



University Centre Weston

Academic Regulations: Assessment (For Bath Spa University validated programmes)

2019/2020

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Academic Regulations: Assessment

Introduction

University Centre Weston, working in collaboration with Bath Spa University, provides a comprehensive and coherent framework of Academic Regulations for Assessment, to ensure that academic standards are maintained and that students are treated in an equitable manner.

It is a requirement of validation that all undergraduate programmes at University Centre Weston have appropriate Academic Regulations for assessment, and that these should be set out clearly for both staff and students, so that they are aware of and understand the assessment criteria under which awards will be made.

The scope of this document is to draw together the key regulations underpinning the assessment process, including policies which have a direct impact on their implementation. It provides a definitive guide for students with regard to the assessment process, from the initial setting of assignments to the final approval of awards. It further outlines how University Centre Weston manages the assessment procedure and the ways in which the quality of learning, teaching and student experience are assured and enhanced.

It is through the assessment process that University Centre Weston, as a higher education provider, ensures that academic standards are maintained and enhanced. Specifically, it ensures that assessment is robust, valid and reliable.

Purpose of Assessment

Assessment is a cyclical activity, placing interactivity and dialogue between staff and students at the centre of the teaching and learning process. It involves two distinct aspects. In the first, assessment is seen as an integral part of the learning process. Students learn both from assessment activities and from their interaction with staff about their performance in those activities. This interaction has two elements: a focus on student learning and the extent to which it has been demonstrated in the assessment, and a focus on furthering learning, often referred to as 'feed-forward'. The second aspect involves making a judgement as to the extent to which students have met the intended learning outcomes of a programme, or an element thereof. These judgements form the basis for the grading of student performance through the allocation of marks, grades and (where applicable) classification.

These two distinct aspects are embedded and reflected in formative and summative assessment.

Formative assessment focuses on current learning and performance in relation to the assessment requirements, and on approaches to future learning. Its purpose is to develop students to learn more effectively. There is no formal grading at this stage.

Summative assessment deals directly with the allocation of marks, grades and (where applicable) classification based on the extent to which the students have been successful in meeting the learning outcomes. Summative assessment may include a formative element that will enable students to understand their strengths and areas for improvement.

Feedback is critical to informing the student learning experience. It can also place assessment in context to the overall aims of the programme, leading to greater engagement, understanding and improved learning.

Principles of Assessment

University Centre Weston assessment of students is based on the following principles:

- Assessment is seen as an integral part of the dynamic learning and teaching process.
- Assessment is seen as integral to the setting and maintaining of academic standards.
- All programmes have specific learning outcomes with clear assessment criteria and marking schemes. These are shared with staff and students to ensure that a common and collective understanding of academic standards is maintained.
- Awards granted are consistent and appropriate to the achievement required for the particular levels of study.
- The student learning process is supported and enhanced through the provision of timely, continuous, and constructive feedback, designed to improve and develop performance.
- All students have the opportunity to demonstrate their level of knowledge, skill and abilities through a variety of assessment formats.
- Students will be consulted and kept informed about processes and outcomes of assessment.
- Academic judgement is articulated and consistently applied by teaching staff.
- Assessment practices are scrutinised by University Centre Weston, External Examiners and Bath Spa University to maintain and monitor standards, ensuring consistency and comparability with other UK HE providers.
- Assessment processes are carried out by competent staff approved by Bath Spa University.
- Where appropriate, due regard is given to the assessment requirements of professional, statutory and regulatory bodies.
- Assessment is conducted with professional integrity and due regard for security in compliance with the appropriate Bath Spa University Regulations.

These Academic Regulations are applicable to all programmes validated by Bath Spa University delivered at University Centre Weston.

Working in partnership, both Bath Spa University and University Centre Weston are responsible for ensuring that academic standards are maintained across programmes validated by Bath Spa University. This document is reviewed annually in response to working practices and every attempt is made to ensure accuracy of content at the time of publication. It will be accessible on the University Centre Weston website and any variations are posted on an annual basis.

PART ONE: ACADEMIC REGULATIONS: ASSESSMENT

1.0 RESPONSIBILITIES FOR SETTING ASSIGNMENTS AND EXAMINATION PAPERS

1.1 Setting Assignments

The assessment scheme for each module is defined in the owning Programme or Award's Definitive Documents and may not be changed without the formal approval of the Awarding Body. Module Handbooks and/or assignment briefs outline assessment requirements. The assessment scheme available to students on the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). In addition, Module Leaders are responsible for informing students of the nature, learning outcomes and assessment criteria and marking schemes for each assignment. This will be communicated to students at the beginning of the module and in the assignment briefs.

1.2 Setting Examination Papers

Where examinations are part of the assessment, deadlines will be circulated for the preparation of examination papers (Refer to Appendix 2: Controlled Components Policy). It is expected that draft papers are:

- Set by Module Leader
- Internally checked by the Programme Team
- Sent to the External Examiner for his/her comments.

2.0 ASSESSMENT SCHEDULING

As soon as the student lists for modules have been finalised (i.e. when students can no longer change their programme of studies for the academic year), two processes begin. One: planning the examination timetable for the year. Two: creating Student Assessment Records. These are described in the following sections.

2.1 Examination Scheduling

The objective of examination scheduling is to provide an error-free examination timetable. It must be acknowledged that this cannot be fully completed until students on each module are confirmed. A full list of examination dates (including resit dates), times and rooms is published at least 6 weeks before the examinations take place. Any errors should be reported immediately to the Academic Registrar at University Centre Weston.

At present, there are two examination sessions per day. Scheduling takes place on the basis that students should not normally have more than three examinations in two days. However, this does not preclude students being timetabled for two consecutive examinations.

Arrangements cannot normally be made for students to take examinations at times other than those specified.

It is the responsibility of students to inform the HE Support Co-ordinator, via their tutor, should they require any special arrangement regarding examinations. This needs to occur at least ten academic working days before the date of the examination, or when they are in receipt of their Disabled Students Allowance (DSA). Academic working days exclude holidays as detailed in the HE University Centre Weston Academic calendar.

2.2 Creation of Student Assessment Records

Once the students for each module are confirmed, Student Assessment Records are created for each module they are taking.

3.0 CONDUCT OF EXAMINATIONS

At each examination the invigilators will be provided with the following information by the HE Directorate:

- An attendance list of candidates
- Two copies of the invigilation certificate
- Examination papers
- Any additional material supplied by the Programme Co-ordinator.

Invigilators will place the appropriate examination paper and the examination registration form on each desk at least fifteen minutes before the start of the examination.

Candidates will be admitted to the room ten minutes before the examination is due to commence. On entering the examination room, they must deposit all bags and unauthorised sources of information in a place indicated by the invigilator. Mobile phones, smart phones or other electronic devices must not be kept on the person, must be switched off completely (**not left on 'silent'**), and placed in bags. Bottled water is allowed but all labels should be removed.

Normally, the Chief Invigilator shall be the sole person to make announcements in the examination room.

The Chief Invigilator shall be responsible for ensuring that:

- No candidate is admitted to the room later than thirty minutes after the commencement of the examination;
- No candidate leaves the examination room until thirty minutes after the start of the examination;
- No candidate leaves the examination room during the last thirty minutes of an examination.

The Chief Invigilator will announce the length and end time of the examination at the beginning. Students will be informed thirty minutes prior to the end of the examination and again at the termination point. Candidates should be asked to check that cover papers are correctly completed, and the scripts numbered according to instructions.

Candidates are permitted to leave the room for a short period for urgent reasons only and must be accompanied by one of the Invigilators. Invigilators may require a candidate to leave the examination room if his or her conduct is disturbing other candidates.

Invigilators shall not discuss the content of the examination paper with any candidate.

It shall be the prime duty of the Invigilators to ensure that no unfair practice occurs within the examination room. Invigilators shall:

- Stay in the examination room throughout the examination unless another member of University Centre Weston staff deputises and maintains constant supervision over candidates. Invigilators shall not do any other work during the examination which is likely to distract their attention from the supervision of candidates.
- Ensure that candidates are seated in their correct places, with their student ID card clearly visible on desk.
- Ensure that each candidate completes an examination registration form and that the forms are collected during the first thirty minutes of the examination.
- Ensure that each candidate has the correct examination papers.
- Ensure that candidates do not engage in unfair practice(s).
- Complete an invigilation certificate.

- Tick the attendance list of candidates indicating those students who are absent.
- Submit a written report to the Academic Registrar with any particular difficulties experienced during the examination. The attendance list may be used for this purpose.
- Collect the examination scripts of any candidate taken ill during the examination and note on it the times at which the candidate left the examination room. Details of the circumstances shall be included in the written report required above.

Candidates must remain seated until an invigilator has collected all examination scripts and they are told to leave by the Chief Invigilator.

Scripts should be placed in student registration number order by module and returned to the HE Directorate together with one copy of the attendance list. Examination registration forms and the attendance list should also be returned to the HE Directorate.

Module leaders or lecturing staff will be required to sign for these scripts and collect them for marking within 48 hours.

Module leaders or lecturing staff are not allowed to enter the examination venue but should be available to assist with identification of candidates and queries relating to inconsistencies in the examination paper.

In practical examinations, module leaders or lecturing staff may be on hand to assist invigilators in case of any technical difficulties.

4.0 SUBMITTING COURSEWORK

Module Leaders are responsible for informing students of the due dates for each assignment; these are identified in the module handbooks/assignment briefs.

The final submission time is 2.00pm on the due date. If a student fails to submit coursework by the specified deadline, it will be marked as a non-submission. All written assignments must be submitted via Turnitin; text is automatically checked for plagiarism. Where the means of assessment make a Turnitin submission impractical, students must refer to the module handbook/assignment brief for specific details.

If, on the due date for the assignment, Turnitin is unavailable for any reason, then students must submit the electronic version of their work as soon as notified by University Centre Weston of the new deadline.

Coursework submitted via Turnitin must comprise of a single file no more than 10MB. Turnitin will only accept files in the following formats: Word, Text, Postscript, PDF, HTML and RTF.

Submission of work by fax or email is not permitted.

Tutors may make copies of any work submitted by students for assessment for purposes including external examination, external moderation and/or external review. No personal data will be made available to any third party outside of the assessment process.

4.1 Word Count Policy

Word counts for all written work will be specified in module handbooks/assignment briefs and are clearly communicated to the student by the module leader. If an abstract or summary is required a separate word count will be indicated.

The purpose of this word count is to provide students with guidance for each piece of written work as to the amount of time and detail required in response to the demands of the assessment.

It is important to develop the academic skills of writing within set word limits and students will be expected to observe the word count set within a module handbook/assignment brief. A maximum tolerance of 10% above and below the word count is allowed. Once the upper limit of the word count has been reached, no further work will be taken into account when awarding marks. Work falling below the required word count risks being self-penalising as it is unlikely that students will cover sufficient material to meet the intended learning outcomes.

The word count includes everything in the main body of the text including: headings/titles, tables, citations, quotations, in-text references, lists. Appendices, foot notes and the bibliography are not included in the word count. Appendices should be kept to a minimum and should only be used to support the academic arguments advanced in the main text, and therefore will not contribute towards the awarded marks. Students must clearly indicate the precise word count on the title page of each assignment.

5.0 MARKING AND RETURNING ASSIGNMENTS

The marking scheme will be clearly outlined in the module handbook/assignment brief.

For guidance on the marking scheme refer to Appendix 1: A Guide to Marking Criteria for Foundation Degree and Honours Programmes.

University Centre Weston accepts the principle that anonymous marking of coursework should be adopted wherever possible. Where a module has a particular assessment, which cannot be conducted anonymously for example a presentation or performance, then it would be beneficial if other form(s) of assessment in the module were conducted anonymously.

Examinations are marked anonymously.

It must be noted that it is not possible to maintain anonymity in all cases. Thus, a breach of anonymity cannot in itself be grounds for a complaint or appeal.

Assessed work will be second-marked on a sample basis. As a guide, 20% of each component of the assessment should be sampled, with a minimum number of eight assignments from the full range of marks awarded. No assessed piece of work will be failed without reference to a second marker. On completion of second marking, an appropriate sample of work is moderated by the Link Tutor, focusing on marks awarded for a task, module and programme in the context of the academic standards for the award

All first class and failed work above Level 4 will be referred to the External Examiner, unless the nature of the work makes this impossible. A 20% sample across the range of marks for all other assessment above Level 4 will also be sent to the External Examiner unless the nature of the work makes this impracticable.

Second marking and reference to the External Examiner is particularly important in the case of assignments where the College has accepted that anonymous marking is impracticable.

In the event of a disagreement between the first and second marker, in the first instance this needs to be resolved through a professional dialogue between the internal assessors. If necessary, advice may be sought from the Bath Spa University Link Tutor.

Marks and grades for all assessment items are to be uploaded as percentages in whole numbers onto University Centre Weston's HE Student Database, which is managed by the Business Lead: HE Student Records.

Work will be marked using the full range of marks, even if it is a referred assessment. Students should note however, that in the case of referred work the mark is capped at 40% for the purposes of calculating the final award outcome. All work will be marked on its academic merits.

All programmes will use an appropriate assessment form for all assignments, showing due regard to University Centre Weston's guaranteed levels of information.

Assignments will be returned to students within 15 academic working days from submission.

6.0 SUBMITTING ASSESSMENT MARKS AND GRADES

It is the responsibility of staff to enter marks for each module into the appropriate grade books by the dates detailed in the academic calendar. When the marks for a module have been inputted, the module result will be calculated for each student. The system will take the raw marks and apply the relative weightings defined in the module's assessment scheme.

7.0 PROGRAMME AND AWARD BOARDS: STRUCTURE AND PRINCIPLES

There are two levels to the assessment structure. These are the Programme and Award Boards, each having a distinct function.

The Programme Board is responsible for the assessment of students within the individual modules, establishing marks and grades and making recommendations regarding overall awards referred or deferred work. It will take into account decisions received from the Mitigating Circumstances Panel and the Unfair Practice Committee.

The second level is the Award Board, which is responsible for confirming awards and progression.

