



*University of*  
**Leicester**

**ACADEMIC AND RESEARCH SERVICES**

**Code of Practice  
on Examining  
for First  
Degrees**

**2007/08**

# UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER

## CODE OF PRACTICE ON EXAMINING FOR FIRST DEGREES

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# CODE OF PRACTICE ON EXAMINING FOR FIRST DEGREES

## Preface

This Code of Practice was first issued in March 1999. It extends the coverage of and replaces the *Code of Practice on External Examining at First Degree and Taught Master's Level*, which itself followed the precepts laid down in the *Code of Practice on the External Examiner System* prepared by the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals and incorporated in the *Reynolds Report on Academic Standards in Universities (1986)*. The Code takes account of recommendations of good practice contained in *Guidelines on Quality Assurance* (HEQC 1996), the *Graduate Standards Programme* (HEQC 1996), the Dearing Report (1997), and the section on External Examining of the QAA's current Code of Practice.

Copies of the Code are sent to senior University Officers, Deans, Sub-Deans, the Associate Dean (Combined Arts), Heads of Departments and Schools, Departmental Examinations Officers, External Examiners, Faculty Board Secretaries, the Secretary of the Academic Review Committee and staff in the Examinations Office. A limited number of additional paper copies are held in the Examinations Office [☎2291], and an on-line version can be found on the Academic and Research Services website at <http://www.le.ac.uk/academic/quality/Codes/index.html>. Any comments on the operation of the Code should be addressed to Faculty Board Secretaries, the Secretary of the Board of the Colleges, the Examinations Officer or the Academic Registrar.

The Code is revised and re-issued annually. Each edition takes account of procedural issues arising from each year's diet of examinations, and of relevant national developments, and in particular of recommendations of good practice arising from QAA audits and contained in QAA publications. The main changes are the introduction of the new (single) scheme of assessment and a revised Code of Practice on Plagiarism.

Deans of the Faculties draw the attention of departments to any breaches of the procedures laid down in this Code which it may observe during its annual review of External Examiners' reports for the Academic Review Committee. That Committee is responsible through its academic reviews of departments for monitoring overall compliance with the Code.

Kathy Williams  
Academic Registrar

## CODE OF PRACTICE ON EXAMINING FOR FIRST DEGREES

### Equal opportunities and risk management statements

**Equal opportunities:** *The University's examination procedures support and reflect the institution's equal opportunities commitments by providing an assessment environment characterised by:*

- *transparency*
- *consistency of approach*
- *fairness*
- *anonymity for all written examinations and most other assessed work*
- *confidentiality*
- *responsiveness to students with requiring special assessment support*
- *scrutiny by external authorities, reporting directly to the Vice-Chancellor*
- *a robust appeals procedure.*

**Risk Management:** *Any actual or apparent failure of its academic standards would be highly detrimental to the University's reputation, and all the procedures governing assessment are in part designed to minimise the risk of this happening. Controls are applied at the level of individual staff (for example, through systems of moderation and double marking), through administrative action (for example, through the application of security measures) through the activities of groups (the operation of Boards of Examiners), through high-level scrutiny (the Vice-Chancellor's consideration of external examiners' reports) and through review (appeals).*

## UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER

### 1. CODE OF PRACTICE ON THE ASSESSMENT OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

#### University regulations, structures and procedures

- 1.1 Appendices I to III to this Code of Practice on Examining for First Degrees set out the University regulations, procedures and conventions which provide the institutional framework to the assessment of undergraduate students.

Appendix IV contains an extract from the University's Learning and Teaching Strategy, describing the overall aims for undergraduate programmes.

The remainder of this Code should be read in the context of these overarching regulations, procedures and statements.

[Note: The term 'department' is used throughout this document to denote the organisational unit responsible for course delivery; it is recognised that in some academic areas teaching and assessment is co-ordinated by Schools and that the operation of this Code will therefore be a School responsibility.]

#### Approval and monitoring of schemes of assessment

- 1.2 Schemes of assessment for new courses must be presented alongside other course approval documentation<sup>1</sup>, and the introduction of a new course will not be approved until a scheme of assessment covering all years of the course is available for scrutiny.

Particular attention will be paid to schemes for joint degrees and other collaborative courses in order to ensure that in the process of combining elements from different schemes, the assessment regime remains appropriately, but not excessively, demanding.

- 1.3 For continuing courses, departments are held to be responsible for conducting an annual review of the operation of each scheme, incorporating:
- feedback from external examiners
  - recommendations from academic staff arising from module/programme review
  - any student feedback on the timing, structure, content and outcome of assessments
  - any issues arising from the previous year's mark and classification profile, and from decisions taken in respect of borderline candidates and special cases.

It will normally be the case that this review will be undertaken during the department's consideration of its external examiners' reports and its formulation of a response to the Vice-Chancellor.<sup>2</sup> The response must include confirmation that the review has taken place, and contains details of the outcome, either recorded in the response itself, or set out in a separate attachment, which might be the minutes of a meeting at which the examiner's report was considered. Evidence that this process is being carried out will be sought by the Deans of the Faculties during their annual review of the preceding year's external examiners' reports and departmental responses, and in the annual and periodic departmental reviews carried out by the Academic Review Committee.

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<sup>1</sup> see also the Code of Practice on Programme Approval (<http://www.le.ac.uk/academic/quality/Codes/>)

<sup>2</sup> see also the Code of Practice on Annual Monitoring and Periodic Departmental Review (<http://www.le.ac.uk/academic/quality/Codes/>)

- 1.4 In addition, each Faculty Board is required to conduct an annual scrutiny of a ten-year summary of degree classes awarded by the Faculty, with a view to identifying any clear anomalies or trends which might require investigation.

### **Schemes of Assessment**

- 1.5 Schemes of assessment must be:
- expressed in a readily-comprehensible form
  - accurate
  - precise
  - logically-constructed, so that there is either a self-evident link between module size and assessment weighting, or a clear understanding of the reasons for any dislocation between the two
  - consistent both with University regulations and with any other schemes of assessment applying to programmes offered by the department
  - widely publicised (see 1.7 below)
  - subject to annual review (see 1.3 above).
- 1.6 Schemes of assessment must also be comprehensive, covering such matters as:
- subject benchmarking requirements
  - the assessment requirements of professional bodies
  - the rules of progression in cases where threshold standards have been set which distinguish between degree programmes (for example, between the B.Sc. degree in Chemistry and the M.Chem. degree)
  - the weighting and assessment regime applicable to study abroad or to students on placements.
- 1.7 Schemes of assessment must be published in departmental and/or course handbooks, issued to internal, external and additional examiners, and made available to internal and external reviewers upon request (see 1.10 below in relation to its publication of descriptions of methods of assessment).
- 1.8 Departments wishing to implement amendments to schemes of assessment which potentially affect registered students must seek the approval of the Dean of the Faculty, who may seek advice from the Faculty's Learning and Teaching Committee. Where students have already commenced or completed assessments which would be affected by a change in the overall scheme, departments will not be permitted to alter their schemes of assessment until those students have graduated, unless it can be demonstrated that the alteration constitutes an improvement for all the students concerned.

## **Assessment methods**

- 1.9 Departments must keep under review the assessment methods in operation in each module and across each programme of study in order to ensure that:
- there is comparability across the programme between module size and assessment load
  - there is correspondence between learning objectives and the assessment methods employed to measure the achievement of these
  - each student experiences a range of assessment methods appropriate to the aims and objectives of the degree programme
  - the possibility of assessment overload or underload is monitored, particularly where multiple assessment methods are used within a single module, or where innovative or relatively untried assessment methods are being used
  - students are provided with sufficient opportunities for revision and reflection
  - unintentional coincidence of assignment deadlines is avoided.
- 1.10 The assessment types and methods used by a department must be described in the departmental/course handbook, accompanied by an explanation of their primary purpose in terms of measuring academic achievement, and an identification of any additional benefits for students in terms of the transferable skills gained through the assessment process.
- 1.11 Programme specifications (see the University's Learning and Teaching Strategy) must include a description of the methods of assessment utilised throughout the course.
- 1.12 Module specifications (required for the approval of new modules) must set out the assessment regime for each module, and must be amended whenever the assessment regime is changed.

## **Setting assignments/examination question papers**

- 1.13 All examination question papers and essay/project titles relating to summative assessment which contributes towards the final degree classification must be submitted to an external examiner for comment, and the deadlines for the preparation of the papers should allow sufficient time for this external review. It is not necessary to submit to an external examiner details of small-scale exercises and tests conducted throughout the year (for example, in Mathematics and Modern Languages), even where these may contribute to the overall final classification. The external should, however, be briefed about the function of such forms of assessment in the overall scheme, and has the right to ask for further details, including examples of students' work.
- 1.14 Departments must ensure that there is no conflict in terms of scope, or overlap in terms of content, between the question papers set in any one year. The recycling of questions year-on-year should be avoided, except where the use of multiple choice question papers requires the availability of a bank of questions.

- 1.15 Care should be taken to avoid the replication of essay titles in subsequent written examination questions, or the setting of examination questions which are so loosely defined that they allow students to answer by recycling in an unthinking way the research conducted for previously-submitted assessed work, either undertaken by themselves or by others.
- 1.16 Deadlines must be expressed in such a way as to leave students in no doubt as to the department's intentions, and they must be widely publicised, and included in the Departmental Handbooks. They should, if possible, be set early in the week in order to ensure that students are not able to obtain unfair advantage by choosing to forfeit some marks in order to gain additional time at the weekend. Requirements such as the format of covering notes to essays, the handing in point for written work, and the number of copies to be submitted must be strictly enforced.
- 1.17 The system for dealing with late submissions without good cause should, if possible, be separated from the system for applications for extensions on medical or other special grounds. For the former, no negotiation should be permitted, and late submission should lead automatically to the imposition of a penalty (see 1.19 below)
- 1.18 Penalties should be applied as soon as the deadline is reached. Periods of grace should not be used unless exceptional circumstances outside the department's control mean that students would be disadvantaged if a concession was not granted.
- 1.19 The University's penalty scheme is as follows:
- a penalty of 10% of the available marks for the written work should be imposed upon the expiry of the deadline
  - a penalty of 5% of the available marks should then be imposed on each of the ten subsequent working days
  - 'available marks' in this context means the maximum marks available for the piece of work (for example, 100 would be the available mark in a percentage marking scheme, 20 would be the available mark in a 1-20 marking scheme)
  - 'working day' in this context means a period of twenty four hours or part thereof from Monday to Friday inclusive.
- 1.20 The range and timing of penalties for the non-completion of non-standard forms of learning or assessment (for example, presentations) may be determined by departments in the light of local circumstances, but should be applied according to agreed procedures. In cases where the turnaround time for marking is less than ten days, departments are also authorised to introduce appropriate variations to this scheme set out above.
- 1.21 Exemptions and extensions must be granted:
- only by staff authorised by the Head of Department\*
  - in accordance with published departmental procedures, which should be applied uniformly across all the undergraduate programmes offered by the department.

(\*or in the case of the Faculty of Law, the Dean of the Faculty, and in the case of the Faculty of Biological Sciences and Medicine, the Director of the relevant teaching activity.)



## **Security and confidentiality**

- 1.22 Departments are responsible for the security of question papers during the process of production, consultation with the external examiner and transmission to the Examinations Office, and for the security of completed answer books during the marking period, and must comply with any published University guidelines and Examinations Office procedures relating to these processes. The Examinations Office is responsible for the security of examination question papers from the point at which those papers arrive in the Office until they are handed to the Chief Invigilator prior to the commencement of the examination, and for the security of answer books from the point at which they arrive in the Examinations Office after the examination until they are collected for marking. The Chief Invigilator is responsible for the transportation of question papers and completed answer books between the Examinations Office and the examination room.
- 1.23 A high level of security must be applied to the transportation and storage of answer books during the marking period, especially where marking is undertaken off-campus.
- 1.24 Marked work should only be returned to students *via* departmental pigeon holes if it is first placed in a personally-addressed and sealed envelope marked Confidential.
- 1.25 Examination scripts must not be returned to students after their results are announced, but must be held in a secure place, either in the department or, by arrangement with the Examinations Office, in a central store. Scripts for first-year examinations and for second-year examinations which do not contribute to the final degree classification must be retained until after the September Examinations for the year in question and the ensuing appeals period are concluded. Scripts for examinations which contribute to the final degree classification must be retained until after the degree is conferred. The secure disposal of scripts is the responsibility of the Examinations Office.
- 1.26 Module marks obtained by an individual student are regarded as confidential to that student, and should therefore not be displayed on noticeboards or set out on pass lists other than in a form through which the identity of each student is anonymised.
- 1.27 Under the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998, students making data subject access requests are entitled to see any examiners' comments recorded on examination scripts, and this information must be provided within five months of the date of the request or forty days from the announcement of the result, whichever is the sooner. Departments must therefore:
- ensure that markers, including any external or additional examiners, are aware of this right
  - issue advice to examiners to prohibit the recording on scripts of any extraneous, irrelevant or inappropriate comments
  - require examiners to write legibly and intelligibly.

This will ensure that the University is able to comply with the requirement of the Data Protection Act that the examiners' comments can be reproduced 'in a meaningful form'.

- 1.28 Students making data subject access requests are also entitled to be supplied with the relevant extract of any minutes of boards of examiners or sub-committees in which they are named (or identified by candidate number), unless the data cannot be disclosed without additionally disclosing personal data about a third party.
- 1.29 Examination results, including degree classifications, constitute personal data and must not be disclosed to third parties without the consent of the student concerned. It is the responsibility of Academic and Research Services to obtain the consent of students to the inclusion of their names on publicly-displayed pass lists, degree congregation programmes, etc., and to notify departments of any students who have withheld their consent.
- 1.30 Results must not be communicated by telephone. Departments wishing to put in place systems for communicating results other than by face-to-face means must either use conventional post, with students providing stamped addressed envelopes for external mailings, or e-mail, where students have given their explicit written authority to the use of a specific e-mail address.
- 1.31 Results (i.e. marks and recommended degree classes) cannot be withheld from students in financial arrears, but the University may decide in such cases not to award or confer the degree until the debt is paid.

