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# Academic Regulations Progression and Award Boards and Module Boards

## Section 6

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### Progression and Award Boards and Module Boards

Originating Department:	Quality Assurance Services
Enquiries to:	<a href="mailto:gas@leedsbeckett.ac.uk">gas@leedsbeckett.ac.uk</a>
Approving Body:	Academic Board
Last Approved:	7 July 2021
Next due for approval:	July 2022
Document Type	Regulation
Target Audience:	Relevant for all University staff and students and of particular relevance to:  Academic and professional support staff responsible for the operation of Progression and Award Boards, Module Boards, Reassessment Boards and Reconvened Boards, external examiners and Collaborative Partners.

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## Section 6: Progression and Award Boards and Module Boards

### 6.1 Purpose

This section of the Academic Regulations defines the purpose and operation of Progression and Award Boards and Module Boards.

Progression and Award Boards are the University bodies which make decisions about student progression and student award outcomes. There are defined profiles of student achievement for progression between levels, and for the achievement of each University award. Boards use these profiles of achievement to make equitable decisions about student progression and award.

Module Boards are established by, and report to, Progression and Award Boards. They have delegated authority to confirm student module marks following assessment. Confirmed module marks are then reported to the Progression and Award Board so that student progression and award decisions may be made.

Module Boards may also confirm students' achievement of credit for standalone modules/ groups of modules where the progression and/ or awarding of students is not being considered.

Module Boards are required to consider reports concerning student performance from relevant staff, with due regard for the data analysis provided in standard Module Board reports provided for this purpose.

Prior to the ratification of module marks and the confirmation of appropriate standards of assessment, the Board will satisfy itself that appropriate moderation and scrutiny of the marks presented has been undertaken and that the University's marking conventions have been adhered to in line with the expectations of nationally agreed award standards articulated within the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications and where applicable, professional, statutory and regulatory body or apprenticeship requirements.

### 6.2. General Principles of Progression and Award Boards & Module Boards

Normally, undergraduate Module Boards are established within Schools at Subject Group level and are chaired by the Head of Subject concerned.

The main role of the Module Board is to provide an accurate and confirmed set of final module marks for consideration by the Progression and Award Board, taking account of academic misconduct penalties and/ or the outcomes of formal mitigation processes.

Module Boards have a core constituency of both internal academic staff who represent each module being considered and the external examiners who are associated with those modules.

Normally, undergraduate Progression and Award Boards are established at School level and are chaired by the Dean of School.

The main role of the Progression and Award Board is to consider final module marks received from the Module Board and use these to make decisions about i) student progression from one level of a course to the next, ii) student award eligibility and iii) student award outcomes. The University has profiles of achievement which students must meet in order to be considered for progression or award eligibility. These are defined later in this section.

Progression and Award Boards have a core constituency of Module Board Chairs and a chief external examiner, who ensures the consistent application of the academic regulations associated with student progression and award and who provides assurance of the maintenance of standards and the equitable and fair treatment of students.

Normally, Postgraduate student outcomes are considered at a joint Module/ Progression and Award Board, bringing together the business of the two separate Boards described earlier in this section in distinct phases of business.

These are generally convened at Subject Group level and are chaired by the Head of Subject concerned but groups of postgraduate courses within the Subject Group may be considered together at a Board chaired by the Course Director.

In addition, where there is postgraduate provision of significant size, Deans may decide to convene separate Module Boards reporting into a School level Progression and Award Board, in line with the undergraduate model.

The Module Board is accountable to the Progression and Award Board which receives its outputs. Progression and Award Boards are accountable to Academic Board. Exceptionally, Academic Board has the authority to review and overturn a decision of a Progression and Award Board.

