



CODE OF PRACTICE ON ASSESSMENT

APPENDIX I

System for the Classification of Three-Year Non-Clinical Undergraduate Degrees

2010-22

Applicable to the following cohorts:

2010-11, 2011-12, 2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15, 2015-16, 2016-17, 2017-18,
2018-19, 2019-20, 2020-21, 2021-22

A student belongs to the cohort in which they started at FHEQ Level 4 provided they have a continuous student record regardless of suspensions, transfers etc. A student articulating into a programme above Level 4 belongs to the cohort which commenced that programme at Level 4. If a student withdraws from a programme and then restarts a new programme there would not be a continuous record and therefore the student would be on the cohort corresponding to Level 4 of the new programme.

In the Code of Practice on Assessment and all Appendices the term “student” includes apprentices on degree apprenticeship programmes

System for the Classification of Three-Year Non-Clinical Undergraduate Degrees

1. Classification of Three-Year Degrees

1.1 The system is based on the use of an overall average of the weighted marks for year 2 and year 3 as the first indicator of the degree classification, with a system of profiling being employed in cases of students whose averages are at the borderline between classifications. The system will operate as follows for **three-year** non-clinical undergraduate degrees

1.2 Progression:

To progress from study years 0, 1 and 2 and to progress from levels of study 4 and 5¹, students must:

- (i) pass (i.e. achieve 40%) all mandatory modules; and
- (ii) pass (i.e. achieve 40%) in modules amounting to 90 credits; and
- (iii) achieve at least 40% averaged across all modules and a minimum mark of 35% in all modules.

For further details, please see paragraph 2.3 of the Model for Non-Clinical First Degree Programmes (Appendix B of the Code of Practice on Assessment).

1.3 Credit to be passed

If modules totalling 330 credits or more have been passed, i.e. the module has been awarded a mark of 40% or above (this includes compensated marks of 40% gained in years one and two) and all mandatory modules have been passed, the candidate will be **considered** for the award of a classified honours degree. The credits passed must be at the appropriate level, as detailed in Appendix A to the Code of Practice on Assessment. If modules totalling **more than** 30 credits in year three have been failed, i.e. the module has been awarded a mark of less than 40%, the candidate will **not** be eligible for the award of an honours degree but may be eligible for the award of a pass (non-honours) degree (see 2 below).

1.4 Weighting

The marks for year two and year three are used to determine the degree classification, with a 30:70 year two/year three weighting applied.

1.5 Averaging

- (i) A mark is allocated for each module. Each mark is multiplied by the number of credits allocated to the module to which it relates. The resulting numbers for each module in the year of study are totalled together and divided by 120 (the total number of credits for a year of study), resulting in an average mark. This calculation is done for both year two and year three and an overall average calculated, weighted 30:70 between year two and year three.

¹ These descriptors for the level of credit correspond to the descriptors in the QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)

- (ii) The overall average for year two and year three is rounded to the nearest whole number (decimal places below five are rounded down and decimal places of five or more are rounded up). The initial indication of degree classification is then reached as follows:

70%+	1 st
60-69%	2.1
50-59%	2.2
40-49%	3 rd
Less than 40%	Pass degree

1.6 **Profiling**

- (i) If a candidate achieves 69%, 59%, 49% or 39% by averaging, i.e. missing automatic classification by no more than 1% (after rounding) they will have their mark profile considered. For the purpose of determining the average mark for profiling, re-sit/re-take marks will be capped at 40% (or 50% for level 7 modules), unless the re-sit/re-take is being treated as a first examination/assessment in cases of ill-health or other extenuating circumstances determined by the Board of Examiners (or, where appropriate, the Faculty Progress Committee).
- (ii) If a candidate is profiled, they will be awarded the higher class if **either**:

- 120 credits of study in years two and three are in a higher class than the overall average mark and of these at least 30 credits have been achieved in year three; **or**
- at least 60 credits of study in the final year have been achieved in the higher class.

(The first condition allows performance in year two to count in the student's favour while requiring that there is some performance at the higher class in year three; the second recognises exit velocity.)