### **Feedback on Assessment**

- 1.32 Students must be notified of the proposed date for the return of assessed work, and kept informed about any unavoidable delays.
- 1.33 Departmental/course handbooks must include an explanation of departmental marking conventions (for example, the use of alphabetic grades), and a description of how these relate to degree class mark bands.
- 1.34 Written feedback to students should:
- comply with a departmentally-agreed system of reporting
  - be undertaken in such a way as to promote learning and facilitate improvement
  - meet published deadlines for the return of work.
- 1.35 Departments are required to provide students with feedback on their performance in first semester modules by 28 February each year. The results at this stage are regarded as provisional and should normally be provided on a pass/fail basis, or as an indication that progress is satisfactory, with information about levels of attainment being offered informally through consultation with personal and academic tutors.
- 1.36 At the end of the second semester, unofficial results may be released by departments after the meeting of the relevant Board of Examiners, provided that marks due to be considered by another Board of Examiners (for example, Combined Studies) are not issued.

- 1.37 The University Registry sends transcripts of their previous year's marks to returning students during the Summer Vacation, except where students have September resits, in which case transcripts are issued during the Autumn Term. The Registry also issues full course transcripts to graduates; these are sent by post in the August following the relevant degree congregation.
- 1.38 Degree certificates are issued to graduates at the degree congregations, or posted to *in absentia* candidates by recorded delivery.

### **Marking standards and marking consistency**

- 1.39 Marking must be undertaken in accordance with agreed written criteria, which should be made available to all the examiners, including external examiners.
- 1.40 Student anonymity in written examinations is compulsory (see Appendix VII to this Code), and should also be adopted for continuously assessed work except where there are practical considerations relating, for example, to the type or timing of the assessments or to the size of the student group, which render anonymity either unworkable or undesirable on educational grounds.
- 1.41 Marking trends should be monitored annually, both during module review and when the department considers its external examiners' reports (see 1.3 above). Particular attention should be paid to the excessive use of borderline marks, and to any perceived failure to use the full range of marks available to the examiners, especially at the upper end of the scale.
- 1.42 Departments should have written guidelines relating to:
- the treatment of borderline candidates
  - the annotation of examination scripts
  - the way in which presentational skills, spelling and use of English should be assessed
  - double and second marking
  - moderation.
- 1.43 Departments must have in place written marking and moderation procedures which set out how marking standards which relate to the final degree classification are scrutinised. The type and extent of scrutiny may vary from module to module, depending on the mode of assessment, the significance of the outcome in the overall scheme and, to some extent, the conventions of the subject, and departments may adopt combinations of blind double marking, second marking, moderation (where all scripts are reviewed) and sampling, provided that:
- the procedures overall are robust enough to provide the necessary guarantee both of the standards of student attainment and the standard of marking
  - any work which contributes to the final assessment which is marked by postgraduate students must always be second marked
  - dissertation/project supervisors do not act as the sole markers of work they have supervised; such work must always be independently scrutinised.

These procedures must be included in the briefing documentation sent by the department to the external examiner(s).

1.44 For summative assessment which contributes to the final degree, departments must have in place mechanisms for scrutinising the standards of marking which are sufficient to:

- provide unequivocal information on student performance to boards of examiners
- provide evidence of robust procedures to external examiners, internal and external reviewers, and students querying or appealing against assessment outcomes
- ensure that the ultimate responsibility for applying academic standards rests with the University's academic staff
- remove any possibility of claims of favouritism, collusion or unfair treatment.

1.45 Evidence must exist and be retained for review purposes which demonstrates that scrutiny of marking standards has taken place. This means that scripts or a cover sheet must be signed or otherwise annotated by a second marker/moderator/ sampler, who must always have the status of internal examiner\* (unless in exceptional circumstances, such as for some language papers, the second marker is the external examiner).

[\*For the purposes of examining the M.B.,Ch.B. degrees, University Clinical Teachers fall into the category of academic staff, and serve as internal examiners]

### **Staff Development**

1.46 Departments should ensure that new Examination Officers receive induction and training from the previous Officer. The University's Examinations Officer is responsible for briefing departmental Examinations Officers on University procedures.

1.47 All new staff should be provided with information and training on departmental assessment practices. The mentors of staff on probation should pay particular attention to the need to monitor probationers' assessment practices and outcomes. Sampling of the marking standards being applied by new staff should be undertaken regularly.

1.48 Training in marking and grading practices should be provided by departments to their postgraduate students and additional examiners, and the activities of these examiners should also be kept under close review through regular sampling.

1.49 Academic staff should be encouraged by their Heads of Department to participate in staff development activities relating both to traditional marking and grading practices, and to new approaches to assessment.

## **2. PROCEDURES GOVERNING THE APPOINTMENT OF EXAMINERS**

- 2.1 Ordinance V (Examiners and Examinations) states that examinations for degrees, diplomas or certificates are the responsibility of Boards of Examiners comprising the Internal and External Examiners for each of the subjects or groups of subjects included in the scope of the examination. In every subject or group of subjects in all final examinations (i.e. where the award of degrees is confirmed and degree classifications determined), there must be at least two examiners, one at least of whom must not be a member of the academic staff of the University.
- 2.2 Boards of Examiners are responsible to the Boards of the Faculties, which are empowered to make recommendations to the Senate for the award of degrees, diplomas and certificates.

### **External Examiners**

- 2.3 External Examiners are appointed by Senate on the recommendation of the Boards of the Faculties.
- 2.4 The Boards of the Faculties receive recommendations from departments for the appointment of individuals as External Examiners either directly, or in the case of the Faculty of Science, on the recommendation of its Academic Committee (see 2.8 and 2.9 below for the role of the Vice-Chancellor's Advisory Committee in the scrutiny process). In making recommendations for appointment, departments should have regard to the following:
- only persons of seniority and experience who are able to command authority in the relevant discipline should be recommended for appointment
  - individuals who have not served before as external examiners should where possible serve alongside more experienced examiners for at least part of their period of service
  - in order to have sufficient time for the proper performance of their duties, individuals are expected to hold not more than two concurrent External Examinerships at first degree level, including their appointment at Leicester
  - an External Examiner should not be appointed from a department in an institution where a member of the University department is serving as an examiner, except where this is unavoidable because the subject is taught in only a very small number of institutions, or where there is deemed to be little or no overlap of responsibilities (for example, between undergraduate and postgraduate examining); in all such circumstances a special case must be made by the Head of Department when the appointment is recommended
  - an External Examiner should not normally be succeeded by an examiner drawn from his/her institution

- former members of staff should not be invited to become External Examiners until at least three years have elapsed since their departure, or such longer period as may be necessary to ensure that they are not involved in moderating the work of students whom they might have taught
  - care should be taken to ensure that in all other respects, the independence of the External Examiner is not compromised (for example, individuals who are engaged in collaborative research activities with members of staff in the department should not normally be selected)
  - care should be taken to ensure that any additional responsibilities or duties undertaken by an External Examiner during the period of appointment do not compromise or conflict with the core role of examining (for this reason, serving External Examiners are not invited to serve as assessors on internal academic review panels or programme approval panels)
  - External Examiners drawn from outside the higher education system, for example from industry or the professions, may be selected in certain circumstances, but because of the need to compare subject standards across higher education sector, such individuals should not be asked to serve as sole examiners unless the course concerned is highly vocational.
- 2.5 The number of External Examiners for any particular degree programme must be sufficient to cover the full range of the syllabus. More than one External Examiner will be required where there is a large number of students or where the degree programme is broadly based. Wherever possible, appointments should be phased.
- 2.6 External Examiners for courses validated by the University in associated institutions, or franchised to other institutions, or offered in association with other institutions, must be external both to the university and to the institution concerned.
- 2.7 Recommendations for appointment must be made using a nomination form obtainable from Faculty Board Secretaries (the form is reproduced as Appendix IX to this Code). This form requires the nominee to provide information to assist in the assessment of 2.4 above. The relevant Head of Department (or School) is required to endorse each nomination.
- 2.8 Potential External Examiners should be given sufficient information about their role in order for them to make an informed decision about whether to accept the appointment.
- 2.9 Prior to its submission to the relevant Faculty Board, each nomination is vetted by the Vice-Chancellor's Advisory Committee in order to monitor University-wide compliance with this Code and to obtain an overview of the overall standard of appointments. VCAC may refer back to departments for further information any nomination which appears problematic, and in exceptional circumstances may refuse to endorse a nomination.

- 2.10 General endorsement by VCAC does not imply that academic approval of the appointment has been given. Only Faculty Boards have this power, and they may engage in such further investigation as may be required before an appointment is recommended to Senate for approval.
- 2.11 As the appointment of External Examiners requires the approval of Senate (as specified in Sections 19(9) and 21(3) of the Statutes), formal letters of appointment are not issued until these bodies have approved specific recommendations. Heads of Department are advised to make this time-lag clear to prospective examiners when discussing the appointment with them.
- 2.12 New External Examiners should if possible be appointed before the examiners they are due to replace have completed their periods of service. Every effort should be made to ensure that vacancies do not occur during which a subject or course is without an External Examiner.
- 2.13 Where it is not possible for a replacement examiner to be found by the required date, or where a new examiner asks to defer the commencement date of his/her period of service, the current examiner may be invited to serve for an additional year. This is regarded as an exceptional arrangement, which should be notified to the Secretary of the relevant Faculty Board by means of a memorandum which sets out the reasons for the recommendation.
- 2.14 A single budget for undergraduate External Examiners' fees is fixed annually and held centrally. It is assigned to departments annually by the Academic Registrar on a subject-by-subject basis, utilising a scheme approved by the Standing Committee of Deans in 2005, summarised as follows:
- £200 flat rate payment for each examiner  
£10 per finalist
- There is a fee of £250 for non-subject based External Examiners (for example, for the B.A. degree in Combined Studies).
- Departments are consulted as to the distribution of the fee between their examiners, and the examiners are notified of the agreed sum by the Examinations Officer. The fee is paid to the examiner upon receipt of confirmation from the Vice-Chancellor's office that a report has been submitted.
- 2.15 External Examiners who fail to meet the requirements of the office (for example, by not producing written reports, or not attending scheduled meetings) may be asked by the Vice-Chancellor to tender their resignation.
- 2.16 External Examiners' expenses are paid from central funds by the Examinations Office, on production of a claim form and receipts.

### **Internal Examiners**

- 2.17 Internal Examiners are appointed annually on the recommendation of the Boards of the Faculties (in compliance with Sections 19(8) and 21(3) of the Statutes).
- 2.18 Internal Examiners must be members of the academic staff of the University or designated as Recognised Teachers of an Associated Institution (under Ordinance XXI). Under Ordinance V(4), individuals with a substantial teaching role who do not fall into these categories may be approved as Internal Examiners by the Staffing Committee on the recommendation of the Dean of the relevant Faculty. A member of staff in one department who is examining for a degree course in another department is still an Internal Examiner (internal describes a relationship with the University as a whole, not with any particular part of it).
- 2.19 Academic staff have a contractual obligation to undertake examining duties under their terms and conditions of appointment.

### **Additional Examiners**

- 2.20 The status of Additional Examiner is offered to those who, because they provide assistance with teaching a particular course, may also be called upon to assist with the examining of that course. The category includes staff on associate contracts, research or other-related staff, honorary lecturers and associate tutors. The names of Additional Examiners are reported to Boards of the Faculties alongside those of the internal examiners.

### **Postgraduate Students**

- 2.21 Postgraduate students may be employed by departments to assist with teaching and assessment. The employment of students in this capacity should take account of the following restrictions:
- postgraduate students may not serve as members of Boards of Examiners
  - postgraduate students may not act as sole markers of any piece of work which contributes to the final degree classification
  - responsibility for teaching and examining rests entirely with the academic staff of the University, who are held accountable to their Head of Department for the actions of any persons employed to teach or examine on their behalf
  - formal feedback to students on their performance in University examinations should be provided by members of the academic staff.
- 2.22 Training in marking and grading practices should be provided to postgraduate students involved in assessment, and their activities should be closely monitored.



### **3. CODE OF PRACTICE ON EXTERNAL EXAMINING**

#### **Purposes of the External Examiner system**

- 3.1 The University endorses the following description of the function of the External Examiner system and the role of External Examiners contained in section 4 of the QAA's Code of Practice.

*The external examining function should help institutions to ensure that:*

- *The academic standard of each award and its component parts is set and maintained by the awarding institution at the appropriate level, and that the standards of student performance are properly judged against this;*
- *The assessment process measures student achievement appropriately against the intended outcomes of the programme, and is rigorous, fairly operated and in line with the institution's policies and regulations;*
- *Institutions are able to compare the standard of their awards with those of other higher education institutions.*

*An institution should ask its external examiners, in their expert judgement, to report on:*

- i. whether the academic standards set for its awards, or part thereof are appropriate*
- ii. the extent to which its assessment processes are rigorous, ensure equity of treatment for students and have been fairly conducted within institutional regulations and guidance*
- iii. the standards of student performance in the programmes or parts of programmes which they have been appointed to examine;*
- iv. where appropriate, the comparability of the standards and student achievements with those in some other higher education institutions;*
- v. good practice they have identified.*

#### **Period of service**

- 3.2 Prior to 2006/07 External Examiners were normally invited to hold office for three consecutive years and could exceptionally be appointed for a fourth and final year. Since 2006/07, four-year appointments have been permitted, but with extensions to five years being disallowed in all but the most urgent or extraordinary circumstances.

