

**UNIVERSITY OF BEDFORDSHIRE**  
**ACADEMIC REGULATIONS 2016/17**

**SECTION 5A ASSESSMENT REGULATIONS FOR UNDERGRADUATE TAUGHT STUDIES INCLUDING FOUNDATION YEAR**

**5a.1 Introduction**

5a.1.1 The University of Bedfordshire's Academic Regulations provide the regulatory framework for assessment processes. Academic Regulations are agreed by and can only be amended by the Academic Board. The implementation of these Regulations is set out in guidance in the Quality Handbook. The Handbook also covers arrangements for quality assurance of implementation, and has been designed to complement, and be read in conjunction with, these Academic Regulations.

**5a.2 PURPOSES AND PRINCIPLES OF ASSESSMENT**

**5a.2.1 Purposes**

5a.2.2 Within its regulations the University of Bedfordshire identifies the purposes of assessment as:

- To measure a student's achievements against the intended learning outcomes of the unit and course.
- To assist student learning by providing appropriate feedback on performance.
- To provide a reliable and consistent basis for boards of examiners to determine the progression of, and conferment of awards to, students.

5a.2.3 Assessment is an integral part of our approach to facilitating student learning. It is part of a progressive process by which students learn to develop their ability to critically evaluate, to analyse and to take responsibility for their own work. It contributes to their employability and to their ability to be life-long learners.

5a.2.4 Assessment practices and processes must be robust and conform to internal and national expectations, ensuring confidence in the reliability, validity and authenticity of grading.

**5a.2.5 Principles**

5a.2.6 The following principles underpin the University's approach to assessment.

**Assessment strategies**

- The assessment of unit outcomes is designed to contribute to, or to support, the achievement of course level outcomes.
- Assessment strategies are coherent and developmental across a course, supporting learner development and enabling students to achieve their potential.

- Assessment strategies strike a balance between summative and formative assessment.
- Students experience a range of assessment activities designed to support the progressive development of their knowledge, understanding, skills and employability.

### **Standards**

- Assessment practices and processes are robust and conform to internal and external expectations, ensuring confidence in the reliability, validity and authenticity of grading.
- Assessment criteria are clearly specified, aligned to the level of the unit and its learning outcomes, and used as the basis for marking and grading.

### **Assessment activities**

- Assessment activities relate to the intended learning outcomes of the unit and support the overarching assessment strategy for the course.
- Assessment activities enable students to demonstrate the learning outcomes in ways which are inclusive and equitable.
- Assessment activities support academic integrity and minimise opportunities for academic offences.

### **Engaging students**

- Students are supported in developing an understanding of expectations through assessment briefs and active engagement with the assessment process and criteria.
- Assessment supports student self-management and reflection, giving students the confidence and skills to use the variety of feedback available to them to monitor and improve their performance.
- Realistic and balanced assessment workloads spread the assessment loading and ensure adequate time for the associated learning.
- Timely and meaningful feedback supports the learning process.

### **Reviewing and evaluating**

- The design and delivery of assessment is a collegiate activity which necessitates academic teams discussing and agreeing expectations and outcomes.
- Assessment practices are continuously reviewed and refined to ensure they are supporting students and their learning, and meeting institutional principles.

### **Marks**

- 5a.3 Student work will be marked using the University grading scheme (refer to Table A).
- 5a.4 Exceptionally, some units are graded on a pass/fail basis, requiring approval by TQSC.

- 5a.5 Marks for elements of assessment must be whole numbers. If there are a number of components within an assessment these must be aggregated and the calculation, rounded using the convention: 0.5 and above rounded up, otherwise rounded down, to the nearest whole number.
- 5a.6 Marks, or part/s of marks, are not awarded for attendance.
- 5a.7 Credit is awarded on successful completion of a credit bearing unit at level 3 and above.
- 5a.8 Successfully completed units cannot be reassessed.
- 5a.9 Units taken in addition to the prescribed course will not contribute to the award.
- 5a.10 Where allegations of academic offences are made they will be investigated. Such offences include cheating, plagiarism, the fabrication of information and impersonation. Where an allegation against a student is upheld, the Academic Conduct Panel will determine the outcome from those available to them under the University's Academic Discipline Policy.
- 5a.11 A student, who has not attained a minimum of 30 credits by the end of a level i.e. after a repeat assessment, will normally be required to leave their course as determined by the relevant Board of Examiners.
- 5a.12 The classification of a student's award is determined by the Board of Examiners. No units may later be substituted with the intention of changing the award title or improving the class of award.

