

## 1 Principles governing the University examination and assessment regulations

The principles governing the University of Sussex examination and assessment regulations are as follows:

**Principle 1:** The adoption of UK sector norms as specified in the QAA HE national framework for higher education qualifications, including the requirement that students achieve the credit requirement as set out in the University's Academic Framework.

**Principle 2:** The requirement of 120 credits for progression on undergraduate awards, subject to specific rules on compensation and trailing of credit. Progression does not normally apply to postgraduate awards which are considered as one stage (with the exception of taught postgraduate awards which are part of a designed professional doctorate course of study).

**Principle 3:** The University of Sussex Academic Framework sets out the volume and level of credit required to achieve each specific award of the University. This includes the principle that Progression and Award Boards are permitted to condone module(s) with an absolute fail up to a maximum of 30 credits at the final award stage based on the academic judgement of the Progression and Award Board that the learning outcomes for the award have been met.

**Principle 4:** The application of rules on compensation, trailed credit and condonement apply only to students who achieve a stage mean of 40% for undergraduate courses and 50% for postgraduate taught courses for progression and/or award. This principle assures the standard for all University of Sussex awards.

**Principle 5:** A 0-100 marking scale for all taught courses and standard thresholds across the institution for classification purposes at both undergraduate and postgraduate level.

**Principle 6:** Module resits are permitted for all stages at undergraduate level, including for honours where course conditions allow. Resit at postgraduate level for taught modules is also permitted where course conditions allow. Where credit has been awarded by a PAB no student shall be permitted to resit to improve the mark.

**Principle 7:** Where a student has an absolute or marginal fail in a module ( $\leq 34\%$  and 35-39% respectively on undergraduate courses and  $\leq 44\%$  and 45-49% respectively on postgraduate courses) and takes a resit opportunity then the uncapped resit mark will be used for progression purposes but the capped resit mark will be used for award classification. The mark achieved at the resit will stand even where it is lower than at the original attempt.

**Principle 8:** A failing student in stage 1 only is entitled to an offer of a repeat year providing that they agree to abide by the additional conditions set down in the University Repeat Year Learning Agreement.

**Principle 9:** A repeat year for a Foundation Year course, Stage 2 and beyond for undergraduate courses, and masters awards is permitted at the discretion of the Progression

and Award Board. Such students will be subject to an individual Repeat Year Learning Agreement

**Principle 10:** Individual mitigating circumstances is the University's description of conditions which are sudden and unforeseen and temporarily prevent a student from undertaking assessment, or significantly impact on student performance in assessment in general, including late submission: as such the measure of severity is not about impact on the student but the impact on the assessment at the level of the module.

**Principle 11:** All students are given a fair and equal opportunity to demonstrate academic achievement. A student with accepted mitigating evidence impacting on module assessment shall be offered a sit as for the first time. The original mark shall be expunged from the student record. Where a lower mark is obtained at this new sit this mark shall be recorded. This principle applies in order to ensure equality of opportunity for all students. There shall be no setting aside of marks in any circumstances.

**Principle 12:** The ability to study effectively may be affected by individual circumstances but any ongoing or long term inability to study should result in the suspension of study being considered. No claim of mitigating circumstances can be made citing lack of fitness to study.

**Principle 13:** Ongoing or longer term conditions or circumstances are not individual mitigating circumstances and will be referred to the Student Support Unit (SSU) for advice on any reasonable adjustments which can be made. Such circumstances may give rise to valid mitigating claims only if they are first confirmed/diagnosed or become suddenly, unexpectedly and markedly worse at a particular assessment point. All such cases shall be managed through the SSU in partnership with the Director of Student Experience (DoSE) by means of reasonable adjustment without reverting to the Mitigating Evidence Committee.

## **2. DEFINITIONS AND EXPLANATIONS: COURSE AND MODULE, ASSESSMENT CYCLES, RESITS, EXEMPTION FROM RESIT, REPEAT STAGE AND PERMANENT AND TEMPORARY WITHDRAWAL**

### **2.1 Introduction**

These regulations apply to all taught awards. Derogation from these regulations may be permitted by the University's Teaching and Learning Committee on recommendation from the School Teaching and Learning Committee to meet the accreditation requirements of Professional and/or Statutory Bodies (PSBs). Any such derogations will be specified in **Appendix A** to this Handbook.

### **2.2 Definition of course and module**

An approved University taught course may be defined by stages of study, and is comprised of a number of modules, normally weighted by credit at a designated stage, which provide a coherent learning experience, with an explicit set of learning outcomes that leads to an award of the University. A taught masters course is defined by a single stage of postgraduate study. FHEQ level 3 (foundation year zero), levels 4, 5 and 6 (undergraduate full time stages 1 to 3) and level 7 (masters and stage 4 of integrated masters courses), are set out in the University's Academic Framework which specifies the volume needed at each level to qualify for a particular award.

