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| Key Concepts for Members of Boards of Examiners (UG) | |
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Table of Contents

[1. Role of External Examiner 3](#_Toc109736243)

[2. Role of Module Boards 3](#_Toc109736244)

[3. Role of Programme Boards 3](#_Toc109736245)

[4. University Student Cases Committee (SCC) 4](#_Toc109736246)

[5. Additional Consideration Committee (ACC) 4](#_Toc109736247)

[6. Results 4](#_Toc109736248)

[7. Award of Degrees 4](#_Toc109736249)

[Module Boards 4](#_Toc109736250)

[8. Reassessment 4](#_Toc109736251)

[9. Module Components 5](#_Toc109736252)

[10. Non-submission 5](#_Toc109736253)

[11. Academic Misconduct 5](#_Toc109736254)

[12. Summary of concepts applicable at specific level 5](#_Toc109736255)

[13. Compensation, referral and condonement maxima 6](#_Toc109736256)

[14. Compensation 6](#_Toc109736257)

[15. Referral 7](#_Toc109736258)

[16. Condonement 7](#_Toc109736259)

[17. Repeat years 8](#_Toc109736260)

[18. Non-progression 8](#_Toc109736261)

[19. Transfer to Ordinary degree 8](#_Toc109736262)

[20. Classification 8](#_Toc109736263)

[21. Borderlines 8](#_Toc109736264)

[22. Ordinary degrees 9](#_Toc109736265)

[23. Extract from the Code of Practice: Boards of Examiners 10](#_Toc109736266)

[Appendix 5 – Scaling Policy and Procedure 10](#_Toc109736267)

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# Role of External Examiner

* 1. As a member of Module and Programme Boards, external examiners:

1. **should** be given the opportunity to report on the quality of the assessments, standard and accuracy of marking, and conduct of the assessment process generally,
2. can offer suggestions to enhance the process of assessment and the quality of the learning opportunities,
3. are not expected to revise marks awarded for the output of individual students other than give an opinion in specific cases at the request of the internal examiners,
4. can provide independent opinion and objective advice in cases that are difficult to resolve, particularly those falling below the pass mark or close to a threshold, or where the marking for a whole batch of student outputs is judged to be significantly over- or under-marked,
5. can advise the Board, but advice is taken as a recommendation rather than a binding decision,
6. can comment on the conduct of the Board.

# Role of Module Boards

* 1. Confirm the agreed mark for each candidate in the module, taking into account all module components, weighted as published in the approved module specification.
  2. The Module Board’s decision **must** be informed by the relevant module results data, which includes comparing the current range of marks with those in previous years and on other modules at the same level. Boards **must** consider any anomalies and take steps to address any unfairness.
  3. Can change agreed marks only in exceptional circumstances.
  4. Be informed of any requests for additional consideration.
  5. Defer decision in the event of an unresolved academic misconduct investigation.

# Role of Programme Boards

* 1. Resolve first any outstanding issues from the previous level, such as referral, confirming progression to current level or determining the consequences of non-progression.
  2. Determine the progression of each candidate:

1. to the next level of the programme or,
2. to the award or,
3. the consequences of non-progression.
   1. Be informed of any requests for additional consideration.
   2. Determine classification of award for finalists.
   3. Under no circumstances is a Programme Board permitted to alter decisions made by the Module Board. In exceptional circumstances, where the Programme Board has access to information not available to Module Boards, the Programme Board may invite the Chair of a Module Board to consider whether the marks verified for a specified module(s) were appropriate.

# University Student Cases Committee (SCC)

* 1. Considers and approves where appropriate special cases such as extension of suspension of study beyond a year, repeating a level and requests for decisions based on individual student circumstances. Boards may not act outside regulations, but a Board may put a case to SCC for approval ‘regulations notwithstanding’.
  2. Deals with academic appeals (candidates cannot appeal against academic judgement).

# Additional Consideration Committee (ACC)

* 1. For information regarding requests for extensions and additional consideration please refer to the University Code of Practice: Requests for Extensions and Additional Consideration.

# Results

* 1. Students **must** not be contacted about their results, or likely results, during the period from marking at the end of the module assessment period to the approval of the programme board decisions. Specifically, students **must** not be contacted prior to, or during, boards of examiners meetings regarding such matters as their likelihood of accepting a particular decision (such as referral, Ordinary degree etc) unless the approval of the chair of Student Cases Committee has been obtained.
  2. The decisions of the programme board, including compensation, referral and condonement, **must** be accurately recorded in the format specified by the University – which constitutes the official record of the University. All board decisions **must** be approved by the external examiner and a record of the approval **must** be recorded in the minutes.
  3. Senate has delegated to Programme Boards of Examiners the award of taught credits, Degrees (other than Honorary Degrees), Diplomas and Certificates and the award of Degrees and other qualifications jointly with other higher education institutions (excluding HYMS).
  4. Results of the decisions of module and programme boards **must** be communicated to students in writing. Communication by telephone **must** not be used.
  5. Completing candidates **must** receive an Official Transcript and Diploma Supplement from the Student Services Directorate for on-campus students, and from partner institutions for collaborative provision students.