## 6.3 Code of Practice for Progression and Award Boards & Module Boards

### 6.3.1 Terms of Reference

#### **A Progression and Award Board is authorised to:**

- a) assess student performance in accordance with the course and University regulations
- b) determine student progression between academic levels
- c) determine students' award eligibility and award outcome
- d) make recommendations to the University on the conferment of awards
- e) apply the outcomes of mitigation processes where relevant to the determination of student progression or award
- f) apply the outcomes of academic integrity processes where relevant to the determination of student progression or award
- g) determine the outcomes of reassessment
- h) establish Module Boards or act as a Module Board where one is not established

#### **A Module Board is authorised to:**

- a) determine the standard and accuracy of student module assessment outcomes
- b) apply the outcomes of academic integrity processes to module outcomes
- c) apply the outcomes of mitigation processes to module outcomes
- d) consider amendment of cohort module marks as appropriate
- e) confirm and record final module assessment outcomes and forward these decisions to the Progression and Award Board(s) as required
- f) record credit where the student will not be presented to a Board for progression or an award

### 6.3.2 Adjustment to Cohort Marks

Exceptionally, and following moderation of internal marking with due regard for relevant standards, external examiners may propose to the Module Board that the marks for a particular cohort of students on a particular module should be adjusted, or that marks at the threshold boundaries of performance should be adjusted.

Such a proposal may be made in respect of:

- the pass/fail threshold and/ or
- other classification boundaries.

In such cases it is expected that the matter will have been discussed with the internal examiners to reach agreement about the extent of adjustment.

Adjustments may also be made to the module marks of a cohort of students, following the Module Board's consideration of extenuating circumstances which are applicable to the entire cohort.

### **6.3.3 Membership of Progression and Award Boards**

The membership of a Progression and Award Board is:

- a) the Chair (normally a Dean of School);
- b) the Chairs of associated Module Boards (normally the Heads of Subject)
- c) the Course Directors associated with the courses being considered;
- d) at least one external examiner, designated as Chief External Examiner;
- e) a Secretary to the Board (in attendance).

### **6.3.4 Membership of Module Boards**

The membership of a Module Board is:

- a) the Chair (normally a Head of Subject);
- b) the module leader (or their nominee) for each module under consideration;
- c) all external examiners concerned with the modules under consideration;
- d) Course Directors associated with the modules being considered (ex officio)
- e) a Secretary to the Board (in attendance).

### **6.3.5 Membership of Joint Module & Progression and Award Boards**

The membership of a joint Board is:

- a) the Chair (normally the Head of Subject);
- b) the Course Directors associated with the courses being considered;
- c) the module leader (or their nominee) for each module under consideration;
- d) all external examiners concerned with the modules under consideration;
- e) a Secretary to the Board (in attendance).

No Boards can be chaired by a member of the teaching team for the courses/ modules being considered.

All members of the Boards are required to be present at the meetings. If a member is absent due to illness, or other good cause, the Chair of the Board must ensure that the contribution that would be made by that member can be satisfactorily covered by other arrangements.

### **6.3.6 Information to Module Boards**

#### **a) Marks**

The following provisions apply:

- the schedule/ spreadsheet of marks arrived at by internal examiners will be tabled as a confidential paper/ online report;
- where there is a discrepancy, the marks as moderated by the external examiner(s) may also be tabled, providing both sets of marks are shown;
- the schedule of marks will be presented in accordance with the relevant guidance.

#### **b) Identification of Need of Further Consideration**

The following students should be clearly identified:

- students for whom further evidence will be presented to the Module Board
- students who have failed a module.

#### **c) Other Relevant Documentation**

Where the Module Board will consider further evidence of student performance, relevant documentation will be prepared to permit due consideration of the matter in question. Sole reliance on oral comment at the Board itself should be avoided.

#### **d) Information to Progression and Award Boards**

Progression and Award Boards will receive complete, accurate and confirmed reports concerning module assessment outcomes as agreed by the relevant Module Boards and signed off by external examiners.

The reports will be presented to the Progression and Award Board in the form of profiles of achievement for student progression, student award eligibility and student award outcome/ classification.



Progression and Award Boards will make progression and award decisions based on these confirmed profiles.

These results will not be amended at the Progression and Award Board except, exceptionally, in respect of late notification of material information concerning assessment or in respect of other material or procedural irregularities not identified at the Module Board.

Decisions undertaken by the Progression and Award Board will be signed off by the chief external examiner.

#### **e) Shared Modules**

Where a Module Board is responsible for modules that contribute to more than one award, its decisions and recommendations will be forwarded to all relevant Progression and Award Boards.

### **6.3.7 Discussion and Decision Making: All Boards**

The Chair of the Board concerned should clearly identify the purpose and scope of the meeting and the courses of action open to the Board with due regard for the regulatory framework which governs the assessment process.

Discussions and decisions will be undertaken with due regard for documentation/ reports provided to the board.