The University's courses are comprised of credit bearing modules which are defined as: A self-contained, formally structured and credit-bearing unit of study, with a coherent and explicit set of learning outcomes and assessment criteria. Modules must have appropriate learning outcomes set at the FHEQ level showing clear progression.

Exceptionally, a particular course of study may specify a requirement to successfully complete a non-credit bearing module linked to a specific award title as specified in **Appendix B**. These non-credit bearing modules may be permitted by the University's Teaching and Learning Committee on recommendation from the School Teaching and Learning Committee.

All courses are validated as cohesive and comprehensive patterns of study. Requests for a variation to undergraduate courses for an individual student will not normally be considered. Requests for a variation to a postgraduate course for an individual student may be considered up to a maximum of 30 credits. Students may request to substitute a module/s with another module or request that the credit for a module that they have previously studied is accepted as part of the credit load. In either case the student needs to demonstrate that the module learning outcomes clearly map to the learning outcomes of the modules that will be missed. Credit from a module previously studied can form part of the credit load requirement as set out in the University's policy on APEL (Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning) or APL (Accreditation of Prior Learning) which must be applied for pre-admission. The University Teaching and Learning Committee will approve any such variations.

### **2.3 An initial assessment cycle and a repeat assessment cycle of the stage**

Modules taken by a student in a given stage of study provide a single assessment cycle comprising one first attempt and (where necessary and available) one resit attempt for each module. This initial assessment cycle applies to each stage of study at undergraduate level and to postgraduate masters level.

Where a stage has been failed, a repeat assessment cycle may be available comprising of one further cycle of a first attempt and (where necessary and available) one further resit (see sections 2.4 on resit opportunities and 2.6 on repeat assessment cycles).

## 2.4 Resit opportunities

A resit is an opportunity to retrieve an initial failed assessment *without having to* repeat the original period of teaching and learning. However, the resit mode may vary depending on the nature of the initial assessment.

Resit opportunities will only be offered for modules where the module has not been passed and the credit *has not* been awarded by the Progression and Award Board (PAB). Resit marks are capped at the threshold pass mark for the individual module (40% on level 3 to 6 modules and 50% on level 7 modules). The uncapped mark will be used for progression purposes whereas the capped mark will be used for award purposes and will stand even where it is lower than the mark achieved at the first attempt. In addition, a mark of zero will stand where the resit opportunity has not been taken.

The other types of resit opportunities are a trailed resit and a second resit which may be offered at the PAB's discretion (see section 3.1 on trailed credit and section 3.5 on temporary withdrawal with a second resit.)

## 2.5 Modules exceptionally exempted from providing a resit opportunity

In some cases the nature of the mode of assessment may preclude the opportunity for a resit, for example, practice placements where assessment requires the execution of specified activities that are inextricably integrated with the practice-based learning. In such cases a student failing to pass the module may be required to repeat the module or year, in order to obtain academic credit.

In the case of 4 stage degrees with a 120 credit professional/industrial placement or study abroad year, failure in the placement or study abroad year will not normally result in a repeat year but rather a transfer to the 3 stage variant of the course.

The exemption of a module from the opportunity to provide a resit must be approved by the University Teaching & Learning Committee on recommendation from the School Teaching and Learning Committee. **Appendix C** provides a list of such modules which must be clearly flagged to students in published materials.

## 2.6 Repeat stages of study including the automatic right to repeat a failed stage 1

The repeat of a stage of study means retaking the stage *ab initio* as published with attendance. That is a repeat of the teaching, learning and assessment. All previous marks and credit will be expunged from the student record and a new full assessment cycle undertaken. The offer of a repeat stage will normally be made at the September Progression and Assessment Board (PAB).

Exceptionally a trailed repeat module assessment cycle may be offered with marks capped at the first attempt and the resit attempt (see section 3.1 on trailed credit.)

The opportunity to repeat stage 1 (FHEQ level 4) is automatic for failing students, subject to the student agreeing to abide by the University Repeat Year Stage 1 Learning Agreement, providing the course of study is available in the following academic session.

For Foundation stages, and for students at stages subsequent to stage 1 including the final undergraduate award stage and for masters students, there is no automatic right to repeat the stage. Any such offer will be at the PAB's discretion. However, the PAB is advised to seriously consider offering a repeat of a stage to a student who has not previously repeated

a stage. Evidence of attendance and engagement during the failed stage should not be taken into consideration but academic performance in a previous stage may be a determining factor. Where the PAB decides not to offer a repeat of a stage to a student who has not previously repeated a stage in the course, the PAB must set out the rationale for this decision in the minutes.

A student's entitlement to repeat a stage of study is dependent upon them agreeing to abide by the conditions as set out in a learning agreement. Where the repeat year is automatic at stage 1, the learning agreement will be the standard University model. Where the PAB offers a discretionary repeat year it may specify (or delegate to the Chair) amendments to the standard University model learning agreement. The School Student Progress Committee may commence withdrawal proceedings for any student in breach of their learning agreement.