# Award of Degrees

* 1. Degrees and other awards are made by the University of Hull, and not by individual Academic Units, Faculties, or Collaborative Partners.

# Module Boards

# Reassessment

* 1. Reassessment is a right.
  2. Reassessment is in a failed module only. Reassessment shall be by:

1. resubmission of the same, amended, piece of work (where appropriate)
2. resit of an examination, or
3. submission and assessment of a new piece of work.
   1. Where reassessment is by the submission and assessment of a new piece of work, the reassessment task shall follow the same method of assessment as the original format where possible. Where this is not possible it **must** be made explicit what form the reassessment will take.
   2. The mark recorded for module components passed after reassessment/resubmission and used to calculate the mark for the module **must** be the relevant pass mark for the level of the module with standardised penalties for late submission imposed where applicable.
   3. If the reassessment is passed after penalties have been applied, the module component(s) is capped at the pass mark.
   4. If the reassessment is failed after penalties have been applied then the higher of the two module marks (original mark and reassessed mark) stands.

# Module Components

* 1. If a module component that **must** be passed in order to pass the module is failed, the maximum module mark is 34% for levels 3, 4, 5 and 6, and 44% for level 7.

# Non-submission

* 1. Candidates who have confirmed their withdrawal from the programme or module in writing, and who have not already received their credits/award, **must** be considered where work has been submitted so that they are awarded any credits achieved.
  2. Where a candidate has not confirmed withdrawal they **must** be treated as normal.

# Academic Misconduct

* 1. The module board **must** be informed of all academic misconduct cases, including those currently ongoing as well as those resolved, and the penalty imposed in accordance with the Regulations for Academic Misconduct. Where the board is informed of a penalty imposed in accordance with the Regulations the board **must** apply that penalty to the module in question and confirm the mark. Under no circumstances is a module board permitted to change the decision specified by the Academic Misconduct process. Where a case is ongoing the module board **must** defer the decision for the candidate(s) in question.

# Summary of concepts applicable at specific level

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Degree Type | Level | Compensation | Referral | Condonement |
| **Foundation degree** | Pre Certificate | **•** |  |  |
| Certificate | **•** | **•** |  |
| Diploma/FD | **•** |  | **•** |
| Honours (top-up) | **•** |  | **•\***+ |
| **Ordinary degree** | Diploma | **•** |  |  |
| Final | **•** |  | **•** |
| Degree Type | Level | Compensation | Referral | Condonement |
| **Honours degree** | Pre Certificate | **•** |  |  |
| Certificate | **•** | **•** |  |
| Diploma &  Post-Diploma | **•** | **•** |  |
| Honours | **•** | *^* | **•\***+*^* |
| Masters | **•** |  | **•** |

* *condonement not permitted at Honours level if already granted at Diploma/FD level of a Foundation Degree*

+ *condonement not permitted if Foundation degree or other Diploma qualification awarded by body other than Hull*

*^ For integrated masters degrees, referral is permitted at Honours level (i.e. third year) but not condonement*

# Compensation, referral and condonement maxima

* 1. Maximum 60 credits of any combination of compensation, condonement or referral for an Ordinary, Honours or Integrated Masters degree; 40 credits for Foundation Degree.
  2. Maximum 40 credits per level, of which never more than 20 credits referred or condoned.
  3. At Pre-certificate level, maximum of 20 credits compensation; such credits do not count towards the overall allowance for the award.
  4. If referred, and module subsequently passed, those credits are removed from the overall allowance for the award.

# Compensation

* 1. At Levels 3-6 any compulsory or optional module awarded a mark of 35-39, shall (subject to 13 above) be passed by compensation, with no change being made to the mark awarded, provided that the weighted average of all the marks for the level is 40 or greater.
  2. At Level 7 any compulsory or optional module awarded a mark of 45-49, shall (subject to 13 above) be passed by compensation, with no change being made to the mark awarded, provided that the weighted average of all the marks for the level is 50 or greater.
  3. Where all the conditions for compensation are satisfied, compensation is automatic although the candidate may waive it and elect instead to take a reassessment (e.g. to avoid using up their allocation).
  4. The raw mark is not changed when a module is compensated, although the credits are awarded.
  5. The Board **must** know the number of credits passed by compensation and/or referral from previous levels.

