

# UNIVERSITY OF ESSEX

## UNDERGRADUATE RULES OF ASSESSMENT

(Academic Year 2009-2010)  
(cohort first registered in this year)

### 4. *Four-Year Honours Degrees*

(For Degrees with a Preliminary Stage, see Three-Year Honours Degree rules)

#### 4.1 PROGRESSION

Progression to a Year Abroad (any Stage)

Students must pass the requirements for the current stage of study in order to be able to proceed to the Year Abroad.

##### 4.1.1 In order to progress from Stage One to Stage Two students must:

- a) achieve 120 credits at level 4. [NB where a student has a fail mark below 40 in a maximum of 30 credits' worth of non-core components it may be possible for a student to progress to the next stage of study in the circumstances set out in section 4.1.4]
- and**
- b) pass core modules and meet any additional course or module specific requirements outlined in the variations to the Rules of Assessment, including professional, statutory and regulatory body requirements.

End of Stage Examination Boards may also be used as progression boards for part-time students, and re-submission opportunities considered

In order to be awarded a **Distinction** in Stage One, students must meet at least one of the following criteria:

- Achieve an overall year mark of 69.5%, or;
- Achieve marks of 69.5% in at least 60 credits, with no credits below 59.5%

##### 4.1.2 If a student does not meet the requirements to progress:

- a) where the student has failed a **maximum of 60 credits**<sup>\*</sup>, he/she may resit the necessary examinations and/or resubmit coursework prior to the next academic Stage in order to fulfil the requirement to progress. The module aggregate mark will be capped at 40%.

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<sup>\*</sup> Credits are awarded at the component level. On programmes where two 15-credit modules have been aggregated together into a 30-credit component, the number of credits which have been passed at the module level is used in the student's favour to determine whether reassessment can be offered instead of a repeat year.

- b) where the student has failed **more than 60 credits**<sup>\*</sup> and has a year mark greater than 20%, he/she may repeat the Stage of study on a full-time basis for uncapped marks or resit the necessary examinations and/or resubmit coursework the following year without attendance. The module aggregate mark will be capped at 40%.
- c) where the Stage mark is below 20%, or where a student was absent from all examinations with no substantiated extenuating circumstances, he/she must withdraw from the University.

**4.1.3 When the Board meets after re-sits/resubmissions are completed, the Board may consider the following options (Boards may offer no more than three opportunities to undertake the assessment for a module). Where appropriate the Board may offer more than one option to the student.**

- a) to repeat the Stage of study full-time for uncapped module marks  
**or**
- b) where the student has failed **a maximum of 60 credits**<sup>\*</sup>, to repeat the Stage of study part-time, and the module aggregate mark will be capped at 40%<sup>1</sup>  
**or**
- c) to resit the necessary examinations the following year without attendance and/or resubmit coursework with the module aggregate capped at 40%.  
**or**
- d) where the student has not met the requirements to proceed having had three opportunities to undertake the assessment for a module, he/she would be required to withdraw from the University.  
**or**
- e) where the **Stage mark is below 20%**, or where a student was absent from all examinations with no substantiated extenuating circumstances, to withdraw from the University.

**4.1.4 Following reassessment, where a student has a fail mark below 40 in a maximum of 30 credits' worth of non-core components, the Board will treat the fail in the following way:**

- a) Where the component aggregate mark is in the range 35%-39% and the mark for the stage is 45% or above, the student will be permitted to proceed to the next stage of study. The credits will be awarded.
- b) Where the component aggregate mark is in the range 20%-34% and the mark for the stage is 40% or above, the student will be permitted to proceed to the

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<sup>1</sup> This option is only permissible where the student's UK immigration permission allows part-time study.

next stage of study. However, the credits will not be awarded and the student will not be permitted to fail any more credits towards their award. Where a student has not had three attempts at the assessment for the Stage, the Board will offer the student the choice of either undertaking reassessment in Stage One or proceeding to Stage Two carrying the fail.

- c) Students will not be permitted to transfer to a course which regards the failed components as core.

Note: For first year non-core components it is **not** necessary for students to pass both the coursework and exam elements as long as the student has passed the overall module aggregate.

If the student fails the overall aggregate in June then s/he must undertake reassessment in the failed elements.

If the student passes the overall module aggregate for the non-core component in June but fails either the coursework or exam elements, the Exam Board should award the credit rather than requiring reassessment.

