

# UNIVERSITY OF ESSEX

## UNDERGRADUATE RULES OF ASSESSMENT

### Academic Year 2015-16 (cohort first registered in this year)

#### 3. *Three-Year Honours Degrees* (Including Degrees with a Preliminary Stage and International Foundation Programme)

##### 3.1 PROGRESSION

##### 3.1.1 In order to progress from the Preliminary Stage (where applicable) to Stage One a student must:

- a) achieve 120 credits at level 3
- and**
- b) meet any additional course or module specific requirements outlined in the approved variations to the Rules of Assessment, including professional, statutory and regulatory body requirements.
- c) Where the student has not met the requirements to progress, the Examination Board will take one of the decisions set out in paragraphs 3.1.2 and 3.1.3 below. However, it is also open to a department to decide whether, notwithstanding the fail, the student should be offered admission into the first year.

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 the Preliminary Stage, students must meet at least one of the following criteria:

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

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

- a) where the student has failed **a maximum of 60 credits**, he/she must undertake the necessary reassessment prior to the next academic Stage in order to fulfil the requirement to progress. The module aggregate mark will be capped at 40%.
- b) where the student has failed **more than 60 credits** and has a year mark greater than 20%, he/she must repeat the Stage of study on a full-time basis for uncapped marks **or** to undertake the necessary reassessment the following year without attendance. The module aggregate mark will be capped at 40%. Students on the International Foundation Programme who are studying under a Tier 4 licence will not be allowed to repeat the Stage of study on a full-time basis, unless there are substantiated extenuating circumstances which are accepted by the Board of Examiners and the Board believes it is appropriate to offer a repeat year. However, they will be given the opportunity to study a maximum of 105 credits part-time to retrieve the failure.

- c) where a student has no substantiated extenuating circumstances, he/she must withdraw from the University in either of the following situations:

- where the Stage mark is **below 20%**;
- where a student was absent from all examinations which were due to be sat in the most recent examination period.

**3.1.3 When the Board meets after resits/resubmissions are completed, the Board will consider the following options (Boards cannot offer more than three opportunities to undertake the assessment for a module). Where appropriate the Board will offer more than one option to the student:**

- a) to repeat the Stage of study full-time for uncapped marks. Students on the International Foundation Programme who are studying under a Tier 4 licence will not be allowed to repeat the Stage of study on a full-time basis, unless there are substantiated extenuating circumstances which are accepted by the Board of Examiners and the Board believes it is appropriate to offer a repeat year. However, they will be given the opportunity to study a maximum of 105 credits part-time to retrieve the failure.

**or**

- b) where the student has failed **a maximum of 60 credits**, to repeat the Stage of study part-time, with the module aggregate mark capped at 40%.

**or**

- c) to undertake the necessary reassessment at the next available opportunity, with the module aggregate mark 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 a student has no substantiated extenuating circumstances, he/she must withdraw from the University in either of the following situations:

- where the stage mark is **below 20%**;
- where a student has undertaken none of the required reassessment.

Note: An undergraduate exam board will reinstate the module mark for a previous attempt at a failed module if it is higher than the mark for the most recent attempt. This will not apply where students are repeating an entire stage for uncapped marks. In such cases the marks achieved at the end of the repeat stage will stand.

## Progression from Stage One

### 3.1.4 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 modules it is possible for a student to progress to the next stage of study in the circumstances set out in section 3.1.7]
- 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.

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% at the first attempt, or;
- Achieve marks of 69.5% in at least 60 credits at the first attempt, with no credits below 59.5%

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

- a) where the student has failed **a maximum of 60 credits**, he/she must undertake the necessary reassessment prior to the next academic Stage in order to fulfil the requirement to progress. The module aggregate mark will be capped at 40%.
- b) where the student has failed **more than 60 credits** and has a year mark greater than 20%, he/she must repeat the Stage of study on a full-time basis for uncapped marks **or** undertake the necessary reassessment the following year without attendance. The module aggregate mark will be capped at 40%.
- c) where a student has no substantiated extenuating circumstances, he/she must withdraw from the University in either of the following situations:
  - where the Stage mark is **below 20%**;
  - where a student was absent from all examinations which were due to be sat in the most recent examination period.

