitable base rooms are established and staffed throughout the examination period.

3.13 In each examination room there will be:

- no fewer than two invigilators irrespective of the number of candidates, and
- normally a further invigilator for every additional 35 candidates.

3.14 Invigilators have a responsibility to ensure that the examination for which they are appointed runs smoothly and is conducted in accordance with the academic regulations. The role of invigilators is to start and finish the examination, maintain effective discipline in the room and ensure that the examination is conducted in a proper manner. Invigilators should:

- collect the examination question papers and the appropriate examination stationery from the base room prior to the start of the examination;
- be present in the examination room at least thirty minutes before the start of the examination. The module coordinator (or author of a paper where different) should be present at the beginning of an examination in order to answer candidates' queries.
- ensure that candidates follow the rules for candidates;
- ensure that candidates are observed by an invigilator throughout the examination;
- announce the start and finish of the examination(s);
- take a register of attendance and check the students' ID cards;
- have the authority to instruct candidates to sit in accordance with a seating plan. Such a plan may have been prepared before the examination or may be devised immediately before the start of the examination if the invigilator deems it necessary;
- inform candidates twice of the remaining time available, normally 30 minutes and 15 minutes respectively before the end of the examination;
- make a report of any incidents during the examination.

3.15 If a student causes a disturbance, the invigilator will:

- warn the student;
- require the student to withdraw if he or she persists;
- not re-admit the student if s/he is required to withdraw;
- make a note of the circumstances for the university.

3.16 If a student reports that he or she has inadvertently brought an unauthorised item to his or her desk the invigilator should:

- remove the item;
- report the matter to the college;
- permit the student to continue the examination.

3.17 Normally, not more than one invigilator should leave the examination room for any purpose at any one time. Under no circumstances whatsoever must the examination room be left unattended during an examination.

3.18 Invigilators have discretion to take whatever action may be appropriate to meet unforeseen circumstances. The invigilator will notify the Head of Degree Programmes of any circumstance or action which may in any way have affected the performance of the candidates.

3.19 The module lead (or a nominated member of the module team in the case of examinations which are conducted in more than one room) will be present at the start of the examination to answer candidates' queries.

3.20 A student may leave the examination room temporarily but only if accompanied by an invigilator. A student who leaves the examination room without obtaining an invigilator's permission will normally be deemed to have withdrawn from the examination. Such cases must be reported to the college. Students who wish to return to the examination room must be accompanied by an invigilator who will have ensured that they did not contact any person or consult any material while outside the room.

3.21 The invigilator should report in writing any occurrences during the examination which may have affected the candidates' performance.

3.22 We allow students who arrive for an exam late (that is after the exam has started) into the exam room up to 30 minutes late. In practical terms:

- At the commencement of the exam, an invigilator stands outside the room and has with them exam scripts and the instructions relating to the specific exam.
- Any student that arrives between minutes 1 to 10 after the exam has commenced will be briefed by the invigilator outside the room on the exam itself, rulings on mobile phones, ID card etc., told where they will be sitting and that the students will not be given any extra time to complete the exam. At this point the students have a choice – they can either follow this ruling and undertake the exam or choose not to enter and sit the exam at a later date (if they have another attempt available).

Evacuation of an examination
3.23 If the building has to be evacuated during the examination invigilators will:
- stop the examination and note the time;
- ask students to leave the room and meet the invigilator at an appropriate assembly point;
- tell students not to communicate with each other when outside the examination room;
- make clear to students that the examination has not been completed or cancelled;

- ensure that the examination materials (answer books, question papers, desks, etc.) are not disturbed and that all equipment is left in the examination room. Students may not remove their bags or electronic devices (such as phones) from the exam room);
- ensure that the examination room is locked so as to secure the examination materials and students' property;
- ensure that candidates continue to observe the rules for candidates while at the assembly point)
- when permission is given to return to the building, control the re-entry of students to the examination room, within reason, as if the examination was to commence under normal circumstances;
- if the delay in returning to the examination room is lengthy (beyond one hour) or if students have failed to follow the rules for candidates while at the assembly point, decide whether the examination should be cancelled;
- inform students of any additional time they will be allowed in lieu of the disruption and report the incident to the university.

3.24   Safe evacuation of the exam room takes priority over the conduct of the exam. No candidate or invigilator will take any of the above actions if doing so would create a risk to life or to the health and safety of themselves or any other individual.

3.25   It will be for the examination board to decide whether the examination should be classified as void.

Rules for examination candidates

3.26 Students must ensure that they are familiar with the examination rules for candidates. These rules apply to all examinations. If students break the rules, they will be penalised and may fail the examination. If they are in any doubt about the rules, they should ask the invigilator.

