

UNIVERSITY OF ESSEX
UNDERGRADUATE RULES OF ASSESSMENT
(Academic Year 2009-2010)

Undergraduate Rules of Assessment – Appendix B

Glossary of Terms

Award

Also referred to as **Programme**

A qualification conferred upon a student who has achieved the intended learning outcomes and passed the assessments required to meet the academic standards set for the award.

Awards may be divided into modules, units or elements at various levels and with different volumes of study, each of which has attached to it intended learning outcomes and academic standards to be achieved by students in order to receive the final award.

Capped Mark

Limited to the pass mark of 40%. Following reassessment, where work has been re-submitted and/or a resit examination has been taken, only the module aggregate will be capped at 40.

Classification of awards

At the completion of a programme of study, an award will normally be given a classification indicating the level of achievement which the student has demonstrated overall. This may be indicated by a numeric classification (e.g. 2.1, 2.2) or by terms such as 'pass', 'merit' or 'distinction'.

Condonement

Following a re-sit/re-submission, where a student has not redeemed a fail, they may still proceed to the next stage. The amount of credit which may be condoned is specified for each award. The Rules of Assessment require that a student "attempts" all the credits for each stage. This means that a student must have completed and been assessed for each module.

Component

The number of components at each Stage of undergraduate study ranges from 4 to 8, and students are awarded credit when they have achieved the learning outcomes within a component. Each component may consist of one module of either 15 or 30 credits, or of two 15-credit modules which share learning outcomes. As learning outcomes are shared, the component as a whole must be passed (i.e. both contributory module marks are taken together to arrive at the component mark).

Core Module

A core module is a module that must be taken and passed in order to progress to the next stage of study. Students cannot fail a core module.

Credit

Credit is an indicator of equivalence of workload. Credit value attaches to learning outcomes, and the achievement of these outcomes (evidenced by gaining at least a pass mark in the required assessments) allows the award of credit. For this reason, a credit rating is attached to each module, and these accumulate to allow awards (evidence of both volume and level of study) to be made.

(Note that marks above a pass mark do not affect the award of credit, but do determine the award classification (e.g. 2.2, Merit, etc.)

Credits are also transportable and can be transferred between institutions, according to their rules of assessment.

Learning Outcomes

These identify what a successful student is expected to know and understand, together with the skills that they should be able to demonstrate on successful completion of the award. Learning outcomes can be attached to both modules and awards.

Level

This is an expression of the intellectual demands placed on the learner at different Stages of study, or the difficulty of the concepts to be engaged with and skills required at each Stage.

If qualifications share the same level this means that they are broadly similar in terms of the demand they place on the learner. Information in Programme Specifications and modules will be expressed in terms of levels.

Broadly speaking Level 4 equates to Stage One, Level 5 equates to Stage Two, and Level 6 equates to Stage Three.

TABLE 4

Framework for Higher Education Qualifications levels (FHEQ)		Types of award	National Qualifications Framework (NQF) levels
1 Certificate	C level	Certificates of Higher Education	4
2 Intermediate	I level	Foundation degrees, ordinary (Bachelors) degrees, Diplomas of Higher Education and other higher diplomas	4, 5
3 Honours	H level	Bachelors degrees with Honours, Graduate Certificates and Graduate Diplomas	4-6

Module

A module is a unit of study complete in itself, with a unique set of learning outcomes and credits attached to it. Usually, several modules are combined to lead to an award. A module may be given one of three designations: ‘core’ – meaning it must be taken **and passed**, ‘compulsory’ – meaning it must be taken, or ‘optional’ – meaning that students can choose which module to study. Students cannot fail a ‘core’ module. (See also “component”, “core module” and “outside option”)

Outside Option

A module taken as part of a programme of study which is not run by the student's main department, or by either of the departments contributing to a joint programme. This is normally taken in the first Stage of study. The module will be among several optional modules which can be taken as one component of the award. There are exceptional modules which can be regarded as outside options regardless of whether or not they lie within the student's department(s), namely CS101, MA123 and LG and LA modules.

Part-time study

Programmes of study are designated as full-time or part-time. In some cases students who are enrolled on full-time programmes may be given the opportunity by the Board of Examiners to retrieve failure in assessment by studying modules again on a part-time basis. In the rules of assessment this is referred to as repeating the stage of study part-time. As International student are not permitted by the Home office to study part-time, this option is only permissible where the student's UK immigration status allows part-time study.

Placement

The University operates a range of work-based learning/placement arrangements where students will study for a period of time outside the University in order to achieve learning outcomes defined by the Programme which cannot otherwise be achieved, for example for practice-based Health or Project Management awards, or study abroad years. Learning opportunities are provided by an outside placement provider, working in conjunction with the University.

Programme

See under **Award**.

Programme Specification

A document that defines the learning outcomes and structure associated with a course.

PSB/PSRB – Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies

Discipline-based professional bodies and associations which regulate and accredit qualifications which relate to their own standards and/or Continuing Professional Development professional requirements.

Some courses subject to accreditation by PSRBs, for example:

Law - Law Society/Bar Council;

CES – Institution of Engineering and Technology, and British Computer Society

East 15 - National Council for Drama Training

The courses involved have had variations to the standard Rules of Assessment approved to take account of these PSRB requirements.

Preliminary Stage

Students enrolled on a preliminary year are undertaking a preparatory year, enabling them to become familiar with a discipline which they may not have previously studied, before joining a three-year course.

Repeat Stage

The term "repeat Stage" (or "repeat year") refers to the repeat of a Stage of study whether full-time, or part-time before progression to the next Stage is allowed. Students repeating study part-time will carry forward marks from passed modules and repeat failed modules only, which are capped.

Resit/Resubmission of Coursework Without Attendance

An Exam Board may offer resits or resubmission of coursework without attendance as an alternative to a repeat year.

Stage

A Stage of study is a unit of learning following which assessment will be scrutinised by an examination board, and marks confirmed or an award made. The most usual “Stage” of study for undergraduates at Essex is one year of full-time study.

Voluntary Reassessment

The Examination Board may offer reassessment in an exam and/or coursework for a failed module even where it is not compulsory for the student to pass the module. Voluntary reassessment provides students with an opportunity to obtain the maximum credit available for the Stage.