#### **Briefing of examiners**

- 3.3 The Departmental Examinations Officer is responsible, under the direction of the Head of Department, for providing the External Examiner with the following information, both at the beginning of the period of office and either annually thereafter or by arrangement with the External Examiner (the examiner's preferences in this matter being the deciding factor):
- general information about the department and its courses (e.g. departmental handbook);

- specific information about the subject/course to be examined, including:
  - course descriptions and programme specifications
  - overall course aims and learning outcomes
  - relevant syllabus details (down to module level, if appropriate or if requested)
  - schemes of assessment
  - departmental marking practices (e.g. policies on blind-marking, double-marking, sampling, etc.)
  - grading criteria, including any departmental definitions of the attributes associated with the award of a particular class of degree.
- information about the role and duties of the External Examiner in the specific subject area (see 3.6 to 3.16 below);

The Departmental Examinations Officer is also responsible for arranging the timing of meetings of Boards of Examiners in consultation with the External Examiners. External Examiners should be given as much notice as possible of proposed dates of meetings.

- 3.4 The Departmental Examinations Officer should ensure that the External Examiner is informed about any changes to syllabus content, marking procedures or schemes of assessment as soon as they occur.
- 3.5 The University's Examinations Office is responsible, under the direction of the Academic Registrar, for supplying each External Examiner with:
- the initial letter of appointment and subsequent letters of re-appointment;
  - notification about fees and expenses and procedures for claiming these;
  - a copy of the Undergraduate General Regulations;
  - a copy of this Code of Practice on Examining for First Degrees;
  - a copy of the report(s) of the retiring External Examiner(s) and the Head of Department's ensuing observations;
  - information about the presentation of the examiner's annual report to the Vice-Chancellor.

### **Participation in assessment procedures**

#### ***Approval of draft examination papers***

- 3.6 All draft question papers for modules which contribute to the assessment of the final degree classification should be sent to an External Examiner for approval. In appropriate cases External Examiners may be asked to set or complete some questions.
- 3.7 In some subjects, External Examiners may be asked to scrutinise and test model answers.

- 3.8 The External Examiner's involvement in the vetting of September Examination papers, and the timetable for this, should be established by the department during the initial briefing process and should accord with the requirements in 3.6 above.

***Assessment of examination scripts, dissertations, projects and other work***

- 3.9 Departments should be mindful of the need to keep the burden of External Examiners' work within reasonable bounds by means of the judicious selection of material for scrutiny. The guiding principle for selection should be that the examiners should have sufficient evidence to confirm comparability of standards and to determine that internal marking and classifications are consistent and fair.
- 3.10 Although an External Examiner has the right to see all examination scripts and any other work which contributes to the final assessment, it is unreasonable to require an examiner to do so, except where there are very few students involved.
- 3.11 Where a department makes a selection of scripts to be sent to the External Examiner, the principles for such selection should be agreed with the examiner in advance.
- 3.12 External Examiners should see a sample of finalists' scripts and relevant assessed work from the top, middle and the bottom of the range. They should normally be sent, or should see at the time the Board of Examiners meets, all scripts and relevant assessed work of borderline candidates and of candidates assessed internally as first class or as failures.
- 3.13 Dissertations and other assessed work should be sent to the External Examiner as soon as they are available, if possible before the commencement of the final written examinations. External Examiners should not be expected to scrutinise a large volume of such work in the short time available between the end of the examination period and the meeting of the relevant Board of Examiners, unless time for this is set aside during the examiner's visit.

***Comments and Advice***

- 3.14 External Examiners are encouraged to comment on the assessment process and the schemes for marking and classification. The participation of an External Examiner in the devising of such schemes may be beneficial, and in some cases essential.
- 3.15 External Examiners may often be able to give valuable advice to Internal Examiners, especially the inexperienced, either directly or through the Head of Department, and are encouraged to do so.
- 3.16 Departments and External Examiners should use any opportunities afforded by the visits of External Examiners to discuss the structure and content of courses and assessment procedures. Departments may also invite their External Examiners to visit on a separate occasion to discuss new course proposals, or may ask for their written comments. Any comments or suggestions made by the External Examiner should be discussed by the department and responded to in writing.

<p><b>For the External Examiner's role as a member of the Board of Examiners see Section 5 : Procedures Governing the Conduct of Boards of Examiners</b></p>
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## Written reports

- 3.17 External Examiners are required to provide a report to the Vice-Chancellor in each of the years of their period of service. It is expected that these reports will normally be submitted immediately after the Midsummer examination period.
- 3.18 The University does not wish unduly to restrict the scope of the comments of its External Examiners by requiring them to complete a standard report form. It does require, however, confirmation in the form of a checklist that the administration of assessment arrangements has been properly conducted, and examiners are therefore asked to complete the yellow form supplied to them by the Examinations Office and attach it to their reports (a sample copy of the note is attached to this Code as Appendix X).
- 3.19 The report itself need not duplicate any of the matters covered in the checklist unless there are areas of concern, or where special commendation is appropriate.
- 3.20 In order to assist in the scrutiny of the reports, the University asks examiners to adhere, where possible to a structure in which the following points (or as many of them as apply) are covered:
- (a) Scope of examinations and examination methods  
Examiners are asked to confirm that the assessment procedures of the department/course are appropriate to the subject matter, and are relevant, properly demanding and designed to allow for the display of knowledge at a level which compares favourably with other institutions offering similar provision.
  - (b) Marking standards/degree classifications/conduct of vivas  
Examiners are invited to comment on the marking standards and grading practices operating in the department. Any concerns about the distribution of degree classes, and the performance of students at the top and bottom end of the ranges should be noted.
  - (c) Student performance  
Comments on the quality of students' work, including presentation and style, are welcomed.
  - (d) Course aims and objectives, structure and syllabus  
Examiners are encouraged to comment on these in the light of their impact on examination procedures and performance, and in a more general sense as they relate to national standards, including the QAA's Qualifications Framework and, where applicable, subject benchmarks. Observations on course literature, departmental handbooks, etc., are helpful.

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(e) Teaching methods and teaching quality

The University welcomes the comments of examiners on the quality of teaching, to the extent that this is reflected in the examining process and in the performance of its students. Similarly, any observations on the effectiveness or otherwise of teaching methods, particularly where these are new or distinctive, will be of great assistance.

(f) General issues

Examiners are invited to comment on any issue relevant to their experiences at the University which is not covered in the checklist or in the list above. This is particularly helpful as an overview at the end of an examiner's period of service.

- 3.21 External Examiners should bear in mind that their reports will be seen by student representatives. Any references to individual students (relating, for example, to performance in oral examinations) will be edited out before this stage but it would be helpful if the identification of individuals could be recorded in the report to the Vice-Chancellor in an appendix.
- 3.22 Fees are paid to External Examiners upon submission of the report. Expenses are paid upon the submission of a claim form to the Examinations Office.
- 3.23 The University reserves the right to return to an External Examiner for further elaboration any report which is too slight or uninformative to serve the monitoring purpose for which it is intended.
- 3.24 The reports are not regarded as confidential, therefore if an External Examiner wishes to raise a matter in confidence with the Vice-Chancellor, this should be communicated in a separate letter.

<b>See also Section 6 : Procedures Governing the Consideration of External Examiners' Reports)</b>
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## **4. CODE OF PRACTICE ON INTERNAL EXAMINING**

### **Responsibilities of Heads of Department**

- 4.1 Heads of Department are responsible for ensuring that undergraduate examining is conducted in accordance with this Code of Practice. They may delegate the administration of examinations to Departmental Examinations Officers.
- 4.2 Heads of Department are required to ensure, through their Departmental Examinations Officers:
- (a) that External Examiners are properly briefed (see Code of Practice on External Examining);
  - (b) that Internal Examiners are informed in a clear and timely manner about their specific responsibilities for setting papers, invigilating, marking (in relation both to formal written examinations and continuous assessment), attending meetings of Boards of Examiners or Faculty Boards, and providing feedback to students on examination performance;
  - (c) that training is provided in departmental marking and grading practices for new academic staff, additional examiners and, if appropriate, postgraduate teaching assistants;
  - (d) that sampling of marking is undertaken at a level which is deemed to be sufficient to ensure that departmental marking and grading procedures are being properly applied;
  - (e) that all markers are informed about departmental schemes of assessment and any changes to these as they occur;
  - (f) that a report of the department's consideration of its External Examiners' reports is submitted to each of the External Examiners concerned, including a notification of any consequential changes to departmental procedures;
  - (g) that any proposed procedural changes to assessment practices which fall within the remit of external professional bodies are notified to those bodies for approval or for information, as appropriate;
  - (h) that robust and secure back-up procedures which comply with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998 are in place when marks are recorded, stored or transmitted electronically.

### **Responsibilities of Internal Examiners:**

- 4.3 Internal examiners are required to ensure:
- (a) that unless they are on study leave or on other approved leave of absence, they are available to undertake such examining duties as may be specified by their Head of Department;

- (b) that they are familiar with the schemes of assessment, regulations and codes governing the examinations they are required to mark;
- (c) that they adhere to agreed departmental marking and grading practices;
- (d) that they comply with University procedures on anonymous marking.
- (e) that they comply with agreed deadlines for the setting of question papers, the marking of assessed work and the marking of examination scripts.

4.4 All staff involved in examination and assessment must apply a high level of security when transporting and storing question papers, answer books and mark sheets, and must comply with Examination Office procedures relating to such matters.

## **5. PROCEDURES GOVERNING THE CONDUCT OF BOARDS OF EXAMINERS**

### **Membership of the Board of Examiners**

- 5.1 Each Board of Examiners is empowered to appoint its own Chairman, except that the Associate Dean (Combined Arts) is the Chairman of the Board of Examiners for the B.A. degree in Combined Studies.
- 5.2 The membership of Boards of Examiners is restricted to the Internal and External Examiners. Additional Examiners may attend meetings only on the authority of the Chairman of the Board, and if they do attend they may not vote.
- 5.3 External Examiners, as full members of the relevant Board of Examiners, have the right to be present at all examiners' meetings at which significant decisions are being taken with regard to the specialisms for which they have responsibility (including the meetings for the setting of papers, although this matter is normally dealt with by post).
- 5.4 There is no requirement that External Examiners should attend a Board of Examiners meeting following the First Semester assessment period but departments are held to be responsible for ensuring that arrangements are in place to ensure that these examinations are appropriately moderated.
- 5.5 External Examiners are required to be present at the meetings of Boards of Examiners where degrees are awarded and degree classifications agreed. If an External Examiner exceptionally cannot attend a meeting where his or her presence is formally required, he or she should be available for consultation by telephone, fax or e-mail.
- 5.6 The University has no formal quorum governing the attendance of Internal Examiners at Boards of Examiners, but given the importance of the decisions taken by examining boards, it is recommended that at least three-quarters of the Internal Examiners in the subject should be present when degree classifications are being determined. Heads of Department are authorised to make attendance at Boards of Examiners compulsory if this facilitates the good conduct of the meeting.

### **Conduct of Meetings**

- 5.7 Departments should agree in advance of a meeting of a Board of Examiners:
  - the format of mark sheets
  - the nature of the material which will be made available to the Board in advance of the meeting and/or on the day of the meeting
  - methods of dealing with evidence of extenuating circumstances (see 5.15 to 5.17 below)

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- procedures for dealing with borderline cases
  - arrangements for *viva voce* examinations
  - procedures for the declaration of the personal interest, involvement or relationship of members with any student under consideration.
- 5.8 The Departmental Examinations Officer is responsible for ensuring that arrangements have been made for room bookings, catering, secretarial support, etc.
- 5.9 Meetings of Boards of Examiners should be scheduled to ensure that the University timetable for the return of marks to the Registry can be met.
- 5.10 The Chairman of the Board should aim to ensure that sufficient time is allowed for the full consideration of all difficult or borderline cases.
- 5.11 The views of an External Examiner are deemed to be particularly important in confirming the mark to be awarded for a disputed unit of assessment and the final classification to be derived from the array of marks of a particular candidate. Where agreement on such cases cannot be reached, the following procedures should be observed:
- If the External Examiners disagree with a unanimous departmental view on a particular student, the Chairman of the Board should attempt to explore the reasons for the conflict and to ensure that the External Examiners are aware of relevant features of the scheme of assessment, University regulations or departmental custom and practice. If no resolution can be reached, the Board should normally apply the recommendation which most favours the student.
  - If the Internal Examiners are divided in their views, they must defer to the view of the External Examiner or, where there are several External Examiners, to the view of the majority of the Externals.
  - If a variety of views are being expressed and there is no clear direction from the External Examiners, the Board should vote on the case, in which case an overall majority view should be sought.
- 5.12 If *viva voce* examinations are not a compulsory element in the final assessment, they should be held only in order to allow a candidate an opportunity of improving his or her position. Vivas should be conducted by an External Examiner, who should be assisted by one or more Internal Examiners.
- 5.13 For every formal University examination, a list of successful candidates must be approved by the relevant Board of Examiners and signed by the Chairman. The signature of all the External Examiners must be appended to final lists of degree results as evidence that they accept the classifications (in the case of joint and Combined Studies degrees, the signature of an External Examiner should be appended to each of the lists of final-year marks which contribute to the degree classification).

- 5.14 A written record of the proceedings of Boards of Examiners should be maintained and kept in the department. This record should include for each meeting:
- a list of members in attendance
  - one set of mark-sheets showing any revisions and alterations made by the Board
  - the relevant scheme of assessment
  - a note of any decisions taken notwithstanding the normal operation of the scheme of assessment
  - a note of any close borderline decisions and *viva voce* arrangements.

### **Consideration of Extenuating Circumstances**

- 5.15 Board of Examiners may consider evidence of extenuating circumstances in full, or it may delegate responsibility for this to a sub-group which is given the power to make recommendations to the Board in accordance with previously-agreed guidelines. The latter method is normally preferable, as it tends to streamline the Board's procedures and offer the students more privacy. It is not necessary, however, in a small department.
- 5.16 Where a student's circumstances fall outside the categories which the sub-group is authorised to consider, the case should always be discussed by the full Board.
- 5.17 The University Regulation governing the notification of mitigating circumstances is included in Appendix V.