Before the examination

3.27 Students may enter the examination room only when authorised to do so by the nominated lead invigilator.

3.28 Students must switch off mobile phones, smart watches and other devices capable of transmitting and receiving data, personal stereos or other items which may distract other candidates. Any such items must be placed in the student's bag or coat, or face down on the floor under their desk for the duration of the examination.

3.29 Students must:
- put coats and bags at the front or back of the room as instructed by the invigilator and not by their examination desk;
- give to the invigilator any papers which may accidentally have been brought into the examination room;

- go to the seat as directed by the invigilator and remain silent;
- switch off any mobile devices and place them face down on the floor under their examination desk (mobile devices which are switched off and, in a bag, or coat may be left at the front or back of the room);
- have a written agreement from Disability and Dyslexia Support to use a dictionary or any other aid which constitutes reasonable adjustment for a disability.

During the examination

3.30 The student's Ada identity card must be placed on the desk such that it is visible to the invigilator. The student's dress must be such as to allow the invigilator to confirm that the image on the identity card matches the student sitting the examination.

3.31 Students may also be asked to remove headwear or outer clothing where the invigilator considers that any kind of aid to examination might be hidden. If necessary, a student may be required to accompany an appropriate invigilator to a private area to allow the invigilator to conduct this check or confirm the student's identity. Once the check has been conducted, the student may sit the exam wearing their chosen clothing. The invigilator has no right to ask for headwear or clothing to be removed permanently, nor to undertake a physical search of the student's person.

3.32 The only other items which may be placed on the desk are as follows:-

- a small selection of writing and related implements; these may be contained in a clear plastic bag only;
- a bottle of water;
- any other item (for example a calculator, data tables, case study) that is explicitly permitted by the examination instruction ;
- any items approved for use by a student with additional needs; such approval must be given in advance and in accordance with DDS.

3.33 Students must:
- obey all instructions from the invigilator;
- check that they have no unauthorised materials on their desks;
- use only Ada examination stationery for all work including all rough work;

3.34 Students must not:

- start writing until told to begin by the invigilator;
- attempt to read the work of any other student;
- talk or communicate in any other way with any other student;
- eat or drink during the examination;
- leave the examination room for any reason during the first or the last 30 of the examination.

3.35 Students may be allowed to leave the room after 30 minutes, in which case they must:

- attract the attention of the invigilator and ask permission to leave;
- leave the examination room quickly and quietly;
- not attempt to remove any examination materials from the examination room or remove any papers from the examination script.

3.36 Students should comply with the instructions of the examination paper.

3.37 Where a student attempts more questions than required by the examination instructions, all answers will be marked and the final mark determined from the best combination of marks that satisfies the examination instructions .

After the examination

3.39 Students must:

- stop writing when the invigilator tells them;
- remain in their seat without talking;
- leave all papers (except the examination paper) on their desk;
- leave the examination room immediately when the invigilator tells them.

Use of aids in examinations

3.40 No electronic devices including smart watches and earphones may be brought into the examination room except as allowed below.

Calculators

3.41 Only a prescribed calculator may be used. The module lead will decide whether calculators are acceptable for use in the examinations for which she/he is responsible and, if they are, which calculators may be used. Unless a clear statement to the contrary is made in the module guide and rubric of the examination paper it will be assumed that permitted calculators will be non-programmable.

 All calculators authorised for use in examinations must be:

- non-programmable (other than as allowed for above);
- not capable of storing text, nor of displaying text other than as built-in error messages;
- battery operated;
- silent;
- not capable of transmitting or receiving data during the examination or test;
- not capable of giving the candidate an unfair advantage of any kind.

Portable computers

3.42 Candidates are not normally permitted to use portable computers, mobile devises or smart watches in examinations. Any candidate found using a portable computer in an examination will be reported as specified under academic misconduct see below.

Dictionaries

3.43 If a candidate is granted alternative assessment arrangements arising from conditions such as dyslexia, the use of a dictionary may be considered where appropriate but must be approved in advance. Where a candidate who has been granted alternative assessment, arrangements is permitted the use of a dictionary, he or she will be required to use the dictionary provided by the college and may not bring his or her own. Any student found with such a dictionary in his or her possession may be the subject of an allegation of academic misconduct.

Inability to attend an examination

3.44 A student unable to attend an examination on grounds of evidenced extenuating circumstances must submit an extenuating circumstances claim by the published deadline.

3.45 In exceptional cases, if extenuating circumstances have been accepted with evidence that a student is able to undertake academic work but unable to attend the examination at the college, the examination board (via Chairs Action) may allow the student to complete an alternative form of assessment of the same learning outcomes. Such a decision is for no more than one module.