**5a.13 University Grading Scheme**

| Grade letter | Mark Band % | Grade Descriptor | Award Classification |                   |
|--------------|-------------|------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
|              |             |                  | Honours degree       | Foundation degree |
| A+           | 80-100      | Outstanding      | First 1              | Distinction       |
| A            | 75-79       | Excellent        |                      |                   |
| A-           | 70-74       |                  |                      |                   |
| B+           | 67-69       | Commendable      | Upper Second 2:1     | Merit             |
| B            | 64-66       |                  |                      |                   |
| B-           | 60-63       |                  |                      |                   |
| C+           | 57-59       | Good             | Lower Second 2:2     | Pass              |
| C            | 54-56       |                  |                      |                   |
| C-           | 50-53       |                  |                      |                   |
| D+           | 47-49       | Satisfactory     | Third 3              |                   |
| D            | 44-46       |                  |                      |                   |
| D-           | 40-43       |                  |                      |                   |

|           |              |                       |                            |  |  |
|-----------|--------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|--|--|
| <b>E</b>  | <b>35-39</b> | <b>Marginal Fail</b>  | <b>F<br/>A<br/>I<br/>L</b> |  |  |
| <b>F</b>  | <b>25-34</b> | <b>Fail</b>           |                            |  |  |
| <b>F-</b> | <b>1-24</b>  | <b>Fail</b>           |                            |  |  |
| <b>G</b>  | <b>0</b>     | <b>Non-submission</b> |                            |  |  |

**Table A**

5a.14 Where feasible, assessments must be submitted and graded anonymously.

5a.15 The determination of the grade for a student's assessment concludes with a decision by the Board of Examiners.

**Elements of assessment and passing units**

5a.16 Students must submit their assignments as specified in the assignment brief. Failure to submit by the published deadline will be classed as non-submission.

5a.17 Students who have failed a unit as a result of a 0/G in any assessment will be permitted an attempt at a repeat assessment.

5a.18 Students must satisfy the Board of Examiners that they have met the intended learning outcomes of the unit by undertaking assessments. The aggregate pass mark for a unit is 40%. Where elements of assessment are confirmed as assessing different learning outcomes, each must achieve a pass mark. The course specification may stipulate further requirements for one or more assessment components as specified by a PSRB or other external awarding body.

5a.19 Students at Foundation year and level 4 who fail an element of assessment may have an opportunity for early reassessment in the failed task/s; subject to course and operational requirements. Early repeat assessment attempts will not be available for some assessments or examinations which will be taken at the next scheduled opportunity. The grade for this repeat assessment element will be capped at the minimum pass mark and will be the only repeat assessment opportunity for the failed assessment.

5a.20 Students at Foundation year and level 4 who fail to pass a unit at the first attempt may have an opportunity to take a substitute unit at an earlier opportunity subject to course and operational requirements

5a.21 Students at level 5 and level 6 who submit all elements of assessment and do not successfully complete the unit have a further opportunity to pass the unit by undertaking a repeat assessment of all failed elements of assessment at the next opportunity. All repeat assessment, including for non-submission, must be taken at the next scheduled opportunity. The grade for the repeat assessment element is capped at the minimum pass mark.

5a.22 Students who do not pass a unit on repeat assessment will retake the unit at the next available opportunity. Students who retake must be assessed in all elements of assessment in the unit they did not pass; unit substitutions for retake opportunities will be approved by the TQSC exceptions panel. The retake marks

override all previous marks for the unit. The full range of marks will be available in assessing the retaken unit unless specified by the University's Academic Conduct Panel.

- 5a.23 Students who do not pass the unit on their retake will have one final opportunity for repeat assessment as under Regulations 5a.20 – 5a.22. Repeat assessment may be scheduled during the next available examination period. This is the final opportunity that will be offered to pass the unit.

### **Progression between stages**

- 5a.24 To progress between stages on an undergraduate course a student must have:

5a.24.1 attempted and passed all units to the value of 120 credits; or

5a.24.2 passed units to the value of 90 credits; and for the remaining 30 credits, has attained an aggregate grade of at least 35% for each unit; with a minimum mark of 25% for any element. This Condonment will not carry credit and a student progressing to the next stage will not be permitted an opportunity for reassessment; or:

5a.24.3 at level 4 passed units to the value of 60 credits; and for the remaining 60 credits, have attained an aggregate grade of at least 35% for each unit, with a minimum mark of 25% for any element, and a record of engagement (as determined in a policy agreed by TQSC) such that the Board agrees that a student be permitted an opportunity for reassessment for 30 credits at L4.

5a.24.4 completed the outcome(s) from an Academic Conduct Panel decision prior to an examination board reaching a decision on progression.

- 5a.25 To progress from the Foundation year to level 4 a student must have attempted and passed all units of the Foundation year as specified in the Course Information form

### **Final Stage assessment and award**

- 5a.26 A student will become eligible for conferment of an award on completion of the course and when the student has:

5a.26.1 acquired the requisite number of credits at the final stage of the course leading to the registered award; and

5a.26.2 where appropriate, met any subject specific or PSRB requirements for the award, as agreed by the University's Academic Board through the course approval process.

