

# MANDATORY ACADEMIC PROCEDURES to accompany the Regulations for Taught Courses

## Academic Registry

<b>Title: Student Mandatory Academic Procedures (for Taught Courses)</b>					
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## Introduction

1. The Mandatory Academic Procedures (MAPs) for Taught Courses is a companion document for the Regulations for Taught Courses, to provide more detailed information and guidance to ensure the requirements of the *Regulations for Taught Courses* and the *Quality Manual* are delivered. In these procedures, as context demands, “the student (s)” may equally mean “apprentice (s) or the applicant (s); the “University” means the University of South Wales or the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama (RWCMD), as appropriate.
2. 2019/20 is the first year where procedural information has been separated out from the Regulations for Taught Courses, with the aim of providing clarity for students. To aid staff during this transitional year, the previous chapter references and numbering have been used in the QMSG.
3. Some of the details within specific forms and references to specific services may change. The most up to date information will be provided online.

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## **1. The Credit Accumulation and Transfer System (A.1.3)**

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### **1.1 Rationale (A.1.3.1)**

The purpose of the credit system is to:

- define the duration, extent and level of the University's courses and ensure comparability in demand across the different disciplinary areas;
- allow individual students the flexibility to select a course at a pace, in a mode and combination, and to a level appropriate to their interests, abilities and needs;
- provide a framework for the University to award credit for prior learning and experience, for example for employment-based training, independent study, short courses, open and distance learning, or courses provided by other institutions;
- facilitate collaboration with employers and professional bodies seeking accreditation of existing company or professional training courses;
- facilitate the design of learning courses, based on a combination of University provision and in-house training, leading to courses tailored to the needs of employers.

### **1.2 Credit accumulation (A1.3.2)**

All courses of the University are based upon a defined number of credit points. Students must accumulate the required number of credit points at the appropriate level in order to achieve a University award or complete an accredited course.

### **1.3 The credit point (A.1.3.3)**

A credit point is defined as what can be achieved in ten notional hours of student learning time. The learning time is the total learning effort required by the average student to achieve a defined learning outcome. It includes direct teaching, time devoted to independent study, work experience placement and assessment time. This definition is for all credits, irrespective of their level or position in any course.

### **1.4 Credit levels (A.1.3.4)**

Credit points are grouped in units, and each group is assigned a higher education level. The level describes the overall standard of achievement, as defined by the skills, knowledge and understanding, and degree of learner autonomy reached by students gaining the credits within the group. It is assigned by considering academic and skills challenge of the credit points and the previous learning or experience needed by the students studying for them.

For its courses, the University uses the definition of levels contained within the Credit and Qualification Framework for Wales (CQFW) and the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)<sup>1</sup>.

The levels are as follows:

- Level 3: the standard of an access to higher education course. The level may also be reached by some A-level students and in some further education provision.
- Level 4: the standard of achievement expected for the award of a Certificate of Higher Education. This is normally comparable to the first stage of an undergraduate degree course. The level may also be reached by good A-level or advanced extension level students, and in some further education provision.

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<sup>1</sup> Where level 3 provision is being proposed also refer to the Qualifications and Credit Framework

- Level 5: the standard of achievement expected for the award of a Diploma of Higher Education or a Foundation Degree. The qualification received will depend upon the extent and nature of the credits to be accumulated. Credits at this level may also form all or part of the first stage of an honours degree course.
- Level 6: the standard of achievement expected in the final stage of an honours degree course, or for qualifications requiring graduate entry, for example a Graduate Degree.
- Level 7: the standard of achievement expected of a Master's course. These include taught courses, research courses, combinations of taught and research elements, and extended undergraduate courses which demonstrate Master's level achievement.
- Level 8: the standard of achievement expected at the final assessment of a doctoral programme. These include awards of original research, publication and portfolio compilations showing substantial research, and awards in specific professional practice which may include taught elements.

Credit groups may also be designated as P, to indicate the credit is gained through supervised placement or professional practice.

### **1.5 The credit-weighting of University awards (A.1.3.5)**

After admission, students must normally successfully complete the designated number and level of credits in order to achieve the award.

#### ***Graduate entry awards with embedded awards***

- 60 credits with at least 40 at Level 6 = Graduate Certificate
- plus 60 credits with at least 80 at Level 6 = Graduate Diploma
- plus 60 credits at Level 6 = Graduate Degree

### **1.6 The pace of credit accumulation (A.1.3.6)**

The credit structure of the course is organised so that a full-time student on a vocational or undergraduate course normally completes 120 credits in one academic year, and a full-time student on a postgraduate course normally completes 180 credits in one academic year. The academic year is normally thirty weeks for vocational and undergraduate students and forty eight weeks for postgraduate students.

See the *Regulations for Taught Courses* for minimum and maximum registration periods.

### **1.7 Credit transfer (A1.3.7)**

Credits points can be transferred between courses within the University and between the University and other UK higher education institutions. They can also be transferred to and from international higher education institutions wherever credit compatibility can be established. Students thus have the opportunity of studying at more than one University during the course of their studies.

This can operate in different ways. For example, students may transfer with achieved credits from one course to another within the University, or from one university to another, perhaps because of changing personal circumstances or changing academic interests and direction. Students may also enrol with the University and incorporate courses taken elsewhere as part of their University course, for example through an exchange arrangement.

However, the value of the credits gained within one course might not be fully transferable with the same number and level of credits within another course. For example, a student may have achieved 120 Level 4 (Certificate) credits on a combined humanities course. These credits are likely to be wholly transferable on to another combined humanities course, but only partially transferable on to a single honours course in History. In this case, students might be expected to take additional credits as required by the specific course to which they are transferring.

See also later chapter 5, Accreditation of Prior Learning.

## 1.8 Compatibility between credit systems (A.1.3.8)

### Credit levels in relation to qualification levels<sup>2</sup>

Credit Levels	Qualification Levels			
	FHEQ Levels	QCF Levels		
		NVQ	Vocational	General Qualification
8	Doctoral			
7	Masters	5	7	
6	Honours		6	
5	Diploma	4	5	
4	Certificate		4	
3		3	3	GCSE AS and A Level
2		2	2	GCSE (Grades A*-C)
1		1	1	GCSE (Grades D-G)
Entry				Entry

### European Credit Transfer System (ECTS)

ECTS credits represent the workload and defined learning outcomes ("what the individual knows understands and is able to do") of a given course or programme. 60 credits are the equivalent of a full year of study or work. In a standard academic year, 60 credits would be usually broken down into several smaller components.

A typical "first cycle" (or Bachelor's) Degree, would consist of 180 or 240 credits, whereas a typical "second cycle" (or Master's) Degree, would consist of 90 or 120 credits, with at least 60 credits at second cycle level.

Countries that are not signatories to the Bologna agreement do not have a unified credit system. Credit equivalencies should be checked through UK NARIC on an individual basis.

<sup>2</sup> Source: *Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation*

## **2 The Modular Structure (A.1.4)**

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### **2.1 Modules and courses (A.1.4.1)**

The University's modular structure describes the way in which the credit points are grouped into units (modules) and how these units build into the different kinds of courses.

All courses offered by the University comply with this structure.