7.1 Programme Boards: Membership and Duties

The composition of the Programme Board will be:

- Head of Higher Education his/her appropriate nominee (Chair)
- Head of Faculty
- Assistant Director HE: Curriculum and Quality
- HE Partnership Manager
- HE Partnership and Compliance Manager
- Academic Registrar
- Welfare and Retention Officer
- HE Support Coordinator
- Programme staff (including Programme Coordinator)
- Business Lead: HE Student Records
- External Examiner
- Bath Spa University Link Tutor
- HE Quality Officer (Secretary to the Board).

The quorum of the Programme Board is two-thirds of the members eligible to attend and must include a representative from Bath Spa University which would normally be the Link Tutor.

No student shall be a member of a Programme Board or attend an external examiner's meeting. Programme Boards are scheduled centrally by the Business Lead: HE Student Records. Minutes of the Board must be returned to the Business Lead: HE Student Records within one working day of the Programme Board taking place.

The Programme Board establishes marks and grades for the modules for which it is responsible and makes recommendations regarding awards. It also makes precise recommendations in connection with any referred or deferred assessment. Academic Registrar is a member of the Programme Board and will communicate all decisions from the Mitigating Circumstances Panel and the Unfair Practice Committee and ensure the Board acts accordingly.

It is the responsibility of the Chair (or his/her nominee) to:

- Ensure that a full and accurate profile of marks is available for all modules for which the Board is responsible

- Check that the list of marks put before the Award Board is an accurate transcription
- Ensure that precise and detailed recommendations on the work required in connection with any referred or deferred assessment is available at the meeting of the Award Board
- Ensure that Mitigating Circumstances Panel and Unfair Practice Committee decisions are presented
- Ensure that the assessment process has been conducted fairly and in accordance with the regulations
- Ensure that the Programme Coordinator liaises with the External Examiner(s) and the Bath Spa University Link Tutor.

The Chair of the Programme Board and the representative from Bath Spa University, should sign and date the grade book for all modules confirming the set of results. These grade books are provided by the Business Lead: HE Student Records and must be returned to the Head of Higher Education after each Programme Board.

If the External Examiner is not able to attend the Programme Board then a written report must be submitted to the Head of Higher Education confirming that the work has been externally examined. This should be received a minimum of five working days prior to the Board.

Higher Education Board of Study (HEBS) requires that Programme Boards be formally minuted. Refer to Appendix 3: Standard Agenda for Programme Boards. The minutes of the Programme Boards should reflect this agenda. A copy of the minutes must be lodged with the Head of Higher Education.

7.2 Award Board: Membership and Duties

The Award Board has responsibility for confirming awards and progression for students registered on:

- BA/BSc Honours Programmes
- Foundation Degrees

The composition of the Award Board will be:

- Vice Principal Higher Education (or his or her appropriate nominee) (Chair)
- Head of Higher Education
- Assistant Director HE: Curriculum and Quality
- HE Partnership Manager
- HE Partnership and Compliance Manager
- Academic Registrar
- Heads of Faculty
- Business Lead: HE Student Records
- Bath Spa University representative from Student Services
- Programme Coordinators
- HE Quality Officer (Minute Taker)

The quorum of the Award Board is two-thirds of the members eligible to attend and must include the Bath Spa University Student Services representative.

Award Boards will take place at appropriate times during the academic year and will be scheduled by the Business Lead: HE Student Records.

The Award Board will look at the students registered for each award, in alphabetical order. The documentation available will consist of an alphabetical list of all students taking the award, together with their results in each module taken during the academic year. Each student's results for the academic year will be examined in turn, pausing where necessary to check the minutes of Programme Boards. As soon as the Award Board has concluded its business, the Chair and the Bath Spa University representative will sign a set of papers confirming the decisions of the Board.

Following the Award Board, a copy of the minutes will be prepared confirming formal decisions about awards and progression.

7.3 Programme and Award Resit Boards

Programme and Award Resit Boards are convened to consider and determine student results following submissions of deferred or referred resit work.

The composition of Resit Boards will be the same as Programme and Award Boards. The quorum for a meeting of a Resit Board is two-thirds of members eligible to attend Programme and Award Boards.

The Programme Resit Board considers any resit submissions to agree the appropriate marks and makes recommendations regarding awards, whilst the Award Resit Board confirms student progression, classification of award for final year students and, where appropriate, the award of credits.

7.4 Results

Decisions from Award Boards will be binding, with results released to students within five working days of the Award Board.

7.5 Undergraduate Award Classifications

Programme and Award Structures:

All programmes are composed of credit rated modules which define the nature, amount and level of study that is required to gain an award.

Credits are assigned to one of three levels:-

Level 4: equivalent in standard to the first year of a full-time undergraduate degree programme.

Level 5: equivalent in standard to the second year of a full-time undergraduate degree programme.

Level 6: equivalent in standard to the final year of a full-time undergraduate degree programme.

Requirements for an Award:

Foundation Degree:

In order to gain a Foundation Degree a minimum of 240 credits will be required as follows:

- A minimum of 120 credits at Level 4
- A minimum of 120 credits at Level 5

Foundation Degree classification

Students can achieve a **pass, merit or distinction**.

A **Pass** will be awarded to students whose module mean mark at Level 5 (year 2) is between **40.00 and 59.99**.

A **Merit** will be awarded to students whose module mean mark at Level 5 (year 2) is between **60.00 and 69.99**.

A **Distinction** will be awarded to students whose module mark at Level 5 (year 2) is above **70.00 and above**.

The final classification for a Foundation Degree will be calculated from the best 100 credits at Level 5. This means that 20 credits of the module with the lowest grade will not be included in the degree calculation, although all modules must be passed.

The successful completion of a Foundation Degree allows a student to apply to progress onto a BA/BSc (Hons) Top-up Degree at University Centre Weston or another Institution of their choice.

University Centre Weston prefers students to obtain an average mark of 50% or more in the Foundation Degree but all applications will be considered in their own right.

BA/BSc (Hons) Top-up Degree:

In order to gain a BA/BSc (Hons) Top-up Degree a further minimum of 120 credits are required at Level 6.

To be awarded a BA/BSc (Hons) Top-up Degree an overall total of 360 credits obtained at the appropriate levels is required, as indicated above.

In the BA/BSc (Hons) Top-up Degree the full range of classifications is available (see table below).

The final classification for a BA/BSc (Hons) top-up degree will be taken from the best 100 credits from level 6. This means that 20 credits of the module with the lowest grade will not be included in the degree calculation, although all modules must be passed.

BA/BSc (Hons)

In order to gain a BA/BSc (Hons) an overall total of 360 credits are required, 120 credits obtained from each level (4, 5 and 6).

In the BA/BSc (Hons) Top-up Degree the full range of classifications is available (see table below).

The final classification for a BA/BSc (Hons) top-up degree will be taken from the best 100 credits at both level 5 and level 6. This means that 20 credits of the module with the lowest grade will not be included in the degree calculation, although all modules must be passed. The marks will be weighted 30% from level 5 and 70% from level 6.

The final classification for students who transfer/APEL directly into level 6 of a full BA/BSc (Hon) will be based on the best 100 credits at level 6. Credit achieved on any previous qualifications will not be included in the calculation of the degree mark and is recognised through pass/fail only.

	Equivalent Honours Classification:	Equivalent Percentage Marks:
A	1st	70.00% and above
B	2.1	60.00-69.99%
C	2.2	50.00-59.99%
D	3	40.00-49.99%
F		39.99% and below
F	No work submitted	0%

See Appendix 1: A Guide to Marking Criteria for Foundation Degree and Honours Programmes

Exit Awards:

If a student withdraws from UCW before completing their registered award, or fails to pass with sufficient credit to achieve their registered award, the following qualifications may be awarded if eligible.

Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE)

In order to be awarded a Certificate of Higher Education a minimum of 120 credits must be achieved. This qualification can be awarded to both Foundation Degree and BA/BSc Honours Students, but not BA/BSc Top-up students.

Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE)

Students studying towards a BA/BSc who achieve 240 credits can be awarded a Diploma of Higher Education.

Ordinary Degree

In order to gain an Ordinary Degree a minimum of 300 credits gained at levels 4, 5 and 6. At least 160 of those credits at level 5 and 6 and students should have attempted no more than 360 credits in total. Where students achieve an Ordinary Degree the award is unclassified and without honours. This is not available to students who join UCW directly at Level 6.

7.6 Assessments, Deferred, Referred or Failed Work

Following failure at the first attempt assessment is either referred or deferred, with a requirement to resit assessment tasks.

Where assessment has been **deferred**, resit work will be treated as a first attempt, with the full range of marks available. Deferred assessment is granted either when an application for mitigating circumstances has been approved, or following a successful appeal. A **referred** assessment will result in resit work being capped at 40%.

Where mitigating circumstances have not been applied for or approved, the Programme Board will refer the assessment to a later point. The deadline for the submission of the required coursework will be communicated to students via the Business Lead: HE Student Records. Referred examinations will be taken in the designated resit period. In both cases, the Resit Boards will consider referred results. However, students may submit work prior to the initial Programme Board and assuming there is sufficient time to allow for the marking processes to be completed, in accordance with the Academic Regulations: Assessment, grades can be considered at the initial Programme Board.

Tutors need to mark the referred/deferred work using the full range of marks available however the final result will be capped at 40% where the assessment has been referred. When submitting grades tutors should indicate the original mark, the capped 40% mark and indicate a late submission.

Students will receive confirmation of deferred, referred and failed work at the earliest time possible, subject to meetings of the Award Boards. Informing students about referred, deferred and failed work, including the resubmission date, time and process, is the responsibility of the Business Lead: HE Student Records.

Students will be instructed to upload work to Turnitin where appropriate, and to submit a hard copy to the HE Academic Registry Team (HEART) zone in the Winter Gardens, where it will be logged and a receipt issued. If submission is by post, students must send work by recorded delivery with proof of postage being retained, with work received by the due date. All resubmitted work will be retained by HEART until collected by the Programme Co-ordinator. The Programme Co-ordinator will be responsible for distributing work to colleagues for marking. This applies to all deferred and referred coursework.

The Academic Registrar is also responsible for the management of any resit exams and the distribution of exam scripts to Programme Co-ordinators for marking.

The procedure for recording and entering marks for deferred or referred work is the same as that used for the first attempt. Where a module has been reassessed and can only be awarded 40%, the actual percentage mark for the individual assignment will be recorded. The system will cap the mark at 40%.

Where students are allowed to resit, unless explicitly determined by an Award Board, this will be within the current academic year. Where the nature of the original assessment (e.g. presentations, ensemble playing) cannot readily be duplicated, staff will substitute an equivalent form of assessment which will be determined at the outset of the academic year.

Where a student fails up to 40 credits maximum on resit, they may be allowed to trail the module(s) into the next academic year and continue as a full-time student. If the failed module(s) is a compulsory part of their programme, students will have to repeat it. If it is an optional module, students may decide either to retake it or to take an alternative module at the same level, it should be noted that in both cases assessment will be treated as a third attempt. Students will be informed that the overall grade for the module(s) that are being trailed will be capped at 40%. Students are required to submit work for all components of the module in accordance with the module handbook(s)/assignment brief(s), (even if they were passed previously).

Where a student has been allowed to trail and progress, and Mitigating Circumstances has been sought and accepted for first and second attempts, the full range of marks will be available to the student.

Where a student fails more than 40 credits, they will not be allowed to trail them and continue full-time. The option for the Award Board will be to allow the student to repeat the year or complete the module as a part-time student. It should also be noted that a student cannot normally re-take a module where a pass grade has been achieved.

Where a student has a component or components that are assessed as pass/fail, these cannot be condoned. In the event of not passing pass/fail components, where Mitigating Circumstances have been sought and accepted, the student will be allowed to take a component resit, rather than being required to resit the entire module.

Where an assessment is failed at the first attempt, all subsequent attempts will be capped at 40% unless mitigating circumstances has been applied for and approved.

Where a student is enrolled as a part-time student, and has already passed all components of the module with the exception of the pass/fail elements, the Award Board may allow the student to trail the pass/fail component, and progress to the next stage of the programme.

Where a student has not passed any modules, and has not sought Mitigating Circumstances, the Award Board may fail and withdraw that student, after the first attempt.

7.7 A Condoned Pass

The Programme Board at its discretion has the power to make a recommendation that a student be awarded a condoned pass, particularly where issues of progression are involved.

- **At Module Level**

Where a student has passed all components within a module but one, and has a mark in the borderline fail range of between 35-39% in that one component and the overall grade for the module is 40% or more, then a condoned pass will be awarded. The original component mark will be used to calculate the module mark and hence the overall grade in the normal manner.

This is appropriate to allow progression to year two of the Foundation Degree and to allow entry to a BA/BSc (Hons) Top-Up degree.

A maximum of up to 40 credits can be condoned within each level.

- **At Programme Level**

In exceptional circumstances, particularly where serious mitigating circumstances are established, the Board, at its discretion, has the power to recommend a condoned pass.

This might be appropriate in the final year of a programme where a student has acceptable and serious mitigating circumstances which prevented the completion of their course of study and would be unable to return to complete the course in the future. If the student's prior performance clearly indicates that they would otherwise have passed then an Aegrotat award may be recommended. An Aegrotat degree is unclassified.

7.8 Component Resit

Where a student has passed all components within a module but one, they will only have to resit the failed component. This component will be capped at 40% and the full range of marks will be available for the module.

8.0 EXTERNAL EXAMINERS

The External Examiner system is the formal mechanism by which Bath Spa University and University Centre Weston seek to ensure that the standards of programmes match their intentions. At least one External Examiner is appointed for each programme and they are full members of the relevant Programme Board. Examiners are appointed typically for a period of four years.

External Examiners are appointed by Bath Spa University to each programme. The correspondence which results from the appointment and issues of contracts and employment are the responsibility of Bath Spa University. Thereafter, all communication regarding the arrangements of visits is the responsibility of University Centre Weston and the appropriate Programme Co-ordinator. External Examiners will be full members of the Programme Board. The External Examiner will send all formal reports initially to Bath Spa University.

