



21 May 2020

Dear External Examiner

Further to our email sent on 3rd April 2020, we are writing to update you about our revised arrangements for the assessment boards this summer.

As you will be aware from our previous communication, the University's Academic Board has agreed to invoke its *Extraordinary Circumstances Regulations for Assessment* to enable us to assess students' progress by alternative means, where necessary.

Within the framework, students have been categorised, at pre-progression boards held in w/c 30 March, into one of three categories:

Continuing Students

- a. Category A – continuation without further assessment – sufficient evidence from assessments undertaken to date shows that module/programme learning outcomes were met.
- b. Category B – alternative assessment required – insufficient evidence of learning outcomes met and/or PSRB requirements not fulfilled. Deadlines for submission of assessment has been extended to 15th June 2020.
- c. Category C - where a student is Category B but is unable to complete the alternative assessment by the extended deadline date – late submission can be accepted following the streamlined extenuating circumstances policy (revised to take account of Covid-19 related claims).

Approximately 60% of students are expected to progress under the framework under category A, to be confirmed by a Category A Assessment Board. Approximately 40% did not progress and will be considered at separate assessment boards for Category B and Category C students.

In total there will be five assessment sessions during this assessment period however you will not be invited to all boards. We would envisage that External Examiners will be invited to 2 boards, with Lead Examiners receiving 2 or more invitations. As part of these modified assessment board arrangements External Examiners are asked to contribute their findings about the modules they have moderated, and to confirm whether they feel the assessment boards they have participated in have followed due process in awarding marks and making progression decisions.

We appreciate that this is a difficult time for colleagues with demands being made of your time and that it may not always be possible for you to participate. All meetings will take place virtually via the MS Teams application. If you reply promptly to the

board invitations it will greatly help the Assessment Unit monitor participation for quoracy purposes.

I attach an FAQ appendix which I hope anticipates some of the initial queries you may have, and an assessment framework which outlines the approaches taken depending on the categorisation of students at each level of study.

We thank you for your ongoing support to the university at this challenging time. If you require any further information, please contact gae@uel.ac.uk.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'PB', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Philip Brimson
Quality Manager (Validation & Review)

Appendix 1 - Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

The University moved to remote (online) from Wednesday 18 March 2020. All face-to-face teaching ceased, which includes seminars, tutorials, and lab-based classes for all our students until 31 July 2020. Similarly, there will not be face-to-face assessments until 31 July 2020. This decision has been taken to allow students to continue their studies remotely.

We recognise the huge disruption that has been caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and we have been working hard to put in place safeguards to protect the education of our students against this highly volatile public health emergency.

We continue to stand by our pledge that no student will be disadvantaged by the new arrangements.

What does alternative assessment mean?

The University's Academic Board has agreed to invoke its Extraordinary Circumstances Regulations for Assessment to enable us to assess students' progress by alternative means, where necessary.

What are examples of alternative assessments?

These could include portfolios, project work or coursework. Alternative assessments will be tailored to the nature of the studies and may include, for example, video components for film students.

Will continuing students be able to progress to the next academic level of study without completing any further assessments?

If it has been determined that the student has sufficiently met their learning outcomes for their current level of study, they will have received an email confirming that they can progress to the next level of study, starting in September.

However, if there is insufficient evidence of learning outcomes being met and/or appropriate, professional, statutory and regulatory bodies (PSRB) requirements are not fulfilled, then they will still need to engage with their studies and submit assessments.

When will the module results be released?

Module results will be released on 20th July and Degree award classifications will be released on 27th July.

What happens if a student is allowed to progress without any further assessment, will they get a pass/fail on the module(s) or will they receive a percentage grade?

The student will receive a 'predicted' percentage grade except for certain modules which require only a pass/fail determination.

How have the predicted marks been calculated?

As agreed institutionally via Deans and UEB members;

Level 3 and 4

- Best average/median 40 credits from modules completed this academic year.
- Where 40 credits are not completed and a calculation cannot be made, an average is made on all passed assessments available.

Level 5

- If no component marks at level 5 we use best 90 credits at level 4
- If there are component marks this academic year use best 90 credits at level 4 (weighted as 60% of mark) and average of level 5 assessment marks (weighted as 40% of mark)
- If level 5 average is higher than level 4 the weightings are altered to 80% weighting at level 4 and 20% at level 5

What is the rationale behind the calculations?