Under the University's structure, the basic grouping of credits is into standard-sized modules. These may be specific to one course, shared between a number of different courses, or free-standing, for instance as a personal development opportunity or as a short community activity. Each module is assigned a specific level appropriate to its position within the course and/or its level of challenge. Whilst the content of a module is constant the same module can be developed to be assessed at different levels providing that two module codes are assigned to differentiate the level and the assessments and learning outcomes reflect the level of study.

All non-research courses are composed of the appropriate number of modules to meet the credit requirements of that level of course. The modules are chosen to create a coherent learning experience of the appropriate subject range and academic standard.

Courses of the University must conform to the University's *Academic Blueprint* (for Undergraduate) and *Course Principles* (for postgraduate). The later chapter 4 on Course Design also provides more information on course structures

### **2.2 The module (A1.4.2)**

A module is a self-contained and coherent package of learning, with a general credit-rating, an assigned level, defined learning outcomes, and assessment strategies appropriate to its level and the outcomes.

The University's standard module is a grouping of 20 credit points, carrying a total of two hundred notional hours students' learning time, defined as the total learning effort required by the average student to achieve the module learning outcomes.

Larger modules may be validated within specific courses, if appropriate to the subject and course, for instance, for project work. Larger modules must, however, be multiples of the standard module size, eg 40 or 60 credits. The maximum module size is 60 credits. Any proposed modules larger than 60 credits should be put forward as a derogation if there is a strong rationale and/or professional body requirements. Sandwich placement modules and modules specifically designed to cover APL are not subject to the 60 credit maximum.

The smallest unit of learning that may be validated is the 5 credit module.

### **2.3 Module assessment (A1.4.3)**

The assessment for each module must be completed within its total learning time, as defined by the number of credits it carries. The mode of assessment will vary according to the nature of the learning outcomes and how the teaching team judges these can best be assessed. The assessment methods are defined through validation but may be amended through a formal approval process.

An assignment must not be assessed as part of a module if the assignment has already been assessed and credit awarded as part of another module.

## **2.4 The mode of study (A1.4.4)**

Courses are validated in full time and part time modes; and in either mode that may be validated through distributed learning, delivered over concentrated periods of time, through weekend facilities, or as appropriate.

Courses and modules may be validated to be delivered in several different ways, provided that the same learning outcomes and assessment levels apply and can be met. However delivered, the students' total learning time must remain constant at ten notional hours per credit point.

## **2.5 The pace of study(A1.4.5)**

The pace of study is determined by the mode of delivery of the particular course and/or elements of the course and by the student's choice of the pattern of attendance.

The *Regulations for Taught Courses* outline expectations for minimum and maximum periods of registration for a course.

Students commit the same amount of actual learning time to a module or a course at whatever pace they study.

## **2.6 The structure of the teaching year (A1.4.6)**

The teaching year varies according to the nature, structure and level of the particular courses. For the majority of students, the academic year begins in late September and runs until June (for HNC/D and undergraduate students) or until late September (for postgraduate students), allowing those studying in full-time mode to complete 120 credits and 180 credits respectively within one year.

To maximise the flexibility and permeability of courses within a modular system, the University arranges its standard timetabling around a thirty week, three term teaching year. Full-time HNC/D and undergraduate students normally follow the equivalent of six standard modules in one academic year, each lasting for thirty weeks, thereby gaining the 120 credit points required for a full-time year's study. Each standard module is normally scheduled across the three terms in the academic year. This comprises a period of twenty four weeks for teaching, a one-week revision/further teaching period and a five week assessment period for assessment, marking and moderation.

Full-time postgraduate students normally follow a forty eight week year, any taught elements normally following the pattern of the undergraduate year, with the remaining time devoted to the dissertation or project element.

Part-time courses often follow the same pattern, although the students' pace of study is less, with fewer modules taken in any one year.

For some courses, however, the pattern may vary significantly. Such courses are normally self-contained, and/or delivered through distance means. The determining factors in the agreed pattern are the nature of the course and the needs of its client group. For example, professional courses, such as the BA Nursing, or Degree Apprenticeships may follow a pattern which allows for the appropriate professional experience to be incorporated into their courses of study. Again, courses may begin at different times of the year, or may be concentrated in weekend, week or summer schools as appropriate. Provided that the total student learning time is consistent with the number of credits awarded, the University places no regulatory constraint on the pattern of delivery across the year.

## 2.7 Course designation and subject title (A1.4.7)

Courses carry a qualification designation according to their level and discipline content, as follows:

- Bachelor/Master of Arts: courses within the subject areas of art and design, humanities, social and media studies, health studies, business or management.
- Bachelor/Master of Sciences: courses within the subject areas of mathematics, science, social and health sciences, engineering, technology or their applications.
- Bachelor of Engineering: courses comprising an enhanced technological education with an emphasis on engineering applications.
- Integrated Masters: courses which follow an integrated course from undergraduate to Master's level study e.g. MEng, MChiro.
- Bachelor/Master of Laws: courses in the specialised study of law; courses in legal and related studies carry a BA or BSc as appropriate.
- Bachelor/Master of Music: courses in the specialised study of music.
- Certificate/Diploma in Management: post-experience, postgraduate courses carrying high competence-based requirements in management.
- Master of Business Administration: post-experience postgraduate courses in the principles and functions of management and the development of management skills.

In addition, some courses carry a subject title which gives a more specific indication of the discipline(s) studied. HNC, HND, Fd, BA, BSc, BEng, MEng, MA and MSc courses normally carry such a title. EEC, EED, LLB and LLM courses do not normally carry a subject title. The MBA may carry an additional title indicating a specific area specialism.

## 2.8 Major/minor, joint and combined subject courses (A1.4.8)

In addition to the single subject undergraduate courses, subject teams may devise stand-alone subject packages leading to major, minor and joint honours degrees. Subject to availability and timetabling constraints, students may choose a degree made up from any of the packages, either in a combination equally-weighted at levels 5 and 6 (joint honours or combined subject courses) or with greater emphasis on one subject at levels 5 and 6 (major/minor honours).

The packages are defined as follows:

- a major subject course comprises 80 credit points at each of levels 5 and 6;
- a minor subject course comprises 40 credit points at each of levels 5 and 6;
- a joint subject course comprises 60 credit points at each of levels 5 and 6;
- a combined subject course comprises three subjects, each comprising 40 credit points at each of levels 5 and 6.

The amount of choice at Level 4 will be governed by subject area and professional body requirements

## 2.9 The titles of major/minor, joint and other combined awards (A1.4.9)

Each subject package should have a succinct title, normally of no more than two words. The award title is formed by linking the subject package titles as follows:

- Major/minor awards are linked by 'with';
- Joint awards are linked by 'and';

The designation of an award as Bachelor of Arts or of Sciences is determined as follows:

- where the major element of a course is based in the Arts (ie art and design, humanities, social/media studies, health studies, business or management) a BA is awarded;
- where the major element is based in the Sciences (ie mathematics, science, social/health science, engineering, technology or their applications) a BSc is awarded;
- where both elements of a joint degree are based in the Arts, a BA is awarded;
- where both elements of a joint degree are based in the Sciences, a BSc is awarded;
- where the two parts come from both the Arts and the Sciences, the Science-based subject appears first and a BSc is awarded.