8.1 Purpose of External Examiners

The function of External Examiners is different from internal assessors. The role is neither “second marker”, “third marker”, nor adjudicator between conflicting judgements of internal assessors. Their role is to ensure that the marks of internal assessors are consistent with marks awarded for equivalent programmes in relation to similar awards elsewhere in the UK higher education system.

In addition to their independent judgements on the relationship of marks to assessment criteria, their reference points will be their experience in other Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), and expectations defined by the UK Quality Code and subject benchmark statements. On the basis of samples, the External Examiner moderates or confirms the marks of cohorts, or runs of marks, not individual marks or assessment items.

External Examiners should see all assessed work proposed for the highest available grade-band and for failure, and samples of the assessed work proposed for each other grade-band, unless the nature of the work or the approved marking scheme makes this impracticable. The sample should represent not less than 20% of the total scripts or other items for assessment.

It is the responsibility of Bath Spa University to communicate with External Examiners regarding terms of appointment, submission of reports and payment of fees and expenses. They will also provide External Examiners with a copy of this document, and others deemed relevant, as well as an expenses claim form. Bath Spa University will book accommodation for External Examiners only on request.

Fees and expenses are paid on receipt of the Examiner’s annual report. A completed claim form should be addressed to Bath Spa University who will answer queries on payment.

Programme External Examiners are not required to attend meetings of the Award Board.

8.2 Disagreements between External Examiners and Internal Assessors

In the event of a disagreement between External Examiners and internal assessors, where issues relating to marking and assessing cannot be resolved, there will be a referral via the programme Link Tutor to Bath Spa University. The dispute needs to be resolved before the Award Board is convened. The decision of Bath Spa University will be final.

9.0 MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES

All students taking a module will have had similar learning opportunities and will be assessed according to the same criteria. Assessment is solely on the basis of the academic standard achieved; marks and award classifications will not be modified according to the circumstances of the individual student. The submission of mitigating circumstances should therefore be seen as a request to delay the assessment point, not modify

assessment standards. The panel will also consider requests to suspend, repeat or change modes of study in response to student circumstances. A full guide to Mitigating Circumstances is available in Appendix 5.

A Mitigating Circumstances form is available, both electronically and from the Head of Higher Education for students to use when they consider their performance to have been adversely affected by personal or medical problems. It is essential that students make any claim for mitigating circumstances promptly, in writing, and supported by appropriate evidence. Unsupported self-certification will not be accepted under any circumstances. The Mitigating Circumstances Panel will take all documented evidence into account, but are not allowed to consider word-of-mouth evidence.

A panel chaired by the Head of Higher Education, and consisting of at least two other members of staff nominated by the Vice Principal Higher Education, will meet to review claims of mitigating circumstances prior to the formal meeting of the Programme Board. The panel will make a recommendation, which will be communicated to the Programme Board as to whether a claim should be accepted or rejected. The Head of Higher Education will communicate the outcome of the Panel to the Programme Board.

Where mitigating circumstances have been accepted, the Programme Board will defer the assessment to a later point. The deadline for the submission of the required coursework will be communicated to students via the Business Lead: HE Student Records. Deferred examinations will be taken in the designated resit period. In both cases, the Resit Boards will consider deferred results. However, students may submit work prior to the initial Programme Board and assuming there is sufficient time to allow for the marking processes to be completed, in accordance with the Academic Regulations: Assessment, grades can be considered at the initial Programme Board.

In the event that assessment items are passed, but a student's performance has fallen below that expected of them, and mitigating circumstances have been accepted, Programme Boards will offer the student the option of a deferral. If the student accepts the offer, the original mark will be disregarded and the later one will be used, regardless of which is the better mark.

10.0 FIVE WORKING DAY EXTENSION

The scope for making an application is limited to students experiencing the following circumstances (and only in cases where it would be appropriate to offer an extension):

- a. bereavement (close family member);
- b. serious personal accident or injury of self or close family member / serious illness of self or close family member (including mental health);
- c. victim of crime;
- d. part time students who have had an unexpected increased in working hours (evidenced by a letter from the employer);
- e. sporting commitment at a national / international level;
- f. participation in activities at a national / international level;
- g. a unique career enhancing opportunity approved by the University Centre Weston

Students will be advised to use this form to request an extension to the original published submission deadline for a piece of assessed coursework. An emergency mitigating circumstances panel meeting will be called and five working day extensions will be reviewed and the outcome communicated to the tutor and the student. The tutor will then confirm the agreed deadline with the student and the assessed work will be given the full range of marks available.

A full guide to the UCW five Working Day extension can be found in Appendix 6.

11.0 UNFAIR PRACTICE

Good academic practices and standards are seen as critical to the maintenance of trust and integrity within the learning environment. Students are expected to apply these standards when producing their own academic work and in particular when referencing/crediting the work of others.

Unacceptable academic practice, particularly in response to assessment, is known as unfair practice.

Unfair practice may take a variety of forms including the following and will be considered as assessment offences by University Centre Weston and Bath Spa University:

- Plagiarism
- Collusion
- Direct cheating: examinations/experiments/field reports/contract cheating
- Falsification
- Fabrication

These are further defined in the Higher Education: Unfair Practice Policy and Procedures document in Appendix 6. To promote and support clarity and good scholarship practice, University Centre Weston subscribes to the plagiarism detection service 'Turnitin'.

The penalties for unfair practice can be severe.

University Centre Weston and staff will foster and support good standards of academic practice to help the student reference work correctly and avoid unintentional plagiarism. Where poor levels of scholarship are displayed, advice and support will be offered. From the outset of their programme, students will be provided with appropriate guidance and information on how to avoid plagiarism and other assessment offences.

The procedures to be followed where unfair practices are detected are clearly set out in the Higher Education Unfair Practice Policy and Procedures in Appendix 6. To ensure that the formal process can operate properly, it is important that evidence is gathered and identified cases are reported through the proper channels as swiftly as possible. See Unfair Practice: Action Timeline in Appendix 6.

Cases of alleged unfair practice will be submitted for consideration to the Unfair Practice Committee.

The membership of the Unfair Practice Committee shall be:

- Vice Principal Higher Education (Chair)
- Assistant Director HE: Curriculum and Quality
- HE Partnership Manager
- Head of Higher Education

In the event that these members are not available, the Vice Principal Higher Education will nominate appropriate substitutes.

The committee will meet on a 'needs basis' in order to submit its recommendations to the Programme Board. An annual report will be presented at Higher Education Board of Studies.

The Unfair Practice committee shall judge the seriousness of the offence and apply the appropriate penalty, if applicable. In determining the penalty to be applied, the committee will consider the following issues:

- Degree of deception
- Previous offence
- Amount/volume of work (component or module)
- Academic level at which the offence occurs
- Explanation received from the student.

The committee will have a defined range of powers at its disposal to determine the penalty to be applied as set out in the Unfair Practice: Penalty Table in Appendix 6.

Where an accusation of unfair practice has been substantiated, the accusation is said to be established and the decision will be formally communicated to both the student and the Programme Board by the Head of Higher Education.

Where the unfair practice process has been initiated, the student's results will not be determined until the process has been completed.

Evidence established post-award can cause cases to be re-opened and the awards suspended.

12.0 APPEALS AND COMPLAINTS

The HE Appeals Procedure covers aspects of assessment and decisions made at Award Boards. Refer to Appendix 7: Higher Education Appeals Procedure. The HE Complaints Policy and Procedure is broader and covers any aspect of the student experience. Students should seek advice from HEART (mycourse@ucw.ac.uk) as to which procedure is applicable.

13.0 REVIEW

These Academic Regulations: Assessment will be subject to an annual review. Any recommendations or amendments will be presented at the Higher Educational Board of Study for consideration prior to being approved by Bath Spa University.

Anthony Murray
Vice Principal Higher Education
May 2019

University Centre Weston Directorate of Higher Education

A Guide to Marking Criteria for Foundation Degree and Honours Programmes

The following assessment criteria have been adopted for all assessment items (essays, seminars, exams, etc.) in the Modular Scheme. They will be amplified and/or refined by more specific criteria, which will be set out in the documentation for each programme of study.

Honours programme:

Indicative	Criteria
Mark Range	
80-100	An outstanding first Work of outstandingly high quality and originality.
77 – 79	An excellent first Work, which fulfils all the criteria at an exceptional standard for the level concerned. Substantial originality and insight, very few minor limitations.
74 – 76	A good first Work of distinguished quality, which is based on extensive research and/or strong technical and creative competence. Clear and logical organisation; consistent scheme of references, used entirely appropriately. An authoritative grasp of concepts, methodology and content appropriate to the programme discipline and to the assessment task will be demonstrated. There is clear evidence of originality and insight and an ability to sustain an argument and/or solve discipline related problems, based on critical analysis and/or evaluation. The ability to synthesise material effectively and the potential for skilled innovation in thinking and practice will be evident.
70 - 73	A first The qualities of a first but with more limitations. Work of very good quality which displays most, but not all, of the characteristics for the level concerned.
67 – 69	A high upper second Work, which clearly fulfils all the criteria for the level concerned, but shows greater insight and/or originality.
64 - 66	A good upper second Work of good quality, which is based on a wide range of properly referenced sources and/or creative input, demonstrating a sound and above average level of understanding of concepts, methodology and content appropriate to the programme discipline and to the assessment task. There is clear evidence of critical judgement in selecting, ordering and analysing content to construct a sound argument based on responses which reveal occasional insight and/or originality. Ability to solve discipline related problems will be effectively and consistently demonstrated. Draws on an appropriate range of properly referenced sources.
60 – 63	An upper second Work of good quality, which contains most, but not all, of the characteristics for the level concerned.

57 – 59	<p>A high lower second</p> <p>Work, which clearly fulfils all the criteria for the level concerned, but shows a greater degree of critical analysis and/or insight.</p>
54 – 56	<p>A good lower second</p> <p>Work of sound quality which is based on satisfactorily referenced sources and/or creative input and which demonstrates a grasp of relevant material and key concepts, together with ability to structure and organise arguments or materials effectively. The work may be rather standard, but will be mostly accurate, clearly communicated and provide some evidence of ability to engage in critical analysis and/or evaluation. There will be no serious omissions or irrelevancies. In dealing with solutions to technical problems, appropriate methods will be chosen. Coherent organisation in general with effective use of references and acknowledgement of sources.</p>
50 – 53	<p>A lower second</p> <p>Work of sound quality, which contains most, but not all, of the characteristics for the level concerned.</p>
47 – 49	<p>A high third</p> <p>Work of a satisfactory standard demonstrating a reasonable level of understanding, and competent organisation, but lacking sufficient analysis and independence at the level concerned.</p>
44 – 46	<p>A good third</p> <p>Work of satisfactory quality, which covers the basic subject matter adequately and is appropriately organised and presented, but which is primarily descriptive or derivative rather than analytical or creative. Study may be limited and narrowly focussed. There may be some misunderstanding of key concepts and limitations in the ability to select relevant material or techniques, and/or in communication or other relevant key skills, so that the work may be flawed by some errors, omissions or irrelevancies. There will be some evidence of appropriate research and ability to construct an argument, but it may be narrowly focused. In dealing with solutions to technical problems, established and appropriate methods will generally be chosen, but these may be applied uncritically.</p>
40 – 43	<p>A third</p> <p>Work of bare pass standard demonstrating some familiarity with relevant subject matter and application of relevant academic capabilities, but only just meeting threshold standards in research, analysis, organisation, focus or other skills essential to the assessment task, and/or with significant errors or omissions.</p>
30 – 39	<p>A fail</p> <p>Work which indicates some evidence of engagement with the subject material and learning process, but which is essentially misinterpreted, misdirected, misunderstood or poorly organised and sketchy or otherwise just failing to meet threshold standards at the level concerned.</p>
20-29	<p>A clear fail</p> <p>Work which indicates little engagement with the subject material and learning process; which contains substantial errors or irrelevancies; which shows minimal evidence of planning and hardly any use of references and acknowledgement of sources; which clearly fails to meet threshold standards at the level concerned.</p>
10-19	<p>A bad fail</p> <p>Work of poor quality, which is based on only minimal effort and/or contains little of relevance. It will offer hardly any evidence of familiarity with subject materials or skills appropriate to the discipline or task at the level concerned.</p>
1-9	<p>A very poor fail</p> <p>Some work submitted, but containing virtually nothing of any relevance, depth or merit.</p>
0	Work failed due to unfair practice.



University Centre Weston Directorate of Higher Education

CONTROLLED COMPONENT POLICY

The purpose of this Controlled Component Policy is to ensure:

- Management of controlled component examinations are conducted in the best interest of candidates
- Operation of an efficient controlled component system with clear guidelines for all relevant staff
- Security of University Centre Weston as an examination centre.

Controlled components at these levels include examinations, both closed and open book, oral examination, presentations, poster defence, *viva voce* and performance. Oral examination, poster defence, *viva voce* and performance will always involve a minimum of two academic judgements. Other controlled components will be subject to an academic judgement and a sampling system to assure quality.

It is the responsibility of everyone involved in University Centre Weston's controlled component processes to read, understand and implement this policy.

This controlled component policy will be reviewed every two years by the Vice Principal Higher Education and Academic Registrar, recommendations for changes tabled at the Higher Education Board of Study (HEBS).

1.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE CONDUCT OF EXAMINATIONS

University Centre Weston's Examination and Assessment Services team will be responsible for the organisation and management of the Higher Education examinations process.

1.1 Examination Scheduling

The objective of examination scheduling is to provide an error-free examination timetable. It must be acknowledged that this cannot be fully completed until students on each module are confirmed. A full list of examination dates (including resit dates), times and rooms is published at least 6 weeks before the examinations take place. Any errors should be reported immediately to the Examination Team Leader at University Centre Weston.

At present, there are two examination sessions per day. Scheduling takes place on the basis that students should not normally have more than three examinations in two days. However, this does not preclude that students may be timetabled for two consecutive examinations.

Arrangements cannot normally be made for students to take examinations at times other than those specified.

It is the responsibility of students to inform the HE Support Co-ordinator, via their tutor, should they require any special arrangement regarding examinations. This needs to occur at least 10 working days before the date of the examination, or when they are in receipt of their DSA.