- (iii) If a candidate intercalating into Year 3 of a BSc Honours programme achieves 69%, 59%, 49% or 39% by averaging, i.e. missing automatic classification by no more than 1% (after rounding) they will have their mark profile considered. For the purpose of determining the average mark and for profiling, reassessment marks will be capped at 40% (or 50% for level 7 modules), unless the reassessment is being treated as a first examination/assessment in cases of ill-health or other extenuating circumstances determined by the Board of Examiners (or, where appropriate, the Faculty Progress Committee).
- (iv) If a candidate intercalating into Year 3 of a BSc Honours programme is profiled, they will be awarded the higher class if at least 60 credits of study at Level 6 (year 3 of the programme) have been achieved in the higher class.

1.7 **Failure of Modules**

If a candidate meets the criteria set out above for the award of a classified honours degree but has failed a module or modules in their final year, the Board of Examiners, before recommending the award of a classified honours degree, must satisfy itself that the overall learning outcomes of the programme of study have been achieved **and** that the student has made a reasonable attempt at the assessments that were failed. If, for example, without extenuating circumstances, a student has a mark of zero in a module due to non-attendance or failure to take the assessments, the Board of Examiners would be unlikely to recommend the award of an honours degree.

2. Pass (Non-Honours) Degrees

- 2.1 Candidates who do not meet the criteria for a classified honours degree will be eligible for the award of a pass (non-honours) degree if they achieve the pass mark (40%) in modules totalling a minimum of 300 credits (irrespective of their overall average). The credits passed must be at the appropriate level, as detailed in Appendix A of the Code of Practice on Assessment and must not include Year 0 credits. This therefore includes:
- (i) candidates who are not considered for a classified honours degree because they have not achieved the minimum 330 credits requirement;
 - (ii) candidates who have achieved the minimum 330 credits requirement for an honours degree but whose average mark is less than 40% and who are *either* not eligible for profiling *or* are not eligible for a classified honours degree following profiling; and
 - (iii) candidates with a failed module or modules in year three who have *prima facie* met the criteria for the award of a classified honours degree but to whom the Board of Examiners has declined to award a classified honours degree on the basis that they have failed to achieve the overall learning outcomes of the programme or the Board is not satisfied that the student made a reasonable attempt at the failed assessments.

3. Final Year Reassessments

- 3.1 Final year examinations/assessments may be re-sat ***at the next ordinary sitting of the examinations/assessments² for those modules*** by candidates who fail modules, on the following basis:
- (i) Candidates
 - (a) who achieve the minimum 330 credits requirement for the award of a classified honours degree but whose average mark/module profile does not entitle them to a classified honours degree; or
 - (b) who achieve 300 credits but fewer than 330 credits and are only therefore eligible for the award of a pass degree; or
 - (c) with a failed module or modules in year three who have *prima facie* met the criteria for the award of a classified honours degree but to whom the Board of Examiners has declined to award a classified honours degree on the basis that they have failed to achieve the overall learning outcomes of the programme or the Board is not satisfied that the student made a reasonable attempt at the failed assessments

will be able to opt ***either*** to accept a pass degree ***or*** to be re-assessed in the examinations/assessments for the failed modules. A student who wishes to re-sit or re-take final year MUST, within 10 days of the formal confirmation of the result by the Board of Examiners, give notice in writing to the Director of Student Administration and Support (SAS) division, of their decision to re-sit/re-take. Notice should be given on the designated pro-forma which can be found on the SAS website www.liv.ac.uk/student-administration/exams/results/resits/ A student whose degree has already been conferred, either in person or in absentia, may not return to the University to re-sit/re-take their final year. The marks for the modules in which examinations/assessments have been reassessed will be capped at 40% (or 50% for level 7 modules) for the purpose of calculating the average for the degree classification. All credits passed must be at the appropriate level, as detailed in Appendix A to the Code of Practice on Assessment, and must not include Year 0 credits.