Alternative assessment arrangements for disabled students

3.46 Alternative assessment arrangements and methods may be made for students on an individual basis to compensate for any restriction imposed by a disability (including students with mental health difficulties, dyslexia and medical conditions) provided this does not compromise the validity of the assessment methods. Any alternative assessment method should be capable of assessing the same learning outcomes by alternative means. The decision must be approved by the Dean, or the Chair of the Exam Board.

Identification of additional needs

3.47 It is the student's responsibility to inform the college of any disability for which they wish to have alternative assessment arrangements made as soon as s/he is able to do so. For additional needs, this could happen at the point of initial enrolment at the college. For those who are identified after enrolling onto courses, this could be as soon as the identification has been made and any necessary supporting evidence is available.

3.48 Students make requests for alternative assessment arrangements to the college admission officer. Appropriate professional or medical documentary evidence and/or advice to substantiate the need for such provision must be submitted. The evidence and/or advice to substantiate requests for alternative assessment arrangements may be provided from appropriate external professional bodies. The admission officer will confirm the validity of the request. Students will provide their written consent to their request being processed.

3.49 In the case of students with obvious permanent or long-term disabilities or severely restricted mobility, it will be possible, to put in place alternative arrangements immediately on receipt of the request. The students would then be asked to provide formal evidence of the disability for the purposes of maintaining full records of the case.

Arbitration in cases of dispute

3.50 If the alternative assessment arrangements approved by the college are disputed by the student on the grounds that the student does not believe that their circumstances have been fully considered or the student believes they are not being met the college will:

- assess the facts, consult the interested parties and seek advice from the relevant areas of expertise;
- make a recommendation on what arrangements are considered appropriate.

4. Examination Boards

4.1 For every 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.

4.2 Examination boards are attended by external examiners, who are subject experts from UK universities and who provide an independent point of reference for the standards of awards. They are sufficiently experienced to make judgements about the standards of awards compared with those of other UK universities. They do not, however, moderate or adjust the marks of individual students of whom they see only a representative sample within each award.

4.3. 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.

Membership of Boards of Examiners

4.3 The Academic Board of Ada is required to agree the membership of Boards of Examiners, at the start of each academic year.

4.4 Under no circumstances may a student of Ada studying for an award of The Open University may be a member of, or attend, a Board of Examiners.

4.5 The Chair of the Board of Examiners will be a senior member of staff, commonly the Head of Degree Programmes or , Dean of college, and not directly involved in the delivery of the programme or the assessment of students in the programme considered by the Board of Examiners.

4.6 The Registrar (or equivalent) or a nominee at Ada – acting with the authority of the Academic Board – should normally be appointed as Secretary to the Board of Examiners.

4.7 A member of The Open University staff must be present at any Examination Board where final decisions on recommendations for an Open University award is made and where decisions about progression are made.

Authority of Boards of Examiners

4.8 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.

4.9 All progression and award recommendations are made to The Open University's Module Results Approval and Qualifications Classification Panel (MRAQCP) for them to ratify. The Panel is responsible for approving recommendations for module results and the award and Classification of qualifications.

4.10 All decisions related to a student's progression, final results, and awards, will be approved by a properly constituted Board of Examiners.

4.11 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.

4.12 Decisions of a Board of Examiners are normally taken at a full, quorate meeting of the board and the minutes of boards must record the decisions of the board and the reasons for those decisions and must comply with the format specified by the Open University.

Conduct of meetings

Prior to the Exam Board

4.13 Exam Board dates should be provided well in advance and a request for dates is sent out by Open University each year.

4.14. Ada provides the required documentation following completion of an Exam Board. With effect from 1 January 2022, the required documentation is:

- o Completed and signed Award Recommendation List for each final or exit award title recommended.
- o Email confirmations from External Examiner (EE) where electronic signatures have been added to the documentation.

4.15 Award Recommendation Lists must be prepared prior to the Exam Board (based on the recommendations being made) and made visible to attendees during the meeting.

4.16 Information on the Award Recommendation Lists must be accurate as it will determine the information which is input by the Open University on the award lists for conferment and certificates which are later produced. Award titles must be correctly entered on the documentation and the date of the Exam Board should be accurate and consistent.

During the Exam Board

4.16 The following information will be made available to an award and progression examination board:

(a)   the full history of each student coming under consideration at the board;
(b)   the recommendations of the extenuating circumstances decision making teams relating to each student coming under consideration at the board.