No student shall be permitted to repeat a stage of study more than once and shall only be permitted to repeat where the stage has been failed. In offering a repeat stage the PAB should be mindful of the maximum period of registration and any undue delay imposed on the student in achieving their award aim.

## **2.7 Permanent and temporary withdrawal requested by a student**

A student may request to Permanently Withdraw (PWD) at any time during a teaching period. An undergraduate student may request to Temporarily Withdraw (TWD) at any time up until the end of the spring term. A postgraduate student may request to Temporarily Withdraw (TWD) at any time.

### **(i) Permanently Withdraw (PWD)**

If a student wishes to return to the University having permanently withdrawn (PWD), readmission is at the discretion of the Registrar and Secretary or their nominee. An application should be made through UCAS. In all cases the current published grade requirements must be met and the personal statement must address the reason for the initial PWD acknowledging what has changed to improve the likelihood of a successful outcome on this occasion.

### **(ii) Temporarily Withdraw (TWD)**

In the case of Temporary Withdrawal, there are two points in the year where re-entry to study is permitted, at the start of the Autumn term or the start of the Spring term. Students must restart at the beginning of the term that they did not complete, in order to avoid any gaps in teaching. In cases where the student does not resume their studies at the next point of re-entry the status of the student will change from Temporary Withdrawal to Permanent Withdrawal if the period of Temporary Withdrawal exceeds 12 months. Temporary withdrawal is distinct from a repeat stage offered by the Progression and Assessment Board (PAB) as it is initiated on the request of the student for non academic reasons. In the case of temporary withdrawal, any assessment marks for the non-completed term, achieved prior to temporary withdrawal, will be removed from the student record, unless the assessment has been completed for the term and confirmed by the Module Assessment Board (MAB) at the end of the stage. Following re-entry the MAB will assure any marks achieved following TWD. Both sets of marks shall normally be presented to the PAB for the award of credit, unless major changes have been made to the curriculum that would require a student to restart at the beginning of the year, where this is possible.

### **3. CRITERIA OF MECHANISMS FOR RETRIEVING CREDIT FOLLOWING EXHAUSTION OF RESIT OPPORTUNITY: TRAILED CREDIT, COMPENSATION, CONDONEMENT AND TEMPORARY WITHDRAWAL WITH SECOND RESIT/S**

#### **3.1 Introduction to mechanisms criteria**

Following any resit opportunity the Progression and Award Board (PAB) may consider the following mechanisms for the retrieval of credit, some of which are discretionary, provided that the uncapped stage mean requirement has been achieved. The uncapped stage mean is used for progression purposes as it indicates academic potential. The stage mean includes all marks achieved on modules taken in the stage including marks of zero and fail marks. The stage mean requirement is 40% at each stage on undergraduate courses, with the exception of integrated masters courses where the stage mean requirement in the final stage is 50% (as modules taken in the final stage of these degrees are at level 7). The stage mean requirement on postgraduate courses is 50%.

#### **3.2 Discretionary trailed credit**

The Progression and Award Board (PAB) has discretionary authority to exceptionally offer an undergraduate student the opportunity to progress to the next stage of study while trailing up to a maximum of 30 credits from the previous stage, provided that a stage mean of 40% has been achieved. Credit can be trailed at all stages, including into the final stage but not beyond the final stage.

Normally, trailed credit will result in the student taking a trailed resit for a module/s already studied with the aim of retrieving the initial fail *without* attendance. Exceptionally, the PAB may offer a student an alternative module/s for the same trailed credit value *with attendance*. Such students trailing an alternative module/s will be entitled to a trailed repeat assessment cycle on this module (a first attempt and a resit attempt with marks capped at the first attempt and the resit attempt), whereas student trailing a module already studied will only be entitled to a single trailed resit. In all cases a trailed resit and a trailed module repeat assessment cycle will result in the capped mark being used for award purposes.

Permission to trail credit will normally only be granted by a September PAB following a failed resit. In exercising its discretion, the PAB will take into consideration evidence of attendance and engagement such that the student is likely to succeed at the next assessment opportunity. Exceptionally, where a student will not be available at the resit opportunity due to course commitments (study abroad, placements, or field trips), the June PAB may allow the credit to be trailed into the next stage where necessary, including into the final stage following a period of study abroad or placement. (**Appendix A** provides a list of courses where trailed credit can be granted at the June PAB).

Where the trailed assessment has not been passed after the conclusion of the trailed resit or trailed module repeat assessment cycle, the PAB may consider other mechanisms available for the retrieval of credit (as set out in the section 4).