- 6. PROCEDURES GOVERNING THE CONSIDERATION OF EXTERNAL EXAMINERS' REPORTS**
- 6.1 External Examiners are asked in their letters of appointment to submit an annual report to the Vice-Chancellor. This report normally arrives during the Summer Vacation, and its receipt triggers the payment of the External Examiner's fee.
- 6.2 The Vice-Chancellor reads each report and sends a letter of thanks to the examiner. Occasionally he comments on a matter raised in the report.
- 6.3 The Vice-Chancellor sends the report to the relevant Head of Department, and asks for a response during the Autumn Term for consideration by a panel of Deans of the Faculties (reporting to the Academic Review Committee). He may draw attention to a specific point raised in the report and ask for an immediate comment on this. All correspondence is copied to the Academic Registrar.
- 6.4 The Vice-Chancellor's request to Heads of Department contains a reminder that the reports should be considered at a departmental meeting, and they should be circulated to all the internal examiners, including any academic staff outside the main department. Departments are expected to have mechanisms in place which allow for discussion about the issues raised in the reports and ensure that any remedial action can be taken swiftly.
- 6.5 The External Examiner should be notified by the department of the way in which his or her recommendations are being carried forward.
- 6.6 A copy of each report and the departmental response, appropriately anonymised to remove any references to individual students, should be referred to the departmental staff/student committee (or its equivalent) and any substantive comments from this source incorporated into the departmental response. If the staff/student committee meeting takes place after the Head of Department's response to the Vice-Chancellor, a supplementary report on any significant issues identified by the student body (if any) should be sent separately to the Vice-Chancellor.
- 6.7 The Academic Registrar sends a copy of each External Examiner's report to the Dean of the relevant Faculty as soon as it arrives from the Vice-Chancellor in order to ensure that any urgent matters are known about and are being addressed.
- 6.8 Heads of Department are asked to send the Academic Registrar a copy of their response to the Vice-Chancellor, and these, together with the reports, are presented in their entirety to the panel of Deans. The departmental response may be in the form of a memorandum, a report, or the minutes of an examining board or staff meeting.
- 6.9 At the meeting of the panel of Deans, the Deans are asked to comment on the reports relating to their Faculties. The panel then identifies any matters of general concern and a report on its conclusions is incorporated into the minutes of the meeting.
- 6.10 The panel's report is submitted to the Spring Term meeting of the Academic Review Committee and from thence referred to the Boards of the Faculties for consideration in the Spring Term.

- 6.11 In addition to input into assessment practices, External Examiners' reports are used for academic planning at departmental level, for internal academic reviews, and for audits and reviews conducted by the Quality Assurance Agency. They may, at the Vice-Chancellor's discretion, be submitted to any external bodies conducting a review of the subject area or of the institution.
- 6.12 The Examinations Office sends each new External Examiner copies of the retiring Examiner's reports and the departmental responses.

## **7. CODE OF PRACTICE ON PLAGIARISM** (applicable to both undergraduate and postgraduate students)

### **Induction**

- 7.1 All departmental handbooks should incorporate the University statement on academic honesty and the regulation on academic dishonesty, or should draw students' attention to other departmental handouts which contain this information. Handbooks should also provide details of the departmental and University support offered to students who are in any doubt about plagiarism or who require assistance with writing techniques.
- 7.2 For students on taught programmes, induction at the beginning of each module should cover any departmental expectations relating to seminar work, group project work, computer assignments or any other academic activity where students might be required to work together. Students should be left in no doubt about the extent to which collaboration is either required or forbidden, both in the completion of any research required by the module, and in its writing-up.
- 7.3 Where possible, students should be provided with an opportunity for discussing the issue of plagiarism and asking questions about departmental policies. They should be notified about the use of Turnitin, the JISC Plagiarism Detection Service, and encouraged to consult the on-line JISC Advisory Service, which contains a wealth of information and guidance on avoiding plagiarism (<http://www.jiscpas.ac.uk/>).
- 7.4 It should not be assumed that students at either undergraduate or postgraduate level enter the University with an existing knowledge of academic conventions, of what plagiarism is, or of how they can avoid it. Instructions about the use of primary and secondary sources, bibliographical techniques and referencing should be presented in clear and unambiguous language and should include as many examples as possible drawn from the subject being studied. Illustrations of good and bad practice should use sources which students are likely to recognise as relevant to their studies.
- 7.5 Special induction procedures may be required for students whose first language is not English, and particular care should be taken to ensure that students whose cultures encourage deference to expert opinion understand that repetition of the words and thoughts of such experts without acknowledgement of their source constitutes plagiarism. All students also need to understand that they are at times expected to challenge received opinion, and that high grades are awarded to those who can demonstrate mastery of the subject and independence of mind.
- 7.6 For distance-learning students, departments must provide very clear written guidelines which take account of the varying cultures in which the students are living and working. Associate tutors should be made aware of the need to encourage discussion about plagiarism in study groups and other support meetings. Feedback on any written work which displays evidence of direct plagiarism or undue reliance on third party material should clearly state where the problem lies and how this should be remedied.

- 7.7 Research training programmes offered to all new research students provide the means of ensuring that advanced postgraduate students (APGs) acquire a thorough ground in the scholarly conventions applicable to their discipline. The review of student progress and attainment which precedes transfer from APG to full Ph.D. student status should thoroughly test this knowledge.

### **Early registration period**

- 7.8 The early period of each student's registration should be regarded as developmental for the purpose of instilling good academic practices. For undergraduate students, the submission of the first piece of written work provides an opportunity for the identification of any problems, and the detection of plagiarism at this stage should be dealt with by means of counselling from academic and personal tutors. For students on taught Master's courses, procedures should be put in place which allow the first written submission to be used developmentally, notwithstanding the fact that the work may contribute to the final assessment. This may be achieved by:

- assigning a relatively small number of marks to the assignment
- allowing an immediate resubmission where students have failed to comply with good practice
- allowing students to submit a first draft of the assignment for departmental comment.

- 7.9 Particular attention should be paid to the possibility of plagiarism in the marking of first assignments for postgraduate courses, where very limited opportunities exist for remedial action. Where possible, highly experienced markers should be used for these first pieces of work to improve the chances of identifying plagiarised material. It should be borne in mind that plagiarism which only comes to light at the end of the course cannot be dealt with in the developmental way described above, but only through the application of penalties.

### **Identifying plagiarism**

- 7.10. Plagiarism can be identified by markers through:

- recognising familiar passages (for example from books or articles in reading lists), or the verbatim copying of lecture handouts
- observing marked improvements in written style and/or linguistic competence
- noting the random juxtaposition of paragraphs with differing authorial styles (linking sentences written by the student will sometimes be used to mask this)
- recognising similarities between students' work, providing possible evidence of collusion or unauthorised copying
- scrutinising 'cheat sites' on the web on the topic of the assignment in order to see the potential source of purchased essays
- using the JISC Turnitin software.

## Procedures for discouraging plagiarism

- 7.11 When the developmental period is over, the onus falls on the student to comply with departmental requirements and University Regulations. In order to reinforce the message that the student must take responsibility for his or her actions, departments should require students to complete a cover sheet to accompany the submission of key pieces of assessed work (the department having first determined the pieces of work to which this requirement should apply). The cover sheet should include the following:
- (a) Name of student  
Module title and number  
Title of work  
Number of words
  - (b) A reference to any departmental material explaining the nature of plagiarism and rules on the presentation of written work where applicable, and to the University's Regulation on Academic Dishonesty (e.g. 'Please refer to the department's Guidelines on the Presentation of Written Work, pp 13-17, and to the University Regulation on Academic Dishonesty contained in the Departmental Handbook before you sign this declaration')
  - (c) This statement: *I confirm that I have read and understood the department's instructions on the presentation of written work and the University's Regulation on Academic Dishonesty and I declare that the submission attached to this statement and presented to the University of Leicester for assessment complies with University requirements and is my own work.*
  - (d) The student's signature
  - (e) The date of submission
- 7.12 Departments should assist students by specifying course requirements in a clear and accessible manner, and should where appropriate periodically reissue any relevant instructions or guidelines (for example, in second- and third-year handbooks where these exist). Some departments issue specific guidance on final-year dissertations and projects, or on Master's degree dissertation preparation, and this is recommended practice if for these submissions students are expected to comply rigorously with academic conventions.
- 7.13 Departments should also continue to publicise to campus-based students the existence of the Student Learning Centre, and to reassure students that advice can be sought from academic and support staff at any stage in their studies. The Centre also offers web-based support (<http://www.le.ac.uk/ssds/slc/index.html>).
- 7.14 Departments should ensure that they are not inadvertently putting pressure on students by making unreasonable demands on them, particularly in relation to deadlines for the submission of written work. Weak students may respond to such pressure by cheating.

- 7.15 Essay/project titles should be reviewed periodically, both in relation to the topics covered and the style of the questions, to ensure that where possible a personal response from the student is encouraged, not just a repetition of received opinion.

### **Poor scholarship**

- 7.16 Inexperienced students may submit work which inadvertently includes plagiarised material. The first test in determining whether plagiarism penalties should be applied is therefore for the marker to assess whether an appropriate response to the inclusion of third party material, or to poor referencing or an incomplete bibliography, is to mark the work at its face value, with the penalty for the student being the award of a low or failed mark (the latter being redeemable by resit). Where there is any doubt about whether a piece of work falls into this category, the programme leader or Head of Department should be consulted.
- 7.17 A written warning should be issued to students who fall into this category i.e. who fail because their work is derivative or poorly referenced, alerting them to the danger of continuing with unsound scholarly practices, and their attention should be drawn to departmental and University guidelines on avoiding plagiarism.

### **Pursuing a plagiarism investigation**

- 7.18 Where plagiarism is suspected or discovered in circumstances where there can be no reasonable doubt that a student understands (or has been given the means of understanding) his or her academic responsibilities, the following procedures should apply:
- the marker should refer the piece of work to a colleague for an informal second opinion
  - if plagiarism is confirmed beyond reasonable doubt, the Head of Department should then be consulted, together with the Departmental Examinations Officer in the case of an undergraduate student
  - the Head of Department should authorise a formal re-marking of the piece of work in question, and at the same time initiate a review of all the assessed work submitted by the student concerned in order to establish whether other offences have been committed
  - the External Examiner should be consulted as appropriate, and should normally always be involved in the examination of cases relating to final-year undergraduate and postgraduate students
  - the Head of Department should then determine which of the following procedures should apply:
    - referral of the case to a small panel established to make recommendations to the Board of Examiners (this is likely to be an appropriate strategy in large departments)



- direct referral of the case to the Board of Examiners

The student should be presented with the evidence of the plagiarism, either during an interview or in written correspondence, and asked to provide an explanation or commentary. Care should be taken to ensure that any concerns raised in the student's mind about the department's investigations do not jeopardise his/her ability to perform in any written examinations taking place at the same time. Where suspected plagiarism is identified during a final undergraduate examination, it is therefore recommended that the matter be pursued immediately after the student's examinations have finished. A *viva voce* examination may be held at this stage in order to substantiate a claim that plagiarism has taken place.

- 7.19 In reaching a conclusion about the appropriate method of dealing with a case of plagiarism, Heads of Department may seek the advice of the Academic Registrar. In order to ensure that departments interpret this Code, and the Regulation on Academic Honesty which underpins it, in a consistent manner, paragraphs 7.20 to 7.23 below set out the range of penalties applicable to cases of plagiarism and the circumstances in which they will normally be applied.

The penalties below are those that should be applied in clear-cut cases. It is recognised that course structures vary, that students will have mark profiles which do not match the assumptions underpinning these penalties, and that special circumstances of varying types may apply. Boards of Examiners should therefore review each case carefully in order to ensure that the penalties are appropriate to the specific offence.

### **Penalties for plagiarism**

#### **7.20 Undergraduate students**

First offence: Failure of the module, resit allowed, severe written warning

Second and third offences: A mark of 0 for the module.  
Resubmission required for the purposes of progression

Possible downgrading of degree class if the offences are for modules which contribute to the final classification, and if the normal application of the standard scheme of assessment incorporating marks of 0 does not automatically lead to a downgrading. In applying this penalty, Boards of Examiners will have due regard to the significance of the plagiarised work in the overall scheme of assessment.

Fourth offence or multiple\* simultaneous offences after the second offence: Termination of course

[\*In this context 'multiple' means plagiarism in more than one separate module and plagiarism applying to double modules of 30 or 40 credits].

## 7.21 Taught postgraduate students

Where written assignments are submitted consecutively:

First offence in the taught element of the programme:	Failure of the module, resit allowed, severe written warning
Second offence in the taught element of the programme:	Mark of 0 for the module. Resubmission required for the purposes of progression
Subsequent offence in the taught element of the programme:	Termination of course

Where a number of written assignments are submitted simultaneously (for example, at the end of the first semester)

One offence in the taught element of the programme:	Failure in the module, resit allowed, severe written warning
Two offences in the taught element of the programme	Mark of 0 for each module. Resubmission required for the purposes of progression
Three or more offences in the taught element of the programme	Termination of course

All programmes:

Plagiarism in the dissertation without a previous offence:	Failure with downgrading to Postgraduate Diploma
Plagiarism in the dissertation with a previous offence:	Termination of course

## 7.22 Research students

First offence during the development of the thesis	Severe written warning
Plagiarism in the submitted thesis	Normally failure without the right of resubmission

7.23 The appeals procedures for students whose registrations are terminated because of plagiarism will be as for termination on the grounds of failure.

7.24 Marks of 0 awarded in respect of plagiarism are recorded on the student's University transcript and in departmental records, and the offence may be reported to any relevant professional body.