4.17 It is essential that the Award Recommendation Lists are made visible to attendees during the Exam Board. Changes may occasionally need to be made and, if this is the case, an Award Recommendation List can be amended during the Board meeting with agreement from the relevant EE(s). For physically held Boards, the changes should be handwritten on the documentation in clear, legible writing and the EE should sign or initial next to the amendments as confirmation of their approval.

4.18 The EE(s) for the programme should verbally confirm that they agree with the final Award Recommendation List before the board ends and this should be recorded by Ada in the minutes of the Board.

4.19 For remotely held Boards, an email will then be required from each EE (during or shortly after the Board) stating, "I hereby give permission for the use of my electronic signature and confirm that the information on the Award Recommendation List is correct." If the Board has been held in person, the EE(s) should sign the paperwork before they depart

After Exam Board

4.20 The required documentation should be sent via secure electronic transfer to OUVPEXAMBOARDS@open.ac.uk as soon as possible after the Board, and ideally within 2 working days, using a secure file transfer or the OU's system, ZendTo (https://filetransfer.open.ac.uk/).

4.21 Once the documentation has been received, it will be thoroughly checked, and any errors found will be referred back to Ada. within five working days of receipt, but this process may take longer for particularly large Exam Boards or during busy periods. Assuming all is in order,

we have received the report from the OU staff member who attended the Exam Board and produced the award lists for conferment, the submission will then be sent to MRAQCP for ratification and conferment of the awards.

4.22 Ada must not issue results to students (or send Diploma Supplements/transcripts) until the awards have been ratified/conferred by MRAQCP and formal notice has been received from the University that the results can be released. If for any reason the results must be released , Ada ensures that students are aware that they are provisional and may be subject to change.

5. Conditions of Conferment & Certification by The Open University

5.1 The OU may approve conferment of a validated award when the following conditions are satisfied:

a) The student has been a registered student at Ada at the time of the assessment for an award.
b) Details of the student's full name, full postal address, email address, date of birth, gender, programme of study, award and all required information have been forwarded to The Open University.
c) Ada 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.

5.2 Following MRAQCP approval, an award certificate will be prepared for each student appearing on the award list.

5.3 All Foundation degrees are classified based on the overall weighted average mark, which is calculated as the average mark of all the Levels 4 and 5 modules comprising the award. The classification is as follows:

Distinction: 70%+
Merit: 60-69%
Pass: 50-59%

5.4 The Bachelor's degree with honours is classified based on the following bands:

1st Class 70%+
2nd Class (Upper Division) 60 - 69%
2nd Class (Lower Division) 50 - 59%
3rd Class 40 - 49%

5.5 Certificates are sent to Ada with a copy of the corresponding award list. Certificates will normally be dispatched within 4 weeks of notification that the awards have been ratified/conferred.

6. End-Point Assessment (EPA)

6.1 All students enrolled on the Bachelor Apprenticeship Degree programme must undertake an independent end-point assessment (EPA) which is a synoptic assessment of the knowledge, skills and behaviours that have been learnt throughout the apprenticeship.

6.2 The purpose of the assessment is to make sure the student meets the apprenticeship standard and are fully competent in the occupation. Students at the very end of the programme take it when their employer and the College is satisfied that they have met the "gateway" criteria to undertake the assessment. EPA is graded and an apprenticeship certificate is only awarded after EPA is successfully completed.

6.3 This is an integrated Bachelor's degree level apprenticeship, which incorporates on-programme academic and workplace learning and assessment with an independent end-point assessment to test the knowledge, skills and behaviours detailed in the standard.

6.4 The degree programme maps the individual modules to the outcomes in the standard and individual modules will contribute to the on-programme assessment of knowledge, skills and behaviour outcomes en-route to the final synoptic end assessment.

6.5 Ada is an approved institution to be on the Register of end-point assessment organisation,(RoEPAOs), and conducts the EPA The College has developed and will deliver the EPA as defined in Assessment Plan

6.6 The programme consists of 360 credits that will typically take three years to complete, with 300 delivered on-programme and 60 through the EPA, which is taken in the last six months. The 60-credit EPA is achieved through a 40-crdeit Dissertation, and a 20-credit work-bead Portfolio.

6.7 Performance in the EPA will count towards the overall degree classification and apprentices cannot successfully complete the Bachelor's degree without passing the EPA. The EPA uses the following assessment methods and should be undertaken in this order:

6.8 The EPA consists of four distinct assessment methods: review of e-portfolio, review of project dissertation, presentation and panel interview. An Assessment Panel, comprised of :

an independent assessor (chair),
a representative from Ada , and
a representative from the employer

integrates the process of reviewing all the submissions and assessing whether the candidates meet the Digital Technology Solutions Degree Apprenticeship Standard.