**4.1.5 Students who, after reassessment, still fail to achieve sufficient marks in an optional module to progress may choose an alternative optional module during their repeat Stage.**

## Progression from Stage Two

### 4.1.6 In order to progress from Stage Two to Stage Three and from Stage Three to the Final Stage students must:

- a) attempt 120 credits in Stage 2 and pass at least 90 credits at level 5 or above:
  - where only 90 credits have been passed at Stage One, 120 credits must be passed in Stage Two, Stage 3 and the final year.
  - where 120 credits have been passed at Stage One, a minimum of 90 credits must be passed in Stage Two. [NB if only 90 credits are passed at Stage 2, then 120 credits must be passed in Stage Three and the final year]

**and**

- b) pass core modules and meet any additional course or module specific requirements outlined in the variations to the Rules of Assessment, including professional, statutory and regulatory body requirements.

### Distinctions for Placement Year Marks

On some courses it may be possible to gain a Distinction for the Placement Stage. Where these are offered, students must fulfil the course requirements as outlined in Appendix A of the Rules of Assessment.

### 4.1.7 If a student does not meet the requirements to progress:

- a) where the student has failed **a maximum of 60 credits**<sup>\*</sup>, he/she may resit the necessary examinations and/or resubmit coursework, prior to the next academic Stage, in order to fulfil the requirement to progress. The module aggregate mark will be capped at 40%. [NB where failure has occurred on a period of study abroad, resits/resubmission may not be available.]
- b) where the student has failed **more than 60 credits**<sup>\*</sup> and has a year mark greater than 20%, he/she may repeat the Stage of study on a full-time basis for uncapped marks **or** resit the necessary examinations and/or resubmit coursework the following year without attendance with the module aggregate mark capped at 40%. [NB where failure has occurred on a period of study abroad, resits may not be available.]

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<sup>\*</sup> Credits are awarded at the component level. On programmes where two 15-credit modules have been aggregated together into a 30-credit component, the number of credits which have been passed at the module level is used in the student's favour to determine whether reassessment can be offered instead of a repeat year.

<sup>\*</sup> Credits are awarded at the component level. On programmes where two 15-credit modules have been aggregated together into a 30-credit component, the number of credits which have been passed at the module level is used in the student's favour to determine whether reassessment can be offered instead of a repeat year.

- c) where the **stage mark is below 20%**, or where a student was absent from all examinations with no substantiated extenuating circumstances, he/she must withdraw from the University.
- d) If 120 credits at level 4 or above have been passed, the student may be considered for the award of a Certificate of Higher Education.
- e) if 240 credits (including a minimum of 120 at level 5) have been attempted and 225 have been passed, the student may be considered for the award of a Diploma of Higher Education.

**4.1.8 When the Board meets after re-sits/resubmissions are completed, the Board may consider the following options (Boards may offer no more than three opportunities to undertake the assessment for a module). Where appropriate the Board may offer more than one option to the student.**

- a) to repeat the Stage of study full-time for uncapped module marks
- b) where the student has failed a maximum of 60 credits<sup>\*</sup>, to repeat the Stage of study part-time, with the module aggregate mark capped at 40%<sup>2</sup> [NB this option is not available where students have failed credits during a period abroad.]
- c) to resit the necessary examinations and/or resubmit coursework the following year without attendance where the mark recorded will be capped at 40%. [NB where failure has occurred on a period abroad, resits may not be available.]
- d) where the **stage mark is below 20%**, or where a student was absent from all examinations with no substantiated extenuating circumstances, to withdraw from the University. If 120 credits at level 4 or above have been passed, the student may be considered for the award of a Certificate of Higher Education
- e) where the student has not met the requirements to proceed having had three opportunities to undertake the assessment for a module, he/she would be required to withdraw from the University.
- f) if 240 credits (including a minimum of 120 at level 5) have been attempted and 225 have been passed, the student may be considered for the award of a Diploma of Higher Education.

**4.2 ELIGIBILITY FOR AN AWARD (Final Stage of Four-Year Degree)**

- 4.2.1 For the award of a Four-Year Honours degree, 480 credits must be attempted over the duration of the course, of which 450 credits must be passed.

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\* Credits are awarded at the component level. On programmes where two 15-credit modules have been aggregated together into a 30-credit component, the number of credits which have been passed at the module level is used in the student's favour to determine whether reassessment can be offered instead of a repeat year.

<sup>2</sup> This option is only permissible where the student's UK immigration permission allows part-time study.

#### 4.2.2 To be eligible for an Honours degree, students must: <sup>3</sup>

- a) attempt 120 credits in the final stage and pass at least 90 credits at level 6:
    - where a maximum of 30 credits have been failed across Stage One, Stage Two and Stage Three, 120 credits must be passed in the final year.
    - where 120 credits have been passed at both Stage One, Stage Two and Stage Three, a minimum of 90 credits at level 6 must be passed in the final year.
- and**
- b) pass core modules and meet any additional course-specific requirements outlined in the variations to the Rules of Assessment, including professional, statutory and regulatory body, and placement-year requirements.