## General Regulations Governing Courses for First Degrees

1. The first degrees awarded by the University are:
  - (a) in the Faculty of Arts: Bachelor of Arts (B.A.)
  - (b) in the Faculty of Science: Master of Chemistry (M.Chem.), Master of Engineering (M.Eng.), Master of Geology (M.Geol.), Master of Mathematics (M.Math.), Master of Physics (M.Phys.), Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.), Bachelor of Engineering (B.Eng.), Science Foundation Degree (Fd.Sc.)
  - (c) in the Faculty of the Social Sciences: Bachelor of Arts (B.A.), Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.), Arts Foundation Degree (Fd.A.)
  - (d) in the Faculty of Law: Bachelor of Laws (LL.B.)
  - (e) in the Faculty of Medicine and Biological Sciences: Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (M.B.,Ch.B.), Bachelor of Medical Science (B.Med.Sci.), Master of Biology (M.Biol.), Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.), Science Foundation Degree (Fd.Sc.)
2. A first degree may be awarded with honours, as a pass degree, without honours (in the case of the M.B.,Ch.B. degree), as an Ordinary degree (in the case of the B.Med.Sci. degrees), or as a Foundation Degree.
3. The following degree classification mark bands apply to all first degrees awarded by the University):
 

First Class Honours	70% and above
Upper Second Class Honours	60% - 69%
Lower Second Class Honours	50% - 59%
Third Class Honours	40% - 49%
Pass	35% - 39%
4. The names of successful candidates registered for honours degrees will be presented in five divisions - first class honours, second class honours (upper and lower), third class honours, and pass. The M.B.,Ch.B. degrees may in cases of exceptional merit be awarded with honours, which are not classified.
5. Students demonstrating outstanding proficiency in a final-year oral examination in French, German or Italian may be awarded a distinction in Spoken French, Spoken German or Spoken Italian.
6. Students may be required to read one or two supplementary subjects. Except in the case of the B.A. degree in Modern Language Studies, the level of attainment in the supplementary subject examination(s) will not be considered in the final classification. Course modules for supplementary subjects are the same as those offered as Combined Studies subjects, or are of an equivalent standard.
7. First-degree courses leading to the degree of Bachelor extend over not less than three academic years. First-degree courses leading to the degree of Master extend over not less than four academic years. (Advanced standing may be conferred in accordance with University Ordinances.)

8. For all full-time degrees except the degrees of M.B.,Ch.B., students are required to register each year for modules totalling 120 credits. This is deemed to be the equivalent of 900 hours of study, including private study time. The Undergraduate Programme Regulations specify those modules which are core and optional in each semester of each year of course. The Module Handbook, which gives details of module content and workload, is available for consultation in departments, on the Corporate Web Information Service and in the University Library and should be read in conjunction with these regulations. A similar modular structure applies to the first two or three years (Phase I) of the courses for the M.B.,Ch.B. degrees and is described in the Course Handbook for those degrees.

*Note: Where staffing changes or other unavoidable circumstances necessitate any alterations to the courses set out below, students will be notified by their departments. Not all optional modules will necessarily be available in any one year.*

9. The teaching year is divided into two semesters (the First and Second Semesters), which are contained within three terms (the Autumn, Spring and Summer Terms). The First Semester comprises an eleven-week teaching period (preceded by a one-week induction period), followed after the Christmas Vacation by one week for examination and assessment. The Second Semester comprises a further ten-week teaching period, followed by six weeks for examination, assessment and preparatory study for the next session. Oral examinations for modern language courses may be held in the final week of the Second Semester.
10. Transfers of course must be effected by means of a change of course form, duly approved and submitted to the Registry by no later than the end of the third week of the First Semester. Transfers of module must be effected by means of a change of module form, duly approved and submitted to the Registry by no later than the end of the third week of the semester in which the module is offered. Transfers from a degree programme to a foundation programme must be effected by means of a change of course form, duly approved in consultation with tutors on the relevant foundation programme and submitted to the Registry normally by no later than the end of the third week of the First Semester and in all cases by no later than the end of the Autumn Term.
11. Modules may be examined by written examination, continuous assessment, the completion of a project or dissertation, or through a combination of assessment methods. Details are provided in the Module Handbook and in departmental literature.

**First-, Second- and non-finalist Third-Year Assessment (excluding the M.B.,Ch.B. degrees)**

12. Students are credited with a module when they have completed the requirements of that module. These requirements include the submission, by the due date, of written assignments, the completion of any field work activities, or of any study abroad requirements, and the attainment of a pass mark in the assessment associated with the module (but see 12 and 13 below).

*Note: The attention of students is drawn to the regulations concerning attendance, work and progress on page 7 of these Regulations. Students who fail to satisfy departmental attendance and workload requirements may be refused the opportunity of resitting module examinations, or in cases of gross neglect, may have their course terminated.*

13. In order to be credited with the modules applying to any one academic year, students must:
- (i) have satisfied the relevant requirements for each module as set out in (12) above and
  - (ii) have achieved a credit-weighted average mark of 40 per cent or more across all the modules taken in the year and
  - (iii) have achieved a pass mark in each module complying with the designations of pass/fail set out in (14) below.
14. Subject to the achievement of an overall average of 40 per cent, modules may be passed at a level sufficient for the award of credit (35 to 39 per cent), or at Honours level (40 per cent or above). Exceptionally, for the purposes of satisfying the demands of professional bodies, or for some other significant academic reason specifically approved by the relevant Faculty Board, some modules may be designated as having to be passed at Honours Level.
15. Feedback on First Semester performance will be provided by departments after the First Semester assessment period and at the latest by 28 February each year. At this stage, the results are regarded as provisional and will normally be provided on a pass/fail basis or as an indication that progress is satisfactory, with information about levels of attainment being offered informally through consultation with personal and academic tutors. Official pass lists will be issued after the end of the Second Semester, and departments are at this stage authorised to release the marks obtained for both First- and Second-Semester modules.
16. Students who have not satisfied the module requirements set out in (13) above will have their performance reviewed by the relevant Board of Examiners in June in the light of the results obtained in both the First and Second Semesters. Boards of Examiners will determine the following rules relating to the determination of pass or fail in individual modules.
- (a) Students with a credit-weighted average of less than 40 per cent overall will be deemed to have failed all modules in which a mark of less than 40 per cent has been obtained;
  - (b) Students with a credit-weighted average of 40 per cent or more overall will be deemed to have failed all modules in which a mark of less than 35 percent has been obtained unless the University has determined that a specific module must be passed at 40 percent (see 14 above), in which case in that module only a mark of 39 per cent or less will be deemed to be a fail mark.
- The Boards of the Faculties will then be presented with the names of those students who are deemed to have failed one or more modules in the course of the academic year.
17. Students who are declared in June to have failed any modules taken during the year may be allowed to present themselves in September of the same year for re-examination in any written examinations associated with those failed modules. Students who have failed or have not completed any elements of assessed course work may be provided by their department with the opportunity of (re) submitting the work before the end of the academic year or by a date specified by their department. Laboratory work, however, must normally be completed within the time allotted for it in the relevant semester. In most laboratory-based subjects, the opportunity for repeating practical work cannot be provided, and any failure in practical elements of the course may lead to termination of course in June. The maximum mark which can be obtained in an examination deemed to be a resit is 40 per cent.

18. Students who fail to satisfy the examiners in September will be considered by the relevant Board of the Faculty. In the light of their overall performance, the Board may determine that such students should:

- (a) have their registration terminated;
- (b) be permitted to resit either failed modules or all modules in January and June of the following year without returning into residence in the meantime;
- (c) in exceptional circumstances be permitted to repeat all or part of the failed section of the course;
- (d) be permitted to proceed to the next year of the course taking, in addition to the standard 120 credits for the year, new modules in place of those failed or, where core modules are involved, repeating failed modules.

*Note: In reaching decisions on students who have failed examinations, Faculty Boards will have regard to departmental recommendations and agreed guidelines, and will take account of medical evidence or other special circumstances. Repeat periods of study will be granted only where evidence exists which demonstrates that such special circumstances have significantly interrupted, through no fault of the student's own, the opportunity to benefit from the teaching programme in a particular semester or academic year. The scale of the interruption must be such that it would be unreasonable to expect a student to take the examination relating to that part of the programme without repeat attendance.*

Where a department has given advance notice to its four-year degree students they must achieve a threshold average mark for progression within the four-year degree, then a student who does not achieve the threshold level will normally be required to transfer to the equivalent three-year degree.

If at the end of the third year a student does not meet the threshold requirement for progression to the final year, they will be considered as a finalist for the three-year degree.

#### **Final Assessment (excluding the M.B.,Ch.B. degrees)**

- 19. Final year modules may be assessed in January and/or June, or in June alone (see Module Handbook or course literature for details). Departments will be in a position to offer feedback on First Semester performance by 28 February each year (see 14 above), but the final assessment of performance in relation to the award of degree classes is undertaken by Boards of Examiners in June.
- 20. Students who fail to satisfy the examiners in the Final Examinations may be allowed by the Board of the relevant Faculty to present themselves for re-examination on one subsequent occasion only, which will be in the following year (January and/or June), and they will be considered for the award of a classified degree in June of that year. The relevant Faculty Board will determine whether such students are required to resit all final-year modules or only those failed.
- 21. Any students may, at the discretion of the examiners, be required to attend an oral examination.

Additional general regulations governing the B.A. degree in Combined Studies, the LL.B. degree, the degrees of M.B.,Ch.B., and the non-modular B.A. Humanities degree are incorporated into the relevant course regulations.

*Course Regulations for each programme of study can be found at the following web page:*

*<http://www.le.ac.uk/academic/Regs/>*

(Extract from Undergraduate Regulations 2007/08)

**Medium of Instruction**

Other than for the purposes of teaching foreign languages, the medium of instruction at the University is English. All forms of University examinations and assessment are conducted in English unless they are designed to test written or spoken aptitude in a foreign language.

(Extract from Undergraduate Regulations 2007/08)

## Examination Conventions and Scheme of Assessment

### (a) Degree Classifications

The following degree classification mark bands apply to all first degrees awarded by the University (last amended in 2002/03):

First Class Honours	70% and above
Upper Second Class Honours	60% - 69%
Lower Second Class Honours	50% - 59%
Third Class Honours	40% - 49%
Pass	35% - 39%

### *Degree class descriptors*

*The following descriptors relate to a student's average performance across all the modules which contribute to the final degree classification. The learning outcomes specified for each degree programme reflect the University's Learning and Teaching Strategy, which outlines, within the appropriate subject context, the key skills and attributes of the Leicester Graduate.*

*N.B. For all degree classes, it is not a requirement that the student should achieve all the learning outcomes at the required level. However, for first and second class degrees, students are expected to achieve at least a majority of the specified learning outcomes at the specified level.*

**First Class:** *Overall has achieved the specified learning outcomes to an excellent or very high standard; has demonstrated a very high level of command of the subject matter and of technical and analytical skills; has demonstrated a high level of achievement in the development of intellectual and personal skills.*

**Upper Second Class:** *Overall has achieved the specified learning outcomes to a good standard; has demonstrated a high level of command of the subject matter and of technical and analytical skills; has demonstrated a good level of achievement in the development of intellectual and personal skills.*

**Lower Second Class:** *Overall has achieved the specified learning outcomes to a competent standard; has demonstrated a moderate level of command of the subject matter and of technical and analytical skills; has demonstrated a satisfactory level of achievement in the development of intellectual and personal skills.*

**Third Class:** *Overall has achieved the specified learning outcomes to the minimum acceptable honours level; has demonstrated an adequate level of command of the subject matter and of technical and analytical skills; has demonstrated a satisfactory level of achievement in the development of intellectual and personal skills.*

**Pass Degree:** *Overall has achieved the specified learning outcomes to the minimum acceptable level; has demonstrated a limited level of command of the subject matter and of technical and analytical skills; has demonstrated some achievement in the development of intellectual and personal skills.*

(Approved by the Learning and Teaching Committee)

### (b) Schemes of Assessment



**(i) To apply to finalists for the first time at Midsummer 2008**

The rules should be applied in descending order, starting at the Pass/Fail threshold, so that fail students are excluded from further consideration.

**Pass/Fail threshold for the programme** (*at the first attempt an overall failure entails a resit; at the second attempt it entails course termination*)

Students who fail modules to the value of 45 credits or less may be considered for the award of a degree under the rules below, unless the department has specifically required a pass in a given module, in which case the student will fail the programme.

Students who fail modules to the value of 50 credits, or have a weighted average mark of less than 35%, will fail the programme.

**First**

Modules to the value of at least 120 credits at 70% or better, a weighted average mark greater than or equal to 65%, and failed modules worth less than 40 credits

Or Weighted average mark greater than or equal to 70%

**2.1**

Modules to the value of at least 120 credits at 60% or better, a weighted average mark greater than or equal to 55%, and failed modules worth less than 40 credits

Or Weighted average mark greater than or equal to 60%

[Or: Weighted average mark greater than or equal to 65% and modules to the value of at least 120 credits at 70% or better, and modules to the value of 40 or 45 failed credits  
(*Dropped class from 1st because of failures*)]

**2.2**

Modules to the value of at least 120 credits at 50% or better, a weighted average mark greater than or equal to 45%, and failed modules worth less than 40 credits

Or Weighted average mark greater than or equal to 50%

[Or: Weighted average mark greater than or equal to 55%, modules to the value of at least 120 credits at 60% or better, and modules to the value of 40 or 45 failed credits  
(*Dropped class from 2.1 because of failures*)]

**Third**

Weighted average mark greater than or equal to 40%

[Or: Modules to the value of at least 120 credits at 50% or better, a weighted average mark greater than or equal to 45%, and 40 or 45 failed credits  
(*Dropped class from 2.2 because of failures*)]

**Pass**

Weighted average mark greater than or equal to 35%

## **Additional Rules**

### ***Calculating the weighted average***

#### **Three-year Programmes**

In order to calculate the weighted average, the scheme fixes the relative weighting of the third-year and second-year marks in three-year programmes at 60:40, on the grounds that most students perform better in their final year. The weighted average is to be calculated on the basis of all second and third year marks. The second year and third year averages are calculated first, and then combined with a weighting of 60:40 in favour of the final year average. If the modules in a year have different credit values (e.g. some 10 and some 20) then they are weighted by their credit value in calculating the year average. If all modules in a year have the same credit value then the average for the year is a simple average.