#### **3.3 Non-discretionary compensated credit**

Where a student has not achieved the credit requirement for progression or award following any resit opportunity, but has met the following criteria, then up to 30 credits will automatically be granted by compensation provided that the remaining credits in the stage meet the pass threshold:

- an uncapped stage mean of 40% for an undergraduate course, with the exception of integrated masters courses where the stage mean requirement in the final stage is 50% or 50% for a postgraduate course;
- a marginal fail on the module/s (35-39% for undergraduate modules or 45-49% for a level 7 module).

This is not discretionary to the Progression and Award Board (PAB) and is referred to as compensated credit for a marginal fail. The actual mark achieved will stand for progression and award purposes.

A maximum of 30 credits per stage in undergraduate courses may be awarded by automatic compensation to enable for stage progression or award. Compensation will be applied at the September PAB to enable progression and at the June PAB to enable award.

A maximum of 30 credits for taught modules may be awarded by compensation in postgraduate courses on the basis that a taught masters is defined as a single postgraduate stage of study. Compensation cannot be awarded for postgraduate research projects/dissertations regardless of the credit weighting.

In all cases compensated credit will not be applied automatically where the criteria have not been met or if more than 30 credits have been failed.

### **3.4 Discretionary condonement credit**

The Progression and Award Board (PAB) has discretionary authority to award up to a maximum of 30 credits via condonement in the undergraduate or postgraduate final award stage where the course learning outcomes have been met and the relevant stage mean has been achieved as set out in 3.1. Credit via condonement is not dependent upon an individual module threshold mark being achieved and is limited to the final award stage. The original mark achieved will stand for award purposes. A maximum of 30 credits may be granted via a combination of compensation and condonement in the final award stage.

### **3.5 Discretionary temporary withdrawal with a second resit**

The Progression and Award Board (PAB) has discretionary authority to offer a second and final resit for one or more failed modules up to a maximum of 60 credits for a capped mark where the progression or award criteria for the stage have not been achieved, after any resit opportunities and other mechanisms to retrieve the credit have been exhausted. This is available to undergraduate and postgraduate PABs. The student will be required to temporarily withdraw and will be offered a second resit of the failed module/s without attendance provided that there is good evidence of attendance and engagement such that the student is likely to succeed at the next assessment opportunity. Any earlier marks achieved for the failed module/s will be removed from the student record. All marks for the second resit on the module/s will be capped at the threshold pass for award purposes. Uncapped marks can be used for progression purposes. The marks achieved will be added to the first cycle marks for modules passed and confirmed by the Module and Assessment Board (MAB). (See section 4.5 and 4.6 on consideration of candidates).

## **4 PROGRESSION AND AWARD: AWARD OF CREDIT, ROUNDING OF MARKS, PROGRESSION AND AWARD CRITERIA, APPLICATION OF MECHANISMS TO RETRIEVE CREDIT, CONSIDERATION OF CANDIDATES AND CRITERIA FOR TRANSFER TO A 4 STAGE COURSE AND FROM A FOUNDATION STAGE**

### **4.1 The award of credit**

Credit is automatically awarded for all modules where the pass threshold for an individual module has been met. The pass threshold is set at 40% for modules at levels 3 to 6 and 50% for modules at level 7. Credit may also be awarded by automatic compensation or via condonement at the discretion of the Progression and Award Board (PAB) where the relevant criteria have been met, as set out in section 3, to ensure the standard of the award.

### **4.2 Rounding of marks**

The mark for a module, stage mean and grand mean (overall degree weighted mark) shall be a whole number rounded up ( $\geq 0.45\%$ ) or down ( $\leq 0.44\%$ ).

### **4.3 Progression and award criteria**

Undergraduate students are required to achieve a stage mean of 40%, with the exception of integrated masters courses where the stage mean requirement is 50% in the final stage, and 120 credits in order to progress to the next stage or to be considered for an award, following the application of rules on trailed credit, compensation and condonement.

Postgraduate students are required to achieve a stage mean of 50% and the credit requirement set out in the University's Academic Framework to be considered for individual postgraduate awards, following the application of rules on compensation and condonement.

The University's Academic Framework sets out the overall credit volume requirements for each taught award and the minimum credit requirement that needs to be achieved to be recommended for a degree (see **Appendix E**).

### **4.4 Application of mechanisms to retrieve credit for progression or award at the undergraduate and postgraduate Progression and Assessment Board (PAB)**

The undergraduate and postgraduate Progression and Award Board (PAB) has discretionary authority to offer a combination of mechanisms in order to provide an opportunity for the student to retrieve the credit necessary for progression (following any resit opportunity) or the achievement of an award as set out below and illustrated in the flowchart at **Appendix F**. A combination of these mechanisms can be applied at the PAB's discretion, where the criteria have been met, in order to ensure the standard of the award. The application of these criteria ensures that in addition to the stage mean being met that the pass threshold has been achieved on at least 75% of the credit in the stage for progression and award. (See criteria for application of mechanisms to retrieve credit in section 3).