The calculations were agreed and discussed between relevant UEB members and Deans of school before being agreed. The algorithms used have ensured institutional parity and fairness for all students, where marks are available.

Level 3 and 4

We have used 40 credits at level 3 and 4 so that part-time students can gain an applicable predicted mark. The marks should not impact on future degree classifications and we have tried to ensure that we do not advantage/disadvantage students institutionally and that there is parity with the predicted marks.

For full-time students we have used the best 40 credits in the assumption that as students continue their studies and move in to term 2 their marks should improve as they embed to University life. Using the best marks should represent that overall improvement.

Term 2 Assessments have not been used due to the differing number of assessments available depending on the module and course. It is also not clear whether students may have been impacted by Covid 19 at this early stage as well and so therefore have not used these marks.

Level 5

For level 5 students we attempted to follow our degree classification as closely as possible and use all available assessments at level 5 in to account due to the nature of 30 credit year long modules.

It was also noted that for the majority of assessments already submitted before the changes to regulations could have lower assessment weightings on those modules. In an attempt to mitigate this and lack of submissions producing grade inflation (i.e. one assessment mark submitted at level 5 could be used as 40% of the predicted grade) we have used level 4 assessments, as well as changed the weightings if the mark achieved appeared overly inflated.

Does this mean that for students at level 5, their level 4 marks can count towards their final degree classification using the algorithms?

Yes. This is why we have attempted to be as fair as possible in being able to work out the predicted marks.

Why did we decide to have a mark entered and not just pass the students?

It was decided to include a mark as students had engaged with assessments in term 2 and they would be lost if a pass mark was entered. For level 5 students it would have impacted the degree award algorithm.

What student cohort is having predicted marks entered?

Only students at level 3, 4, or 5 that have been given a "progress" decision (Category A).

How will assessment boards be conducted?

The assessment boards will take place virtually via MS Teams; invites will be circulated via our Assessment Unit with instructions on joining the meeting.

Will I be expected to participate in more boards?

You may be invited to participate in additional boards this summer in line with the revised Academic Regulations. Please join these meetings where possible, however if you are unable to engage in the virtual board meeting, please refer to the board invitation for information on how to provide your moderation comments in advance of the meeting.

How will I submit my annual report?

You will receive an email with a link to your online report which should be submitted within a month of the main boards taking place. *Your report should not be submitted prior to the board taking place.*

How will I receive payment?

Your fee payment will be processed automatically following receipt of your completed annual external examiner report. Payroll is run once a month and payments are made on the last Thursday of the month.

Appendix 2 - Assessment Framework Table for September Entry Programmes.

CONTINUING STUDENTS			
	CATEGORY A	CATEGORY B	CATEGORY C
	<i>If there is sufficient evidence, from assessments to date, that module/programme learning outcomes can be evidenced:</i>	<i>If there is INSUFFICIENT evidence from assessment to date at a module/programme student level that learning outcomes can be evidenced &/or PRSB requirements have not been fulfilled:</i>	<i>If the student is in Category B, however, and the student is unable to complete alternative assessments to the extended deadline, a late submission should be made following the streamlined extenuating circumstances (EC) policy:</i>
Level 3 (Foundation year)	<p><u>Continuation without further assessment post-16th March 2020.</u></p> <p>Students who have been proactively engaged with their course of study will progress to the next level and will be awarded moderated marks based on work already submitted until the week commencing the 16th March 2020.</p> <p>University Assessment Boards meet w/c 2nd June 2020. Students will be auto-enrolled into September 2020 Term at Level 4 (please note that, if this category is exercised, an exit qualification will not be available).</p>	<p>Alternative assessment will be provided, via Moodle, at a module level by Friday 27th March 2020.</p> <p><u>Assessment deadlines will be extended to the 15th June 2020</u> with moderated marks considered at University Programme Boards on during w/c 13th July 2020.</p> <p>Students who have met their programme criteria will be able to continue/auto-enrol into Level 4 in the September 2020 Term and/or an exit qualification provided.</p>	<p>Alternative assessment will be provided, via Moodle, at a module level by Friday 27th March.</p> <p>If an Extenuating Circumstances (EC) submission is made successfully, the last possible date for assessment submission (to enable uninterrupted continuation into the 2020/21 academic year) is 15th July 2020.</p> <p>Moderated marks will be considered at University Programme Boards during w/c 3rd August 2020.</p> <p>Students who have met their programme criteria will be able to continue/auto-enrol into Level 4 in the September 2020 Term and/or an exit qualification provided.</p>
Level 4 (1st year continuing degree students)	<p><u>Continuation without further assessment</u></p> <p>Students who have been proactively</p>	<p>Alternative assessment will be provided, via Moodle, at a module level by Friday 27th March 2020.</p>	<p>Alternative assessment will be provided, via Moodle at a module level by Friday 27th March 2020.</p>