For the purposes of identifying students' best performances on a module-by-module basis in order to meet the 120 credit threshold for a particular class, all second and third year modules are equal (only differentiated by their credit value where applicable). Differential weighting is only for the purposes of calculating the average mark between the two years.

#### **Integrated Four-Year Programmes**

The same general principles apply to the calculation of the weighted average as for three-year programmes, but the second, third and fourth years are included, with a relative weighting of 20:30:50. For the purposes of identifying students' best performance on a module-by-module basis, all second, third and fourth year modules are equal, but the credit threshold for a particular class is 180 rather than 120 credits.

#### **Four Year Programmes with a year out**

In the case of four-year programmes in which the year out does not count towards the final classification, the second and fourth years are used in determining the degree class, according to the standard scheme for three-year programmes.

### ***Borderlines***

External examiners will be involved in the consideration of borderline cases, and of those just below the borderline with special/mitigating circumstances. *Viva voce* examinations may still be permitted where there is a genuine need to substantiate the information available to a Board of Examiners, but it is anticipated that the current trend away from *vivas* will continue as the new rules become embedded.

Candidates will be considered for promotion to the next higher degree class under the following borderline rules:

#### ***First***

Modules to the value of at least 120 credits at 68% or better, including modules to the value of at least 90 credits at 70% or better, a weighted average mark greater than or equal to 65%, and failed modules worth less than 40 credits.

## 2.1

Modules to the value of at least 120 credits at 58% or better, including modules to the value of at least 90 credits at 60% or better, a weighted average mark greater than or equal to 55%, and failed modules worth less than 40 credits

## 2.2

Modules to the value of at least 120 credits at 48% or better, including modules to the value of at least 90 credits at 50% or better, a weighted average mark greater than or equal to 45%, and failed modules worth less than 40 credits

Note: for four-year integrated programmes, the requirement is 180 credits at the 68/58/48% level and 150 at the 70/60/50% level.

Allowance should be made for exceptions to the borderline rules for individual students with an extraordinary profile of marks, but such exceptions should be rare, and not be made a pretext for generating a sub-set of rules. The single scheme does not take away the discretion of Boards of Examiners, but seeks only to ensure that this is exercised in the context of a clear set of standard procedures.

### ***Limits on the number of failed modules***

A student cannot graduate with more than 45 failed credits. A fail mark is a mark below a pass for credit: i.e. 34 or less.

### **(ii) To apply only to students completing four-year programmes in 2008**

The University has approved two broad schemes of assessment; each degree course scheme of assessment must be modelled on one of these, although slight variations may be permitted where the academic necessity for this can be demonstrated.

#### ***Scheme A***

<i>First Class Honours:</i>	<i>At least 120 credits at 70 per cent or better and an average mark of not less than 65</i>
<i>Upper Second Class Honours:</i>	<i>At least 120 credits at 60 per cent or better and an average mark of not less than 55</i>
<i>Lower Second Class Honours:</i>	<i>At least 120 credits at 50 per cent or better and an average mark of not less than 45</i>
<i>Third Class Honours:</i>	<i>At least 200 credits* at 40 per cent or better and an average mark of not less than 40</i>

*\* 195 credits for departments with 15-credit modules*

#### ***Treatment of failures in the final year of Honours programmes utilising Scheme A***

*Boards of Examiners have the power to condone marginal failure in the final year, and schemes of assessment are permitted to incorporate procedures for the setting aside of failure in one non-compulsory module without penalty, and for penalising failure in two non-compulsory modules by the down-grading of one degree class. Boards of Examiners also have the power to raise borderline marks to 40 per cent.*

*Students who have failed final-year modules to an extent which cannot be addressed by such measures should be treated as follows:*

- (i) *Students who, if their failed modules were to be awarded a mark of 40, would have an overall average mark which would qualify them for the award of an Honours Degree (i.e. an average of 40*

*per cent or above) should be required to resit outstanding modules without residence. The mark recorded for successfully retaken modules will be 40R.*

*[This procedure protects the position of students who have failed in a minority of modules but whose performance across the board places them in line for an Honours degree.]*

- (ii) *Students who have an overall average mark, including failed modules, which is between 35 and 39 per cent should be awarded a Pass Degree.*

*[This procedure mirrors the way in which the Pass Degree is awarded in Scheme B (the 'Science scheme').]*

- (iii) *Students who have an overall average mark, including failed modules, which is below 35 should be required to resit outstanding modules without residence. The maximum mark which can be awarded to retaken modules in these circumstances is 35, and the highest degree which can be awarded is a Pass Degree.*

*[This procedure ensures that students who have failed outright with a very low average cannot improve their position on resit to one which is better than that of students who have been awarded a Pass Degree on the basis of their first attempt.]*

### **Scheme B**

Scheme B allows departments to assess students on the basis of an average mark, which can be obtained over the second and third year, or the third year alone, in all or selected modules. In this scheme, the final average must normally fall within the University's standard mark bands as set out on the preceding page.]

#### **(c) Assessment criteria at module level**

<b>MARK RANGE</b>	<b>ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR UNSEEN EXAMINATIONS</b>
85-100	Excellent application of broad knowledge of the subject. Excellent critical evaluation and analysis of evidence from a wide range of sources expressed in a very well reasoned, logical manner. Excellent organisation of information, with good use of appropriate examples to illustrate points and justify arguments.
70-84	Very good application of broad knowledge of the subject. Very good critical evaluation and analysis of evidence from a good range of sources expressed in a very well reasoned, logical manner. Very good organisation of information, with good use of examples to illustrate points and justify arguments.
60-69	Good application of sound knowledge of the subject. Good critical evaluation and analysis of evidence from a range of sources expressed in a well reasoned, logical manner. Good organisation of information with use of examples to illustrate points and justify arguments.
50-59	Competent application of basic knowledge of the subject. Evidence of critical evaluation and analysis of evidence from different sources expressed with basic reasoning and logic. Competent organisation of information with some use of examples to illustrate points and justify arguments.
40-49	Basic application of limited knowledge of the subject. Limited evidence of critical evaluation and analysis of evidence from limited sources expressed with basic reasoning and logic. Basic organisation of information with limited use of examples to illustrate points and justify arguments
Borderline fail	Limited application of a rudimentary knowledge of the subject. Minimal attempt at critical evaluation and analysis of evidence from limited sources expressed with rudimentary logic and reasoning. Rudimentary organisation of material and use of examples, to illustrate points and arguments.

<b>MARK RANGE</b>	<b>ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR ASSESSED ESSAYS COMPLETED IN STUDENTS' OWN TIME</b>
85-100	Content drawn from a range of well chosen primary and secondary sources. Excellent critical evaluation and analysis of evidence expressed in a very well reasoned, logical manner. Excellent organisation of information, with good application of appropriate examples to illustrate points and justify arguments. Excellent presentation.
70-84	Content drawn from a range of primary and secondary sources. Very good critical evaluation and analysis of evidence expressed in a very well reasoned, logical manner. Very good organisation of information, with good use of examples to illustrate points and justify arguments. Very good presentation.
60-69	Content drawn from a good range of primary and secondary sources. Good critical evaluation and analysis of evidence expressed in a well-reasoned logical manner. Good organisation of information with use of examples to illustrate points and justify arguments. Good presentation.
50-59	Content drawn from a basic range of sources. Competent critical evaluation and analysis of evidence expressed with basic reasoning and logic. Competent organisation of information with some use of examples to illustrate points and justify arguments. At least acceptable presentation.
40-49	Content drawn from limited range of sources. Limited evidence of critical evaluation and analysis of evidence expressed with basic reasoning and logic. Basic organisation of information with limited use of examples to illustrate points and justify arguments. Presentation may be poor.
Borderline fail	Content drawn from rudimentary range of sources. Minimal attempt at critical evaluation and analysis of evidence expressed with rudimentary logic and reasoning. Rudimentary organisation of material and use of examples, to illustrate points and arguments. Presentation may be poor.

<b>MARK RANGE</b>	<b>ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR DISSERTATIONS.</b>
85-100	Excellent review of a wide range of relevant literature. Excellent organisation of information, with very good use of appropriate examples to illustrate points and justify arguments. Excellent critical evaluation and analysis of evidence, identifying and suggesting reasons for inconsistencies. Excellent presentation.
70-84	Very good review of a wide range of relevant literature. Very good organisation of information, with very good use of appropriate examples to illustrate points and justify arguments. Very good critical evaluation and analysis of evidence, identifying and suggesting reasons for inconsistencies. Very good presentation.
60-69	Good review of a range of relevant literature. Good organisation of information with use of examples to illustrate points and justify arguments. Good critical evaluation and analysis of evidence, with some identification of gaps and inconsistencies and attempt to address them. Very good presentation.
50-59	Competent review of a reasonable range of relevant literature. Competent organisation of information with some use of examples to illustrate points and justify arguments. Evidence of critical evaluation and analysis of evidence with some acknowledgement of inconsistencies. Acceptable presentation.
40-49	Limited review of a basic range of relevant literature. Basic organisation of information with limited use of examples to illustrate points and justify arguments. Limited evidence of critical evaluation and analysis of evidence, with little or no acknowledgement of inconsistencies. Presentation may be poor.
Borderline fail	Limited review of a rudimentary range of relevant literature. Rudimentary organisation of material and use of examples, to illustrate points and arguments. Virtually no identification of inconsistencies in the evidence. Presentation may be poor.

<b>MARK RANGE</b>	<b>ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR EXPERIMENTAL/ SURVEY PROJECTS</b>
85-100	Excellent introduction to the project, addressing a wide range of relevant literature. Excellent presentation of a sound data set, demonstrating very good experimental/survey design and thorough, technically competent and systematic data collection. Excellent discussion of results in the light of relevant literature with acknowledgement and good attempts to reconcile inconsistencies and irregularities. Clear statement of the implication of the study and sensible suggestions for further work.
70-84	Very good introduction to the project, addressing a wide range of relevant literature. Very good presentation of a sound data set, demonstrating very good experimental/survey design and thorough, technically competent and systematic data collection. Very good discussion of results in the light of relevant literature with acknowledgement and good attempts to reconcile inconsistencies and irregularities. Clear statement of the implication of the study and sensible suggestions for further work.
60-69	Good introduction to the project, addressing a range of relevant literature. Good presentation of a sound data set, demonstrating competent experimental/survey design and competent and systematic data collection. Good discussion of results in the light of relevant literature with acknowledgement of and some attempt to reconcile inconsistencies and irregularities. Identification of some implications of the study including some suggestion for further work.
50-59	Competent introduction to the project, addressing some relevant literature. Competent presentation of a basically sound data set, with no major flaws in experimental/survey design, and reasonably competent and systematic data collection. Competent discussion of results in the light of some relevant literature, with acknowledgement of at least some inconsistencies and irregularities and a basic attempt at their reconciliation. Identification of a few implications of the study.
40-49	Basic introduction to the project addressing some relevant literature. Limited presentation of basic data set, given some flaws in experimental/survey design, and incomplete data collection. Limited discussion of results in the light of some relevant literature. Acknowledgement of at least some inconsistencies and irregularities. Identification of a few implications of the study.
Borderline fail	Rudimentary introduction to the project addressing at least some relevant literature. Rudimentary presentation of limited data set, given significant flaws in experimental/survey design and incomplete data collection. Rudimentary discussion of results in the light of at least some relevant literature. Limited acknowledgement of at least some inconsistency and irregularities

(Approved by the Learning and Teaching Committee)

### **Aims for Undergraduate Programmes**

*To ensure that on graduation University of Leicester undergraduates have developed the subject-specific, lifelong learning and transferable skills that the University considers to be characteristic attributes of a Leicester Graduate.*

*Graduates will have:*

- demonstrated scholarship appropriate to their level of award in their chosen discipline or disciplines;
- demonstrated their ability across a range of transferable skills;
- developed the necessary skills to learn effectively and independently in order to support progression throughout their course and into appropriate and rewarding employment; and
- developed personally in ways which will enrich their lives and facilitate a full contribution to society in the future.

In more detail, this requires that:

Each undergraduate degree programme should ensure students demonstrate scholarship in their chosen discipline or disciplines, characterised by:

- mastery of an appropriate body of knowledge
- understanding and application of key concepts and techniques;
- critical analysis of key issue
- clear and concise presentation of material, and
- critical appraisal of evidence with appropriate insight.

Each undergraduate degree programme should enable development, in a discipline context, of a range of personal or transferable skills, including:

- problem solving;
- communication skills (written and oral);
- basic numeracy
- team working
- IT skills
- information handling skills
- emerging learning technologies skills
- lifelong learning skills
- employability skills

in order to ensure that, for each skill area, students attain at least the minimum outcomes outlined in the guidelines in Appendix B ([www.le.ac.uk/teaching/strategy.html](http://www.le.ac.uk/teaching/strategy.html)).

Departments will provide explicit opportunities, through their arrangements for Personal Development Planning, for students to reflect upon their learning and achievements, in both the formal curriculum and their wider extra-curricular activities, and to plan for both their future learning and skills development, and their progression into appropriate and rewarding employment. In particular, students will be provided with opportunities to develop the following employability traits:

- the ability to reflect on and assess their skills as they progress through their course and to take appropriate action to develop those sought by employers
- an awareness of the range of opportunities available at University and more widely; understanding how to access those opportunities; and, how those opportunities contribute to personal and skills development
- an understanding of the opportunities open to graduates for further study and employment; understanding how to access those opportunities; and, how their individual aspirations relate to this
- the ability to market themselves effectively by articulating their skills, interests and other attributes appropriately to employers and others
- an understanding of the contribution that they can make as a graduate to the community, organisations, society and the wider world.

The University will ensure that students are informed about, and encouraged to engage with, the opportunities provided by the informal curriculum, including:

- work experience and placements
- accredited courses such as the Leicester Award for Employability and the European Computer Driving Licence
- volunteering opportunities
- Students' Union activities
- language learning opportunities through the School of Modern Languages
- entrepreneurial activities fostered by the Institute of Lifelong Learning
- central skills workshops

and understand the importance of these for their academic and personal development and for their career planning and future prospects.