### **6.3.8 Declaration of a Matter of Principle**

When a Chair has identified a course or courses of action open to the Board, where necessary external examiner(s) should be asked to declare whether any of these courses of action is a matter of principle. On any matter which the external examiner(s) have declared a matter of principle, the decision of the external examiner(s) shall either:

- be accepted as final by the Board, or if agreement cannot be reached:
- be referred to Academic Board for resolution

Other than where they formally declare a matter of principle, external examiners do not have an automatic veto over the decisions of a Module Board or Progression and Award Board.

### **6.3.9 Assessment Outcomes**

In order to facilitate timely reassessment, students may be informed of their confirmed marks resulting from module assessment following the conclusion of the Module Board.

Students will receive final confirmation of the outcomes of the assessment process from the Progression and Award Board for all levels of a course, both overall and for individual modules.

Disclosure of the confirmed marks of an individual student must be to that student only.

Progression or award decisions for registered and enrolled students will be published via the University's 'Results Online' service, within 5 working days of the Progression and Award Board. Consideration will be given to alternative disclosure methods for any student who for good reasons requests these.

For certain collaborative arrangements, the University and its partners will have agreed alternative but equivalent disclosure methods of confirmed outcomes to students.

### **6.3.10 Reassessment: Joint Module & Progression and Award Boards**

A joint Module & Progression and Award Board will be convened to consider outstanding matters of reassessment and associated progression or award decisions.

Joint boards convened for this purpose may take place at various levels of aggregation dependant on operational requirements. The membership of a joint board convened for the purposes of reassessment is consistent with the membership described earlier in this section and may proceed with a single external examiner in attendance.

### **6.3.11 Reconvened Boards**

A Reconvened Board will be held to consider outstanding matters associated with progression or award decisions where a quick resolution is required and there is no upcoming Progression and Award Board scheduled in an appropriate timeframe.

Reconvened Boards held for this purpose may take place at various levels of aggregation dependant on operational requirements. The membership of a Reconvened Board is consistent with the membership for Progression and Award Boards and may proceed with a single external examiner in attendance.

Reconvened Boards must be conducted in accordance with University guidance.

### **6.3.12 Module Board: Absence of External Examiners**

If an external examiner is absent from a Module Board, the following provisions apply when other external examiners are present:

- the Chair will ensure that a written report from the external examiner is available to be tabled at the Board;
- this report will complement the observations of those external examiners present at the Board and inform the discussion.

If there is no external examiner in attendance or represented, all decisions made are subject to Chair's action and are confirmed subsequently through the written consent of the absent examiner(s) concerned.

### **6.3.13 Progression and Award Board: Absence of External Examiners**

If the Chief External Examiner is absent from the Progression and Award Board, an alternate external examiner may support the Board or Committee's decision making.

If there is no external examiner in attendance or represented, all decisions made are subject to Chair's action and are confirmed subsequently through the written consent of the absent Chief External Examiner concerned.

### **6.3.14 Records**

Secretaries to Module Boards, Progression and Award Boards and Joint Boards will compile a formal record of the business and decisions of the meetings. These will constitute the minutes.

A full list of membership of the Board concerned is made available at the meeting, which must be signed by all members present and will form the record of their attendance. All absences should be noted.

The minutes will be confidential, confirmed by the Chair following consultation with other Board members and will be made available to the next meeting of the Board.

External Examiner(s) may retain marks sheets, minutes and other materials, but shall be required to maintain confidentiality.

### 6.3.15 Progression and Award Board & Joint Module/ Progression and Award Board Decisions

#### Pass Award

Successful completion of final level; the student is eligible for a final award; there will not be any subsequent levels.

The award may be made with a classification, merit or distinction (if appropriate).

#### Contained Award

The student has not completed the final level successfully but is eligible for a contained award, which may be made with merit or distinction (if appropriate)

#### Pass Proceed

Successful completion of level; eligible to proceed to next level. The student does not receive an award at this point.

#### Award Proceed

Successful completion of level; eligible to proceed to next level. The student may receive a contained award at that level as stipulated in the course validation process.

#### Components Pending

Failed to achieve the requirements to progress to next level. Offered the opportunity for *reassessment* to complete the level. Re-submitted work to be completed by a specified date.

#### Level Incomplete

Non-progression decision. The student is not yet ready to be presented for progression.

