
Chapter 3 – Assessment

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Chapter 3

Assessment

Academic Standards

- 3.1 Assessment that contributes to the award of academic credit and/or to the award of the degrees, diplomas, certificates and other academic distinctions of the University will relate the achievement of each candidate to the stated academic standards of the University.
- 3.2 The academic standards of the University will be as stated in the intended learning outcomes of modules and programmes of study, as set out in the relevant module descriptors and programme specifications.

Equity of Assessment

- 3.3 All students registered for a module will be subject to the application of the same academic standards, rules and procedures with respect to assessment and re-assessment, irrespective of the programme of study or mode of delivery on which they are enrolled.

Anonymous Marking

- 3.4 Procedures for anonymous marking as outlined in the **Assessment Handbook**, and approved by Senate will be used in all assessments that contribute to the award of academic credit and/or to the award of the degrees, diplomas, certificates and other academic distinctions of the University except where the nature of the assessment itself renders anonymity impossible to achieve, for example, in placement observations, presentations or practical assessment.

Module Descriptors

- 3.5 The Module Descriptor for each module shall specify the intended learning outcomes for the module, the range and type of components of assessment and a mechanism of assessment for deciding whether a student should be awarded a pass in the module.

Programme Specification

- 3.6 The Programme Specification for each programme shall specify the aims of the programme, a mechanism for deciding how the associated qualification(s) should be awarded, and the requirements for progression from one level of the programme to the next (see also 1.23).
- 3.7 Programme Specifications shall specify what modules are core or optional, in order to meet programme requirements for progression or award.

- 3.8 A core module is compulsory in order to meet the requirements for progression and award (except for Combined Studies exit award - see Regulation 1.61).

Module Pass

- 3.9 A pass is achieved in a module, and the student gains the associated credits, when the School Assessment Board has awarded

- In levels SCQF 7-10, a grade of C or above, and an aggregate mark of at least 40%, with no component of assessment less than 30%
- In levels SCQF11-12, a grade of B2 or above, or an aggregate mark of at least 50%, with no component of assessment less than 40%.

(See paragraph 3.18 for marking and grading)

- 3.10 Where specifically validated, some modules may not have marks or grades. In such cases the student's attainment will be recorded as 'pass' or 'fail', having met or not met the threshold standard in accordance with the assessment criteria within the approved module descriptor. (See also Regulation 3.22)
- 3.11 Where a professional or accrediting body explicitly requires it (see Regulation 1.40) other criteria may be used for a pass in one or more modules. Full details of these criteria and the reasons for them must be included in the programme specification and confirmed at validation and cross referenced to any relevant module descriptors.
- 3.12 A pass in one trimester should not be specified as a prerequisite for starting a module in the following trimester. (See Regulation 3.13 below)

Progression

- 3.13 Progression is the transition from one level of a programme to the next. For SCQF levels 7-9, a student who has not gained passes in some modules may be allowed to progress to the next level of study ("progression with deficit") provided:
- they have gained at least 80 credits in the current level; and
 - they undertake the re-assessment (or choose to retake the module while studying at the next level); and
 - they meet all prerequisites for core modules in the next level of study; and
 - they have undertaken the full set of modules as identified in the programme specification at their current level

- 3.14 Progression with credit deficit from SCQF level 9 to level 10 is not normally permitted.

Award

- 3.15 A School Board of Examiners will grant an award for a student who has satisfied the requirements for the award as outlined in the Programme Specification (see Reg 1.15).
- 3.16 No award can be granted without the approval of the External Examiner appointed to the School Board of Examiners. (See Reg 3.47)

Formal Examination

- 3.17 Where a formal examination is specified in the approved module descriptor as a final summative assessment for a module, this will take the form of a single paper of either 2 or 3 hours duration.

Marking and Grading

- 3.18 All student work that contributes to a module mark and grade is assessed according to the following standard marking and grading scheme. Grade points are then allocated automatically as follows:

Grade	Numerical Range	Grade Points
A1	90-100	4.0
A2	80-89	3.5
A3	70-79	3.0
B1	60-69	2.5
B2	50-59	2.0
C	40-49	1.5
D	30-39	1.0
E	1-29	0.5
N	0	0

- 3.19 The **UWS Marking and Grading Scheme** provides grade descriptors at undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