Each degree programme will have a programme specification that details its aims and expected learning outcomes and which is appropriate to:

- the discipline context;
- the skills and attributes defined in the Strategy;
- the relevant subject benchmark statement(s); and
- the needs of employers, prospective students, funding agencies and professional bodies.

(Extract from the University's Learning and Teaching Strategy, revised and republished 2006)



### **Illness and Notification of Mitigating Circumstances**

Students who suffer a minor illness for a period of less than five working days are required to report this to their departments:

- (a) if the illness leads to absence from classes at which attendance is compulsory;
- (b) where it might be a contributory factor in a failure to meet course deadlines or to perform up to expectations in any academic assignment.

Students must self-certify their illness using a standard form available from departmental offices, and must report the illness as soon as they are fit to do so.

Where the illness is of more than five days' duration or is of a non-minor nature, medical advice should be sought and a medical certificate submitted to the University. Students are responsible for collecting medical certificates from the Freeman's Common Health Centre and supplying a copy to their department and to the Registry (for undergraduate students other than MBChB students), the Medical School Faculty Office (for MBChB students), or the Graduate Office (for postgraduate students). Students registered with other general practices should ensure that their medical certificates are similarly distributed.

The five-day ruling is suspended by the Freeman's Common Health Centre during the First and Second Semester and September resit examination periods, when it is the responsibility of students to seek medical help as soon as possible for any ill health experienced during, or near to, the examinations.

It is the responsibility of students who are required to produce medical evidence of fitness to continue or resume study to acquire such evidence by the date specified to them by the Registry, the Graduate Office or the Secretary of the relevant Faculty Board.

Medical reports are provided free of charge by the Freeman's Common Health Centre; other general practices may charge for providing reports and such charges must be met by the student concerned.

University Regulations state that it is the responsibility of students to inform their Departments of any matters (whether of an academic, personal, medical or other nature) which may be relevant to their academic performance, and to supply substantiating evidence, for example, a medical certificate. Such information should be submitted before the expiry of any departmental deadlines governing the submission of evidence of special circumstances. If no such deadlines exist, the evidence must be submitted as soon as it is available, and in any event before the meeting of the relevant board of examiners is due to take place.

Appeals against degree classification and appeals against termination of course may be disallowed if the appeal is based on mitigating circumstances which the appeals committee believes should have been communicated earlier to the department concerned. (Extract from Undergraduate Regulations 2007/08)

**Examination Regulations**

1. Students are responsible for ensuring that they have entered correctly for their examinations.
2. Candidates must act in accordance with any instructions issued by the Invigilators.
3. Except in relation to a very small number of question papers, where special arrangements will apply, the use of programmable calculators is forbidden. Where the use of non-programmable calculators is permitted, the only model currently authorised for use are the Casio fx-83ES or Casio fx-85ES and unauthorised non-programmable calculators will be confiscated. Any suspected misuse of calculators will be reported to the Registrar as a possible breach of Regulation 11 below concerning unfair means.
4. Candidates may not bring into or take out of the examination room, books, paper, blotting paper, or any objects other than pen, ink, ruler or drawing instruments. Candidates will be notified in advance if additional aids for certain papers are to be permitted. Graph paper and mathematical tables will be provided when required.
5. Candidates should bring to the examination room only those materials permitted as examination aids. Briefcases, bags and handbags cannot be taken into the examination room and candidates should, if at all possible, refrain from bringing them to the examination. Any personal belongings, other than those detailed in Regulation 4 above, must be left outside the examination room; it is held to be the responsibility of each candidate to ensure the safety of valuable items (e.g. money, credit cards etc). Coats should be left in the areas specially designated for the purpose, which will be either outside or at the back of the examination room.
6. Each desk in the examination room will be numbered. Notices outside each room will indicate the papers being taken in that room and will state the numbers of the desks on which the examination papers will have been placed by the Invigilators. Candidates must occupy one of the desks allocated to their papers as indicated by the notice outside the room. Before commencing their examination, candidates must complete the attendance slip which will have been placed on their desk. The completed slips will be collected by the Invigilators after the examination has been in progress for thirty minutes.
7. Candidates will be admitted to the examination room a few minutes before the time scheduled for the start of the examination. Candidates are responsible for seeing that they have the right question papers. No candidate is allowed to enter the examination room later than thirty minutes after the beginning of an examination, or to leave the room during the first thirty minutes of an examination. No candidate who enters an examination room late may be allowed additional time at the end of the examination. Candidates who wish to leave an examination room must do so quietly, and with the minimum of disturbance both inside and immediately outside the examination room. To eliminate the possibility of disturbance candidates will not be allowed to leave an examination room during the last twenty minutes of an examination.
8. Any candidate wishing to leave the examination room temporarily will be escorted by the man or woman attendant who will be on duty outside the room throughout each session.
9. Candidates who wish to make an enquiry should raise an arm. They should not leave their desks.

10. Smoking is not permitted in an examination room.
11. Candidates who are suspected of using unfair means will be so informed by the Invigilator and their answer books endorsed appropriately; they will be allowed to complete the paper. A detailed report of the circumstances will be sent immediately to the Registrar. Offences in connection with examinations are normally regarded as offences under the terms of the Code of Student Discipline. 'Unfair means' includes using unauthorised aids, copying from and communicating with other candidates.
12. Candidates whose conduct is disturbing to other candidates will be warned by the Invigilator. Should they persist in the conduct they will be required to withdraw from the examination room. Their answer books will be endorsed accordingly and a detailed report of the circumstances will be sent immediately to the Registrar.
13. Candidates who wish to retire early from an examination must inform the Invigilator of their intention. At the end of an examination candidates must retire from the examination room immediately. It is the responsibility of all candidates to ensure that they leave an answer book, bearing their number in the space provided, clearly visible on the desk that they have occupied for the examination. On no account must a candidate remove an answer book from the examination room.
14. A medical certificate must be produced if a candidate is absent from any examination because of illness. Candidates leaving an examination on medical grounds should in their own interests obtain a medical certificate immediately after leaving the examination room.
15. Candidates who are in breach of these Regulations will be reported by the Invigilator to the Registrar. Appropriate action may be taken under the provisions of the Code of Student Discipline.
16. Candidates may be penalised for poor presentation in written examinations. Students submitting illegible scripts will be required to report to their department so that arrangements can be made to have their work legibly transcribed. The student concerned will be asked to read out his or her answers, under examination conditions, to a departmental secretary or other authorised member of staff. All costs associated with this process will be borne by the student concerned.
17. Students are required to be available throughout all formal examination and marking periods (January, June and September) to answer any queries from the examiners or from the Examinations Office. Students who cannot be contacted will be subject to such academic penalties as the examiners see fit (including in relation to the illegibility of a script (see 16 above) the award of a mark of zero).
18. Candidates must display their University Card (containing their photograph) on their desk throughout all their examinations. The University Card will be checked during each examination by an invigilator. If a candidate fails to produce their University Card for inspection they will be reported to the Examinations Office. In cases where the identity of a candidate cannot be confirmed the Registrar will be informed. Appropriate action may be taken under the Code of Student Discipline.

(Extract from Undergraduate Regulations 2007/08)

**Instructions regarding the use of Examination Anonymity**

1. This method of anonymous marking applies to all written examinations shown on the centrally prepared examination timetables. Systems for the anonymous marking of coursework are at the discretion of departments.
2. Candidates are required to enter a candidate number rather than their name on their answer books. Where departments use multiple choice or other special answer papers they must not be designed to require the candidate's name.
3. A student's Candidate Number is the student ID number recorded on the student record system e.g. 073529281. This number is assigned to students at Registration and retained throughout the duration of their course. The number is recorded on the Student ID Card, which must be brought to all examinations.
4. A master list of names and numbers will be available in each examination room. Candidates who have forgotten their candidate number can be supplied with their number from this list. The list will be of limited and controlled availability.
5. Candidates will be required to enter their candidate number and their seat number on their scripts and to enter their name and seat number on their attendance slip. The attendance slips can therefore serve as a safety check in the examination room or assist with the unscrambling of any problems resulting from the incorrect recording of candidate numbers by students. At the end of the examination the attendance slips will be kept separate from the scripts.
6. The Notes for Invigilators include details of the above procedures.
7. Anonymity should be protected for as long as possible in the assessment process, but is not required at meetings of Boards of Examiners. Departments will be provided with (or will be able to produce directly from the Student Record System) listings for each module detailing numbers and names of students taking the module. This listing can be used for the transcription of marks. A nominated person in each department (e.g. the departmental examinations officer) holds this list. Listings without names can be prepared from these listings and supplied to markers. Only when all marking is complete will the results be transferred to a marks sheet with the names of students. Particular care is required at this point and double-checking is desirable.

(As approved by the Standing Committee of Deans)

**Notes of Guidance for Deans and Heads of Department on  
Alternative Examination Arrangements for Undergraduate Students**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

The arrangements outlined in these guidelines are intended, subject to the overall requirements that academic standards should be maintained, to facilitate the examination process for students with short-or-long term conditions, specific learning difficulties and disabilities and, where necessary, to ameliorate circumstances which might otherwise prevent students making progress through their course.

Any **new** non-standard arrangement, whether intended for groups of students or for individuals, will need to be examined in the light of any possible academic consequence before final approval can be granted.

Deans are ultimately responsible for approving non-standard alternative arrangements because of the possible implications for academic standards, but they will, of course, pay the most serious attention to advice issued by the Student Health Service, the University's Welfare Services and the AccessAbility Centre. The Examinations Officer will forward requests for alternative arrangements to the relevant Dean for consideration/approval and will indicate if a similar request has been granted to the student during previous examination sessions. The Examinations Office will maintain a database of all alternative arrangements granted and will be responsible for notifying students of their alternative arrangements.

**2. FACILITIES**

The following facilities are provided for use by students requiring alternative arrangements during all examination periods:

- Ken Edwards Building (KE322)
- Ken Edwards Building (KE323)
- Ken Edwards Building (KE324)
- Ken Edwards Building (KE526)
- Ken Edwards Building (KE527)
- Ken Edwards Building (KE528)
- Student Sick Bay - Medical cases

Other rooms may be used as required.

**3. STUDENTS WITH SPECIFIC LEARNING DIFFICULTIES**

Names of all students with specific learning difficulties wanting alternative arrangements should be forwarded to the Examinations Officer via the AccessAbility Centre. The AccessAbility Centre will recommend alternative arrangements. Only recommendations which have the support of the AccessAbility Centre will be considered. These recommendations will usually follow those made by an external assessor or Educational Psychologist. Alternative arrangements for students with specific learning difficulties include the following:

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- (a) Additional time: Usually a provision of up to an additional 15 minutes per hour for each examination taken. More time may be recommended by an external assessor or Educational Psychologist.
- (b) Amanuensis: Following the recommendation of an external assessor or Educational Psychologist, an amanuensis can be provided, however a separate location with suitable invigilation is required.
- (c) Word Processors: Following the recommendation of an external assessor or Educational Psychologist, the use of a word processor will be permitted. The candidate must use a word processor supplied by the University.

#### **4. BLIND/VISUALLY IMPAIRED STUDENTS**

Alternative arrangements for blind/visually impaired students may include Braille papers, an amanuensis, extra time and a separate location. These recommendations would usually be based on documentation held in the AccessAbility Centre.

#### **5. DEAF OR HARD-OF-HEARING STUDENTS**

Alternative arrangements for deaf or hard of hearing students may include allocation to a smaller room to ensure that candidates are aware of invigilators instructions and extra time for those whose speed of language processing is affected. These recommendations would usually be based on documentation held in the AccessAbility Centre.

#### **6. MEDICAL CASES.**

The necessity for alternative arrangements can result from either long or short-term medical conditions. Although the Examinations Office can be informed of cases from several sources, (students themselves, Academic Departments, Welfare Office, AccessAbility Centre, Student Health Centre) all cases are referred to the Student Health Centre. All requests/recommendations for alternative arrangements must have the approval of a doctor from the Student Health Centre.

Alternative arrangements for students with medical conditions include the following:

- (a) Additional Time: Candidates with difficulties writing can be allowed additional writing time. The standard provision is a maximum of 15 minutes per hour for each examination.

Some candidates are allowed a break during the examination. They may move around if they need to do so. The length of time allowed can vary but is usually either 15 to 30 minutes. This time cannot be used for answering the question paper.

- (b) Amanuensis: Candidates who are unable to write can be allowed an amanuensis. A separate location with suitable invigilation must be arranged.
- (c) Word Processor: In exceptional cases a candidate may be permitted to use a word processor supplied by the University. A separate location will be required.

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- (d) Special Desks/Location: Candidates who require either special desks or chairs will be accommodated in KE526, KE527 or KE528. On the advice of a doctor from the Student Health Service, some candidates who are adversely affected by taking examinations in large rooms are permitted to take their examinations in the Ken Edwards rooms.

## **7. EMERGENCY CASES**

All emergency cases which occur prior to the start of an examination should be referred to the Student Health Centre and the Examinations Officer. The Student Health Centre will advise the Examinations Officer of any alternative arrangements. The Examinations Officer will seek the Dean's approval for the arrangements if this is possible prior to the examination. Details of the procedure regarding students requiring special attention during an examination are contained within the 'Notes for Invigilators' booklet.

## **8. AMANUENSIS**

An amanuensis can be provided for the following:

- blind/visually impaired students.
- students with severe writing difficulties (broken arms etc.).
- dyslexic students (if recommended by an external assessor or Educational Psychologist)

The duties of the amanuensis will be as follows:

- (a) to write the answers as dictated by the candidate. The amanuensis must under no circumstances assist the candidate;
- (b) to ensure that no unlawful means are used during the examination.

The following may act as an amanuensis:

- an academic member of staff.
- a member of administrative, clerical or research staff, or graduate students nominated by the relevant department.