**3.1.6 When the Board meets after re-sits/resubmissions are completed, the Board will consider the following options (Boards cannot offer more than three opportunities to undertake the assessment for a module). Where appropriate the Board will 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**, to repeat the Stage of study part-time, and the module aggregate mark will be capped at 40%<sup>1</sup>
- or**
- c) to undertake the necessary reassessment at the next available opportunity, with the module aggregate mark 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 a student has no substantiated extenuating circumstances, he/she must withdraw from the University in either of the following situations:
  - where the stage mark is **below 20%**;
  - where a student has undertaken none of the required reassessment.

Note: An undergraduate exam board will reinstate the module mark for a previous attempt at a failed module if it is higher than the mark for the most recent attempt. This will not apply where students are repeating an entire stage for uncapped marks. In such cases the marks achieved at the end of the repeat stage will stand.

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

- a) Where the module 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 module aggregate mark is in the range 20%-34% and the mark for the stage is 40% or above, or the module aggregate mark is in the range 35%-39% and the mark for the stage is in the range 40%-44%, the student will be permitted to proceed to the next stage of study. However, the credits will not be awarded. Where a total of 30 credits have been failed the student will not be permitted to fail any more credits towards their award. Where a total of 15 credits have been failed, the student will only be able to fail 15 non-core credits in the future. Where a student has not had three attempts at the assessment for the Stage, the Board will offer

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

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 modules as core.

**3.1.8** 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

**3.1.9 In order to progress from Stage Two to the Final Stage (Stage Three) students must:**

- a) achieve 120 credits at level 5 or above [NB where a student has a fail mark below 40 in a maximum of 30 credits' worth of non-core modules it will be possible for a student to progress to the next stage of study following reassessment in the circumstances set out in section 3.1.12]:
  - where only 90 credits have been passed at Stage One, 120 credits must be passed in Stage Two.
  - 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 Two, then 120 credits must be passed in Stage Three (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.

### 3.1.10

**If a student does not meet the requirements to progress:**

- a) where the student has failed **a maximum of 60 credits**, he/she must undertake the necessary reassessment 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/reassessment may not be available]
- b) where the student has failed **more than 60 credits** and has a year mark greater than 20%, he/she must repeat the Stage of study on a full-time basis for uncapped marks **or** undertake the necessary reassessment 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 / reassessment and/or a repeat stage / term may not be available]
- c) where a student has no substantiated extenuating circumstances, he/she must withdraw from the University in either of the following situations:
  - where the Stage mark is **below 20%**;
  - where a student was absent from all examinations which were due to be sat in the most recent examination period.
- d) if 120 credits at level 4 or above have been passed, the student will be considered for the award of a Certificate of Higher Education.

### 3.1.11

**When the Board meets after re-sits/resubmissions are completed, the Board will consider the following options (Boards cannot offer more than three opportunities to undertake the assessment for a module). Where appropriate the Board will offer more than one option to the student:**

- a) to repeat the Stage of study full-time for uncapped module marks [NB where failure has occurred on a period of study abroad, resits/reassessment and /or a repeat year / term may not be available.]

**or**

- b) where the student has failed **a maximum of 60 credits**, to repeat the Stage of study part-time, with the module aggregate mark capped at 40% [NB this option is not available where students have failed credits during a period abroad.]

**or**

- c) to undertake the necessary reassessment at the next available opportunity where the module aggregate mark recorded will be capped at 40%. [NB where failure has occurred on a period of study abroad, resits / reassessment may not be available.]

**or**

- d) where a student has no substantiated extenuating circumstances, he/she must withdraw from the University in either of the following situations:

- where the stage mark is **below 20%**;

- where a student has undertaken none of the required reassessment.