## **2.10 Major/minor and joint sandwich courses (A.1.4.10)**

Where available, major/minor and joint students may take a sandwich course through the completion of supervised work experience. Major/minor students would normally complete a placement relevant to the major part of the degree. In joint courses, students may choose a placement relevant to either part of the degree.

The faculty/College offering the relevant part of the degree is responsible for the placement.

## **2.11 Major/minor and joint course dissertations and projects (A.1.4.11)**

In major courses, a dissertation or project may be either a compulsory or optional element in the major package. In joint courses, a dissertation or project may only be an optional element, and students may only opt for the dissertation in one of the two subjects of the course. Normally, a minor part of a degree may not contain a dissertation.

# **3. The Design and Management of Modular Courses (A.1.5)**

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## **3.1 The design of modular courses (A.1.5.1)**

In a modularised course there is a danger that the students' learning may become fragmented and compartmentalised. In designing a course, teams need to consider those issues which might affect the academic quality and standard of the course, and in particular, its coherence, integration, balance, teaching and learning methods, assessment and progression.

Coherence and progression can be improved through designing modules which link together in various ways. Pre-requisite, co-requisite and post-requisite modules ensure that the students have adequate prior knowledge and preparation, and/or that the process of understanding begun in one module can properly mature in subsequent modules. Synoptic modules (including project or dissertation<sup>3</sup> modules) can be used as vehicles for integrating the separate thematic strands at strategic points through the course.

## **3.2 Teaching and learning methods (A1.5.2)**

In modular structures, modules may be taken by a heterogeneous group of students from a range of subject disciplines and, sometimes, from more than one stage or level. Additionally, a module may be part of a compulsory core for some students, while for others it may be optional. A heterogeneous group of students may have the advantage of bringing a range of perceptions and methodologies to bear on a topic, but it may not be easy to meet the specialist needs of different students. In

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<sup>3</sup> Please refer to the [Guidance on Dissertation Supervision](#).

designing courses and planning teaching strategies, lecturers need to avoid making assumptions about the prior knowledge base of their students.

All students, irrespective of the course on which they are enrolled, are equal once they have been admitted onto a module, and their needs must be considered equally.

### **3.3 The course (A1.5.3)**

Students study specific modules, validated as leading to their designated course.

Each course must specify which modules students may take, which are compulsory, which may be studied as options and in which order they must be taken.

### **3.4 Flexibility within and between courses (A1.5.4)**

All courses should make provision for supporting students who wish to transfer courses. However, decisions on transfers will be made by the Course Leader and will be subject to the consideration of the student's learning to date. Such transfers may be between different courses within the same subject area or to courses in other subject areas. This provision is to ensure that students follow the course which is most appropriate to their aptitudes, and academic development and direction.

To this end, courses should:

- make provision for intermediate awards so that students who are unable to complete the final award can leave with recognition for the work they have successfully completed;
- allow students to transfer between courses at any time, subject to their satisfying appropriate pre-requisites;
- allow students where possible to substitute modules up to 20 credits taken at any one level providing that the substitution does not adversely affect students from achieving all course learning outcomes.

Courses carrying professional body requirements which preclude such provision must define these restrictions at validation.

### **3.5 The management of courses (A1.5.5)**

The faculty/RWCMD is responsible for ensuring the course is well managed, its requirements are fulfilled and that the students are given appropriate advice and guidance. The course is managed by the academic faculty/College responsible for the subject area of the course, although for multi-disciplinary courses staff from other faculties will contribute to the overall course management

The responsibilities of the faculty/RWCMD in course management are to:

- Monitor the operation of courses, including any versions running concurrently with collaborative partners;
- Consider external examiners' reports and agree responses thereto, noting causes for concern; features of good practice; and emerging trends;
- Consider feedback from students and agree responses thereto, noting causes for concern; features of good practice; and emerging trends;
- Consider feedback from employers and agree responses thereto, noting causes for concern; features of good practice; and emerging trends;
- Agree and monitor the implementation of Course Action Plans (this could be through Continuous Monitoring Action Plans);
- Refer to the Centre of Enhancement for Learning and Teaching (CELT) good practice in learning and teaching for further dissemination;
- Report to FQAC/CQAC and make a substantial contribution to Faculty/College Continuous Monitoring processes;

The progression and completion of students enrolled on the courses are the responsibility of the appropriate award and progression assessment board (see chapter 7).

Course leaders are accountable to the dean of faculty/principal of RWCMD for:

- overseeing the development, organisation and operation of the course;
- ensuring that the course is appropriately constructed, managed and monitored;
- liaising with appropriate subject leaders on module provision;
- liaising with award external examiners/moderators.

### **3.6 The management of subjects and modules (A1.5.6)**

Whilst the University focuses its framework for managing academic standards and quality on course and module level, the Assessment Boards allow a holistic view of the subject. A subject is a collection of cognate modules located in and organised by one faculty/College.

Subjects may be single subject, multi-disciplinary, or represent one or more specialisms within one discipline, according to the range of modules and academic responsibilities of the faculty/College to which they belong. They may be co-terminus with a single course, or provide modules for a wide range of different courses.

A subject assessment board can include all staff offering and teaching on modules within that subject. The assessment of modules and the assurance of standards are the responsibility of the subject assessment board (see chapter 7).

### **3.7 Responsibility for courses and students (A1.5.7)**

All courses are located within the academic faculty/College responsible for the area(s) of study to which they lead.

For those major/minor or joint courses where the two subjects are the responsibility of different faculties, the location is determined as follows:

- major courses are located within the faculty responsible for the major subject;
- for joint courses where both subjects are either arts-based or science-based, the subjects are placed in alphabetical order, and the courses are located in the faculty responsible for the first listed subject;
- for joint courses which contain an arts-based and a science-based subject, the courses are located in the faculty responsible for the science-based subject.

Students are the responsibility of the faculty/College which organises the courses upon which they are enrolled.

### **3.8 Student representation and communication (A1.5.8)**

Each faculty/College is responsible for ensuring adequate student representation on appropriate committees where students' interests are discussed. Refer to the *Quality Manual, Chapter 9, Student Engagement with Quality Processes*

Committee membership, for students, is a clear requirement enjoined on faculties and to be distinguished from informal focus groups, questionnaires and other forms of gaining feedback. Both are, however, equally subject to audit through the continuous monitoring and course review processes.

Each faculty/College is also responsible for ensuring its students receive clear, comprehensive and timely information on the procedures, requirements and

regulations of their courses, and on the sources of support and guidance provided for them.

### **3.9 Guidance and progress (A1.5.9)**

With the complexity of student choice possible in modular courses, students need careful guidance through the pathways on offer, in terms of their educational and vocational aspirations. Faculties/College must be assured that the students' choices are appropriate, that their courses are balanced, coherent and meet the requirements for the course(s) or membership of the relevant professional bodies. They must further be assured that a regular check is kept on each student's progress to provide sufficient support and guidance throughout their studies.

Each faculty/College is therefore responsible for ensuring that systems are in place to provide advice on academic matters and to monitor students' academic progress on an individual level. Each faculty is also responsible for ensuring that all undergraduate students are assigned a Personal Academic Coach.