1.2 Examination Team Leader

Responsible for the administration of internal examinations on behalf of University Centre Weston and partner institutions:

- Receive and store securely all examination papers
- Administer access arrangements.
- Make arrangements to book the correct number of rooms for each cohort according to the needs of the cohort. Communicate individual arrangements by letter to all candidates involved.
- Communicate this timetable directly to Programme Co-ordinators and make available on the three designated examinations notice-boards and on-line.
- Manage the examination invigilators: organising the recruitment; training and monitoring of a team of examination invigilators.
- Quality assure the examination process as robust and secure.

1.3 Academic Registrar

- Check all exam papers for accuracy
- Establish an examination timetable in collaboration with staff and publish a full list of dates, times and rooms four weeks in advance. Provide printed exam papers for the Exams Team Leader
- Ensure that module/unit name and code, names of candidates and a photographic programme register with the University student number is made available to the Examinations Office at least four weeks prior to examination.
- Confirm any access requirements directly with the Examinations Office for individual students within the register. Ensure all exam scripts are stored securely until they are collected by marking tutors
- Quality assure the examination process as robust and secure.

1.4 Programme Co-ordinators

- Ensure that each candidate has completed diagnostic tests during induction or as soon as possible post induction.
- Ensure that all draft examination material has been received by the External Examiner in a timely manner for consideration.
- During September of each academic year store the Annual Operating Agreement/Statement for the programme (AOA/AOS) on HE SharePoint site.
- Ensure that formatted papers have been made available to the Academic Registrar four weeks prior to examination.
- Pick up and sign for the examination scripts from the HE Directorate Office for marking within 48 hours of the finish of the examination.

1.4 Chief Invigilator/Invigilator's Responsibilities

At each examination the invigilators will be provided with the following information by the Examination Team Leader/Academic Registrar:

- Attendance list of candidates

- Two copies of the invigilation certificate
- Examination papers
- Any additional material supplied by the Programme Co-ordinator.

Invigilators will place the appropriate examination paper and the examination registration form on each desk at least fifteen minutes before the start of the examination.

Candidates will be admitted to the room fifteen minutes before the examination is due to commence. On entering the examination room they must deposit all bags and unauthorised sources of information in a place indicated by the invigilator. Mobile phones, smart phones or other electronic devices must not be kept on the person, must be **switched off** completely (**not left on 'silent'**), and placed in bags. Bottled water is allowed but all labels should be removed.

Normally, the Chief Invigilator shall be the sole person to make announcements in the examination room.

The Chief Invigilator shall be responsible for ensuring that:

- No candidate is admitted to the room later than thirty minutes after the commencement of the examination
- No candidate leaves the examination room until thirty minutes after the start of the examination
- No candidate leaves the examination room during the last thirty minutes of an examination.

The Chief Invigilator will announce the length and end time of the examination at the beginning. Students will be informed thirty minutes prior to the end of the examination and again at the termination point. Candidates should be asked to check that cover papers are correctly completed and the scripts numbered according to instructions.

Candidates are permitted to leave the room for a short period for urgent reasons only, and must be accompanied by one of the Invigilators. Invigilators may require a candidate to leave the examination room if his or her conduct is disturbing other candidates.

Invigilators shall not discuss the content of the examination paper with any candidate.

It shall be the prime duty of the Invigilators to ensure that no unfair practice occurs within the examination room. Invigilators shall:

- Stay in the examination room throughout the examination unless another member of University Centre Weston staff deputises and maintains constant supervision over candidates. Invigilators shall not do any other work during the examination which is likely to distract their attention from the supervision of candidates.
- Ensure that candidates are seated in their correct places, preferably with their student ID card clearly visible on desk. Invigilators may ask for other means of identification if a candidate has not produced an ID card and candidates may be excluded if they are unable to provide appropriate identification.
- Ensure that each candidate has the correct examination papers.
- Ensure that candidates do not engage in unfair practice(s).
- Complete an invigilation certificate. Tick the Attendance List of candidates indicating those students who are absent.
- Submit a written report to the Examination Team Leader/Academic Registrar with any particular difficulties experienced during the examination. The attendance list may be used for this purpose.

- Collect the examination scripts of any candidate taken ill during the examination and note on it the time at which the candidate left the examination room. Details of the circumstances shall be included in the written report required above.

Candidates must remain seated until an invigilator has collected all examination scripts and they are told to leave by the Chief Invigilator.

Examination scripts should be placed in student registration number order by module, and returned to the Academic Registrar together with one copy of the attendance list.

Module leaders or lecturing staff will be required to sign for these scripts and collect them for marking within 48 hours.

Module leaders or lecturing staff are not allowed to enter the examination venue but should be available to assist with identification of candidates and queries relating to inconsistencies in the examination paper.

In practical examinations, module leaders or lecturing staff may be on hand to assist invigilators in case of any technical difficulties.

2.0 MANAGING FORMAL NON EXAMINATION ASSESSMENT

The programme teams will book all controlled component assessment rooms after liaison with other users.

When oral examination, presentations, poster defence, *viva voce* and performance is to be assessed a minimum of two academics will be present. In this situation it is unnecessary to include an invigilator. However students should be aware that audio/video recording may be made of these activities for the benefit of second marking and moderation by External Examiners and University link tutors as appropriate.

3.0 MITIGATING AND EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES

Should a candidate be too ill to sit an exam, suffer bereavement or be taken ill during the examination itself, it is the candidate's responsibility to alert University Centre Weston, and the partner University, to that effect.

The Assessment Regulations for University Centre Weston or the partner University outline the steps required for students to apply for mitigating or extenuating circumstances. These Regulations can be found on the partner University's website, University Centre Weston VLE or by contacting the Directorate of Higher Education. In all cases evidence will be required to substantiate a case for special consideration.

4.0 ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

The Equality Act 2010 extends the application of the DSA to general qualifications. All examination centre staff must ensure that the access arrangements and special consideration regulations and guidance are consistent with the law.

Students who need special arrangements must communicate them to the HE Support Co-ordinator via their tutor as early in the academic year as possible, and no later than ten working days prior to an examination.

4.1 Access Arrangements

Making special arrangements for candidates to take controlled component assessments is the responsibility of the Examination Team Leader/Academic Registrar, informed by the Access Needs Assessment Report.

Completing access arrangement applications and submitting these to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the HE Support Co-ordinator.

Roles and Responsibilities:

- **Examination Team Leader:**
Rooming for access arrangement candidates to meet their needs;
Allocation of staff to support access arrangements for candidates along with any required special equipment.
- **HE Support Co-ordinator:**
Manage referrals of all HE students for StudyScan, Diagnostic Assessments and Access Needs Assessment.
Process HE applications for DSA
Complete Access Arrangements Form with candidate;
Forward copy of Access Arrangements to Examination Team Leader/Depty Academic Registrar;
- **Programme Personal Tutors**
Track progress of students through Quick Scan, StudyScan, and referral for DSA;
Keep copies of Examination Access Arrangements in tutor files.

4.2 Student Responsibility

The student is expected to cooperate fully with the Needs Assessment process. In the case of a student failing to give their agreement or not engaging with the Access Arrangement process, there will be a cut-off point of ten working days in advance of the examination.. No arrangements will be made and Mitigating Circumstances can neither be applied for nor granted.

EXAMINATION ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

Student accepted on HE Course



Quick Scan and Study Scan indicate the need for a diagnostic assessment by the Diagnostic Assessor.



HE Support Co-ordinator will apply for DSA. As part of the full diagnostic assessment, a needs assessment will be carried out by an external agency.



Student is awarded DSA. The completed Needs Assessment should be passed to the HE Support Co-ordinator.. If there were any queries the HE Support Co-ordinator would confer with colleagues at BSU.



The HE Support Co-ordinator ensures that appropriate examination access arrangements are put in place.

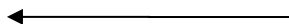


The HE Support Co-ordinator will email details to:

- Student
- Programme Co-ordinator
- Academic Registrar

- Personal Tutor
- Examinations Team Leader

If the student does not have a full diagnostic assessment but does have an Educational Psychologist report or a medical report the Programme Co-ordinator should refer to the HE Support Co-ordinator for an Access Needs Assessment. The cost of these assessments must be met by the faculty and permission to apply for a needs assessment must be agreed by the relevant Head of Faculty.





University Centre Weston Directorate of Higher Education

AGENDA

PROGRAMME BOARD

(PROGRAMME NAME)

Date, Time, Venue

1. **APOLOGIES**
2. **PURPOSE OF THE PROGRAMME BOARD**
3. **INDIVIDUAL STUDENT RESULTS AT MODULE LEVEL:**
(Taking full account of any recommendations received from the Mitigating Circumstances Panel and the Unfair Practice Committee where appropriate)
 - 3.1 **LEVEL 4 MODULES**
 - 3.2 **LEVEL 5 MODULES**
 - 3.3 **LEVEL 6 MODULES**
4. **INDIVIDUAL STUDENT RESULTS AT PROGRAMME LEVEL:**
 - 4.1 **LEVEL 4**
 - 4.2 **LEVEL 5**
 - 4.3 **LEVEL 6**
5. **EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S COMMENTS**
6. **LINK TUTOR COMMENTS**
7. **PROGRAMME CO-ORDINATOR'S COMMENTS**
8. **FORMALLY SIGN OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE PROGRAMME BOARD**
9. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**
10. **DATE OF THE PROGRAMME RESIT BOARD**



University Centre Weston Directorate of Higher Education

AGENDA

AWARD BOARD

Date, Time, Venue

(STANDARD AGENDA)

1. **APOLOGIES/NEW MEMBERS**
2. **PURPOSE OF THE AWARD BOARD**
3. **TO RECEIVE FOR CONSIDERATION TRANSCRIPTS REGARDING INDIVIDUAL STUDENT MARKS BY PROGRAMME AS RECOMMENDED BY THE VARIOUS PROGRAMME BOARDS TO CONFIRM PROGRESSION AND AWARDS**
4. **TO CONSIDER OTHER ISSUES THAT ARISE DIRECTLY FROM ITEM 5**
5. **TO FORMALLY SIGN OFF THE DECISIONS OF THE AWARD BOARD**
6. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**
7. **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**



University Centre Weston Directorate of Higher Education

Mitigating Circumstances: A Guide

Mitigating circumstances are any unforeseen or unpreventable circumstances that significantly affect a student's performance in an assessment (whether an examination, essay, seminar presentation, performance or other form of assessment). Mitigating circumstances may include illness affecting a student, serious illness affecting a close family member, bereavement or any other unforeseeable or unpreventable events.

The panel will also consider requests to suspend, repeat or change modes of study in response to student circumstances.

The following **will not** normally be regarded as mitigating circumstances:

- Failure to attend an examination due to misreading the examination timetable
- Loss of electronic work not appropriately backed up
- Events such as holidays and weddings
- Inadequate planning and time management
- Having more than one examination on the same day
- Pressures from paid employment for full-time students
- Any event that could reasonably have been expected or anticipated, such as participation in sporting events.

It is the responsibility of the student making a claim to formally inform the Directorate of Higher Education using the official standard Mitigating Circumstances form (attached). This form is available from the HEART Office in the Winter Gardens or the Directorate Offices on the 6th Floor of Knightstone, or online and should be returned in hard copy to the Head of Higher Education or directly emailed to mycourse@ucw.ac.uk with the necessary supporting evidence.

A claim for mitigating circumstances may be submitted at any time during the academic year as long as it is prior to the meeting of the relevant Programme Board. Claims for mitigating circumstances are considered at a number of meetings of University Centre Weston's Mitigating Circumstances Panel throughout the academic year.

All claims for mitigating circumstances must be supported by independent documentary evidence. In cases of illness, a medical certificate or doctor's letter must be submitted and in the case of bereavement, students will be expected to provide a photocopied death certificate.

MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES PANEL

The Membership of the Mitigating Circumstances Panel shall be:

- Head of Higher Education (Chair)
- Academic Registrar
- HE Partnership Manager
- HE Welfare and Retention Officer.

In the event that these members are not available, the Vice Principal Higher Education will nominate appropriate substitutes.

Terms of Reference:

- Neither marking staff nor the Programme Boards may apply discretion in respect of mitigating circumstances; all work must be marked on academic merit alone. Mitigating circumstances are only considered by the Mitigating Circumstances Panel.
- Requests for mitigating circumstances will be addressed to the Head of Higher Education who will bring both the claim and the evidence to the panel for a decision.
- Claims are considered by the Mitigating Circumstances Panel at their first available meeting and decisions will be communicated to the student in writing at the earliest opportunity. It may prove necessary to inform employers where their involvement in student availability and support is required.
- The Mitigating Circumstances Panel will consider each individual claim before making a recommendation to the relevant Programme Board on whether it considers the mitigating circumstances to be valid.
- If the Mitigating Circumstances Panel decides that the claim of mitigating circumstances is not valid, it will reject it and make this recommendation to the relevant Programme Board. It is therefore important that the Mitigating Circumstances Panel has access to fully documented evidence to support the claim.
- A list of all the decisions will be minuted and made available for Programme Boards, Award Boards and HE Board of Study as and when required.

University Centre Weston will not be responsible for contacting medical services, third parties or outside agencies for verification of mitigating circumstances. It is the student's responsibility to provide such evidence. In the absence of supporting evidence the Panel reserves the right to dismiss the claim for mitigating circumstances.

Students should note that unsupported medical self-certification will not be accepted under any circumstances, and nor will word-of-mouth or anecdotal evidence. Informing tutors of mitigating circumstances does not constitute the making of a claim, and the Mitigating Circumstances Panel will not consider mitigating circumstances on the basis of the comments of tutors alone. Staff can take the opportunity to write in support of the student if they so wish, however this in itself is not seen as sufficient evidence to support a claim.

In submitting mitigating circumstances evidence, the student is requesting that the Programme Board ignore a non-submission or a failed attempt, and allow the student to take the assessment within the resit period without penalty. The student should also be aware of the following points:

- The Mitigating Circumstances Panel is not obliged to accept evidence if it is not submitted in an appropriate format, or at the appropriate time.
- The Mitigating Circumstances Panel may accept evidence, but decide that it does not cover the case, or would not have materially altered results.