² See paragraph 3.2 below

- (ii) Candidates who do not achieve enough credits for either an honours degree or a pass degree will be allowed to be re-assessed and, depending upon the results of the re-examinations/re-assessments, may be eligible for the award of either a classified honours degree or a pass degree. The marks for the modules in which examinations/assessments have been reassessed will be capped at 40% (or 50% for level 7 modules) for the purpose of calculating the average for the degree classification.
- 3.2 The next ordinary sitting of an examination/assessment shall normally be in the following academic year except where otherwise specified in the module specification or in the case of students with accepted Extenuating Circumstances for whom an August/September attempt is arranged (see also Appendix M of the Code of Practice on Assessment).
- 3.3 Where a student has not completed all assessments owing to ill-health or other extenuating circumstances, or whose performance in their assessments is considered by the Board of Examiners to have been affected by ill-health or other extenuating circumstances, the Board of Examiners should decide whether it has sufficient evidence of the student's achievement to determine the award. If the Board of Examiners considers that there is enough work (normally 60 credits) and that there is evidence that the programme's learning outcomes have been met, they will recommend the award which should be made (including the class of the award, if appropriate) and that the student be offered the option of **either** accepting that award **or** of re-taking/re-sitting the missed/affected assessments as a 'first attempt' at either the August/September sitting or at the next ordinary sitting. Where the Board of Examiners decides to award a pass degree, then the student concerned should be given the opportunity **either** to accept the pass degree **or** to sit/re-sit the missed/failed assessments at either the August/September sitting or at the next ordinary sitting of those assessments, with any sit/re-sit of assessments judged to have been affected by extenuating circumstances being regarded as a 'first attempt'. Such 'first attempt' re-assessments shall only be possible if they can be accommodated within the maximum period of registration on a programme. A student who wishes to re-sit or re-take final year **MUST**, within 10 days of the formal confirmation of the result by the Board of Examiners, give notice in writing to the Director of Student Administration and Support (SAS) division, of their decision to re-sit/re-take. Notice should be given on the designated pro-forma which can be found on the SAS website www.liv.ac.uk/student-administration/exams/results/resits/.
- 3.4 For candidates who are permitted to present themselves for re-assessment in research and independent study modules, the Board of Examiners shall determine whether they should do so either:
- (a) As re-taking the module with attendance with full supervision. The Board of Examiners shall ensure that the student is given clear guidance on whether or not the retake should be on a new topic; or
- (b) As re-sitting the module without attendance. The Board of Examiners shall ensure that the student is given clear guidance as to the level of supervision which they can expect; it is anticipated that this requires no attendance on campus and no face-to-face meetings with supervisors and that the student is not required to make a submission on a new topic. The student shall be provided with formative written feedback on their first attempt submission; or
- (c) As re-sitting the module with partial supervision. The Board of Examiners shall ensure that the student is given clear guidance as to the level of supervision which they can expect; it is anticipated that this requires no attendance on campus and no face-to-face meetings with supervisors and that the student shall not normally be required to make a submission on a substantially new topic. The Board of Examiners shall ensure

that the student is provided with formative written feedback on their first attempt submission and given clear guidance as to the level of supervision which they can expect.

- 3.5 A Board of Examiners may award an *aegrotat* degree if it is considered that a student's ongoing ill-health would preclude them from re-sitting/re-taking the missed/affected assessments or where an exit award has been offered, for example, if the student is out of time for further re-assessment attempts, but it is deemed that the student was unable to complete the degree owing to ill-health. The option to award an *aegrotat* degree is at the sole discretion of the Board of Examiners. *Aegrotat* degrees will only be available for students in their final year of study on non-clinical undergraduate degree programmes, or for students in the third or fourth year of integrated Masters' degrees for consideration for a Bachelor's award. Students on clinical degree programmes cannot be awarded an *aegrotat* degree but may be eligible for an exit award of a classified or *aegrotat* non-clinical Bachelor of Science degree in accordance with the provisions of the framework for non-clinical first degree programmes.
- 3.6 An *aegrotat* degree will only be awarded on application by the candidate or their representative. The application should be made after the Final Board of Examiners has decided, on the basis of the student's performance and any accepted extenuating circumstances claims, either to allow a re-assessment or to offer an exit award (for example, if the student is out of time for further re-assessment attempts). Any application for an *aegrotat* degree must be accompanied by appropriate medical evidence. Application must normally be made within ten days of the notification of the Board of Examiners' decision. Where the student indicates they are unable to provide evidence to support their application within the ten days, the student or their representative can request a further fourteen days to provide the evidence.
- 3.7 Applications for *aegrotat* degrees will be considered by the Extenuating Circumstances Committee which will advise the Board of Examiners. The Extenuating Circumstances Committee will be required to consider whether the medical evidence suggests that the student was ever likely to have been able to complete the degree successfully (in cases where the Board has decided to make an exit award) or will be able to so within a reasonable period (in cases where the Board has decided to offer a re-assessment opportunity) and to advise the Board of Examiners accordingly.
- 3.8 *Aegrotat* degrees are not classified. The decision of a Board of Examiners not to make this discretionary award does not constitute grounds for an academic appeal.
- 3.9 A student whose degree has already been conferred, either in person or in absentia, may not return to the University to re-sit/re-take their final year.
- 3.10 Normally candidates will re-sit the failed modules without attendance, unless the Board of Examiners determines that there are special circumstances which suggest that they should be allowed to re-take with attendance.
- 3.11 Candidates may opt not to be re-assessed in **all** their failed final year modules but rather to re-sit/re-take the requisite number which, if passed at an appropriate level, would result in the award of a degree. However, they would be well advised to re-sit/re-take all final year failed modules, in view of the fact that reassessment marks are capped at 40% (or 50% for level 7 modules) and also that **no further opportunity for re-sitting/re-taking examinations/assessments would be available.**