#### 4.2.3 If a student does not meet the requirements for an Honours degree<sup>3</sup>:

- a) where the student has failed **a maximum of 60 credits**<sup>\*</sup>, he/she may resit the necessary examinations and/or resubmit coursework/repeat the Stage of study part-time.<sup>4</sup> The module aggregate mark will be capped at 40%.
- b) where the student has failed **more than 60 credits**<sup>\*</sup> and has a year mark greater than 20%, he/she may repeat the Stage of study on a full-time basis for uncapped marks **or** resit the necessary examinations and/or resubmit coursework the following year without attendance, **or** repeat the Stage of study part-time with the module aggregate mark capped at 40%.<sup>5</sup>
- c) where the **stage mark is below 20%**, or where a student was absent from all examinations with no substantiated extenuating circumstances, he/she must withdraw from the University.
- d) if 240 credits (including a minimum of 120 at level 5 or above) have been attempted and 225 have been passed, the student may be considered for the award of a Diploma of Higher Education.

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<sup>3</sup> Boards of Examiners will offer a voluntary reassessment opportunity to final year students who have met the requirements to graduate with an honours degree but have failed final year module(s), provided the students have not already had three attempts at the assessment for the module. In cases where students have not met the requirements to graduate the Board of Examiners will specify the minimum volume of compulsory reassessment that is required, and will offer a voluntary reassessment opportunity in the other failed final year modules. However, students will not be permitted reassessment across the summer in more than 60 credits' worth of modules.

<sup>4</sup> Repeating the stage part-time is only permissible where the student's UK immigration permission allows part-time study.

<sup>5</sup> Repeating the stage part-time is only permissible where the student's UK immigration permission allows part-time study.

**4.2.4 When the Board meets after re-sits/resubmissions are completed, the Board may consider the following options (Boards may offer no more than three opportunities to undertake the assessment for a module, and no more than one opportunity to take exams without attendance). Where appropriate the Board may offer more than one option to the student<sup>6</sup>:**

- a) to repeat the Stage of study full-time for uncapped module marks
- b) where the student has failed **a maximum of 60 credits**<sup>\*</sup>, to repeat the Stage of study part-time, with the module aggregate mark capped at 40% <sup>7</sup> [NB this option is not available where students have failed credits during a period abroad.]
- c) to resit the necessary examinations and/or resubmit coursework the following year without attendance where the mark recorded will be capped at 40%. This option cannot be offered where a student has already resat the exams without attendance. [NB where failure has occurred on a period abroad, resits may not be available.]
- d) where the **Stage mark is below 20%**, or where a student was absent from all examinations with no substantiated extenuating circumstances, to withdraw from the University.
- e) where the student has not met the requirements for the award having had three opportunities to undertake the assessment for a module (Boards may offer no more than one opportunity to take exams without attendance), he/she would be required to withdraw from the University.
- f) if 240 credits (including a minimum of 120 at level 5) have been attempted and 225 have been passed, the student may be considered for the award of a Diploma of Higher Education.

**4.3 AWARD CLASSIFICATION FOR FOUR-YEAR HONOURS DEGREES**

(Students on Degrees with a preliminary Stage need to refer to the Three-Year Honours Degree rules. Students on Five-Year Degrees should follow Model 1 in the table below).

- 4.3.1 Results for Honours degrees are calculated by two methods, known as 'Dominant Quality' and 'Arithmetic Average'. Students will receive the more favourable degree class of the two. The results of both methods are published on the grid presented to Boards of Examiners. Class is based upon Stage Two, Stage Three and Stage Four marks.

The marks from the student abroad year in Four Year Degree should only be able to improve a student's degree classification. Calculation of degree classification at the

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<sup>6</sup> Students cannot be offered further voluntary reassessment so Boards of Examiners will only offer reassessment to final year students who have not met the minimum criteria for the award on which they are studying. Furthermore, Boards will only offer reassessment in a sufficient number of modules to enable students to meet the minimum criteria for the award. For example, if a student has failed 60 credits' worth of non-core modules in the final year, s/he will only be offered reassessment in 30 credits.

<sup>7</sup> This option is only permissible where the student's UK immigration permission allows part-time study.

Final Year Board of Examiners should therefore be undertaken both with and without the study abroad year and the highest classification result should be the one awarded.<sup>8</sup>

### 4.3.2 Arithmetic Average

There are five different types of four-year degree course, each with its own requirements.