- The Mitigating Circumstances panel may find insufficient evidence for mitigating circumstances to be allowed and therefore reject the claim or request additional clarification.
- The Programme Board may defer assessment on the basis of mitigating circumstances evidence, but in no circumstances will it adjust marks.

It is the student's sole responsibility to ensure that mitigating evidence is submitted in time to be considered by the Mitigating Circumstances Panel. If the student is unable to submit a claim for mitigating circumstances at the appropriate time for good reason, e.g. because a medical condition was only diagnosed after the deadline for submitting claims, the student may submit an appeal against any subsequent decision. The student will be expected to prove to the Appeals Panel the reason why they were unable to submit the claim at the appropriate time, providing independent documentary evidence as appropriate.

If it is established to the satisfaction of the Mitigating Circumstances Panel that a student's absence, failure to submit work, or poor performance in all or part of the assessment was due to their proven illness or other valid and documented cause, it will make one of the following recommendations to the appropriate Programme Board:

- A student shall be assessed during the resit period as if for the first time, with the full range of marks available.
- If an assessment affected by illness was itself a second attempt, reassessment will be permitted as if for the second time and the mark will remain capped at 40%.
- An Aegrotat award may be made if a student is prevented by serious illness, injury or other sufficient cause from completing their course of study. In making such decision the Award Board should be satisfied that the student's prior performance shows beyond reasonable doubt that they would otherwise have passed and that due to the nature of the illness, injury, or other cause, the student would be unable to return to complete their course at a later date. An Aegrotat award shall be unclassified. (Any award that is conferred posthumously may be accepted by a parent, spouse or other appropriate individual.)

University Centre Weston Mitigating Circumstances Form

This form should be completed if your studies have been disrupted by circumstances out of your control. It should be submitted to HEART, University Centre Weston, 017 The Winter Gardens, Weston-super-Mare, BS23 1AJ or emailed directly online to mycourse@ucw.ac.uk. Claims cannot be considered without independent supporting documentary evidence, such as a medical certificate.

Unsupported self-certification cannot be accepted under any circumstances. **Please forward your supporting evidence to HEART within 14 days of making your claim.**

Your application will be rejected unless it is completed in full. Please ask a member of HEART to check it.

Student Name:		Student No.	
Email address:		Phone number:	
Award:		Stage/Year:	
Tutor:		Part-time/Full-time	
Nature of circumstances (please tick relevant boxes)			
Illness	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hospitalisation	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Death of close relative	<input type="checkbox"/>
Accident	<input type="checkbox"/>	Family illness	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
Please provide further relevant information about the cause of mitigating circumstances. If you are concerned about confidentiality, please leave this section blank and write directly to the Academic Registrar.			
Dates/periods of time work has been affected:			

Assessments (assignments/examinations) affected.
THIS FORM WILL BE REJECTED UNLESS ALL ELEMENTS ARE FILLED IN. THE SPECIFIC ASSESSMENT FOR THE MODULE MUST BE SPECIFIED. IF YOU ARE REQUESTING FOR THE WHOLE MODULE THEN PLEASE WRITE 'WHOLE MODULE' IN THE ASSESSMENT BOX.

Module title	Module code	Assessment title	Date work due
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			

Please ask your tutor to sign this form to confirm you have discussed this with them. Should you wish the nature of your mitigating circumstances application to be kept confidential, then please ask the tutor to sign this form first and then complete the application at a later date.

Your application will be rejected if it has not been signed by the Course Leader or Module Lead.

Course Leader:	
Signed:	Date:
HEART team member checked:	
Signed:	Date:



Five Working Day Extension Guidance on completing the Extension Request Form

This form must be returned to HEART (with evidence) no later than 14:00 two full working days (48 hours) before your coursework deadline.

The scope for making an application is limited to those experiencing the following circumstances (and **only** in cases where it would be appropriate to offer an extension):

- a. bereavement (close family member e.g. partner, parent, primary carer, child);
- b. serious personal accident or injury of self or close family member / serious illness of self or close family member (including mental health);
- c. victim of crime (requires a written statement of events, evidenced by a crime reference no. / police report **and** one of the following: evidence from a counsellor, doctor, victim support or legal adviser which confirms that the nature of the crime is likely to prevent the timely submission of the work);
- d. part time students who have had an unexpected increased in working hours (evidenced by a letter from the employer);
- e. sporting commitment at a national / international level;
- f. participation in activities at a national / international level;
- g. a unique career enhancing opportunity approved by the University Centre Weston

Use this form to request an extension to the original published submission deadline for a piece of assessed coursework.

DO NOT use this form if you **miss** an examination or other assessment (e.g. coursework submission, practice elements, in class test etc.) through illness or other good reason; in such situations you should complete a Mitigating Circumstances application.

Wherever possible you should request an extension as soon as you become aware that you will be unable to meet the original published deadline (but normally no earlier than two weeks before the deadline).

You should continue to work towards the original published deadline until the outcome of your request is known.

Filling in the form

- Complete **all parts** of the form. If you have difficulty, seek advice from HEART.
- Make sure you write **clearly** and **legibly**.
- Describe your circumstances, as fully and clearly as you can.
- Include the **dates** of relevant events.
- Describe **how** you believe the circumstances have impacted on your assessment.

- It is very important that you provide the correct module information as this will ensure there are no delays caused by queries. Make sure you have recorded the correct module code, name and element of assessment.

Providing evidence to support your application

- You **must** provide **supporting evidence** of the problem you are describing, such as a medical certificate. Please note that **applications cannot be considered without evidence**, requests submitted without evidence will be rejected.
- Submit the **original copies** of any documentary evidence with your form.
- If you would like the original copies of your evidence returned to you, mark this on the form.
- If you have difficulty knowing what evidence to submit, you can seek advice from the HE Unit.
- If your circumstances or the assessment type do not meet the criteria for an extension you may still be eligible to apply for extenuating circumstances.

Receipt

If you do not receive an acknowledgement e-mail within 5 days of when your form should have arrived with us, you must contact us to check that your form has been received.

Other important notes

- Extensions cannot be requested for **Group work** (e.g. jointly assessed group work, a group presentation, group design review, a group report for which the same mark is assigned to all contributors). **Assessments limited by logistical constraints** (e.g. assessments to be completed whilst on a field trip, assessments with a submission date which falls after the Friday before a Field Board, assessments submitted for marking in a studio by a group of staff at a fixed time - including work for an end of term degree show. **Practice elements of professional practice modules. Practical / skills based work** (e.g. an assessment taking place within a laboratory; Objective Structured Clinical Examinations). **Timed assignments** (e.g. multiple choice questions, computer based exams, tests, timed essays).
- There may be other cases where it is not possible to accommodate a student's request for an extension depending on the nature of an individual assessment.
- Extensions may not be granted for examinations or *any* resit work.
- Extension requests can only be considered if you put them in no later than 14:00, two working days (48 hours) **prior to** the assessment which will be impacted by the problems you describe. Requests submitted after this time cannot normally be considered.
- We strongly recommend you keep a copy of your form and of your supporting evidence.
- In the case of students with disabilities, if your circumstances do not fit the criteria or you require an adjustment to your deadline of longer than five working days please contact HEART.
- There should be no further extension upon an already granted extension.

Advice and support

If you would like advice and support from HEART you can contact us on:

- Telephone 01934 411403
- E-mail mycourse@ucw.ac.uk
- Come into room 017 at Winter Gardens or room A125a at University Campus

Submitting your form

Post or deliver your form and evidence in a sealed envelope to HEART

- Write on the envelope:
 - 'Extension request form'
 - Course Title
- Or send your form and evidence by email to: mycourse@ucw.ac.uk.

If your circumstances are not accepted

You will be expected to submit your coursework by the original deadline (or within the 24 hour window for the late submission of work), and your work will be marked on this basis. Alternatively, you may be eligible to submit an extenuating circumstances application

If your circumstances are accepted

You will be given a new deadline for the submission of the coursework and will be advised of this via email. It is your responsibility to check your emails for this confirmation.



Five Working Day Extension Application Form
University Centre Weston BSU students ONLY

Part 1 – student details

Family name:	First name(s):
Course:	
Email:	

Part 2 – details of the assessment/s and deadline/s that will be affected

Module Code	Module Name	Module Leader name	Assessment description e.g. Essay 1 Critical Analysis	Original published deadline	Please indicate whether an earlier version of the assessment has already been submitted online. (Y/N)	For office use only Accepted / Not accepted (insert reason if application is not accepted)	For office use only New deadline

Part 3 – details of your circumstances

Please use this space to provide details of the circumstances – including dates – that will lead you to be unable to meet the original published deadline/s

Part 4 - Evidence

Type of documentary evidence provided (medical certificate etc.). Please indicate if you wish to have the originals returned.

☐ I wish to have the originals returned to me (please tick if appropriate)

Part 5 - Declaration

Confidentiality

I understand that this form and any information I have submitted with it will be held in confidence by the Weston College and filed securely in accordance with the arrangements outlined in the College's Data Protection Policy. This form and the submitted information will be considered by the relevant staff, solely for purposes relating to academic assessment.

I declare that the information above is true, that the supporting evidence enclosed is genuine and that I have read the above statement on confidentiality.

Your signature (e-mail submission is taken as authentication):

Date:



University Centre Weston Directorate of Higher Education

Unfair Practice Policy and Procedures

ACADEMIC STANDARDS

University Centre Weston seeks to assist, guide and support students to understand and meet the appropriate and required levels of academic scholarship.

Good academic practices and standards are seen as critical to the maintenance of trust and integrity within the learning environment. Students are expected to apply these standards when producing their own academic work and in particular when referencing/crediting the work of others.

UNIVERSITY CENTRE WESTON'S RESPONSIBILITIES

University Centre Weston and staff will foster and support good standards of academic practice to help the student reference work correctly and avoid unintentional plagiarism. Where poor levels of scholarship are displayed, advice and support will be offered.

From the outset of their programme, students will be provided with appropriate guidance and information on how to avoid plagiarism and other assessment offences in the following ways:

- **Initial induction sessions and Student Handbooks:**
The appropriate conventions and standards for a particular subject discipline will be defined in assignment briefs, student handbooks, on-line, and other printed information provided by module co-ordinators and programme co-ordinators.
- **Library Induction:**
All first year HE students will attend compulsory 'H.E.L.P.' (Higher Education Library Plus) sessions which include an introduction to plagiarism. Students will be made aware of policies and documentation which will be available on Moodle.
Turnitin is available on all Moodle courses for staff to set up for all electronically submitted written assignments.
- **On-line support:**
Information regarding academic good practice is available on-line both at University Centre Weston and partner universities' websites.

STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES:

It is the responsibility of staff to:

- Stress to students the unethical nature of plagiarism and similar unfair practices.
- Make clear to students University Centre Weston's policy on plagiarism and unfair practices.
- Seek to ensure that students have the knowledge and skills required to enable them to cite and reference appropriately and make full use of appendices and bibliographies.

- See that good academic practice is embedded in the student learning programme particularly at level 4.
- See that clear programme specific information is provided, both on-line and in the student handbook.
- Support opportunities for academic scholarship skills training appropriate to the discipline alongside library-led workshops.
- Seek to 'design out' potential plagiarism in the development of modules, assignment briefs and learning outcomes.
- Provide appropriate guidance and support for students where poor scholarship skills have been identified.
- Investigate alleged assessment offences in accordance with University Centre Weston's regulations, and those of partner higher education institutions, regarding unfair practices.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

It is the responsibility of students to:

- Undertake all controlled component assessment assignments in accordance with University Centre Weston and higher education institutions' assessment regulations and unfair practice policies.
- Take a responsible attitude towards the development of good academic practice by engaging with the information and training opportunities provided by University Centre Weston regarding citation, referencing, paraphrasing, and use of appendices and bibliography.
- Ensure that work submitted for purposes of assessment is their own.
- Ensure that the words of others are appropriately cited and referenced using the accepted referencing system recommended by University Centre Weston and partner higher education institutions.
- Take responsibility for avoiding plagiarism in their own work and not allow other offences such as collusion and copying to take place.

Students are expected to present their own words, own analysis and own argument.

It is acceptable to use the work of others to support arguments and analysis, provided credit is correctly given.

Staff will inform as to what constitutes good practice and give help with referencing.

Students should ensure that work (whether paper-based or electronic) is not made available to others. Failure to secure work adequately can mean potential implication in an accusation of plagiarism.

It is not acceptable to submit the same piece of work for different assessments or modules, nor may students re-use work originally submitted at another institution for which credit has already been obtained. This constitutes 'double counting'.

Students may legitimately refer to the same body of material for more than one assignment, but it is never acceptable to submit the same work in more than one assignment.

If in any doubt about acceptable practice, students should consult the module leader or programme co-ordinator for advice before submission.

WHAT CONSTITUTES UNFAIR ACADEMIC PRACTICE?

Unacceptable academic practice, particularly in response to assessment, is known as unfair practice.

Unfair practice may take a variety of forms and the following will be considered as assessment offences by University Centre Weston and the validating university:

- Plagiarism
- Collusion
- Direct cheating: examinations/experiments/field reports/contract cheating
- Falsification
- Fabrication

The penalties for unfair academic practice can be severe.

1. PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism, according to the Oxford English Dictionary, is 'the taking and using as one's own the thoughts, writing or inventions of another.'

It is further defined in academic terms as:

When "someone uses words, ideas, or work products that are attributable to another identifiable person or source without attributing the work to the course from which it was obtained, in a situation where there is a legitimate expectation of original authorship, in order to obtain some benefit, credit or gain." (Fishman, 2011)¹

Plagiarism can take a variety of forms:

- Copying sections from one or more books or articles without acknowledgement of the source(s). Note the phrase 'one or more'. It is still plagiarism if sections are reproduced from several sources rather than one, in a 'cut and paste' approach.
- Excessive dependence upon one or a limited number of sources is plagiarism if the sources are inadequately referenced, even if the exact wording used by the original author(s) has been modified
- Using the web to download work and submitting as your own
- Using someone's ideas and paraphrasing material without acknowledging the source
- Copying another student's work without permission or referencing
- Incorrect referencing and lack of acknowledgement (bad scholarship practices) can lead to accusations of copying which in turn infer plagiarism.