Classification of Honours Degrees

- 3.20 The minimum criterion for the award of an Honours degree is a grade C or above in each of the modules studied at SCQF level 10 or in the final year stage of the programme (none less than SCQF level 9) according to the programme specification. Where modules lower than SCQF level 10 are taken as part of the Honours year stage, then grades for such modules will count towards the Honours classification as if these modules were at SCQF level 10
- 3.21 The rules governing the award of Honours classification are as follows, where modules are weighted according to their credit value:

Classification of Honours Degrees

First class	Mean mark of 70% or above	OR Mean mark of at least 67% and a majority of the credits in the final year stage at grade A
Upper second class	Mean mark of 60% or above	OR Mean mark of at least 57% and a majority of the credits in the final year stage at grade B1 or better
Lower second class	Mean mark of 50% or above	OR Mean mark of at least 47% and a majority of the credits in the final year stage at grade B2 or better
Third class	Mean mark of 40% or above	

- 3.22 Where core modules in the Honours year of study are assessed using the Pass/Fail grades, then these modules will be excluded in the calculation of the Honours classification. Modules assessed using the Pass/Fail grades will not be permitted as optional modules within the Honours year of study.
- 3.23 Modules used for the calculation of Honours must be SCQF level 9 or above, with a minimum of 90 credits at SCQF level 10.
- 3.24 Where a student has undertaken a resit in one or more modules at SCQF level 10 or in the final year stage of the programme, then the resit mark will stand on the student's transcript but a mark of 40% and grade C for those modules will be used in the calculation of the classification of the Honours award.

Award of Distinction

- 3.25 Except for PgCert, Grad Cert, Honours, and Foundation programmes, awards shall be made *with Distinction* to candidates who meet the following criteria:
- A mean mark of 70% or above at their first attempt at the assessments comprising the award level (i.e. 120 credits or, for MSc, 180 credits), weighted according to credit value;
 - The 120 credits must comprise UWS credit;
 - Pass/Fail grades in the final year stage (up to 40 credits) are excluded from the calculation.
- 3.26 Imported credit cannot be used for the calculation of distinction unless it derives from a student exchange or study abroad programme in which a translation of the relevant grading system has been completed as part of the exchange agreement. (See Regulation 2.34).

Intermediate Awards

- 3.27 See Regulation 1.33 and 1.61 for intermediate awards.

Aegrotat Awards

- 3.28 Where the School Board of Examiners is satisfied that the candidate has demonstrated achievement in over half of the credit for the final stage and, but for illness or other valid cause would have successfully completed their programme, it may exceptionally grant an Aegrotat Award. Such an award is made without classification or distinction and only at the candidate's request.

Posthumous Awards

- 3.29 Any of the above awards (3.27 - 3.28) may be made posthumously.

Joint and Dual Awards (collaboration)

- 3.30 The University of the West of Scotland will participate fully in the decision making process with regard to assessment arrangements for joint awards.
- 3.31 School Assessment Boards and School Board of Examiners will take place at the University of the West of Scotland under normal University conditions.
- 3.32 Students enrolled on the programme will be subject to the progression and award criteria that apply to the programme, and their assessments will be considered at the appropriate point in each academic session.
- 3.33 A collaboration agreement may specify a dual award for the same set of assessments.

- 3.34 Further details and guidance on Joint and Dual awards is provided in the **Quality Handbook**.

Compensation for Failure in Modules

- 3.35 School Board of Examiners cannot apply compensation for failure in any module for any student.

Fit to Sit and Extenuating Circumstances

- 3.36 In submitting each piece of coursework or completing an examination or class-test, a student is confirming that they are 'fit to sit' the assessment and wish that any mark achieved for that coursework, examination or class-test should stand.
- 3.37 If a student feels that their academic performance has been affected by extenuating circumstances and they are not in a position to complete assessment requirements, they should complete an on-line Extenuating Circumstances (EC) Statement with details of assessment not being completed.
- 3.38 A student who has undertaken an assessment may withdraw the assessment submission within 48 hours but must submit an extenuating circumstances statement.

Re-assessment

- 3.39 If a module has not been passed at the first attempt, a student may normally undertake re-assessment for the module. The forms of re-assessment should normally be the same as for the first attempt; but components that were passed at the first attempt cannot be re-assessed, and will be carried forward. If a module has been passed there is no right to re-assessment for the purposes of improving a module grade.
- 3.40 All assessments and re-assessments for a module must occur within two years of first taking the module.
- 3.41 Some programmes and modules do not permit re-assessment as a result of requirements by professional, statutory or regulatory bodies.
- 3.42 The maximum number of attempts at assessment for a module shall be three for undergraduate (SCQF levels 7-10) and two for postgraduate (SCQF level 11-12). A period of authorised interruption shall be discounted from the two year assessment period (see 3.40).