	<p>engaged with their course of study will progress to the next level and will be awarded moderated marks based on work already submitted until the week commencing the 16th March 2020.</p> <p>University Assessment Boards meet w/c 2nd June 2020. Students will be auto-enrolled into September 2020 Term at Level 5.</p>	<p><u>Assessment deadlines will be extended to 15th June 2020</u> with moderated marks considered at University Programme Boards during w/c 13th July 2020.</p> <p>Students who have met their programme criteria will be auto-enrolled into September 2020 Term at Level 5.</p>	<p>If an EC submission is made successfully, the last possible date for assessment submission (to enable uninterrupted continuation into the 2020/21 academic year) is 15th July 2020. Moderated marks will be considered at University Programme Boards during w/c 3rd August 2020.</p> <p>Students who have met their programme criteria will be auto-enrolled into September 2020 Term at Level 5.</p>
<p>Level 5 (2nd year continuing degree students)</p>	<p><u>Continuation without further assessment.</u></p> <p>Students' progression will be determined based on moderated marks of all assessments taken during this academic year until the week commencing the 16th of March 2020.</p> <p>University Assessment Boards meet w/c 2nd June 2020. Students will be auto-enrolled into September 2020 Term at Level 6.</p> <p>As Level 5 marks comprise 20% of the overall degree classification, Assessment Boards will also take into account students' performances across levels 4 and 5, as appropriate, and in such a way as to ensure that students are not disadvantaged in their final qualification.</p>	<p>Alternative assessment will be provided, via Moodle, at a module level by Friday 27th March 2020.</p> <p><u>Assessment deadlines will be extended to 15th June 2020</u> with moderated marks considered at University Programme Boards during w/c 13th July 2020.</p> <p>Students who have met their programme criteria will be auto-enrolled into September 2020 Term at Level 6.</p>	<p>Alternative assessment will be provided, via Moodle, at a module level by Friday 27th March 2020.</p> <p>If an EC submission is made successfully, the last possible date for assessment submission (to enable uninterrupted continuation into the 2020/21 academic year) is 15th July 2020. Moderated marks will be considered at University Programme Boards during w/c 3rd August 2020.</p> <p>Students who have met their programme criteria will be auto-enrolled into September 2020 Term at Level 6.</p>
<p>Placement students</p>	<p>/</p>	<p>No changes to assessment.</p>	<p>EC policy applies as usual.</p>

STUDENTS QUALIFYING IN 2019/20:

	CATEGORY A	CATEGORY B	CATEGORY C
	<p><i>There is insufficient evidence for all Level 6 and Level 7 students to qualify / maintain all academic standards, PSRB requirements and the value of the degree without final assessments. As such, this category can not apply to final/qualifying year students.</i></p>	<p><i>If there is INSUFFICIENT evidence from assessment to date at a module/programme student level that learning outcomes can be evidenced &/or PRSB requirements have not been fulfilled:</i></p>	<p><i>If the student is in Category B, however, the student in unable to complete alternate assessments to the extended deadline, a late submission should be made following the streamlined extenuating circumstances policy:</i></p>
<p>Level 6: Final year students expecting to graduate in July</p>	<p>/</p>	<p>There will be no face-to-face examinations at end of term 2. Alternative assessments will be offered (e.g. coursework or 'open book' examination).</p> <p><u>The deadline for assessments (* 1&2) will be extended to 15th June 2020</u>, to offer students enough time to either prepare for their online assessment or submit their coursework.</p> <p>Student transcripts will be reviewed at University Assessment Boards during w/c 13th July 2020 and degrees awarded in August 2020.</p> <p>*</p> <p>1. For those projects & dissertations with a significant fieldwork component, deadlines will be automatically extended to 15th July. This will be communicated to students, where</p>	<p>Alternative assessment will be provided, via Moodle at a module level by Friday 27th March.</p> <p>If an EC submission is made successfully, the last possible date for assessment submission (to enable degree award in the 2019/20 academic year) is 15th July 2020 * with moderated marks considered at University Programme Boards on during w/c 3rd August and degrees awarded in Sept 2020.</p> <p>*</p> <p>1. Projects & dissertations with significant fieldwork extension to 18th September 2020.</p> <p>2. Clinical/performance modules during last week of August until the 3rd week of September and the Exam Board to be held during the second week of October 2020 - with students able to graduate in November 2020.</p>

		<p>appropriate, by programme leaders.</p> <p>2. There are a small number of clinical/performance modules where the assessments are not able to be delivered on-line due to PSRB requirements (e.g. health, psychology, sports, performing arts). The students will undertake the necessary clinical hours and assessment during last week of August until the 3rd week of September and the Exam Board to be held during the second week of October 2020 - with students able to graduate in November 2020.</p>	
<p>Level 7 (Taught component of postgraduate Masters degree)</p>	<p>/</p>	<p>There will be no face-to-face examinations at end of term 2. Alternative assessments will be offered (e.g. coursework or 'open book' examination).</p> <p><u>The deadline for assessments will be moved back to 15th June 2020 *</u>, to offer students enough time to either prepare for their online assessment or submit their coursework with results reviewed at University Assessment Boards during w/c 13th July and degrees awarded in August 2020 (where appropriate) or enabling continuation to placement in August/Sept 2020.</p> <p>*</p> <p>1. For those projects & dissertations with a</p>	<p>Alternative assessment will be provided, via Moodle at a module level by Friday 27th March.</p> <p>If an EC submission is made successfully, the last possible date for assessment submission (to enable degree award in the 2019/20 academic year) is 15th July 2020 * with moderated marks considered at University Programme Boards on during w/c 3rd August and degrees awarded in September 2020 (where appropriate) or enabling continuation to placement in Sept 2020.</p> <p>*</p> <p>1. Projects & dissertations with significant fieldwork extension to 18th September 2020.</p>

		<p>significant fieldwork component, deadlines will be automatically extended to 15th July. This will be communicated to students, where appropriate, by programme leaders.</p> <p>2. There are a small number of clinical/performance modules where the assessments are not able to be delivered on-line due to PSRB requirements (e.g. health, psychology, sports, performing arts). The students will undertake the necessary clinical hours and assessment during last week of August until the 3rd week of September and the Exam Board to be held during the second week of October 2020 - with students able to graduate in November 2020.</p>	<p>2. Clinical/performance modules during last week of August until the 3rd week of September and the Exam Board to be held during the second week of October 2020 - with students able to graduate in November 2020.</p>
Level 7 (Placement component of postgraduate Masters degree)	/	<p>For those currently on placement (September 2018 programme start dates and expected to complete in May 2020), there is no anticipated impact. Awards will be considered in the w/c 2nd June Assessment Board with degrees awarded in July in line with the original programme timeline.</p>	<p>If an EC submission is made successfully, the last possible date for assessment submission (to enable degree award in the 2019/20 academic year) is 15th July 2020 with moderated marks considered at University Programme Boards on during w/c 3rd August and degrees awarded in September 2020.</p>
Level 8 (Postgraduate research Degrees)	To be dealt with on a case by case basis with students contacted by their School and or the Graduate School.		
Taught component	To be dealt with on a case by case basis by Programme Leader		

Research component (including thesis for ALL programmes)	To be dealt with on a case by case basis with students contacted by their School and or the Graduate School.
Apprentices	Block mode delivery, with results considered at August 2020 Board.

JANUARY ENTRY PROGRAMMES:

The schools are currently working on the assessment framework for both Undergraduate and Postgraduate January cohort students and further detail will be published separately.