Year marks from the second, third, and final years are weighted according to the weightings indicated in the right hand column of Table 2, and combined to give a **degree mark**. The degree mark is used to calculate a degree class as follows:

Degree mark	Class
70% and over	<b>Class 1</b>
60%-69%	<b>Class 2.1</b>
50%-59%	<b>Class 2.2</b>
40%-49%	<b>Class 3</b>
under 40%	<b>Fail</b>

TABLE 2: shows the volume of credit allocated to the placement and associated weighting of the placement year, which differentiates the five models

MODEL	VOLUME OF CREDIT ALLOCATED TO THE PLACEMENT, MARKED AS PASS/FAIL	COMPONENTS WHICH RECEIVE A MARK	WEIGHTING OF YEARS (2-3-4)
<b>(1) Work-experience or placement year</b>	120	0 components	40%-0%-60%
<b>(2) Year abroad (Normally as part of a language-related degree)</b>	30	3 components of 30 marked credits in addition to the placement	30%-20%-50%
<b>(3) Year abroad (Normally on a degree which is not language-related)</b>	60	2 components of 30 marked credits in addition to the placement	30%-20%-50%
<b>(4) Four years studied at Essex</b>	0	The number of 30-credit or 15-credit components that the course has in conformity with the Rules of Assessment	30%-30%-40%

<sup>8</sup> This ruling will stand until such time that any new rules relating to the weighting of the year abroad are approved for introduction, as approved by Senate in April 2012. In cases where the degree classification is based on the courses studied at Essex and exclude the year abroad marks, the student would still remain on the 4 year programme and the transcript of records for the year abroad and the year abroad marks would remain on the transcript for the student.



<b>(5) Placement spread across two years</b>	120 (30 in Stage Three, 90 in Stage Four)	4 components of 30 marked credits each in addition to the 120 placement credits over 2 Stages/years	40% - 45% - 15%
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### 4.3.3 Dominant Quality

The number of components in each class in the second, third, and final Stage is assessed in order to determine the dominant quality of the student's work<sup>9</sup>:

TABLE 3

	<b>MODEL</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Class 1</b>	Min number of credits at Class 1	120 (none below 2.2)	150 (none below 2.2)	150 (none below 2.2)	180 (none below 2.2)	120 (none below 2.2)
<b>Class 2.1</b>	Min number of credits at 2.1 or above	150 (max 90 credits at 3 <sup>rd</sup> permitted, none below)	180 (max 90 credits at 3 <sup>rd</sup> permitted, none below)	180 (max 90 credits at 3 <sup>rd</sup> permitted, none below)	210 (max 120 credits at 3 <sup>rd</sup> permitted, none below)	150 (max 90 credits at 3 <sup>rd</sup> permitted, none below)
<b>Class 2.2</b>	Min number of credits at 2.2 or above	150 (max 30 failed credits permitted)	180 (max 30 failed credits permitted)	180 (max 30 failed credits permitted)	210 (max 30 failed credits permitted)	150 (max 30 failed credits permitted)
<b>Class 3</b>	Maximum number of FAILED credits	30	30	30	30	30

<sup>9</sup> When determining the class of degree, where this will benefit a particular student, the Board of Examiners should apply the Rules of Assessment which have been approved for students entering the Preliminary or First Stage from the start of 2012/13 academic year, i.e. in addition to the rules given in 4.3.2 and 4.3.3:

#### Model 1

First Class Honours should be awarded to a candidate who has 120 credits at 70 or more and a Degree Mark of at least 68. Upper Second Class Honours should be awarded to a candidate who has 120 credits at 60 or more and a Degree Mark of at least 58. Lower Second Class Honours should be awarded to a candidate who has 120 credits at 50 or more and a Degree Mark of at least 48.

**Models 2 and 3** First Class Honours should be awarded to a candidate who has 150 credits at 70 or more and a Degree Mark of at least 68. Upper Second Class Honours should be awarded to a candidate who has 150 credits at 60 or more and a Degree Mark of at least 58. Lower Second Class Honours should be awarded to a candidate who has 150 credits at 50 or more and a Degree Mark of at least 48.

#### Model 4

First Class Honours should be awarded to a candidate who has 180 credits at 70 or more and a Degree Mark of at least 68. Upper Second Class Honours should be awarded to a candidate who has 180 credits at 60 or more and a Degree Mark of at least 58.

Lower Second Class Honours should be awarded to a candidate who has 180 credits at 50 or more and a Degree Mark of at least 48.

**Senate April 2012**