### **3.10 Welfare advice and counselling (A1.5.10)**

Welfare advice is organised on campuses through the Advice Zones who, receive students' welfare enquiries, acting as first port of call for students seeking welfare advice, and referring students to other sources of specialist advice, if appropriate. They receive training from the Student Services and Learning Services departments on welfare matters.

Advice Zones also have a remit to advise students who are considering withdrawing or changing their course. The Advice Zone provides a link between academic staff, Registry staff, and Personal Academic Coaches, and liaises between those staff and the various departments.

The Advice Zones receive claims for personal extenuating circumstances in respect of academic progress, and advise students on how to submit such claims and on any supporting evidence required. Decisions are handled by Advice Zone Team Leaders and/or an extenuating circumstances panel.

## **4. Courses (A.2)**

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### **4.1 General Principles (A.2.1.1)**

- [a] The taught courses of the University are consistent and comparable in standard with awards granted and conferred throughout higher education in the United Kingdom.
- [b] The courses portfolio of the University is consistent with its strategic vision and mission.
- [c] The range of courses offered by the University allows students to gain the highest level of award of which they are capable.
- [d] The University offers its courses on the basis of equality of opportunity

### **4.2 Course design (A.2.1.2)**

- [a] Taught courses are defined in terms of level, learning outcomes and place within the CQFW and FHEQ<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> 'Credit Qualification Framework for Wales' and 'Framework for Higher Education Qualifications'

- [b] The curriculum, structure, teaching methods and forms of assessment of taught courses allow for the attainment of their stated learning outcomes.
- [c] All University courses must conform to the relevant QAA Benchmarks.
- [d] The courses are designed to ensure that students receive a balanced and coherent learning experience, which allows their knowledge and skills to develop progressively during their learning, and which encourages their ability to see relationships between the various elements and to examine their subject of study in a broader perspective.
- [e] Each course is designed to stimulate in students an enquiring, analytical and creative approach and to encourage independent judgement and critical self-awareness. It aims to develop their intellectual and imaginative powers; their understanding and judgement; their problem-solving, communication and other transferable skills.

#### **4.3 Definition of Student's Programme of Study (A.2.2.1)**

A student's 'programme of study' is the approved curriculum followed by an individual student; it may be identical with a course, or be one of a number of standard routes available within a large course, or it may be unique to the student.

#### **4.4 Conformity with University regulations (A2.2.2)**

All programmes of study must conform to the *Regulations for Taught Courses*. Where amendment is needed to satisfy the requirements of a professional or statutory body, requests for course specific regulations are approved by the relevant university committees and must be supported by appropriate evidence.

#### **4.5 The course specification (A.2.2.3)**

All approved courses are governed by a formal course specification, available to students, which includes:

- its title and any award(s) to which it leads;
- its planned duration and mode of study;
- its overall aims and learning outcomes;
- its curriculum and structure;
- regulations on the admission, progression and assessment of students.

#### **4.6 Changes to course specifications (A.2.2.4)**

An individual course specification cannot be changed without formal approval through the relevant university committees. Any post-enrolment changes in connection with the progression and assessment regulations must be subject to formal consultation with the students affected, and receive the written consent of the appropriate external examiner(s), before being approved.

#### **4.7 The title of a course (A2.2.6)**

- [a] The title should be clear, accurate and consistent with the course content. It must conform to the parameters of the CQFW and FHEQ<sup>5</sup> and accurately describe the level of knowledge and skills to be expected from a person holding such a qualification to professional bodies, students and employers.
- [b] Regulations governing the designation of courses are set out in Chapter 2.

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<sup>5</sup> 'Credit Qualifications Framework for Wales' and 'Framework for Higher Education Qualifications'

## **4.8 Enrolment on courses (A.2.2.7)**

### **4.8.1 Validation (A.2.2.7.1)**

Any course which leads to a University award must be validated according to the University procedures before any students are enrolled upon it.

### **4.8.2 Credit parameters (A.2.2.7.2)**

Enrolled students normally study no less than 20 credits and no more than 120 credits in any one academic year for HNC/D and undergraduate courses. This may be extended to 140 credits for students taking repeated or substituted modules, or transferring to another course.

Postgraduate students normally study no less than 20 credits and no more than 180 credits in any one academic year.

## **4.9 Admissions (A.2.3)**

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The following information should be read in conjunction with the University's Admissions Policy, the University and UCAS web pages and the relevant University Prospectus.

### **4.9.1 Admission Criteria A.2.3.1**

The Enquiries & Admissions Unit co-ordinates admission to most University undergraduate and postgraduate courses taught at its campuses in Pontypridd, Newport and Cardiff. Each faculty/College is responsible for setting its admission criteria in line with the minimum University requirements and in conjunction with the Enquiries & Admissions Unit.

### **4.9.2 Admissions Policy and Practice A.2.3.2**

The University Quality Assurance Committee is responsible for monitoring admissions policy and practice. The Admissions Policy is applied in accordance with and alongside other University policies and complies with relevant legislation and with reference to the QAA UK Quality Code.

### **4.9.3 Admission of students A.2.3.3**

Students are admitted subject to

- adhering to the Admissions Policy
- fulfilling the entry requirements of the course
- a reasonable expectation that the applicant will be able to achieve the learning outcomes of the course and achieve the award as demonstrated through the application process.

### **4.9.4 Entry Requirements A.2.3.4**

The University sets a minimum entry requirement for its courses as outlined below. Specific entry requirements are found in the University and UCAS web pages and the relevant University Prospectus.

#### **[a] Undergraduate courses A.2.3.4.1**

Admission to these courses normally requires a minimum of two A level passes or equivalent and five GCSE passes at grade C or above to include Mathematics and English Language.

#### **[b] HNC/HND/Foundation Degrees A.2.3.4.2**

Admission to these courses normally requires a minimum of one A level pass or equivalent and three GCSEs at grade C or above to include Mathematics and

English Language although other qualifications, e.g. BTEC awards, may be considered.

**[c] Postgraduate taught courses A.2.3.4.3**

Admission to postgraduate taught courses normally requires one of the following

- an honours degree
- a postgraduate diploma
- a recognised professional qualification.

Alternative qualifications or relevant experience may be acceptable.

Entry requirements for professional courses vary.

**[d] English Language Minimum Requirements A.2.3.5**

Applicants must be able to demonstrate ability to study through the medium of English, for example GCSE grade C or above in English Language. Normally the University requires international and EU undergraduate applicants whose first language is not English to have obtained a minimum score of 6.0 in the IELTS (Cambridge Advanced) examination or equivalent. This minimum score increases to 6.5 for integrated masters and postgraduate applicants. International/Non-EU applicants may also be required to adhere to English language requirements as stipulated by the UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) as a condition to obtaining the required study visa. Some courses require a higher level of ability as indicated in the specific course requirements. GCSE Welsh Language is not accepted in lieu of GCSE English Language unless the course is taught fully through the medium of Welsh.