University Centre Weston is committed to ensuring that students get proper credit for their work. This means making sure students are properly assessed in relation to the learning outcomes specified for the modules with staff using their academic judgement in the normal way. Proper assessment is compromised when students engage in unfair practice, in particular when they plagiarise, or otherwise present others' work as their own.

¹ FISHMAN, T. (2011). 'Integrity and incongruity in an increasingly integrated world'. The fifth ASKe conference on institutional policies and procedures for managing student plagiarism, Oxford Brookes University, 9 June 2011.

Students should be in no doubt that plagiarism is CHEATING, and is a very serious offence in higher education. Pleas that a student was not aware of the offence or its consequences, or did not understand what constitutes plagiarism, will not be accepted under any circumstance. Plagiarism will result in a penalty even when it is unintended or unwitting.

For clarity and to support good practice, University Centre Weston subscribes to a Plagiarism Detection Service (PDS) 'Turnitin'. This compares work submitted to it with millions of pages of internet-based material -- including work uploaded to the service by other students. All written work is submitted to 'Turnitin'.

Please note that the use of electronic detection software in this way is seen as supporting the exercise of academic judgement by staff and not as a replacement for it.

Additionally academic staff may choose to make the outcome reports from plagiarism software scrutiny available to students whether in draft or final format to be used as part of formative feedback to the student, or as a learning tool to improve the student's understanding of acceptable and unacceptable academic practice.

2. COLLUSION

Examples of this include:

- Students should be aware of the distinction between 'collaboration' and 'collusion'. Some assignments encourage or require students to collaborate with fellow students and submit joint work. The majority however assess individual work and do not permit collusion. Students should never submit joint work unless it is clearly required by the module's written documentation.
- Where a student claims as their own, work done in collaboration with another person(s), with the intention to gain unfair advantage.
- A student knowingly permitting another to copy all or part of their work and allowing them to submit it as their own unaided work.

3. DIRECT CHEATING

Examples of this include:

- Making use of mobile/smart phones, or any similar technological device, to obtain an unfair advantage in a controlled component situation, for example examination, or timed laboratory assignments
- Discovered possessing relevant supporting notes in an examination
- Submitting work that has been completed wholly or in part by another person on their behalf such as the use of a ghost-writing service (contract cheating)
- Making work available to other students for financial gain in an attempt to deceive the institution involved
- Impersonation in examinations.

4. FALSIFICATION

- Misrepresentation of experimental/research data
- Actual falsification of references, bibliographies, laboratory reports, and project information.

5. FABRICATION

- Creating reports on research and experiments never undertaken, and the fabrication of data

- Submission of fraudulent mitigating circumstances.

Plagiarism in particular has increased in recent years, partly due to the accessibility of information on the Internet. Students should not imagine that cases of Unfair Practice will not be detected.

Every case of Unfair Practice, however minor the scale of the case, is taken very seriously by University Centre Weston and will be investigated and all cases where deception is detected will be reported.

UNFAIR PRACTICE PROCEDURE

There are **two** perceived stages to the procedure:

STAGE 1

This is for cases where the lecturer detects plagiarism but suspects that 'unwitting plagiarism' has occurred which is due to poor academic practice or scholarship and the student could not reasonably be expected to realise that plagiarism had occurred.

The issue will be raised with the student and the Programme Co-ordinator. Suitable support will be recommended to ensure the student conforms to good academic practice in the future.

It is most likely for this to occur in level 4 of study but should be unlikely to occur at levels 5 and 6.

The Programme Co-ordinator and the lecturer as part of their academic judgement will make sure the marks reflect this poor academic/scholarship practice.

A note will be made by the Programme Co-ordinator indicating that this 'unwitting plagiarism' has occurred along with the recommendation for support given to the student. A copy will be sent to the Head of Higher Education for future reference.

The Unfair Practice Committee is not involved.

STAGE 2

This is for cases where an example of plagiarism, collusion, or other unacceptable academic practices is detected.

Where staff identify examples of cheating, plagiarism, assessment offences or other unacceptable academic practices the Programme Co-ordinator and the Head of Higher Education must be informed immediately, along with the appropriate HE Partnership Manager.

A written report will be compiled by the Programme Co-ordinator including all the relevant details, stating the nature of the alleged offence and the evidence supporting it. This report will be submitted to the Unfair Practice Committee for consideration.

The student must be informed of the procedures in relation to this allegation. They can seek guidance from the HE Student Support Officer and may respond to the allegation by submitting written evidence as appropriate.

UNFAIR PRACTICE COMMITTEE: MEMBERSHIP

The membership of the Unfair Practice Committee shall be:

- Vice Principal Higher Education or his or her appropriate nominee (Chair)
- Assistant Director HE: Curriculum and Quality
- Head of Higher Education
- HE Partnership Manager

In the event that these members are not available, the Vice Principal Higher Education will nominate appropriate substitutes.

The committee will meet on a 'needs basis' in order to submit its recommendations to the Programme Board. An annual report will be presented at Higher Education Board of Study.

The Unfair Practice committee will judge the seriousness of the offence and apply the appropriate penalty, if applicable. In determining the penalty to be applied, the committee will consider the following issues:

- Degree of deception
- Previous offence
- Amount/volume of work (component or module)
- Academic level at which the offence occurs
- Explanation received from the student.

Where an accusation of unfair practice has been substantiated, the accusation is said to be established and the decision transmitted to the student by the Head of Higher Education, and formally by the Chair to the relevant Programme Board.

PENALTIES FOR UNFAIR PRACTICE

There are potentially **four** possible outcomes:

In the case of a first and/or lesser offence (evidence of plagiarism, collusion or fabrication):

Penalty 1: Assessment component mark is reduced to 40%.

Penalty 2: Assessment mark is reduced to 0% and student is referred (resit) in the module which will be capped at 40%.

In the case of a serious offence (evidence which identifies plagiarism, cheating, collusion, falsification or fabrication)

Penalty 3: Assessment mark is reduced to 0%.
Appropriate credits are awarded.
Classification affected.

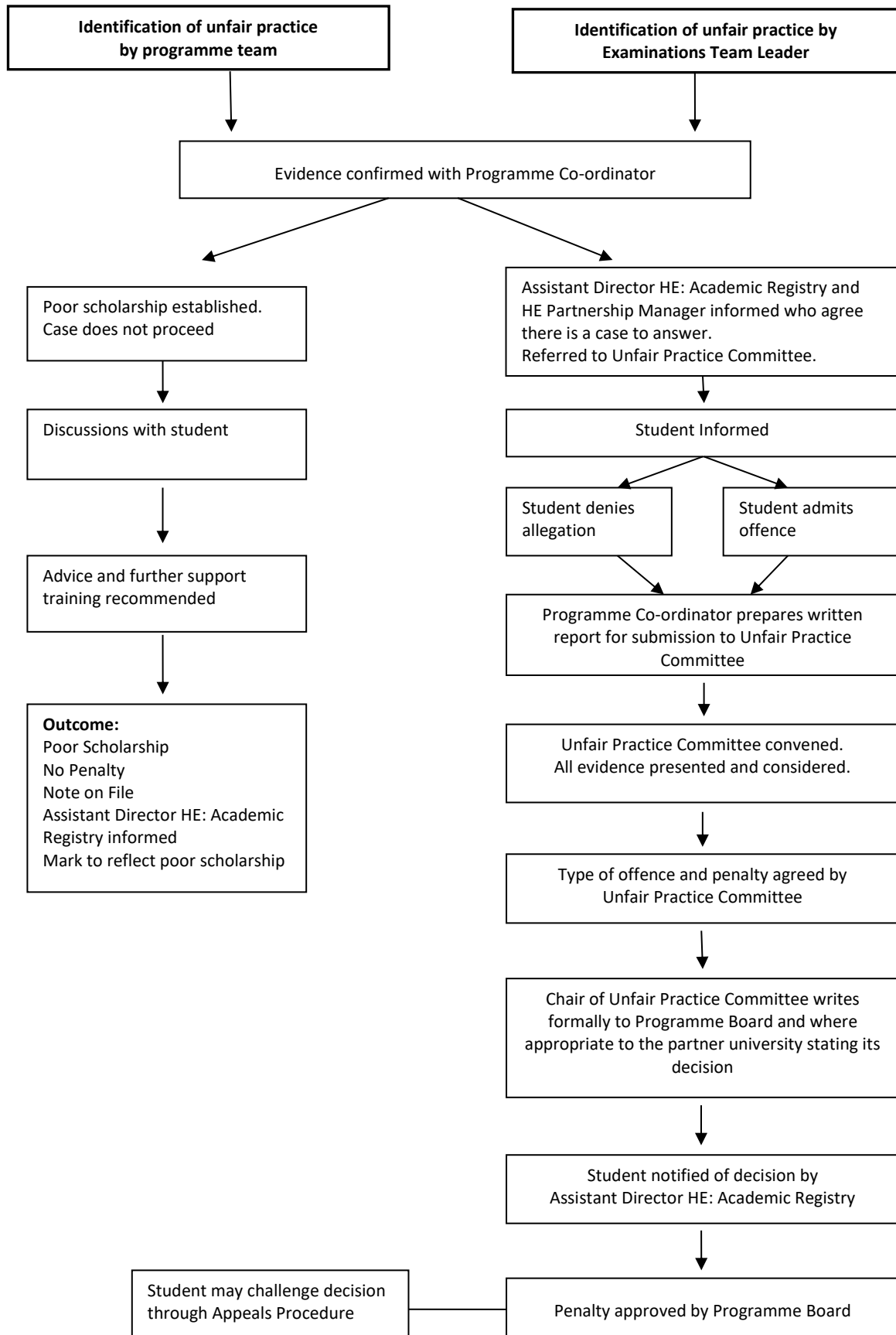
Penalty 4: Failure in the programme of study.
Student has no right to redeem but is allowed credit for marks at a level already received.
A lesser award.

NB: Evidence established post award can cause cases to be re-opened and awards suspended. Where the Unfair Practice Committee has determined that an offence has been committed and a student has submitted mitigating circumstances, the decision of the Unfair Practice Committee takes precedence over the decision of the Mitigating Circumstances Panel.

Please refer to the two following diagrams:

1. Unfair Practice: Action Timeline
2. Unfair Practice: Penalty Table

UNFAIR PRACTICE: ACTION TIMELINE



UNIVERSITY CENTRE WESTON DIRECTORATE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

UNFAIR PRACTICE: PENALTY TABLE

Stage 1: Evidence not presented to Unfair Practice Committee

Alleged Offence	Offence Established	Normal Penalty Applied
Suspected plagiarism reported Level 4 only	Poor scholarship established	No penalty. Support arranged. Programme Co-ordinator checks that the mark reflects poor scholarship. Note of offence placed on record.

Stage 2: Evidence presented to Unfair Practice Committee

Alleged Offence	Offence Established	Normal Penalty Applied
Evidence clearly shows plagiarism and/or collusion	First and lesser offence established and agreed. Committee balances the level of offence considering the key issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree of deception Previous offence Amount/volume of work (component or module) Academic level at which the offence occurs Explanation from student 	1. Assessment component mark is reduced to 40%.
		2. Assessment mark is reduced to 0% and student is referred (resit) in the module which will be capped at 40%.
Evidence showing serious plagiarism, cheating, collusion, falsification or fabrication	Serious offence established and agreed. Committee balances the level of offence considering the key issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree of deception Previous offence Amount/volume of work (component or module) Academic level at which the offence occurs Explanation from student 	3. Assessment mark is reduced to 0%. Appropriate credits are awarded. Classification affected.
		4. Failure in the programme of study. Student has no right to redeem but is allowed credit for marks at a level already received. A lesser award.

NB: Evidence established post award can cause cases to be re-opened and awards suspended.



University Centre Weston Directorate of Higher Education

Higher Education Appeals Procedure

1. Introduction

The HE Appeals Procedure is established to constitute a framework for considering appeals against decisions made at the Award Boards.

Without prejudice to the outcome of an appeal, a student may continue to attend classes and to make use of University Centre Weston facilities whilst their appeal is being heard. Therefore, any student making an appeal should continue with his/her studies as normal, including studying for any retakes.

2. Grounds for Appeal

Students have the right of appeal to the Appeals Committee against a decision of an Award Board, where the grounds for appeal are one or more of the following:

- That their performance in the examination/assessment was adversely affected by illness or other factors that they could not reasonably have been expected to divulge before the Award Board reached its decision
- That there has been a material and significant administrative error
- That the examination/assessment was not conducted in accordance with University Centre Weston's Controlled Component Policy
- That some other material and significant irregularity has occurred.

Appeals on the following grounds will not be considered:

- Against the academic judgement of internal or external examiners
- Informal assessments of the student's work by members of academic staff
- Marginal failure to attain a higher class of degree
- The retrospective reporting of extenuating circumstances which a student might reasonably have been expected to disclose to the Award Board before their meeting
- Lack of awareness of relevant procedures or regulations.

3. Procedures for Applying to the Appeals Committee

Letter of appeal

- A student wishing to appeal must write to the Head of Higher Education, Directorate of Higher Education, University Centre Weston, Knightstone Road, Weston-super-Mare BS23 2AL, specifying the ground(s) for appeal.
- The letter of appeal must either be given by hand to the Directorate within 10 working days of the publication of the results, or bear a post mark dated no more than 10 working days after the publication of results. The receipt of the appeal will be acknowledged within 5 working days.
- The formal letter of appeal must contain:

A stamped self-addressed envelope
A completed appeals form
Medical certificates or other documentary evidence material to the case
The decision of the Award Board.

Action on receipt of an appeal:

- The Chair of the Appeals Committee will investigate all appeals and may consult such persons, as he/she thinks fit. All valid appeals will then be taken to an Appeals Committee. Students submitting invalid appeals will be written to with an explanation of why their appeal was not valid. Students with valid appeals will be written to informing them that their appeal will be heard by the Committee and inviting them to attend.

4. Appeals Committee

Membership

- A Senior Academic appointed by the Vice Principal Higher Education or his or her appropriate nominee (Chair)
- Assistant Director HE: Curriculum and Quality
- Head of Higher Education
- HE Partnership Manager
- At least one member from the faculty where the programme under discussion is based.