**or**

- 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.

**or**

- f) 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.

Note: An undergraduate exam board will reinstate the module mark for a previous attempt at a failed module if it is higher than the mark for the most recent attempt. This will not apply where students are repeating an entire stage for uncapped marks. In such cases the marks achieved at the end of the repeat stage will stand.

### 3.1.12

**Following reassessment, where a student has a fail mark below 40 in a maximum of 30 credits' worth of non-core modules and has passed 120 credits at Stage One, or has a fail mark below 40 in a maximum of 15 credits' worth of non-core modules and has passed 105 credits at Stage One, the Board will treat the fail in the following way:**

- a) Where a student has not had three attempts at the assessment for the failed module the Board will offer the student the choice of either undertaking reassessment in Stage Two or proceeding to Stage Three carrying the fail. [NB where failure has occurred on a period of study abroad, resits / reassessment and / or a repeat stage / term may not be available.]
- b) Where a student has already had three attempts at the assessment for the failed module the Board will permit the student to proceed to Stage Three carrying the fail.

## 3.2 ELIGIBILITY FOR AN AWARD (Final Stage)

**3.2.1 For the award of an Honours degree, a total of 360 credits must be attempted, of which 330 credits must be passed.** However, Boards of Examiners will offer one voluntary reassessment attempt in all failed final year modules no later than the start of the next academic year, provided the student has not already had three attempts at the assessment for the module. The module aggregate mark will be capped at 40%.

**3.2.2 To be eligible for an Honours degree, students must <sup>2</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 and Stage Two, 120 credits must be passed in Stage Three (final year)
    - where 120 credits have been passed at both Stage One and Stage Two, a minimum of 90 credits at level 6 must be passed in Stage Three (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 requirements.

**3.2.3 Students progressing from Foundation degrees or Diplomas of Higher Education to the final Stage of Honours degrees, or being admitted directly to the final Stage of Honours degrees**

- a) For the award of an Honours degree for students with a University of Essex Foundation Degree or Diploma of Higher Education, a minimum of 105 credits must be passed in Stage Two (the final Stage of the Foundation degree or Diploma of Higher Education). A minimum of 210 credits must be passed over Stage Two and Stage Three (final year) combined. 90 credits must be passed at level 6.
- b) For the award of an Honours degree for students with a level 5 award (including Foundation Degree or Diploma of Higher Education) awarded by another institution, 120 credits must be passed in Stage Three (final year). 90 credits' worth of which must be passed at level 6.

- c) For the award of an Honours degree for students admitted directly to the Final Stage, 120 credits must be passed in Stage Three (Final Year). 90 credits' worth of which must be passed at level 6.
- d) For the purpose of considering whether a student will be permitted to repeat Stage Three, the Board of Examiners will regard Stage Three as a new award.

### 3.2.4 If a student does not meet the requirements for an Honours degree<sup>2</sup>:

- a) where the student has failed **a maximum of 60 credits**, or has failed a maximum of 90 credits but the Board determines that he/she can only be required to undertake compulsory reassessment in a maximum of 60 credits, he/she must undertake the necessary reassessment/repeat the Stage of study part-time. The module aggregate mark will be capped at 40%. [NB where failure has occurred on a period of study abroad, resits / reassessment and / or a repeat stage / term may not be available.]
- b) where the student has failed **more than 60 credits** and the Board determines that the student must undertake compulsory reassessment in more than 60 credits, and the student has a year mark greater than 20% he/she must repeat the Stage of study on a full-time basis for uncapped marks **or** undertake the necessary reassessment 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 / reassessment and / or a repeat stage / term may not be available.]
- c) where a student has no substantiated extenuating circumstances, he/she must withdraw from the University in either of the following situations:
  - where the Stage mark is **below 20%**;
  - where a student was absent from all examinations which were due to be sat in the most recent examination period.
- d) if 240 credits (including a minimum of 120 at level 5 or above) have been attempted, and 225 have been passed, the student will be considered for the award of a Diploma of Higher Education.