## **5. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) (A.2.3.10)**

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(also known as Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) APCL / APEL)

- [a] The University's provision for the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) seeks to ensure that students are admitted to the highest level of award for which they are qualified and for which they wish to apply and that they receive credit for their previous and demonstrable learning achievements. These principles apply equally to pre-entry, post-entry or credit transfer applications.
- [b] An applicant can use both forms of RPL (certificated and experiential) to claim credit as part completion of an award.
- [c] All applications for the transfer of credit using the RPL procedure must be made in accordance with the regulatory procedures for RPL for Exemption.
- [c] All applications for the award of academic credit for experiential learning using the RPL procedure must be made in accordance with the regulatory procedures for RPL for Accreditation.
- [d] The RPL procedures are applicable when used:
- (i) To allow an applicant entry onto a course where they do not meet the formal entry requirements;
  - (ii) To award credit at the point of entry;
  - (iii) For transfer between courses/programmes of study;
  - (iv) Post-entry to a course/programme of study.
- [e] The maximum amount of credit which can be transferred/awarded through RPL is outlined in *The Regulations for Taught Courses*

**5.1 RPL for Admission (A.2.3.10.1)**

- [a] The University may admit students on the basis of their prior experiential learning, provided that it is identifiable, relevant to the programme of study for which they are applying and provides sufficient evidence of their ability.
- [b] The applicant is responsible for identifying their formal application to study at the University as a 'RPL for Admission' application.

**5.2 RPL for Exemption formally known as Accreditation of Prior Certified Learning (APCL) (A.2.3.10.2)**

- [a] Students are not expected to re-take modules for which they have gained equivalent credit elsewhere (certificated learning), provided that the credit is accepted as appropriate for the course to which they are transferring. Students may be given full or partial recognition of their prior learning.
- [b] The applicant is responsible for identifying their formal application to study at the University as a 'RPL for Exemption' application.
- [c] Students may apply to transfer from courses of study within the University or from courses of other institutions on the basis of the relevant credit they have gained on those other courses.
- [d] The proposed credits against which prior certificated learning is to be set must be formally recorded on an RPL exemption form which details the specific module exemptions under consideration and/or whether there is any exemption from entire levels. Credit may not be given for partial modules. This form must be signed by the relevant course leader. Where a student is given exemption for a module on the basis of certificated learning, this should be recorded as 'exempt' against the appropriate module and clearly indicated on the student's record and any transcript(s) of performance.

**5.3 RPL for Accreditation formally known as Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) (A.2.3.10.3)**

- [a] Students are not expected to take modules for which they have relevant prior experiential learning. RPL for Accreditation is a way of recognising, assessing and awarding students with credit for their knowledge, skills and experience; provided they can demonstrate that their existing knowledge and skills meet most of the course /module learning outcomes.
- [b] The applicant is responsible for identifying their formal application to study at the University as a 'RPL for Accreditation' application.
- [c] The applicant is responsible for completing the RPL for Accreditation form, for supplying supporting evidence and submitting the completed application to the relevant Course Leader. This evidence must be relevant, sufficient, authentic, and current and demonstrate the appropriate learning skills for the level of learning. Students may not use the same evidence to double count experiential learning, whether awarded by the University of South Wales or another institution, and the student must sign the RPL for Accreditation form to this effect.
- [d] Course Leaders and Module Leaders are responsible for assisting applicants in preparing their RPL for Accreditation application and for assessing those claims. These two functions, however, must be clearly separated and handled independently.

- [e] When assessing RPL for Accreditation the applicant's prior learning should be mapped to the learning outcomes of either individual modules within the course or the level/interim stage learning outcomes as stated in the course specification.
- [f] RPL for Accreditation applications are subject to the University's normal assessment regulations and all credit awarded is provisional, until ratified by the subject assessment board..
- [g] The proposed credits awarded for prior experiential learning must be formally recorded on an RPL for Accreditation form which details the specific module or credit exemptions under consideration, which marks, if any, will contribute to the grading or classification of the award and/or whether there is any exemption from entire levels. Credit may not be given for partial modules. The form must be signed by the Course Leader, the RPL Assessors and the student.
- [h] Where a student is successfully awarded credit for experiential learning, the RPL for Accreditation form should be sent to Student Administration (Academic Registry) to allow the mark(s) to be recorded on the appropriate module(s) of the student's record.

**5.4 RPL credit limits (A.2.3.10.4) – See the Regulations for Taught Courses**

**6. Assessment Management (A.2.5)**

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**6.1 General principles and requirements (A.2.5.1)**

The University has an [Assessment for Learning Policy](#) which outlines a number of principles. These are underpinned by several requirements and should be referred to when designing or reviewing assessment.

**6.2 The assessment regime (A2.5.2)**

- [a] Students must be assessed in accordance with the validated assessment methods. All validated forms of assessment must be treated and marked with the same level of academic rigour, and are subject to standard minimum marking and moderating requirements, including the role of external examiners Appendix 2 of the Assessment for Learning Policy outlines the requirements and expectations for Marking and Moderation.
- [b] Students cannot submit an assignment to be assessed as part of a module if the assignment has already been assessed and credit awarded as part of another module.
- [c] All subjects must specify the assessment criteria applicable to the modules within their remit, defining the academic qualities and practical abilities students need to demonstrate to achieve a particular mark on the University scale, and taking due regard to the relevant national subject benchmarks.  
  
This is distinct from the assessment strategy which specifies the weighting between examination, coursework or other elements of the module assessment.
- [d] All courses must specify the requirements and outcomes for each level of study, and ensure that these accord with the generic level descriptors included in University regulations.
- [e] The conduct of subject assessment boards and award and progression assessment boards is carried out under standard University protocols, with clearly defined remits and ranges of discretion. The consideration of personal extenuating circumstances is likewise subject to standard protocols and common guidelines. Refer to the *Extenuating Circumstances Regulations and Procedures*.

- [f] External examiners are responsible for the oversight of all assessments which count towards a particular award. Their role is to ensure that justice is done to the individual student and that the standard of the University's courses is maintained.

The extent to which any external examiner becomes involved in detailed scrutiny of individual assessments is a matter for the examiner's judgement and the level of demonstrable confidence reposed in the subject team.

### **6.3 Assessment of disabled/dyslexic students (A.2.5.4)**

University policy is to provide the widest possible access to those who wish to benefit from its courses and to remove barriers which already exist to disabled students.

If a disabled/dyslexic student is unable to be assessed by the approved methods, a subject assessment board may vary these as appropriate, bearing in mind the learning outcomes of the module and the need to assess the student on equal terms with other students.

Assessment formats and possible adjustments should be discussed by disability advisors and appropriate staff within faculties/College, to ensure that the methods employed are practical and consistently applied. Subject external examiners should be provided with information on the reasonable adjustments made for disabled/dyslexic students. If the reasonable adjustment to the assessment is minor (for example, extra time) then subject external examiners need simply to be informed of the adjustment. Where the reasonable adjustment is a substantial modification to the method of assessment (for example, replacing a written exam with an oral exam or an essay), then subject external examiners should confirm that the learning outcomes and academic standards are still being met prior to the assessment being undertaken. Subject external examiners should confirm at the subject assessment board(s) that the University's policies have been observed.

### **6.4 The language of assessment (A.2.5.5)**

As a matter of principle, a course is assessed in the language in which it has been developed and validated, through which it is taught, and in which the approved internal and external examiners are competent. The University can then be assured that the delivery accords with the course aims and curriculum and the assessment matches its learning outcomes.