- The panel reviews the candidate's full e-portfolio, dissertation and presentation against the standard, to ensure that the apprentice has demonstrated the full range of skills, knowledge and behaviours detailed in the standard. During this process, members of the panel will interview the apprentice, asking clarification questions.

- The panel undertakes the grading, with the final decision made by the independent assessor (chair).

- The panel will award marks based on their assessment of the portfolio, dissertation and the panel interview.

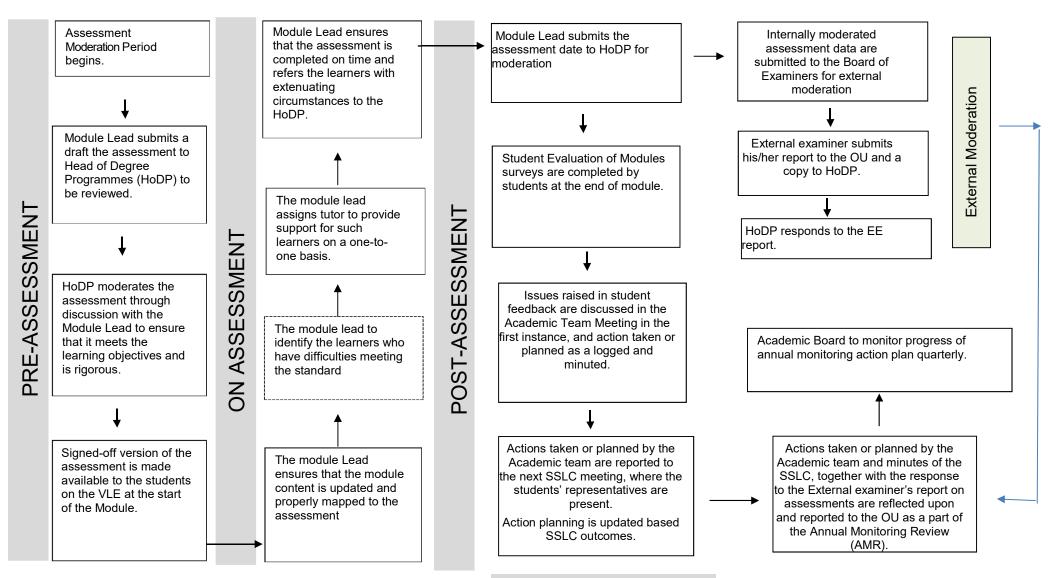## 7. Apprenticeship Certification

7.1 The EPA results are classified based on the weighted average mark of the components in section 6.8, as follows:

Distinction: 70%+
Merit: 60-69%
Pass: 50-59%

7.2 The EPA grades will be sent to Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), which will prepare the apprenticeship certificates.

MONITORING OF PROGRAMMES AND MODULES
PROCEDURE FLOWCHART

This flowchart is intended to provide a summary of the main stages of the Monitoring of Programme and Modules procedure.

PRE-ASSESSMENT

Assessment Moderation Period begins.

↓

Module Lead submits a draft the assessment to Head of Degree Programmes (HoDP) to be reviewed.

↓

HoDP moderates the assessment through discussion with the Module Lead to ensure that it meets the learning objectives and is rigorous.

↓

Signed-off version of the assessment is made available to the students on the VLE at the start of the Module.

ON ASSESSMENT

Module Lead ensures that the assessment is completed on time and refers the learners with extenuating circumstances to the HoDP.

↑

The module lead assigns tutor to provide support for such learners on a one-to-one basis.

↑

The module lead to identify the learners who have difficulties meeting the standard

↑

The module Lead ensures that the module content is updated and properly mapped to the assessment

POST-ASSESSMENT

Module Lead submits the assessment date to HoDP for moderation

↓

Student Evaluation of Modules surveys are completed by students at the end of module.

↓

Issues raised in student feedback are discussed in the Academic Team Meeting in the first instance, and action taken or planned as a logged and minuted.

↓

Actions taken or planned by the Academic team are reported to the next SSLC meeting, where the students' representatives are present.
Action planning is updated based SSLC outcomes.

Internally moderated assessment data are submitted to the Board of Examiners for external moderation

↓

External examiner submits his/her report to the OU and a copy to HoDP.

↓

HoDP responds to the EE report.

External Moderation

Academic Board to monitor progress of annual monitoring action plan quarterly.

↑

Actions taken or planned by the Academic team and minutes of the SSLC, together with the response to the External examiner's report on assessments are reflected upon and reported to the OU as a part of the Annual Monitoring Review (AMR).

ACTION PLANNING