### **4.5 Consideration of undergraduate candidates**

#### **(i) Achievement of stage mean**

Where the stage mean requirement has been achieved (40% on undergraduate courses and 50% in the final stage of integrated masters courses) but the credit requirement has not been achieved, mechanisms available to the Progression and Award Board (PAB) to enable the student to progress or achieve the award include the application of a combination of compensated, condoned or trailed credit.

**(ii) Non achievement of stage mean**

Where the stage mean requirement has not been achieved (40% on undergraduate courses and 50% in the final stage of integrated masters courses) the student has no right to compensated, condoned or trailed credit nor has the PAB discretion to allow a student to progress or receive an award. Mechanisms available to the PAB to enable the student to retrieve the credit include a requirement to repeat the stage (with attendance) or required temporary withdrawal from the course with a second resit (without attendance). Alternatively the PAB may decide that retrieval should not be permitted and so require permanent withdrawal with an exit award if appropriate to the credit volume and level achieved during study.

**(iii) Consideration of progression candidates**

Where a student has not met the progression requirement, following a resit opportunity, the PAB may consider the following (provided that the criteria have been met):

(a) Where the pass threshold has been achieved on 90 credits or more: the PAB may grant a combination of compensated credit and trailed credits; or temporary withdrawal with a second resit/s (at the next assessment opportunity for a capped mark). Alternatively the PAB has discretion to offer a repeat of the stage.

(b) Where the pass threshold has been achieved on 60 credits or more: the PAB may grant a combination of compensated credit and trailed credit and/or temporary withdrawal with second resits (at the next assessment opportunity for a capped mark). Alternatively the PAB has discretion to offer a repeat of the stage.

(c) Where fewer than 60 credits have been achieved: the PAB may consider offering a repeat to students in stages subsequent to stage 1 and the foundation year

(d) Students failing to progress from stage 1 are automatically entitled to a repeat stage. However, exceptionally the PAB may offer temporary withdrawal with a second resit/s for up to a maximum of 60 credits where there is evidence of good engagement.

**(iv) Consideration of award candidates**

Where a student has not met the award requirement the PAB may consider the following (provided that the criteria have been met):

(a) Where the pass threshold has been achieved on 90 credits or more: the PAB may grant a combination of compensated credit and condonement credit; a first resit or a second resit with temporary withdrawal (both at the next assessment opportunity for a capped mark). Alternatively the PAB has discretion to offer a repeat of the stage, following a failed resit.

(b) Where the pass threshold has been achieved on 60 credits or more: the PAB may grant a combination of compensated credit and condoned credit up to a maximum of 30 credits and/or a first resit or a second resit with temporary withdrawal (both at the next assessment opportunity for a capped mark). Alternatively the PAB has discretion to offer a repeat of the stage, following a failed resit.

(c) Where fewer than 60 credits have been achieved: the PAB will consider offering a repeat of the final stage, following failed resits.

(d) Credit trailed from the previous stage may also be condoned at award stage provided that the credit granted via condonement for the trailed credit and any failed modules in the final stage does not exceed 30 credits.

## **4.6 Consideration of postgraduate candidates**

### **(i) Achievement of stage mean**

Where the 50% stage mean has been achieved but the credit requirement has not been achieved, mechanisms available to the Progression and Award Board (PAB) to enable the student to achieve the award include the application of a combination of compensated credit and condonement up to a maximum of 30 credits excluding the project/dissertation.

### **(ii) Non achievement of stage mean**

Where the 50% stage mean has not been achieved the student has no right to compensated or condonement credit nor the PAB discretion to allow a student to receive an award. Mechanisms available to the PAB to enable the student to retrieve the credit include a requirement to repeat the stage (with attendance) or required temporary withdrawal from the course with a second resit (without attendance). Alternatively the PAB may decide that retrieval should not be permitted and so require permanent withdrawal with an exit award if appropriate to the credit volume and level achieved during study.

### **(iii) Consideration of award candidates on postgraduate masters courses**

Where a student has not met the award requirement the PAB may consider the following (provided that the relevant criteria have been met):

(a) Where the pass threshold has been achieved on 150 credits or more: the PAB may grant a combination of compensated credit and condonement credit; a first resit/s or a second resit/s with temporary withdrawal (both for a capped mark and to be taken at the next assessment opportunity).

(b) Where the pass threshold has been achieved on 120 credits or more: the PAB may grant compensated credit up to a maximum of 30 credits, and a first resit/s or a second resit/s with temporary withdrawal (both for a capped mark and to be taken at the next assessment opportunity).

(c) Where fewer than 120 credits have been achieved: the PAB may exceptionally consider offering a repeat of the stage, following a failed resit/s.

### **(iv) Consideration of award candidates on postgraduate diploma courses**

Candidates on postgraduate diploma courses are required to achieve 120 credits and achieve a stage mean of 50%, following any resit and/or repeat opportunity, in order to receive an award. This may include up to 30 credits granted via compensation or condonement.