(Guidelines drawn up by the AccessAbility Centre in consultation with the Examinations Officer, and approved by the Standing Committee of Deans)

## **REQUEST FOR ALTERNATIVE EXAMINATION ARRANGEMENTS**

This form should be completed for all requests for alternative examination arrangements and returned to the Examinations Officer who will seek approval from the relevant Dean (where appropriate) and inform the student accordingly.

**SECTION A: Personal Details** Student Registration No: ..... Signature: .....  
Surname: ..... Forename(s): .....  
Faculty: ..... Year: ..... Course: .....

### **SECTION B: Alternative Arrangements** (Please tick all that apply)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 25% Additional Time                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Alternative location (please state)..... |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other Additional Time (please state)..... | <input type="checkbox"/> Rest periods (please state).....         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Word Processor                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Enlarged text (please state).....        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Amanuensis                                | <input type="checkbox"/> Coloured Paper (please state).....       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Transcription                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Taped questions                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Modified Papers (BSL users only)          | <input type="checkbox"/> Use of overlay                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reading/Interpretation of paper           | <input type="checkbox"/> Other arrangement:.....                  |

Are arrangements required for all exams being taken by the student during the current academic year? If 'NO' please specify the examinations for which special arrangements are required:

.....

Reasons for request (please attach a copy of relevant supporting documentation e.g. medical Certificate):

.....

Signed:.....

Position:.....

Name:.....

Original/ file copy/ student file

Date:.....

### **SECTION C: Additional Comments** (to be completed, if required, by Examinations Officer/Student Health Centre):

.....

### **SECTION D: Dean's Approval (where appropriate):**

Signed:..... Date:.....

### **FOR EXAMINATIONS OFFICE USE ONLY:**

.....

Student notified: Department notified: Entered in diary:

Please note that the personal data that you have provided on this form will be held on computer by the University for the purpose of student administration in accordance with the University's regulation under the 1984 Data Protection Act. Under data protection legislation you may have a right of access to information held about you. Any enquiries about data protection matters, including subject access requests, should be made to the University's Data Protection Officer, Colin Atkinson (Assistant Director, Corporate Information Services, IT Services, ☎ 0116 2522412)



## UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER

**APPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL EXAMINERS FOR  
UNDERGRADUATE AND TAUGHT POSTGRADUATE COURSES**

**NOMINATION FORM**

This form is used to facilitate the progress of recommendations for the appointment of examiners through the University's committee structure, and to provide a record for departmental and administrative purposes. It also provides confirmation that the appointment complies with the provisions of the University's Code of Practice on Examining for First Degrees and the Code of Practice on Examining for Taught Postgraduate Programmes.

**SECTION A**

To be completed by the Head of Department

**Subject/course:****Years of appointment:**

(stated as the calendar years in which the examiner will serve)

**Has a member of staff from your department acted as an external examiner within the proposed examiner's institution during the last five years?** **Yes / No**  
(If yes, please give details)

**SECTION B**

To be completed by the prospective examiner

**Name:**

(including title)

**Position:****Correspondence address:****Telephone no:****Fax no:****Email address:****Academic qualifications:**

**Career to date (summary only):**

NB: The University reserves the right to ask for additional information, e.g. a CV, at any stage in the approval process

**Details of current external examinerships for taught courses:**

**Other external examinerships held over the last three years:**

**Please specify any links which you have with the Department:**

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ (Prospective Examiner) Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ (Head of Department) Date \_\_\_\_\_

This form should be signed by the Head of Department and the original submitted to the Academic Registrar for onward transmission to the appropriate Faculty Board. A copy should be retained for departmental records.

Formal letters of appointment are normally issued after recommendations have been approved by Senate. Some time may therefore elapse between the submission of a nomination form and confirmation of appointment.

**Please note that the personal data that you have provided on this form will be held on computer by the University for the purpose of student administration in accordance with the University's registration under the 1984 Data Protection Act. Under data protection legislation you may have a right of access to information held about you. Any enquiries about data protection matters, including subject access requests, should be made to the University's Data Protection Officer, Colin Atkinson (Assistant Director, Corporate Information Services, IT Services,, ☎ 0116 2522412)**

**UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER**  
**EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE VICE-CHANCELLOR**

Name of Examiner:	
Correspondence Address:	
Subject:	
Year of Office:	

External Examiners' are asked to prepare their reports to the Vice-Chancellor in accordance with the University's Code of Practice on External Examining (see section 3.17 – 3.23 of the Code of Practice on Examining for First Degrees). The University suggests in the Code that examiners should concentrate in their reports on quality, standards and the achievement of students, but it also needs to assure itself that the organisational and administrative arrangements for meetings of Boards of Examiners have been properly carried out. It therefore asks that the checklist below be completed, and this form attached to the free format element of the report before its submission to: **Professor R.G. Burgess, Vice-Chancellor, University of Leicester, University Road, Leicester LE1 7RH**

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**Conduct of Examinations**

Were you satisfied with:	Yes	Yes, with additional comments in report	Not relevant	No, with details provided in report
(a) Briefing material provided about <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the department</li> <li>the subject</li> <li>the scheme of assessment</li> <li>marking and grading practices</li> <li>your responsibilities as an examiner</li> <li>the date/time of the examiners' meeting</li> <li>any domestic arrangements</li> </ul>				
(b) the overall administration of the examinations by the Departmental Examinations Officer				
(c) the method of providing you with material for scrutiny (postal arrangements, etc)				
(d) the general level of communications with the department				

Signature.....

### Academic Dishonesty

The University's primary functions of teaching and research involve a search for knowledge and the truthful recording of the findings of that search. Any action knowingly taken by a student which involves misrepresentation of the truth is an offence which the University believes should merit the application of very severe penalties. Offences in this category include, but are not confined to, cheating in written examinations, copying work from another person, making work available to another person for copying, copying from published authorities including the internet, without acknowledgement, pretending ownership of another's ideas, and falsifying results.

Plagiarism is used as a general term to describe taking and using another's thoughts and writings as one's own. Plagiarism can occur not only in essays and dissertations, but also in scientific experimentation, diagrams, maps, fieldwork, computer programmes, and all other forms of study where students are expected to work independently and produce original material.

Where plagiarism is identified, departments are authorised to apply through the relevant Board of Examiners the following penalties:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| - First offence:  | Failure of the module, resit allowed, severe written warning   |
| - Second and third offences:  | A mark of 0 for the module<br>Resubmission required for the purposes of progression<br>Possible downgrading of degree class if the offences are for modules which contribute to the final classification, and if the normal application of the standard scheme of assessment incorporating marks of 0 does not automatically lead to a downgrading. In applying this penalty, Boards of Examiners will have due regard to the significance of the plagiarised work in the overall scheme of assessment |
| - Fourth offence or multiple* simultaneous offences after the second offence: | Termination of course  |

[\*In this context 'multiple' means plagiarism in more than one separate module and plagiarism applying to double modules of 30 or 40 credits].

Where a student is found to have been cheating in written examinations or falsifying results, the case will be referred to the Academic Registrar and the Deans of the Faculties for consideration under the Code of Student Discipline. The Academic Registrar and Deans are authorised to recommend to the Vice-Chancellor that he should invoke the powers he holds under Statute 5 of the University Statutes to recommend to Council the temporary or permanent exclusion from the University of the student concerned and the case will be referred to the Registrar for consideration under the Code of Student Discipline. Penalties applied in relation to plagiarism or cheating in written examinations will be recorded on the student's official transcript, and a record of the offence will be held in the department. Cases of academic dishonesty may where relevant be reported to professional bodies.

(Extract from Undergraduate Regulations 2007/08)

## Appeals

### (i) Appeals against Degree Classifications

Appeals against degree classification are permitted only where *prima facie* evidence of material irregularity relating to the operation of the University's assessment procedures can be produced. Students may not challenge the academic judgements of the examiners, and the decisions of properly-constituted Boards of Examiners operating in accordance with approved procedures will always be upheld by the University.

#### 1. Assessment procedures

- (a) Degrees are conferred by the authority of Senate on the recommendation of the Boards of the Faculties. Examinations for undergraduate degree courses are the responsibility of the Boards of Examiners comprising the Internal and External Examiners for the subject (or subjects) included in the scope of the examinations. The Internal Examiners are appointed by Senate on the recommendation of the Board of the Faculty concerned from the members of the Academic Staff of the University. All the staff who contribute to a particular degree course are normally members of the Board of Examiners for that course. Those who contribute to the course but are not members of the Academic Staff of the University may be designated Additional Examiners and may attend meetings of Boards of Examiners, but are not full members and have no voting rights. The External Examiners are appointed by the Council of the University on the recommendation of Boards of the Faculties and Senate and there is at least one External Examiner for each degree course. External Examiners normally hold office for three or four consecutive years and are not permitted to serve for more than five.
- (b) Each degree course has a scheme of assessment, which is normally notified to students through departmental or course handbooks. Boards of Examiners receive each student's marks and assess these in accordance with the provisions of the scheme of assessment in order to arrive at the final degree classification. Medical or other evidence is considered at this stage, and candidates may be asked to attend a *viva* (in some courses, a *viva* is a compulsory element of the examining process). The proposed degree classifications are submitted to the relevant Board of the Faculty for ratification, and then approved by Senate. The results of Combined Studies candidates are considered by departmental Boards of Examiners to approve the subject mark(s), and by a special Combined Studies Board of Examiners which operates the scheme of assessment applicable to that degree.

#### 2. Appeals procedures

If any student wishes to draw the University's attention to a procedural irregularity (examples of which may include evidence that a Board of Examiners was improperly constituted, that some aspect of the scheme of assessment had been overlooked, or there had been insufficient consideration of special circumstances pertinent to the assessment of the degree), the following procedures should be followed:

- (a) Students wishing to query their degree classification (or for the M.B.,Ch.B. degree, the non-award of Honours) on procedural grounds should consult without delay their Head of Department (or Senior Tutor/Associate Dean for Combined Studies students), who will be able to give detailed guidance about the operation of their scheme of assessment.

- (b) Matters which are unresolved after such consultation has taken place should be referred by the student in writing to the Academic Registrar following the procedure outlined in (c) to (e) below. Students may at this stage wish to consult the Education Unit of the Students' Union.
- (c) Students who wish to appeal must notify the Academic Registrar of this before the date of the conferment of the degree (i.e. before the relevant degree ceremony), otherwise the appeal will be declared invalid. Such notification can either be through the submission of the appeal itself, or a notification of intention to appeal.
- (d) Students who have either appealed or submitted a notification of intention to appeal will be allowed to attend the relevant degree congregation, but their degree certificates will be withheld, pending the outcome of the appeal.
- (e) Students who have submitted a notification of intention to appeal must submit their full appeal by the deadline of eight working days after the award of the degree by Senate (in 2007/08, this deadline will be Wednesday 16 July 2008).
- (f) Upon receipt of an appeal, the Academic Registrar will send a copy to the relevant Head of Department and request a written report. In preparing the report, the Head of Department may consult other Internal Examiners and the External Examiner(s) as appropriate. The task of preparing the report may be delegated by the Head of Department to another member of the academic staff with appropriate knowledge and expertise, for example, the departmental examinations officer.
- (g) The written submissions from the student and the department will be considered by a panel which will consist of a Pro-Vice-Chancellor, the Dean of the relevant Faculty (unless the Dean served on the Board of Examiners which recommended the original degree classification, in which case a Dean from another Faculty will be selected), and the Registrar and Secretary. The Academic Registrar or the Secretary of a Faculty Board not associated with the appeal will act as secretary to the panel.
- (h) Students will be notified of the outcome of the appeal within four weeks (twenty working days) of the date of the deadline for submission unless information relevant to the appeal is still being sought by the panel, in which case students will be provided with a progress report within the above timescale.

### **3. Recommendations**

If no procedural irregularities are identified, the panel will recommend that the degree classification be confirmed. Students will be issued with a letter outlining the reasons for the panel's decision, and will be sent their original degree certificates.

At the conclusion of the appeal, students whose appeals have been successful will be sent a completion of procedures letter and details about the Office of the Independent Adjudicator.

If any procedural irregularity is identified, the panel will present a report to the relevant Board of Examiners, which will reassess the candidate in the light of the new evidence. If the new evidence is material to the operation of the scheme of assessment, this reassessment may lead to a reclassification of the degree.

In these circumstances, students will be issued with a letter outlining the procedural reasons for the upgrading of the degree classification and a degree certificate recording the new degree classification.

**(ii) Review of Decision to Recommend Termination of Course**

If a Faculty Board resolves to recommend that a student's course be terminated, for whatever reason, the Secretary of the Board will, by letter, notify the student of this recommendation and of the right the student shall have to request that the Board review its decision. Students in this position are strongly urged to consult their Personal Tutor or Head of Department for advice.

A student's request for a review should be made through the submission of an appeal form to the Secretary of the Board. The form should draw attention to any matter that the student feels to be relevant to his or her academic performance and of which the Board may have been unaware when it made its decision. Any supporting documents (e.g. medical certificates) should also be sent to the Secretary.

The review will be conducted by a committee comprising three Deans or Sub-Deans of the Faculties. The membership of the committee will exclude the Dean or Sub-Dean of the Faculty in which the appellant is registered (the Faculty Board of which will have recommended the termination of course). The Dean or Sub-Dean of the student's Faculty may, however, attend the meeting to report on the Faculty Board's consideration of the student's case. The student will be informed of the time and place of the committee's meeting. The student may attend the meeting and may be accompanied by another member of the University. Personal attendance provides an opportunity for the student to expand upon, and answer questions about his/her submission. The student's companion (if any) will be invited to make a brief statement on the student's behalf, but will take no part in the proceedings unless requested to do so by the Chairman. The student's Personal Tutor and a representative of each department involved will also be invited to attend. At the end of the meeting the committee will reach its conclusions in private discussion. The committee will report to the Faculty Board which recommended the termination of course, and the Secretary of the Board will notify the student in writing of the Board's decision. At the conclusion of the review, the student will be sent a completion of procedures letter and details about the Office of the Independent Adjudicator.

(Extract from Undergraduate Regulations 2007/08)