Re-attend

- 3.43 Where a student is offered the opportunity to re-attend a module, the student will have the entitlement to the same number of attempts at

assessment as if taking the module for the first time. A student may only re-attend a module once.

School Assessment Boards

- 3.44 School Assessment Boards consider the performance of students registered for modules assigned to the Board by the Dean of School, and decide upon the confirmed marks and grades for each student on each module. The membership and terms of reference of School Assessment Boards are located in the **Committee Handbook**.

School Board of Examiners

- 3.45 School Board of Examiners decide the eligibility of each candidate for progression between levels of study, and for awards of the University. The membership and terms of reference of the School Board of Examiners are located in the **Committee Handbook**.
- 3.46 Each student on a named programme of study will be assigned to a specified School Board of Examiners.
- 3.47 A decision of the School Board of Examiners that a candidate is eligible for an award of the University will require the written consent of the relevant School Board of Examiners External Examiner.
- 3.48 External examiners are appointed in accordance with the criteria and procedures outlined in the **Quality Handbook**.

Cheating

- 3.49 Cheating is defined by the University as the attempt to gain an unfair advantage in an assessment by gaining credit for work of another person or by accessing unauthorised material relating to assessment. This includes the following:
- communication with or copying from another student during an examination or assessment (except in so far as assessment regulations specifically permit communication, for instance for group assessments);
 - knowingly introducing any unauthorised materials (written, printed or blank) on or near an examination desk unless expressly permitted by the assessment regulations;
 - knowingly introducing any electronically stored information into an examination hall unless expressly permitted by the assessment regulations;
 - obtaining a copy of an 'unseen' written examination paper prior to the date and time of its authorised release;
 - gaining access to unauthorised material relating to an assessment during or before the assessment;

- colluding with another person by submitting work done with another person as entirely one's own work;
- collaborating with another student in the completion of work which is intended to be submitted as that other student's own work;
- knowingly allowing another student to copy one's own work to be submitted as that student's own work;
- falsifying data by presenting data of laboratory reports, projects or other assessments as one's own when these data are based on experimental work conducted by another party or obtained by unfair means;
- assuming the identity of another person with intent to deceive or to gain unfair advantage;
- allowing another person to assume one's own identity with the intention of deceiving or gaining unfair advantage to oneself;
- the use of any other form of dishonest practice not identified above.

3.50 Cheating may be regarded as a substantial academic irregularity under the **Code of Discipline for Students (Chapter 5)** and all instances are liable to be investigated and to be given due consideration under the terms of that Code.

Plagiarism

3.51 As Plagiarism is a type of cheating it is also defined by the University as the attempt to gain an unfair advantage in an assessment by gaining credit for work of another person or by accessing unauthorised material relating to assessment.

3.52 For Plagiarism this includes the use of the work of other students, past or present, or substantial and unacknowledged use of published material presented as the student's own work. It includes the following:

- the extensive use of another person's material without reference or acknowledgement;
- the summarising of another person's material by changing a few words or altering the order of presentation without reference or acknowledgement;
- the substantial and unauthorised use of the ideas of another person without acknowledgement;
- copying the work of another student with or without the student's knowledge or agreement;
- deliberate use of commissioned material which is presented as one's own, including the use of essay writing services;
- the unacknowledged quotation of phrases from another's work.

- 3.53 All written coursework assignments must be submitted in electronic format via the University's plagiarism detection software. This should be used in conjunction with other means of detection to analyse assessment submissions in all modules where text based plagiarism may be an issue.
- 3.54 Any suspected case of plagiarism will be referred in the first instance by the member of academic staff concerned to the Chair of a Plagiarism Panel constituted in the relevant academic School. (See **Plagiarism Procedure**).
- 3.55 Marks which have been capped as a result of a decision by a Plagiarism Panel will be carried forward in subsequent attempts and will appear on the student transcript.

Re-admission

- 3.56 Students who have been deemed eligible for an award by the School Board of Examiners will not be considered for re-admission to the same award at that level with a view to improving their marks, the eligibility for the award of distinction or the classification of Honours.
- 3.57 A student shall be required to re-apply for a programme of study if the School Board of Examiners has not assigned credit to the student for a period of two calendar years. The student will be treated as a new applicant and will go through the University's procedures for **Recognition of Prior Learning** to check on the currency of their learning. They will then be offered the most appropriate level of entry based on that learning.