#### Failed – Repeat Full Level (Full Time Students)

Failed the level. Offered the opportunity to repeat the whole level. Attendance at the institution is required.

#### Failed – Repeat Part Level (Full or Part Time Students)

Failed part level. Offered the opportunity to repeat those parts that have been failed. Attendance at the institution is required.

#### Sandwich Placement Achieved

Passed a sandwich placement, eligible to continue.

#### Failed Sandwich Placement

Failed the compulsory sandwich placement. Offered the opportunity to:

- repeat the placement  
or
- transfer to an alternative course/pathway of study.

#### Failed - Withdraw

Failed the level. Required to withdraw.

#### Decision Deferred

The decision is being deferred until a later date for further information, e.g. marks not available, work outstanding, etc. This deferral is likely to be for a prolonged period, i.e. greater than one week.

#### Deferred Proceed

The decision to pass the level is deferred as a result of extenuating circumstances. Eligible to proceed to next level carrying forward up to two outstanding modules.

#### Module Deferred (Mitigation)

Assessment of one or more modules deferred to specified later date.

#### Chair's Action

The decision is subject to immediate action by the Chair *where that action is agreed beforehand by the Board*.

#### Conditional Award

Award to be confirmed at a subsequent meeting of the Board or Reassessment Committee.

#### Letter of Completion

The student has been successful in accumulating credits for standalone module(s).

#### Exchange Student

The successful student is on an exchange and is not assessable by Leeds Beckett University (to be used when an exchange student has enrolled on a Leeds Beckett University award)

#### Not Assessed

The student's level is, for example, a sandwich year, for which there is no assessment.

#### **Stage**

Where courses have validated arrangements for 'stage' within their course design the following progression decisions may be made by the Progression and Award Board, as appropriate

Stage Proceed – student has passed stage and is eligible to proceed to the next stage.

Failed Stage – student has failed stage and is required to repeat failed modules part-time.

### 6.3.16 Module Board Decisions

Module Boards provide an accurate and confirmed set of final module marks for consideration by the Progression and Award Board, taking account of academic misconduct penalties and/ or the outcomes of formal mitigation processes. Consequently, the majority of decisions in respect of student assessment outcomes are taken by Progression and Award Boards.

However, the Progression and Award Board may devolve its authority to the Module Board concerning certain assessment decisions for operational reasons, as follows:

- a) Where a module mark is below the threshold pass, the Module Board may record the following outcome whilst confirming arrangements for reassessment:

#### Components Pending

Failed to achieve the requirements to progress to next level. Offered the opportunity for *reassessment* to complete the level. Re-submitted work to be completed by a specified date.

- b) Where formal mitigation outcomes of Category B are reported, the Module Board may record the following decision, whilst confirming arrangements for deferrals:

#### Module Deferred (Mitigation)

Assessment of one or more modules deferred to specified later date.

- c) Where reassessment opportunities have been exhausted and the module mark is below the threshold pass the module board will record:

#### Failed Module

Fail to achieve threshold pass.

- d) Also for operational reasons, Module Boards may also take the following decisions:

#### Decision Deferred

The decision is being deferred until a later date for further information, e.g. marks not available, work outstanding, etc. This deferral is likely to be for a prolonged period, i.e. greater than one week.

### Chair's Action

The decision is subject to immediate action by the Chair *where that action is agreed beforehand by the Board.*

### 6.3.17 Award Classification

#### **Award Classification: Bachelor with Honours**

The classification of awards of Bachelor with Honours should be determined in accordance with the provisions of Section 4: Progression and Award.

#### **Merit and Distinction**

The award of merit or distinction should be determined in accordance with the provisions of **Section 4: Progression and Award.**

### 6.3.18 Conditional Awards

#### **Awards without Degree Classification**

If a student's final award cannot be determined at the Progression and Award Board the following provisions apply:

- whenever possible, a conditional award should be made (e.g. award subject to passing a placement/teaching practice);
- where this is done it is not necessary to reconvene the whole Board in order for the award finally to be determined;
- the Board should formally endorse Chair's Action in respect of such a conditional award.

#### **Honours Degree Classification**

Where Honours Degree classification is to be decided, the above apply with the additional requirement that the external examiner(s) present at the Board must be associated with the decision. Such "association" may be by oral agreement followed by written confirmation.