### **(v) Consideration of award candidates on postgraduate certificate courses**

Candidates on postgraduate certificate courses are required to achieve the pass threshold on 60 credits, and achieve a stage mean of 50%, following any resit and/or repeat opportunity, in order to receive an award. Credit may not be granted via compensation or condonement.

## **4.7 Criteria for transfer between a 3 and a 4 stage course with study abroad or a professional placement year**

Courses enabling students to undertake a year-long study abroad or professional/industrial placement may require specific additional conditions for progression and/or transfer. These are formerly approved by the University Teaching and Learning Committee and included in **Appendix G**. Students graduating on the 4 stage variant will have this recognised in the

degree certificate 'Degree title (with Study Abroad Year or Professional/Industrial Placement Year),' as set out in the University's Academic Framework.

#### **4.8 Progression to an integrated masters degree**

Regulations for progression from a 3 stage course to a 4 stage integrated masters degree are set out at **Appendix H** (the standard University regulations do not apply as integrated masters degrees have enhanced admissions criteria which may not have been met).

#### **4.9 Progression from foundation year to stage 1 of an associated undergraduate course**

Regulations for progression to stage 1 from a foundation year are set out at **Appendix I** (the standard University regulations do not apply as these are effectively criteria for admission to a course). Where a student fails to achieve progression from a Foundation Year to stage 1 but passes overall they shall receive an exit award of a University of Sussex Certificate of Education.

## **5. AWARD CLASSIFICATION, CLASSIFICATION DIVISIONS, BORDERLINES AND SPECIFIC LEARNING DISABILITY**

The credit requirement at the level of the award is set out in the University's Academic Framework for all awards (see Appendix E).

### **5.1 Credit volume and weighting for undergraduate awards**

#### **(i) 3-year honours degree**

A 3-year honours degree will be awarded to students who achieve 360 credits across stages 1, 2 and 3, following the application of rules on compensation and condonement. Award classification shall be calculated according to the grand mean based on a ratio of 40:60 for stages 2 and 3.

#### **(ii) 4-year honours degree**

A 4-year honours degree with an integrated Year Abroad or Professional/Industrial Placement will be awarded to students who achieve 480 credits across stages 1, 2, 3 and 4, following the application of rules on compensation and condonement. Award classification shall be calculated according to the grand mean based on a ratio of 40:25:60 for stages 2, 3 and 4. For Professional/Industrial Placements that are assessed by pass/fail, the weighting will revert to that for a 3-year honours degree based on a ratio of 40:60 for stages 2 and 4.

#### **(iii) Integrated Masters' degree**

An Integrated Masters' degree will be awarded to students who achieve 480 credits across stages 1, 2, 3 and 4, following the application of rules on compensation and condonement. Award classification shall be calculated according to the grand mean based on a ratio of 40:60:65 for stages 2, 3 and 4. Where an Integrated Masters incorporates a Professional/Industrial Placement Year the award classification shall be calculated according to the grand mean based on a ratio of 50:40:76 for stages 2, 3 and 4.

#### **(iv) LLB (Graduate Entry) 2-year degree**

An LLB (Graduate Entry) 2-year degree will be awarded to students who achieve 240 credits across stages 2 and 3 (stage 1 exemption applies), following the application of rules on compensation and condonement. Award classification shall be calculated according to the grand mean based on a ratio of 40:60 for stages 2 and 3.

#### **(v) Intercalated undergraduate awards**

Classification for Intercalating medical students shall be determined on the basis of performance in the single year only.

#### **(vi) Ordinary degree exit award**

An Ordinary degree will be awarded to students as an exit award where 300 credits have been achieved across stages 1, 2 and 3, including 60 credits in the final stage, following the application of rules on compensation and condonement. In some cases, a student who does not meet the progression criteria for a named award may be transferred onto the Ordinary variant for the final stage.

#### **(vii) BSc and BEng Hons as an exit award on an integrated masters degrees**

A BSc/BEng Hons degree will be awarded to students as an exit award where the criteria for an integrated masters degree have not been met. In some cases, a student who does not meet the progression criteria for an integrated masters degree may transfer onto the BSc/BEng variant for the final stage.

## **5.2 Credit volume and weighting for postgraduate awards**

### **(i) Euromasters award**

A Euromasters degree will be awarded to students who achieve 240 credits across the course, following the application of rules on compensation and condonement.

### **(ii) Masters award**

A masters degree will be awarded to students who achieve 180 credits across the course, following the application of rules on compensation and condonement.

### **(iii) Postgraduate diploma award as an entry award**

A postgraduate diploma will be awarded to students who achieve 120 credits across the course, following the application of rules on compensation and condonement.