In the event that these members are not available, the Vice Principal Higher Education will nominate appropriate substitutes.

Terms of Reference

- To consider prima facie valid appeals against decisions of Award Boards and to determine action in response to such appeals.
- To report annually to Higher Education Board of Study summaries of appeals.

Procedure

- Dates of the meetings of the Appeals Committee shall be established when dates for Award Boards are established.
- The Chair shall require any member of the Committee to withdraw, where that member has a close academic connection with an appeal. All members shall be asked to declare any significant connection with any appeal.
- The Appeals Committee may require the appellant to appear before it, in which case he or she may be accompanied.
- The proceedings of the Appeals Committee shall be formally minuted.
- It shall be the responsibility of the Head of Higher Education to conduct all its correspondence on behalf of the Committee.

Attendance by students

- Any student attending the meeting of the Appeals Committee may be accompanied by a friend. If the student is unable to attend the meeting of the Appeals Committee the meeting will nevertheless take place and the decision made will still be valid. A student who is unable to attend the meeting can ask a member of University Centre Weston or the Students' Union to attend on his/her behalf.

5. Powers and Responsibilities

- The Appeals Committee shall consider all appeals. It may decide that:

The grounds of the appeal are not valid.

The grounds of the appeal are valid but the appeal is not upheld.

The grounds of the appeal are valid and the appeal is upheld.

- The Head of Higher Education will inform the student in writing of its decision together with brief reasons for its decision within five working days of the Appeals Committee meeting.
- Where the appeal is successful, and where appropriate, the Appeal may change a 'referred' to a 'deferred'. In all other instance of a successful appeal, the decision of the Award Board shall be referred to its Chair, who shall be required to review its original decision in the light of the opinion of the Appeals Committee.
- In making the review the Chair shall consult at least two other members of the Award Board and an External Examiner where one was present.
- The Chair of the Award Board shall report the process and outcome of the review in writing to the Chair of the Appeals Committee.

6. Further Right of Appeal

- Students have a further right of appeal to the Assistant Principal, Curriculum, Teaching and Learning but only if University Centre Weston materially fails to comply with the Appeals Procedure, and the student can demonstrate that s/he has suffered detriment. If the student wishes to appeal the student must write to the Principalship, University Centre Weston, Weston-super-Mare, BS23 2AL, specifying the grounds of appeal. The letter making the further appeal must be posted within ten working days of notification of the outcome of the appeal.
- The Principalship will inform the student of the outcome of his/her further appeal within five working days of the hearing. This decision will be final.
- Once the College's processes have been exhausted, students who are not satisfied with the outcome of the decision may appeal to Bath Spa University. Students should refer to the appropriate procedure (<http://www.bathspa.ac.uk/regulations/appeals-procedure>).
- Students, who still feel that their appeal has not been satisfactorily dealt with, may be entitled to take the appeal to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (www.oiahe.org.uk).



University Centre Weston Directorate of Higher Education

APPEAL FORM

This form is to be completed in order to appeal against the decision of an Award Board. This form should be read in conjunction with the Appeals Procedure, a copy of which is available from HEART.

Name:	
Student No.	
Address:	
Telephone:	
Email:	
Programme of Study:	
Year:	
Faculty:	

Please indicate here which grounds apply and then give full details of your complaint on the following sheet(s).

Mitigating circumstances	
Procedural irregularities:	
(a) administrative	
(b) conduct of examinations	
Other	

Signature:	
Date:	

Complete this form and submit it to the Head of Higher Education within ten working days of publication of your examination results. Enclose any medical certificates or other documentary evidence material to the case.

If you require any further information, please contact:
 HE Student Welfare and Retention Officer (Directorate of Higher Education)
 Tel. 01934 411403 Email: mycourse@weston.ac.uk

GROUND FOR APPEAL – MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES:

“That their performance in the examination/assessment was adversely affected by illness or other factors that they could not reasonably have been expected to divulge before the Award Board reached its decision”.

Mitigating circumstances are defined as: “Circumstances beyond a student’s control which could cause him or her to perform significantly less well in coursework or examinations than he or she might otherwise have expected”. If these circumstances involve illness then the student must provide evidence. Normally only a Doctor’s note will be considered sufficient. Unsupported claims will not be accepted.

Please give full details of grounds on which you are appealing below:

GROUND FOR APPEAL – PROCEDURAL IRREGULARITIES:

“That there has been a material and significant administrative error or that the examinations were not conducted in accordance with the College’s Controlled Component Policy”.

Please give full details of grounds on which you are appealing below:

GROUND FOR APPEAL – OTHER

“That some other material and significant irregularity has occurred”. Other grounds will be considered on their merit, but the following are not considered legitimate grounds on which to appeal, and any appeals based on the following grounds for appeal will NOT be considered:

- Appeals against the academic judgement of internal or external examiners.
- Informal assessments of the student’s work by members of academic staff.
- Marginal failure to attain a higher class of degree.
- The retrospective reporting of mitigating circumstances which a student might reasonably have been expected to disclose to the Award Board before their meeting.

Please give full details of grounds on which you are appealing below:



University Centre Weston Directorate of Higher Education

ACCREDITATION OF PRIOR LEARNING POLICY

Policy Aim.

To facilitate the assessment and recognition of prior learning that students may have gained through previous experience.

Principles.

- To enable recognition of prior learning in support of flexible learning pathways
- To promote lifelong learning
- To support widening participation
- To develop employability
- To increase opportunities for partnership working
- To ensure decisions are accessible, transparent, fair and consistent

These principles reflect University Centre Weston's objectives which seek to ensure equality of opportunity and widening participation.

University Centre Weston may award credit for successfully assessed experiential learning and/or for learning accredited by other institutions delivering higher education or other bodies recognised by University Centre Weston for this purpose.

Scrutiny of prior learning for the purpose of the recognition by University Centre Weston of credit toward a named award should be undertaken by academic staff within faculties in accordance with the procedures. Such staff shall have appropriate programme discipline and/or professional expertise and should have regard for University Centre Weston information and guidance on accreditation of prior learning.

Accreditation may be used for:

- Admission to a programme of study. (Please refer to Admissions Statement.)
- Awarding credit to allow admission to a programme of study at a point subsequent to initial entry (advanced standing), e.g. transferring from another university.
- The recognition of credit towards an award.

Conditions

- Any module for which credit is awarded will be capped at a 40% pass. No classification will be awarded.
- The maximum credit allowed within any single award is two-thirds.

In general University Centre Weston would look to advise students where possible to engage fully with the integrated nature of the learning experience presented within a programme of study.

FEES

In respect of HEFCE-funded programmes, an applicant should not usually be charged a fee for consideration of their application. However the programme fee will not be reduced.

GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

Applications

In all cases claims for APL should be submitted to the Head of Higher Education. Students should initially discuss the potential and suitability of their proposed claim directly with the Head of Higher Education.

Types of Accreditation

Generally students ask for one of two types of accreditation for prior learning to be considered:

- **AP(C)L: Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning**

This is where a student is seeking admission to a programme of study or is seeking to transfer from another higher education institution onto a similar programme at the same level and already has verifiable passes in modules containing equivalent learning outcomes. Another example might be a student wishing to change the mode of study from part-time to full-time or vice versa.

- **AP(E)L: Accreditation of Experiential Learning**

This is where a student has prior and relevant experience academically and professionally which might be seen to match closely the entry requirements and/or the learning outcomes of a particular module and can be supported by a portfolio of evidence or successful completion of a written project set at the correct academic level; the portfolio to include a mapping of student reflection on how the relevant learning outcomes have been met, job descriptions and independent corroboration.

Process

It is the student's ultimate responsibility to decide the grounds on which he/she wishes to make a claim for APL.

In the case of AP(C)L the appropriate form should be submitted, together with an academic transcript obtained from the higher education institution at which they have studied. This should include programme title, level, dates results obtained, module descriptors and learning outcomes.

The Head of Higher Education, with reference to the relevant Programme Co-ordinator and the Assistant Director HE: Curriculum and Quality where appropriate, will oversee the decision making in these cases.

In the case of AP(E)L an outline of the potential claim should be submitted to the Head of Higher Education, following which the applicant will be referred to the programme co-ordinator for detailed advice about compiling a portfolio of evidence. The programme co-ordinator should usually provide support to students wishing to make such claims and guidance on the verification of professional expertise and currency of prior learning.

In some cases a suitable written assignment may also be prescribed.

Upon formal submission the Head of Higher Education will pass the portfolio of evidence on to the appropriate Programme Co-ordinator for consideration, who should use the following criteria to inform their decision.

Guidance Criteria for Staff Making Assessments

- **AP(C)L**

The transcript or other evidence provided should include clear confirmation of the institution of study; (validating body); course/programme title studied; student name; dates of study; modules passed and credit points achieved; and/or final award. Vigilance should be exercised where any of the above details are omitted, and additional evidence normally sought. If there are any queries about the authenticity of the transcript (including if the student now bears a different name to the one listed on the transcript), the Head of Higher Education will need to note that approval is pending sight of the original document or other evidence. Admission onto a programme must be based on receipt of sufficient documentary evidence.

- **AP(E)L**

A portfolio of evidence and/or written assignment for experiential learning is assessed against the learning outcomes of the module(s) for which a claim is made.

There are five criteria to consider:

- **Content:** does the evidence indicate that the student has acquired the types of knowledge/ understanding and skills developed in the module(s)?
- **Level:** does the evidence indicate that the learning has been at the same higher education level as the module(s)?
- **Volume:** does the evidence indicate that the learning has been of sufficient volume to deserve credit equivalent to the module(s)?
Note: this is particularly important in placement-type modules where the student must have a certain length of work experience.
- **Currency:** is the learning still current, in relation to the module learning outcomes? As a rule of thumb, ten years is considered the maximum 'shelf life' over which the learning is considered current. However, this will depend on subject. For instance, learning in subjects where there has been rapid technological development, or where professional requirements have changed, will have briefer currency.
- **Authenticity:** are you confident that the evidence presented is authentic?

The student should provide evidence of **broad equivalence** – i.e. that he/she has met the same learning outcomes as a student who has taken and passed the module. If the module is a prerequisite for another, or if it is a core or compulsory module within a student's programme, the student must provide evidence to suggest that he/she is sufficiently prepared to progress to the next module or level. The student must provide an equivalent document that clearly maps materials in the portfolio against the module learning outcomes, normally in the form of a grid. It is not the job of the programme co-ordinator to do this mapping. A claim might be referred back if the student has not completed this properly.

The Programme Co-ordinator, after consideration of this evidence, will make one of three recommendations (outlined below) and return to the Head of Higher Education for communication to the student.

Formal Decision

Possible recommendations are:

1. **Acceptance** of the accreditation for the specified module(s).
2. **Referral** of the claim. The student is encouraged to resubmit. Comments in the feedback section should make it clear where the weaknesses are. In cases where it might be difficult to provide new evidence, the student might be invited to demonstrate learning by undertaking a written or oral assignment.

3. **Rejection** of the claim. The student is not encouraged to resubmit (comments should make it clear where the shortfalls are), and therefore encouraged to engage with the whole programme where appropriate.

The Head of Higher Education will meet with the Programme Co-ordinator and where appropriate with the Assistant Director HE: Curriculum and Quality to establish:

1. Claims which may be formally approved and signed off at that point.
2. Claims which require further evidence.
3. Claims which cannot be accepted.

Notification of Decision

When the claim has been formally approved the Head of Higher Education will send notification to the student. Confirmation will be passed to the Business Lead: HE Student Records, for input to the student's record as soon as possible.

When a claim has been referred the Head of Higher Education will send notification to the student asking for specific supporting evidence to be provided for clarification and support of the claim.

When the claim has been rejected the Head of Higher Education will send notification to the student indicating the grounds for rejection.

The Head of Higher Education has final approval for all decisions.

University Centre Weston Directorate of Higher Education
Accreditation of Prior Learning Application Form (Cover Sheet)

STUDENT NAME:		STUDENT NUMBER	
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PROGRAMME APPLIED FOR: <i>(list title and/or code)</i>

PERSONAL DETAILS	
Surname	
Forename(s)	
Former Name <i>(if applicable – proof of name change to be submitted with application)</i>	
Title <i>(eg Mr, Mrs, Ms, Miss)</i>	Male / Female
Correspondence address	
Postcode	
Telephone No	Email <i>(for current students, we will use your student mail)</i>

APPLYING FOR: <i>(please tick as appropriate)</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning: AP(C)L <input type="checkbox"/> <p>If you are applying for AP(C)L, please attach a list of the modules for which you are seeking credit, a transcript of your results so far, and an outline (printed from the website of your current institution) of the module content.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning: AP(E)L <input type="checkbox"/> <p>If you are applying for AP(E)L, please complete the application form and attach it to your portfolio or completed assignment.</p>	

FOR UNIVERSITY CENTRE WESTON USE ONLY	
Date received by Head of Higher Education: _____	
Offer <input type="checkbox"/>	Reject <input type="checkbox"/> (Programme Co-ordinator to indicate)
Reasons for Rejection: _____	
Programme Co-ordinator: _____	
	Signature _____ Date _____
Assistant Director HE: Curriculum and Quality: _____	
	Signature _____ Date _____
Approved by Head of Higher Education: _____	
	Signature _____ Date _____

This cover sheet, together with the required documentation outlined above, should be returned to:

Head of Higher Education
 Directorate of Higher Education
 University Centre Weston
 Knightstone Road
 Weston-super-Mare BS23 2AL

University Centre Weston Directorate of Higher Education
ACCREDITATION OF PRIOR CERTIFICATED LEARNING: AP(C)L

*This form must be completed by a programme co-ordinator in order to make a recommendation for credit on the basis of Prior Learning which is **Certificated** (that is, formally assessed and resulting in a qualification or award of credit). On signature by the Assistant Director HE: Curriculum and Quality, this document becomes confirmation of AP(C)L and is copied to the Applicant and all relevant departments*

Student's Surname:	Forename:	Student Number:
Programme Title:		