Students wanting to submit assessments in Welsh are subject to the [Regulations for Taught Courses](#) and the procedures for [Assessments Submitted in Welsh](#).

#### **6.4.1 Language and international students (A.2.5.5.1)**

The University recognises its responsibilities to its international students in ensuring that they are treated with equity and not disadvantaged in assessment through the use of their second language. Internal examiners must consider the intended audience when phrasing assessment tasks and questions, and ensure that these are as clear and unambiguous as possible.

#### **6.4.2 Proficiency in the language of assessment (A.2.5.5.2)**

Students are, nevertheless, expected to be sufficiently proficient in the language through which a module is delivered to meet its requirements. If, exceptionally, international students are admitted without the normal English language entry requirements they must achieve that standard before they complete their course.

#### **6.4.3 Use of translation dictionaries (A.2.5.5.3)**

Students may not take translation dictionaries into examinations conducted in the language through which the module has been delivered. Dictionaries may

exceptionally be permitted where their use is integral to the assessment schedule of a module, as agreed through the validation process. An example might be students studying a foreign language course. All such exceptions apply to the agreed assessment for the module, and not to any individual student registered on it.

## **6.5 Assessment through the medium of Welsh (A2.5.6)**

(see also Procedures for Assessments Submitted in Welsh which must also be adhered to)

[a] The University recognises its responsibilities under the Welsh Language Standards<sup>6</sup> to ensure equal status to both Welsh and English, and not to discriminate against those students whose level of fluency is greater in Welsh than in English. Students on modules delivered in English are therefore permitted to submit assessments, both coursework assessments and examinations, in Welsh providing the procedures set out below can be put in place. (NB In the case of some assessments, eg group assessments, presentations or practicals, it may not be possible to make the necessary arrangements.)

[b] Students must notify the University at the start of a module or, at the latest, within four weeks of the start of a module, through completion of the relevant form, of their wish to submit assessments through the medium of Welsh so that appropriate arrangements can be put in place.

### **[c] Internal examiners**

Where the normal internal examiner is not Welsh-speaking, the faculty should consider whether there is an alternative member of staff within the University with suitable competencies to undertake the marking. These competencies encompass both those of the discipline concerned and high level linguistic skills in both Welsh and English to ensure comparability. The member of staff marking the Welsh assignments should liaise closely with the normal internal examiner to ensure consistency of marking.

Where there is no suitably qualified member of staff available, the faculty should seek to appoint an associate examiner (ie someone from outside the institution who could play the same role as an 'internal examiner'). The associate examiner should have a discussion in advance with the internal examiner to ensure they become familiar with the assessment requirements of the course and the marking criteria for the assessments to be undertaken in Welsh. The associate examiner should be provided with a number of English medium assessments which have been marked against the criteria to ensure consistent marking of the Welsh medium assignments.

The associate examiner should discuss the marking of the Welsh assessments with the normal internal examiner prior to the mark being agreed.

Where neither of the above alternatives are possible, the internal examiner should make arrangements for the Welsh assessment to be translated into English for marking by the internal examiner. All such translations must be arranged through the Welsh Language Officer who will seek an appropriate translator familiar with the subject matter. The translator will be instructed not to correct grammatical errors in undertaking the translation and to reflect in the translation any lack of clarity in the original Welsh version. The work sent to the translator will be anonymous, ie there will be no indication of the name of the student who has submitted the work. The student will be given an opportunity to verify the translation.

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.comisiynyddygybraeg.cymru/English/Organisations/Pages/What-are-standards.aspx>

Where the assessment is in the form of a written examination, the examination paper must be sent to the Welsh Language Officer for the translation to be prepared at least one month in advance of the examination.

[d] **External examiners**

The external examiner should be informed of any written assessments which have been submitted in Welsh and either marked by an alternative internal marker or an associate examiner or have been translated.

Where 10% or more of a module cohort elect to submit written assessments in Welsh where the module is taught in English, some of the assessments submitted in Welsh should be included in any sample of the assessed work which is provided to the external examiner. Where necessary, the sample of assessments submitted in Welsh may be translated into English for this purpose.

The relevant subject assessment board should be informed where any students have submitted assessments through the medium of Welsh and the module leader will confirm that the agreed University procedures have been followed.

These regulations and the related procedures conform to the QAA guidelines for HEIs in Wales developed to supplement the QAA Quality Code.

**6.6 Examination centres different from the study institution (A.2.5.7)**

[a] Students normally take their examinations at the institution where they have studied. They may be permitted, exceptionally, to take examinations at an alternative examination centre, provided the University is confident that appropriate conditions exist in that centre. No student has the right to take examinations at an alternative examination centre, and each case is considered individually, according to the conditions in [b], [c] and [d] below.

[b] Students must apply to take their examinations at an alternative examination centre and provide reasons with acceptable evidence for their request.

[c] Examinations may only be held at an existing collaborative partner institution of the University where appropriate conditions for examinations have been established or at a British Council office approved as an examination centre by Academic Registry

[d] Academic Registry, in consultation with faculties where appropriate, must confirm that the format of the examination is suitable for assessment at the approved examination centre.

**6.7 Disclosure and computer retention of grades (A.2.5.8)**

[a] Academic Registry/the College is responsible for publishing the results for all students enrolled on courses. The faculty/College should ensure that they supply the Assessment Boards with full information, i.e. the marks and recommendation code, in a timely fashion.

Likewise, faculties should ensure that partner institutions are informed of the grades achieved by students studying on their courses at those institutions.

[b] Module grades will be retained electronically and students will have access to their own grades achieved in all stages of their course.

[c] Progression and completion results posted on a noticeboard must be anonymous. Individual grades should not be posted on a noticeboard. Faculties/College may choose to inform students by alternative means if appropriate.

## **6.8 Responsibilities in designing and setting assessment (A.2.7.1)**

- [a] The University arrangements for grading students' work and agreeing their progression places principal responsibility on the individual tutor/ team of tutors for each module for ensuring the fairness and appropriateness of the assessment tasks and the assessment outcomes. In fulfilling their responsibilities, tutors must ensure that:
- assessment tasks are set in clear and unambiguous terms;
  - the criteria against which each task is to be assessed are agreed in advance and made known to the students;
  - academic judgements of performance are made in the light of the agreed criteria, and are clear and unequivocal.
- [b] Tutors should establish deadlines for all pieces of assessment that contribute to a course in advance, and make these known to all students at the start of each module. The *Assessment for Learning Policy Appendix 1 on Assessment Dialogue and Approval* should be referred to.
- Tutors should likewise clearly distinguish between assessments which contribute to the overall module grade, and those, if any, which are formative only.
- [c] Tutors must ensure that their practices conform to the QAA Quality Code.

## **6.9 Marking protocols (A.2.7.4)**

Examining teams are expected to adhere to defined marking and moderating protocols as outlined in the Assessment for Learning Policy. These protocols represent the minimum level of practice required to maintain the academic standards of the University's awards.