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<sup>2</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.



**3.2.5 When the Board meets after re-sits/resubmissions are completed, the Board will consider the following options (Boards cannot offer 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 will offer more than one option to the student<sup>3</sup>:**

- 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**, to repeat the Stage of study part-time, with the module aggregate mark capped at 40%.<sup>4</sup> [NB this option is not available where students have failed credits during a period abroad.]  
**or**
- c) to undertake the necessary reassessment at the next available opportunity where the module aggregate 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 of study abroad, resits / reassessment and / or a repeat stage / term may not be available.]  
**or**
- d) where a student has no substantiated extenuating circumstances, he/she must withdraw from the University in either of the following situations:
  - where the stage mark is **below 20%**;
  - where a student has undertaken none of the required reassessment.**or**
- e) where the student has not met the requirements for the award having had three opportunities to undertake the assessment for a module (Boards cannot offer more than one opportunity to take exams without attendance), he/she would be required to withdraw from the University.  
**or**
- f) if 240 credits (including a minimum of 120 at level 5) have been attempted and 225 have been passed, the student will be considered for the award of a Diploma of Higher Education.

Note: An undergraduate exam board will reinstate the module mark for a previous attempt at a failed module if it is higher than the mark for the most recent attempt. This will not apply where students are repeating an entire stage for uncapped marks. In such cases the marks achieved at the end of the repeat stage will stand.

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<sup>3</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>4</sup> This option is only permissible where the student's UK immigration permission allows part-time study.

### **3.3 AWARD CLASSIFICATION FOR THREE-YEAR DEGREES (INCLUDING DEGREES WITH A PRELIMINARY STAGE)**

**3.3.1** A student's degree class is based upon Stage Two and Stage Three marks. Stage Two and Stage Three marks are weighted 40% and 60% respectively and combined to give the Degree Mark.

**3.3.2** **First Class Honours** will be awarded to a candidate who has:

- *Either* a Degree Mark of 70 or more; *or*
- 120 credits at 70 or more and a Degree Mark of at least 68.

**Upper Second Class Honours** will be awarded to a candidate who has:

- *Either* a Degree Mark of 60 or more; *or*
- 120 credits at 60 or more and a Degree Mark of at least 58.

**Lower Second Class Honours** will be awarded to a candidate who has:

- *Either* a Degree Mark of 50 or more; *or*
- 120 credits at 50 or more and a Degree Mark of at least 48.

**Third Class Honours** will be awarded to a candidate who meets the criteria for the award of an Honours degree (see 3.2 above) but who does not qualify for any other class of degree.

**3.3.3** **For students progressing from a University of Essex Foundation degree or Diploma for Higher Education<sup>5</sup> to the final Stage of a University of Essex Honours degree**, the marks from Stage Two of the Foundation degree are used in the calculation of the Honours degree. Stage marks from Stage Two of the Foundation degree and from the final Stage are weighted 40% and 60% respectively to give the Degree Mark. The degree class is calculated in accordance with the normal rules for three-year Honours degrees (see 3.3.2 above).

**3.3.4** **For students given direct entry into the Final Stage or for students progressing from Foundation degrees at other institutions into the final Stage of an Essex Honours degree**, the final Stage marks only will be used in calculating the Degree Mark. The degree class is calculated in the following way:

- **First Class Honours** will be awarded to a candidate who has a Degree Mark of 70 or more;
- **Upper Second Class Honours** will be awarded to a candidate who has a Degree Mark of 60 or more;
- **Lower Second Class Honours** will be awarded to a candidate who has a Degree Mark of 50 or more;
- **Third Class Honours** will be awarded to a candidate who meets the criteria for the award of an Honours degree (see 3.2 above) but who does not qualify for any other class of degree.

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<sup>5</sup> References to University of Essex Foundation degrees or Diplomas of Higher Education also refer to validated awards (i.e. awards taken at the University or through a partner institution with a validated award).