*List below the module codes for any **COMPULSORY MODULES** where learning outcomes have been acceptably covered by the student's prior learning. It is helpful to annotate and append a copy of the transcript to indicate where there is broad equivalence with University Centre Weston programme modules*

Certificated Module Title	University Centre Weston Module Title	Number of Acceptable Credits

Sum of Total Credit to:	Level 4:		Level 5:		Level 6:		<i>NB: The total volume of AP(C)L should not normally exceed the Maximum Credit Limits by award.</i>
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<p>Confirmation</p> <p>Student accepted for entry at: UG Level 4 <input type="checkbox"/> UG Level 5 <input type="checkbox"/> UG Level 6 <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Student required to take the following module(s), not covered by AP(C)L above, to meet course requirements for the level/stage of entry. <i>(Please list module title and credit value)</i></p> <p>_____</p>
--

Programme Co-ordinator:
Signature Date

Assistant Director HE: Curriculum and Quality:
Signature Date

Attach applicant's form, together with all evidence and any additional feedback, and return to:
Head of Higher Education, University Centre Weston,, Knightstone Campus, BS23 2AL

University Centre Weston Directorate of Higher Education

ACCREDITATION OF PRIOR EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING: AP(E)L

*This form must be completed by programme co-ordinators in order to make a recommendation for credit on the basis of Prior Learning which is **Experiential** (that is, uncertified learning which did not result in the award of credit or a qualification. On signature by the Assistant Director HE: Curriculum and Quality, this document becomes confirmation of AP(E)L and is copied to the Applicant and all relevant departments*

STUDENT NAME		STUDENT NUMBER	
PROGRAMME <i>(including module title and code)</i>			
MODULE CLAIMED <i>(please complete separate form for each module claimed)</i>			<i>Tick to confirm</i>
Content: does the evidence indicate that the student has acquired the types of knowledge/ understanding and skills developed in the module(s)?			
Level: does the evidence indicate that the learning has been at the same higher education level as the modules?			
Volume: does the evidence indicate that the learning has been of sufficient volume to deserve credit equivalent to the module(s)? <i>Note: this is particularly important in placement-type modules where the applicant must have a certain length of work experience.</i>			
Currency: is the learning still current, in relation to the module learning outcomes? <i>Note: as a rule of thumb, ten years is considered the maximum 'shelf life' over which the learning is considered current. However, this will depend on subject. For instance, learning in subjects where there has been rapid technological development, or where professional requirements have briefer currency.</i>			
Authenticity: are you confident that the evidence presented is authentic?			
DECISION			<i>Tick to confirm</i>
Accept portfolio for credit against module listed above			
Refer the claim. Student is encouraged to resubmit. <i>Note: Comments in Feedback section below should make it clear where the weaknesses are. In cases where it might be difficult to provide new evidence, the student might be invited to demonstrate learning by undertaking a piece of written or oral assessment.</i>			
Reject the claim and recommend student to engage with the whole programme. Student is not encouraged to resubmit (comments below should make it clear where the shortfalls are)			
FEEDBACK ON ANY WEAKNESSES OR GAPS / SUGGESTIONS FOR RESUBMISSION			

Programme Co-ordinator:
Signature
Date

Assistant Director HE: Curriculum and Quality:
Signature
Date

Attach applicant's form, together with all evidence, and return to the Head of Higher Education, University Centre Weston, Knightstone Campus, BS23 2AL.

Portfolio to be collected from Head of Higher Education at above address (the portfolio will be retained until after the External Examiner has visited)		Portfolio enclosed with feedback	
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((Tick as appropriate))



University Centre Weston Directorate of Higher Education

Ethical Research: Protocol and Procedure

1. Context

In the light of University Centre Weston increasing its higher education provision in terms of numbers and breadth of disciplines, a need to develop arrangements for the regulation and monitoring of research ethics has been recognised. This is necessary to assure that guidance frameworks from professional associations are being observed and that any ethical issues that may arise have been taken into account when considering research, and also to provide information and guidance if and when ethical issues arise in the course of enquiry.

2. Principles and Procedure

2.1 All research will be informed by the British Educational Research Association (BERA) ethical guidelines (www.bera.ac.uk). All academic staff engaged in higher education programmes will need to be familiar with these guidelines, and should make students aware of the guidelines as a reference point prior to engaging in any research activity. It will be the responsibility of the Directorate of Higher Education to inform academic staff when the guidelines are updated.

2.2 Prior to undertaking research, the researcher should complete an “Ethical Protocol Checklist” and submit it to the member of academic staff supervising the activity. Following consideration of the proposal, the member of staff supervising will confirm one of two statements:

- *Appropriate action and consideration shown to maintain ethical standards following discussion – no further action required*
- or
- *To be submitted to the Ethics Committee for ethical approval*

This judgement will be informed by knowledge of the BERA ethical guidelines and an understanding of the programme area. Where no further action is required, the research can commence with no further action. If there is a question over the research that requires clarification and/or further comment, it will be referred to the University Centre Weston Ethics Committee terms of reference.

3. Ethical Protocol. A commitment

As previously stated, research will be guided and informed by the BERA ethical guidelines. These guidelines provide the basis and reference points for the University Centre Weston approach to ethical research. All staff and students are required to be aware of them. The BERA guidelines ensure a commitment to the following:

- Openness and honesty about the purpose of the study.
- Informed consent, including permission to use utterances of adults and young people involved in the study.
- The right to withdraw from the study.
- Data to be held securely and confidentially under the requirement of the Data Protection Act.
- Visual images of young people only to be taken and used with written permission of parents/carers.

- A debriefing to participants based on any outcome(s).
- Unless explicitly waived, in writing, by participants, anonymity in reporting is expected.
- Protection of participants from physical, educational or psychological harm.
- Respect for the rights of participants to be subjects and not passive objects.
- The engagement of a key individual as a critical friend to advise on any matters of ethical concern as they might arise.
- Due regard should be shown to the regulations covering children, vulnerable young people and adults.

4. Further points to consider

- Supervising staff will be responsible for advising students on ethical practices in their research, and directing them to the BERA ethical guidelines.
- Ethical conduct is an ongoing practice rather than a procedure. All staff and students need to be vigilant regarding ethical practice at all stages of research, not just the point at which the checklist is completed and discussed.
- Ethical practice remains a professional judgement. Where a judgement needs clarification, a critical friend, supervising staff member or Ethics Committee will provide the necessary support. If in doubt, support should be sought.
- To all those participating in research, an agreement governing the conduct of the enquiry, confidentiality procedures, and rights and obligations concerning access to and release of data should be offered.
- Research with children needs particular consideration due to special statutory provision as well as power inequalities that may occur when the participant is a child.
- The principle of participant withdrawal should always be observed, irrespective of research consequences.
- Methods should be fit and appropriate for purpose.

5. Misconduct

All educational researchers must protect the integrity and reputation of educational research by ensuring they conduct their research to the highest standards. BERA guidelines suggest that researchers must therefore not bring research into disrepute by, for example:

- Falsifying research evidence or findings;
- 'Sensationalizing' findings in a manner that sacrifices intellectual capital for maximum public exposure;
- Distorting findings by selectively publishing some aspects and not others;
- Criticizing other researchers in a defamatory or unprofessional manner;
- Exploiting the conditions of work and roles of contract research staff;
- Undertaking work for which they are perceived to have a conflict of interest or where self-interest or commercial gain might be perceived to compromise the objectivity of the research;
- Undertaking work for which they are not competent;
- Using work carried out with co-researchers as the basis of individual outputs without the agreement of the co-researchers concerned;
- Using research for fraudulent or illegal purposes.

University Centre Weston Directorate of Higher Education

Ethical Protocol Checklist

This checklist should be completed by the researcher who is intending to undertake research with human participants. On completion it should be placed as an appendix to the research. The form will show whether or not an application for ethical approval needs to go to the University Centre Weston Ethics Committee.

Proposed Title of Study: _____

Researcher: _____

Staff supervising: _____

PART 1:

1. Could the research induce psychological stress or anxiety, cause harm or have negative consequences for the participants (beyond the risks encountered in their normal lifestyles)? **YES / NO**
2. Will deception of the participants be necessary during the study? **YES / NO**
3. Will the study involve prolonged or repetitive testing? **YES / NO**
4. Will the study involve medical procedures? **YES / NO**
5. Will financial inducements be offered to participants? **YES / NO**
6. Will you be unable to obtain permission to involve children under sixteen from the school or parents? **YES / NO**
7. Are there any difficulties with the participants' right to remain anonymous or to have the information they give, not identifiable as theirs? **YES / NO**
8. Is the right to withdraw from the study at any time withheld or not made explicit? **YES / NO**
9. Does your planned research infringe any regulations or practices they may already have in place? **YES / NO**
10. Do participants have any objections to being bound by University Centre Weston's requirements for ethical research practices? **YES / NO**
11. Does the study involve participants who are particularly vulnerable e.g. people with learning difficulties, emotional problems or difficulties with understanding and/or communication? **YES / NO**

If you have answered **NO** to each of these questions you do not need to apply for ethical approval for your study. **HOWEVER** you are reminded that ethical issues arise throughout a research study and you will need to maintain vigilance throughout your research regarding ethics, and you may need to append this checklist as part of your submission. If you are in any doubt regarding the ethics of your study then you should discuss it with your supervisor and apply for ethical approval.

If you have answered **YES** to any of the questions, please complete Part 2 of this form.

PART 2:

Proposed Title of Study: _____

Researcher: _____

Staff supervising: _____

Please summarise the issues that need to be addressed relating to the ethical problem:

Signed by Researcher: _____ Date: _____

To be completed by staff supervising following discussion with researcher:

Appropriate action and consideration shown to maintain ethical standards following discussion – no further action required **YES / NO**

To be submitted to the Ethics Committee for ethical approval **YES / NO**

Signed by Supervisor: _____ Date: _____

In the event where the staff supervising decides that the proposal needs to go to the Ethics Committee for consideration, Parts 1 and 2 of this form should be submitted to the PA to the Vice Principal Higher Education, 6th Floor, Knightstone Campus, BS23 2AL, who will advise staff and researcher of the next meeting of the Ethics Committee at which the proposal will be heard. Researchers and staff should be available at the meeting if needed by the panel.

PART 3:

RESPONSE AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE ETHICS COMMITTEE

To be completed by the Chair of the Ethics Committee

PROPOSAL REJECTED: YES / NO

Outlined below are the specific reasons and an explanation of why this research proposal failed to meet the ethical standard required.

PROPOSAL APPROVED: YES / NO

Outlined below are detailed specific actions and conditions that are required to maintain ethical standards in the proposed research project.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Chair of the Ethics Committee

The above information to be sent to the student within 7 days of the decision being taken.

**University Centre Weston Directorate of Higher Education
University Centre Weston Ethics Committee
Terms of Reference**

1. Background

University Centre Weston Ethics Committee (WCEC) is constituted to ensure good ethical practice in both teaching and research, and to advise staff and students on the conduct of ethical research. As appropriate, its remit extends to advise on withdrawing or amending research approaches and proposals. WCEC will also have an advisory role to both the Principal and Directorate of Higher Education.

1.1 The WCEC is guided by the principles identified within the British Ethical Research Association ethical guidelines (www.bera.ac.uk).

1.2 WCEC will primarily be responsible for the following:

- To consider and advise on ethical issues relating to individual or group research brought to the Committee.
- A panel where ethical practice can be explored, discussed, and improved upon.
- To receive reports where ethical dilemmas are identified in teaching and learning, and to advise where appropriate and feasible.
- To advise the Principal and Vice Principal Higher Education with relation to any ethical concerns or implications that they are aware of.

2. Membership

The panel of the WCEC will be made up of four members, each of whom will have experience and an understanding of ethical practice and its implications.

Chair: Executive Director Multi-Academy Trust
Vice Chair: Higher Education Learning and Teaching Quality Manager
Member: Academic Member of staff, designated by the Chair

In the event that these members are not available, the Vice Principal Higher Education will nominate appropriate substitutes.

Should a circumstance arise where the panel is split over a decision, the Chair shall have the casting vote.

3. Meetings

3.1 The WCEC will meet three times annually, once each term. The WCEC reserves the right to call emergency meetings should the Chair decide that a circumstance or issue has arisen that merits it. Scheduled meeting dates will be announced in advance.

3.2 All papers or proposals that are intended for discussion at WCEC should be received by the Directorate of Higher Education at least 10 working days before the meeting date. This is in order that panel members can have an opportunity to consider papers prior to the meeting itself.

- 3.3 Staff and students who have papers for consideration are requested to be available for the meeting. If needed for questions or clarification purposes, they will be invited into the meeting.
- 3.4 The meetings are confidential but will be minuted. The minute taker will be agreed by the chair of WCEC, and all minutes checked by the Chair and held centrally in the Directorate of Higher Education office.
- 3.5 Should a member of the WCEC panel put a proposal forward, or be instrumental in the student's application, they should withdraw from the meeting while it is being considered.

4. Records

- 4.1 The Directorate of Higher Education will keep a register of each proposal that comes to it. This will be available for audit by the appropriate regulatory bodies, such as the QAA, but will only be shared on the basis of confidentiality.
- 4.2 The Directorate of Higher Education shall retain all relevant records for a period of five years should they be requested by appropriate regulatory bodies, such as the QAA.

5. Reporting

- 5.1 Where possible, an initial response will be provided at the meeting itself.
- 5.2 The confirmation of the decision will be sent in writing to the student within seven days. The decision of the panel is final.



Assessment Cover Sheet

PROGRAMME:	
MODULE TITLE:	
MODULE CODE:	
COMPONENT:	
PROGRAMME CO-ORDINATOR:	
STUDENT NUMBER:	

FOR COLLEGE USE ONLY

Affix College Date Stamp

- To be completed by the student at the time of submission to the Faculty or Directorate office.
- Both parts to be checked and date stamped, and the receipt issued to the student as proof of submission.

University Centre Weston Directorate of Higher Education

ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION RECEIPT

PROGRAMME:	
MODULE TITLE:	
MODULE CODE:	
COMPONENT:	
PROGRAMME CO-ORDINATOR:	
STUDENT NUMBER:	

FOR COLLEGE USE ONLY

Affix College Date Stamp

Student's signature