## **6.10 Anonymous and non-anonymous assessment (A.2.7.5)**

- [a] All examinations are to be marked anonymously, with students identified by enrolment number.
- [b] Coursework assessments which can be marked anonymously (for example, essays) must be so marked where they contribute towards a final award. In these cases, students supply their enrolment number only and the grades are processed by an independent person. Once initial feedback has been given, it is the student's responsibility to approach the lecturer for further advice or support. Some forms of coursework cannot be anonymously assessed because the nature or content necessarily identifies the individual student.
- [c] Examiners must ensure demonstrable equity amongst students marked non-anonymously by adhering to the following protocols:
- as far as possible, ensuring that "live" activities are viewed by more than one assessor;
  - where possible, individualising a specified element within any group work assessment so that each group member's contribution to the final outcome is assessed;
  - reassuring students about the confidentiality of comments within learning logs or journals;
  - keeping a written record of their deliberations for presentations, projects, performances, and other "live" activities, in accordance with previously defined assessment criteria;
  - informing students about work that is to be visually or aurally recorded for the purposes of double, second or external assessment;

- keeping all records relating to non-anonymisable assessments secure until the time limit for any appeal has passed.

## **6.11 The certification of awards (A.2.9.10)**

[a] Students receive a certificate of their award, once conferred, which records:

- the name of the University;
- the full name of the student;
- the full title of the award, including the course;
- the date of conferment;
- any other relevant endorsement, e.g. honours classification, sandwich mode.

[b] Students receive a transcript of the module(s) successfully completed on a course. The transcript records:

- the full name of the student;
- the dates of his/her enrolment;
- the place of study;
- the module title(s), credit value(s) and level(s);
- the % grade achieved for each module and the date(s) of completion.

## **6.12 Aegrotat and Posthumous Awards (A.2.9.11)**

### **6.12.1 Aegrotat awards (A.2.9.11.1)**

Aegrotat awards may be awarded to students who have been prevented by illness from completing final examined/assessed elements of a taught course of study.

The Progression and Award Board should be satisfied that the student's prior performance shows beyond a reasonable doubt that he/she would have passed but for the illness/event that occurred and that the student is unlikely to be able to return to complete his/her study at a later date.

Aegrotat awards will only be made with the express approval of the student. Where he/she is unwilling to accept this award the Progression and Award Board shall permit him/her to complete the assessments in question by an approved subsequent date.

An aegrotat degree, diploma or certificate shall be unclassified and, in all other respects, un-graded. An aegrotat award does not necessarily entitle the holder to registration with a professional body, or exemption for the requirements of any professional qualification, which might otherwise be associated with the course of study concerned.

Progression and Award Boards may not recommend the award of aegrotat research degrees and aegrotat taught Master's degrees may only be awarded where the work done for the dissertation can be examined. This requirement does not prevent the issuing to the student of any relevant certificate or diploma award that might be made in respect of study already completed.

### **6.12.2 Posthumous awards (A.2.9.11.2)**

Posthumous awards may be made in cases where there has been a death of a student. The following is intended to apply in these circumstances; if a student has died, having qualified for the award and satisfying the usual requirements prior to death, the award made will not be distinguished in any other way from that given to any other graduate usually.

The Progression and Award Board will need to satisfy itself that the appropriate requirements have been met in respect of the awards, as follows:

### *Initial Degree Courses*

A Progression and Award Board may recommend that a posthumous award may be given where the student achieved no fewer than one third of the credits required at the appropriate levels.

For full-time honours degrees and taught postgraduate awards, the Board must consider a report supplied by a senior member of Faculty confirming that their performance was likely to result in the award requested

### *Postgraduate Research Degrees*

An Examination Board may recommend that a posthumous degree be awarded:

- After the thesis has been examined or submitted for examination but before the viva (where required) could be held, if the Board considers the work presented and provided that it is satisfied that the work is the student's own (by means of the receipt of a report from the supervisor).
- Before the thesis has been submitted, provided the Board is able to consider available evidence of the research work completed by student. Normally such evidence shall be supplied by the student's supervisor, who shall submit a report for consideration by the examiners. In addition:
  - Enough of the research project must have been completed to allow a proper assessment to be made of the scope of the thesis
  - The standards of the research work completed must be that normally required for the award of the degree in question, and must demonstrate the student's grasp of the subject
  - The written material available (such as draft chapters, published work, presentations to conferences/seminars) must demonstrate the student's ability to write a thesis of the required standard.

Should a case fail to satisfy the requirements of the regulations it is open to the Examination Board (in consultation with the external examiner) to refer it to the Research Committee for consideration for special approval of it on its merits.

### *The making of the award*

In cases in which families or friends wish to attend a ceremony, in consultation with family and friends the following could be arranged:

- The holding of a special ceremony in memory of the student in the faculty concerned, at which a presentation of the certificate could be made to the appropriate persons
- The inclusion of the student's name in the formal degree congregation, together with the extension of an invitation to family and friends to attend.

In cases in which family and friends do not wish to take part in a ceremony a personal letter of condolence should be prepared for dispatch at the same time as the certificate is dispatched to the family.

## **7. Assessment Boards (A.2.6)**

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### **7.1 General arrangements (A.2.6.1)**

#### **7.1.1 Subject assessment boards, and award and progression assessment boards (A.2.6.1.1)**

The University operates a tiered system of assessment boards. Students' individual performances are judged and graded at subject level by subject assessment boards.

The subject assessment boards then pass the students' grades to the relevant award and progression assessment board. Award and progression assessment boards are responsible for deciding students' progression, completion and, if appropriate, classification on the basis of the grades supplied by the subject assessment boards.

### **7.1.2 External Examiners' roles (A.2.6.1.2)**

The University operates a system of Course External Examiners. These are allocated a module and course workload. Details of their role can be found in the External Examiner Handbook.

In their first year of tenure they will be invited to the Subject and Progression/Award Boards. In subsequent years, they will be expected to wherever possible attend the Progression/Award Board.

They contribute to the work of Subject Boards remotely after their first year via the academic staff in attendance.

They are appointed to maintain oversight of the academic standards, quality and coherence of the modules/courses to which they are appointed. Examiners must endorse the outcomes of the board on its completion.

### **7.1.3 Examiners' academic judgement (A.2.6.1.3)**

Both internal and external examiners are responsible for upholding the standards of the University awards and ensuring all students are treated with equity under the regulations. Their academic judgment is final.

### **7.1.4 Consent of the Course External Examiner (A.2.6.1.4)**

No recommendation for the conferment of an award of the University can be made without the consent of a Course External Examiner. On any matter which an External Examiner(s) has declared to be a matter of principle, the decision of the External Examiner(s) must either be accepted as final by an assessment board or referred to the Academic Board, as must any unresolved disagreement between External Examiners.

## **7.2 Subject assessment boards (A.2.6.2)**

### **7.2.1 Role (A.2.6.2.1)**

Subject assessment boards are established to agree the overall module grades of individual students for all modules belonging to that subject. Subject assessment boards are accountable to Academic Board for the fulfilment of their terms of reference.

### **7.2.2 Membership (A.2.6.2.2)**

The membership of a subject assessment board is as follows:

- dean of faculty/principal of College or nominee (Chairperson);
- staff offering and teaching on modules within the subject, including, where applicable, staff from collaborative partner institutions;
- External Examiner(s) appointed to the subject (mandatory only if in the first year of their tenure);
- nominee of the Academic Registrar (Secretary).