### **(iv) Postgraduate certificate award as an entry award**

A postgraduate certificate will be awarded to students who achieve 60 credits across the course. Credit may not be granted by compensation or condonement.

### **(v) Postgraduate diploma and certificate exit awards at postgraduate level**

Postgraduate diploma and certificate awards at postgraduate level may be awarded at the discretion of the PAB where the student has achieved the credit and stage mean requirement and where the course permits.

## **5.3 Aegrotat awards**

An Aegrotat degree is a degree that may be awarded where a student has achieved fewer than 60 credits in the final stage and is unable to complete their studies in the foreseeable future because of serious personal circumstances. A student achieving 60 credits in the final stage may be eligible for an Ordinary degree as set out in the Academic Framework. An Aegrotat Ordinary or an Aegrotat unclassified Honours can be awarded based on the credit achieved and/or on work completed to that date. The Aegrotat unclassified honours degree will be reserved for those circumstances in which the PAB recognises higher level academic achievement. The PAB has authority to offer a lower level award where the criteria have been achieved.

## 5.4 Classification divisions

The class of an award, both undergraduate and postgraduate shall be as follows:

| <b>Undergraduate Division</b>  | <b>Less than</b> | <b>Greater than or equal to</b> |
|--------------------------------|------------------|---------------------------------|
| First Class (1 <sup>st</sup> ) | Not applicable   | 70%                             |
| Upper Second Class (2.1)       | 70%              | 60%                             |
| Lower Second Class (2.2)       | 60%              | 50%                             |
| Third Class (3 <sup>rd</sup> ) | 50%              | 40%                             |

| <b>Postgraduate Division (Masters &amp; PGDip/PGCert entry awards)</b> | <b>Less than</b> | <b>Greater than or equal to</b>                 |
|--|------------------|---|
| Distinction  | Not applicable   | 70% threshold plus 50% of credit at 70 or above |
| Merit  | 70%              | 60% threshold plus 50% of credit at 60 or above |
| Pass   | 60%              | 50%   |

## 5.5 Borderline for degree classification

Rounding of marks at module level may result in a grand mean mark coming close to but below a degree classification boundary. The PAB shall give consideration to such students falling within a borderline area of one percent below each classification boundary as follows:

69-70 Boundary for 2:1/1<sup>st</sup> and for postgraduate merit/ distinction

59-60 Boundary for 2:2/2:1 and for postgraduate pass/ merit

49-50 Boundary 3rd/2:2 and for Masters borderline fail

39-40 Borderline fail for undergraduate

The PAB shall enable external examiners to review an individual student profile for all stages of study contributing to the award to provide further guidance for the Board on the treatment of students falling within the borderline zone.

In considering whether to raise a student to the higher class the PAB should consider the preponderance of credit for which the higher class has been obtained as the borderline grand mean may have occurred as a result of exceptional performance in a heavily weighted component of assessment which does not reflect performance overall. Whilst the PAB has discretion regarding the preponderance of credit in the higher class for undergraduate candidates, the PAB is guided to consider cases where at least 50% of the credit that contributes to classification was in the higher class. In relation to postgraduate students the PAB has discretion to consider borderline candidates who have achieved 50% of the credit in the higher class.

Mitigating evidence does not provide grounds for reclassification of an award as adjustments will have already been made to lateness penalties on the mark array under scrutiny and students will have previously been offered a sit to retrieve their performance as a result of their circumstances.

## **5.5 Specific learning disability (SpLD)**

In cases of late diagnosis of Specific Learning Disability (SpLD) the PAB has the discretion to base classification on the marks achieved for which the student was in receipt of the necessary support in order that they demonstrate their full learning potential, as long as this is not detrimental to the student. No mark should be set aside.

## **6. LATE SUBMISSION**

A penalty deduction of 5 percentage points (not 5% of the actual mark) shall be applied to work submitted up to 24 hours late although the application of such penalties shall not reduce the overall conflated mark below the minimum pass mark. This means that such penalties cannot in themselves prevent progression or require the student to resit assessments that have been academically passed.

A penalty deduction of 10 percentage points (not 10% of the actual mark) shall be applied to work submitted after 24 hours and up to 7 days late, although the application of such penalties shall not reduce the overall conflated mark below the minimum pass mark. This means that such penalties cannot in themselves prevent progression or require the student to resit assessments that have been academically passed.

Work will not be accepted more than 7 days after the original deadline. A mark of 0 and a non-submission will be recorded.

Exceptionally, the School may approve the exclusion of some assessment components from the full late submissions scheme where the teaching pattern provides rapid feedback within 7 days of the original deadline. In such circumstances, late submission would only be permitted up to 24 hours of the original deadline, and not up to 7 days.

Where a claim for mitigating is submitted within 7 days of the original deadline in relation to an assessment that has been submitted late and the evidence is accepted by the Director of Student Experience (DoSE), the lateness penalty can be waived.