- 3.12 In circumstances where there have been significant changes to a module or a module is not offered in every year, special examinations/assessments must be set for candidates re-sitting the module following failure in the final year. These examinations/assessments will take place when the examinations/assessments for the changed module take place or when the examinations/assessments for the module would have taken place were it being offered that year.
- 3.13 Candidates who fail up to 30 credits in the final year but who still achieve an average which results in a classified honours degree being awarded will **not** be allowed to re-sit or re-take modules to gain a higher classification.
- 3.14 A candidate who gives notice of their intention to be re-assessed in the final year but who subsequently reverses this decision in writing³ will be eligible for the award of the qualification in line with the original recommendation from the Board of Examiners. Such a candidate will not be admitted to their degree until the appropriate degree congregation in the next academic session. A candidate who gives notice of their intention to re-sit or re-take the final year but who fails to complete all notified re-assessments without giving written notice of the reversal of their decision to re-sit or re-take all notified assessments in the final year, will be deemed to have failed those re-assessments and the Board of Examiners will recalculate the award accordingly.
- 3.15 A student who is eligible to resit failed final year modules may normally do so on one further occasion only and only where they have not yet exceeded the maximum period of registration for their programme.

4. Professional/Statutory Body Requirements

It is recognised that the above provisions may be in conflict with the accreditation requirements of certain professional or statutory bodies and in these circumstances the system will have to be adjusted. Where this is the case, the rules for the award/classification of the degrees must be clearly indicated to students. **In particular, some professional, statutory or regulatory bodies may not allow an accredited/recognised degree to be awarded to students who do not pass their final year at the first attempt. In these circumstances, although students will be allowed to re-sit/re-take failed final year modules and be awarded a classified degree, the relevant professional/statutory/regulatory body will be informed of the first attempt failure and that the student has not met the criteria for accreditation/recognition.**

5. Intercalated Degrees

In the case of students intercalating from clinical degrees into the third year of a modular non-clinical degree, the classification of the intercalated degree will be based solely upon the marks obtained in the third year and no weighting will be attributed to the clinical degree. The title of the degree awarded will also reflect that it was intercalated.

6. Role of the Board of Examiners

The new degree classification system will mean that all the calculations can be done and a list of classifications arrived at before final examiners' meetings take place. Most of these results will simply be ratified by the Board of Examiners, but the Board will be required to

³ This means notification by letter or email. A text message would not constitute notification.

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2010-11 to 2021-22

give special consideration to the cases of students who *prima facie* have met the criteria for the award of a classified honours degree, but who have failed modules in their final year, and of students whose performance might have been affected by ill-health or other extenuating circumstances. The External Examiner's role will be focused on scrutinising module marks before they are fed into the calculations, considering the cases of students with final year failed credit and those whose performance may have been affected by ill-health or other extenuating circumstances and verifying the assessment process. External Examiners will no longer need to be asked to read 'runs' of papers to help in the assessment of borderline candidates.