### **7.2.3 Functions (A.2.6.2.3)**

All the functions of the board must be carried out in accordance with the University regulations, and, where applicable, in accordance with approved professional requirements.

Specifically, a subject assessment board's functions are:

- to decide candidates' grades for modules, to relay these to appropriate award and progression assessment board(s) and to ensure that the grades and recommendations are recorded accurately on University systems.
- to record the decisions and proceedings of all meetings of the board including those cases of extenuating circumstances eligible to be considered by the board (see 7.2.4 below);
- to receive reports of any disability and/or dyslexia (including language matters) relating to any candidate.

#### **7.2.4 Subject assessment board decisions and extenuating circumstances (A.2.6.2.4)**

A subject assessment board's function is to determine the students' performance on their modules and assign grades to this on the basis of academic judgement alone. It is not empowered to modify grades for extenuating circumstances, except:

- where there is evidence of a factor which has affected either the entire cohort of students on a particular module or a group of students from the cohort;
- where an extenuating circumstances panel has judged there is a valid reason for late/non submission.

These are the only instances where a panel will report to a subject assessment board; it will not otherwise do so. Refer to the *Extenuating Circumstances Regulations and Procedures*.

### **7.3 Award and progression assessment boards (A.2.6.3)**

#### **7.3.1 Role (A.2.6.3.1)**

Award and progression assessment boards are established for every course leading to an academic award of the University, in order to determine the students' progression and completion of their courses. An award and progression assessment board may be responsible for one course, or a number of courses. Boards are accountable to the Academic Board for the fulfilment of its terms of reference.

#### **7.3.2 Power to confer an award (A.2.6.3.2)**

An award and progression assessment board is the only body to have authority to confer an award. In agreeing the appropriate award for each individual candidate, the award and progression assessment board must take into account the relevant completion and classification regulations (if any), the distribution of grades, the student's academic development during the course, and any recommendations made by the extenuating circumstances panels.

No other body may do this, or amend the decision of a properly constituted award and progression assessment board, other than the Academic Appeals Committee or Academic Board.

#### **7.3.3 Membership (A.2.6.3.3)**

The membership of an award and progression assessment board is as follows:

- dean of faculty/principal of College or nominee (Chairperson);
- course leaders contributing to the awards;
- External Examiner(s) for the award(s);
- faculty collaborative manager (where the courses are delivered in collaboration with partners);
- up to three other academic members of staff nominated by the dean of faculty/principal of College;
- nominee of the Academic Registrar (Secretary).

Subject leaders and representatives from the faculty's collaborative partners contributing to the courses are eligible to attend the award and progression assessment board to advise on decisions taken at subject assessment boards.

#### **7.3.4 Functions (A.2.6.3.4)**

All the functions of an award and progression assessment board must be carried out in accordance with the University regulations outlined in this handbook, or, where applicable, in accordance with approved professional requirements.

Specifically, an award and progression assessment board's functions are:

- to receive module decisions from the relevant subject assessment boards;
- to receive the decisions of a faculty's/College/campus's extenuating circumstances panel;
- to award credit for successfully completed modules;
- to determine each student's progression, award and classification;
- to decide on referrals and any other course of action, taking account of information and advice supplied by the relevant subject assessment boards and the extenuating circumstances panel;
- to confirm candidates for interim awards at the point in the programme when they are eligible for the award (eg, CertHE at the completion of Level 4);
- to record the decisions and proceedings of all meetings of the board.

#### **7.3.5 Award and progression assessment boards and extenuating circumstances (A.2.6.3.5)**

The function of an award and progression assessment board is to ensure that decisions about progression, classification, compensation and reassessment are made properly, on the basis of the grades it receives from the subject assessment board(s). An award and progression assessment board must also therefore decide on cases where any extenuating circumstances have been confirmed as valid by the extenuating circumstances panel. The scope of an award and progression assessment board's actions in such cases are outlined in the *Extenuating Circumstances Regulations and Procedures*. An award and progression assessment board cannot, however, alter a grade that has been agreed by a subject assessment board, other than to allow compensation in accordance with the University regulations.

#### **7.4 Student membership of assessment boards (A.2.6.4)**

In normal circumstances, students will not be members of assessment boards or attend examiners' meetings other than as candidates for assessment. If, however, a person who is otherwise qualified to be an examiner for an award (eg as a member of staff or as an approved external examiner) is also registered as a student on another course either in the University or elsewhere, that will not in itself disqualify that person from carrying out normal examining commitments.

#### **7.5 Responsibilities for chairing assessment boards (A.2.6.5)**

[a] Deans of faculty/principal of College are formally responsible for chairing all assessment boards located in their faculties/College. This responsibility may be delegated to an appropriate nominee. However, the award and progression assessment board should normally be chaired by the dean of faculty/principal of College, or if delegated, by a member of staff at deputy dean or head of school level.

[b] All nominated chairpersons should be among the senior staff of the faculty/College. They should have sufficient familiarity with the University regulations and processes and have a degree of independence from the awards being considered.

- [c] All chairpersons of subject assessment boards and award and progression assessment boards must attend training sessions which will be offered by the University at regular intervals to ensure familiarity and full knowledge of current regulations and practice. Only staff who have attended these sessions may be nominated to chair boards.

There will be an additional session for all chairpersons, held before summer assessment boards each year, to brief them on recent changes to University regulations.

## **7.6 Chairperson's action (A.2.6.6)**

- [a] Chairpersons of assessment boards should take chairperson's action when information becomes available which was not at the time of the board meeting and where it would not be appropriate or practicable to convene a meeting of the board.
- [b] Chairpersons should attempt to consult an external examiner before taking chairperson's action. It is good practice to obtain the agreement of the external examiner for any chair's action; however this can sometimes be impractical. Chairpersons and external examiners may agree topics which s/he would not normally act upon without the agreement of the external.
- [c] Chairpersons should consult as many appropriate members of the board as are available, especially key officers, eg subject leaders and academic counsellors, before taking chairperson's action.
- [d] Chairperson's action should always be documented fully, including the process taken. The outcome of any action should be reported immediately to all affected students, staff, faculties/departments and to the Student Administration team within Academic Registry and should be reported to the next meeting of the board.
- [e] Chairpersons should appoint appropriate staff to act on their behalf in their absence.

## 8. Students' Mandatory Academic Procedures

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8.1 The following mandatory procedures are held online as they include more detailed information on where forms can be found, who to contact and what steps are involved in a process. As these details need to be kept up to date, the procedures are online through Unilife or directly on Academic Registry's webpages.

- Temporary Absence Procedure
- Student Withdrawal Procedure (Withdrawing from your course)
- Interruption of Studies Procedure (Interrupting your studies)
- Transferring Courses Procedures
- Procedures for Assessing through the Medium of Welsh
- Engagement and the Lack of Engagement Process
- Attendance Monitoring for Tier 4 visa students

8.2 In addition to the above, students should be aware that the Student Casework Regulations and Procedures can be found published on line. These are:-

- Academic Appeals
- Academic Misconduct
- Extenuating Circumstances
- Fitness to Practice
- Fitness to Study
- Student Complaints
- Student Conduct