## **7. MITIGATING EVIDENCE**

### **7.1 Mitigating Evidence Claim (MEC) Committee**

The University's Mitigating Evidence Claim (MEC) Committee will meet at least twice each year to consider the impact of mitigating evidence claims on assessment across the module, in accordance with the University's Mitigating Evidence principles. The MEC Committee will usually formally convene after the mid-year assessment period to review claims related to Autumn term modules where the assessment had been completed and following the assurance of marks at the subject Module Assessment Board (MAB) at the end of the year and prior to the School Progression and Award Board (PAB).

Mitigating evidence claims may be made in relation to late submissions, non-submission, absence from an in-person assessment and impaired performance on work submitted on time or an in-person assessment taken at the scheduled time. All claims for mitigation must normally be submitted within 7 days of the original deadline with the evidence to be submitted within 21 days of the original deadline, as set out in the University's Mitigating Evidence Claims Guidance.

In reviewing the impact of mitigating evidence on assessment across the module, the MEC Committee will ratify decisions made by the Directors of Student Experience (DoSEs) in relation to the acceptance or rejection of evidence against assessment components in accordance with the criteria set down in the University's Mitigating Evidence Claims Guidance, and will notify the PAB of the weighting of accepted mitigation on the module. The PAB has authority for the award of credit and all academic decisions relating to progression and awards.

### **7.2 Waiving of late submission penalties**

To facilitate early feedback to students in relation to a mitigation claim regarding a lateness penalty, the DoSEs are empowered by the MEC Committee to review evidence submitted to support a claim by an individual student and to waive the lateness penalty as appropriate.

### **7.3 Progression and Award Board (PAB) consideration of mitigation**

The PAB will consider offering a Sit for an uncapped mark in accordance with the weighting of the accepted mitigation, as recommended by the MEC Committee. This will be a Sit of the resit mode weighted according to the proportion of accepted mitigation. No setting aside of missed, failed or impaired assessment, or components of assessment, will be permitted. The PAB may consider that due to the extent of the missed, failed or impaired assessments across the stage that it is more appropriate to require a repeat stage to be undertaken instead. The PAB may decide not to offer a Sit if the mark achieved on the module is not significantly out of line and/or if the weighting of the assessment is low. In all cases the PAB must ensure that the academic standards of the award or decision to progress a student is upheld in accordance with the University's assessment principles and academic framework.

Where a Sit is taken for the full weighting of the module assessment the marks achieved at the first attempt will be removed from the student record and will be replaced with the mark achieved at the Sit, even where this is lower than the original mark achieved. Equally, in the event that the MEC is accepted in relation to a component of the module assessment and the Sit offered is taken, the marks achieved at the first attempt on this component will be removed from the student record and will be replaced with the mark achieved at the Sit. Marks achieved for a Sit on a component of the module assessment will be conflated with

any existing marks achieved for any non-mitigated assessment components and with any marks achieved where mitigation was not accepted. In the event that the Sit offered is not taken the original mark achieved will stand for progression and award.

Where a student submits a claim against a Sit in September, and this is accepted by the MEC Committee, the PAB may consider allowing the student to trail the further Sit into the next stage (provided that the criteria are met for trailed credit) or require the student to temporarily withdraw and Sit at the next assessment opportunity, before being considered by the PAB for award or progression to the next stage.

#### **7.4 Students on study abroad or placement**

A student on study abroad or a professional/industrial placement wishing to submit a MEC should do so in accordance with the University procedures within the usual 7 day time period as set out in the MEC Guidance. Such students will be allowed an additional 3 week period to submit the evidence allowing 6 weeks in total from the assessment date related to the claim.

Students on a period of study abroad should endeavour to take any opportunity to retake an assessment during the period of study abroad or placement, where they have failed an assessment, where this is possible. If a student finds that their difficulties are not resolving themselves and seem to be 'ongoing' they cannot use a MEC to resolve matters but instead should contact the International Study Abroad Office, as there may be other ways of supporting them to complete their studies. If the issues relate to a 'complaint' about the administration or teaching of the course, or to lack of provision of disability/learning support, this will not meet the criteria for a MEC. These issues must be notified, *without delay*, to the relevant department representative, and/or the Study Abroad Office and/or the Student Support Unit (if they are registered).

A student on a professional/industrial placement should use the sickness reporting system of the employer that they are working for and notify the School Office in the usual way if they are absent for 6 consecutive days or more. They do not need a MEC to cover short periods of absence. The assessment will be by portfolio or project with a MEC only appropriate if circumstances arise relating to non-submission or late submission.

In all cases no setting aside of marks will be permitted.

#### **7.5 Students with a disability**

The Student Support Unit (SSU) conduct a review of students who have a long term or pre-existing conditions and determine if a 'reasonable adjustment' to the assessment should be made. In such circumstances students cannot normally submit a mitigating evidence claim in addition. (See flowchart at Appendix x).