- 5a.27 Compensation or condonment is not permitted in any unit at the awarding level.

5a.27 A student who is exiting the University either for failure to progress or alternative reasons may be granted an exit award. The next available Examination Board

will consider the highest award available to the student based on the assessment and credit the student has successfully completed in the course.

- 5a.28 Credit successfully completed at a higher level may be used to contribute to an award at a lower level where there is deficiency in credit.
- 5a.29 The Bachelor's degree with Honours is awarded in classes of First (1); Upper Second (2i); Lower Second (2ii) and Third (3).
- 5a.30 The Bachelor's degree (without Honours) is awarded without any classes or divisions.
- 5a.31 When used as exit awards, the Certificate of Higher Education, the Diploma of Higher Education, or unclassified Bachelor's Degree, may be awarded as an unnamed exit award in accordance with, and adopting generic learning outcomes as specified in Section 2 Awards and Courses (2.9). Certificates or Diplomas of Higher Education or unclassified Bachelor's Degrees may be established as named exit awards and also conferred as named awards where the requirements, including relevant learning outcomes, are defined through the course approval process.
- 5a.32 For each candidate for the Bachelor's degree with Honours, the class of Honours achieved will be based on the best of the two following weighted averages of unit marks:
- 5a.32.1 in the penultimate and final stages of the programme of study:
- marks from the units comprising the best 90 credits at the final stage, including at least 30 credits from the designated project, are double weighted; and
  - marks from the units comprising the best 90 credits at the penultimate stage are single weighted; and
  - the result of this weighted average calculation is rounded using the convention: 0.5 and above rounded up, otherwise rounded down to the nearest whole number.
- 5a.32.2 in the final stage:
- the Honours classification is based on the average of the marks attained in 90 credits at the final stage, including at least 30 credits from the designated project.
- 5a.33 The calculated mark for classifications for all honours awards will be determined using both of the above methodologies; students will be awarded using the higher of these calculations.
- 5a.34 The table below (Table B) shows the weighted averages and the boundaries for classes of Honours:

| <b>Weighted average</b> | <b>Class</b>                        |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>70 – 100%</b>        | <b>First class honours</b>          |
| <b>68 – 69%</b>         | <b>2i/1<sup>st</sup> borderline</b> |
| <b>60 – 67%</b>         | <b>Upper Second class honours</b>   |
| <b>58 – 59%</b>         | <b>2ii/2i borderline</b>            |
| <b>50 – 57%</b>         | <b>Lower Second class honours</b>   |
| <b>48 – 49%</b>         | <b>3/2ii borderline</b>             |
| <b>40 – 47%</b>         | <b>3<sup>rd</sup> class honours</b> |

**Table B**

- 5a.35 If the weighted average for a student falls within one of the borderlines noted above, the profile of marks in the final stage will be reviewed. For students with 60 credits or more awarded in the higher classification category the Board of Examiners' will confirm the higher classification.
- 5a.36 The Integrated Master's Degree may be awarded with Distinction to students who have achieved consistently high marks in levels 6 and 7 of the course according to a methodology previously agreed through the course approval process and ratified by Academic Board.
- 5a.37 The Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE), Foundation Degree (FD), Higher National Diploma (HND) and Higher National Certificate (HNC) are awarded with Distinction to students who have attained marks of 70% or higher in a minimum of 60 credits at level 5 for DipHE/FD/HND and level 4 or 5 for HNC.
- 5a.38 The Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE), Foundation Degree (FD), Higher National Diploma (HND) and Higher National Certificate (HNC) are awarded with Merit to students who have attained marks of 60% or higher in a minimum of 60 credits at level 5 for DipHE/FD/HND and level 4 or 5 for HNC.

### **Boards of Examiners**

- 5a.39 Decisions about the assessment of students are made on behalf of the Academic Board by Boards of Examiners.
- 5a.40 Boards of Examiners are established at two levels: Portfolio Boards of Examiners; and the Scheme Board of Examiners.
- 5a.41 Portfolio Boards of Examiners have delegated authority to agree progression decisions for students and recommend award decisions to the Scheme Board of Examiners.
- 5a.42 The Scheme Board of Examiners is responsible for the conferment of awards and credit for exit decisions.

### **Academic Offences**

- 5a.43 If a student on a taught course leading to a University of Bedfordshire award is accused of an academic offence, the procedures described in the University's Academic Discipline Policy and Procedure (see <http://www.beds.ac.uk/aboutus/quality/regulations>) will be followed.

### **Appeals against decisions of Boards of Examiners**

- 5a.44 In line with the Policy regarding Academic Appeals and the Procedures to be followed when submitting an Appeal; a student may appeal against the decision of an examination board. The policy is found at <http://www.beds.ac.uk/aboutus/quality/regulations>.
- 5a.45 Academic appeals are not valid where they relate to academic judgement.