# Referral

*(not applicable to Ordinary degrees or the masters level of an Integrated Masters degree)*

* 1. A candidate who has failed a module (up to 20 credits) with a level weighted average of 40% or greater can be allowed to take the module again in the following session at the same time as undertaking the next level.
  2. The candidate **must** undertake all the attendance and assessment requirements for the module.
  3. If the module being referred is optional the candidate can choose another module from the available options.
  4. If taking the same module would be impractical (e.g. because it is no longer offered or due to timetabling difficulties) the Programme Board can determine that the candidate take another module.
  5. Having re-taken the module the candidate is entitled to the actual mark achieved, and has a right of reassessment.
  6. The decision to refer a module is discretionary for the Programme Board, taking into account the ability of the student to manage the extra workload and ensuring that a student in this position receives adequate guidance.
  7. The Board **must** carefully minute the decision, especially recording the factors contributing to the decision (see also section on non-progression below).

# Condonement

* 1. A fail (marks in the range 0-34 for level 4, 5 and 6 modules and 0-44 for level 7 modules) at the final level of the programme can be disregarded at the discretion of the Programme Board provided the following criteria are met:

1. the weighted average for the level is 40% or greater for level 4, 5 and 6 modules,
2. the weighted average for the level is 50% or greater for level 7 modules,
3. the total number of credits to be condoned is 20,
4. the module is not declared in the programme of study to be core and/or elective.
   1. The decision **must** be carefully minuted, recording the factors contributing to the decision.
   2. The raw mark is not changed therefore an Honours degree classification may be reduced as a result of the low mark.
   3. Foundation degrees: condonement applies at both Diploma and Honours levels but cannot be granted twice.
   4. Direct entrants to final level of Honours degree cannot benefit from condonement (**must** achieve 120 credits).
   5. Integrated Masters degree: condonement applies at the Masters level.

# Repeat years

* 1. Unless the Board has been informed that a repeat year has been granted by SCC, it **must** proceed based on the marks that it has.
  2. If a repeat year is granted, the previous year is wiped from the record and the candidate **must** take again all the modules for the year as credits gained cannot be carried forward

# Non-progression

* 1. Where a candidate is not eligible to progress to the next level, or to the award, even after considering compensation, referral or condonement, the consequences are specified by the regulations according to the number of credits gained:

1. 75 or more credits at Certificate level transfer to Ordinary
2. fewer than 75 award credit.
   1. Where a candidate has failed through achieving insufficient credits, there is no opportunity to restart or continue by other means.

# Transfer to Ordinary degree

* 1. Candidates not eligible to progress on the Honours degree **must** be transferred to the Ordinary degree in the following cases:

1. Pre-certificate not permitted
2. Certificate 75 or more credits
3. Diploma 180 or more credits.

# Classification

*(not applicable to Ordinary degrees)*

* 1. Degree classification **must** be based on the weighted averages of the relevant levels, using the University approved weightings.
  2. Credits awarded (or modules exempted) by other institutions based on approved Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) claims **must** be disregarded in calculating degree classification.
  3. Level end averages are not rounded.
  4. The final average of the relevant level end is recorded to the nearest whole number.
  5. Foundation degrees – a candidate **must** be awarded a merit (60 - 69) or distinction (70+) as indicated by the weighted average over all marks assigned in the Diploma level. The award of merit or distinction only applies where no more than 20 credits’ worth of modules are designated pass/fail.

# Borderlines

*(Honours degrees only)*

* 1. If a candidate’s weighted average is 2 points below a classification threshold after rounding, they **must** be considered for the higher classification.
  2. A candidate who is borderline **must** be awarded the higher classification where

1. for all awards of the University of Hull where more than 50% of the credits counting towards classification are in the higher classification or above.
   1. For Bachelor’s degrees:
2. more than 50% of the credits in the Diploma and Honours levels are in the higher classification or above,

OR

1. exactly 50% of the total credits in the Diploma and Honours levels counting towards classification are in the higher classification or above and more than 50% of credits in the final level are in the higher classification or above,

OR

* 1. For Integrated Masters degrees:

1. more than 50% of the credits in the Honours and Masters levels are in the higher classification or above,

OR

1. exactly 50% of the total credits in the Honours and Masters levels counting towards classification are in the higher classification or above and more than 50% of the credits in the final level are in the higher classification or above.
   1. Candidates not meeting one of these criteria **must** not be awarded the higher classification.
   2. Vivas **must** not be used to determine classification, whether under current or previous borderline rules.

# Ordinary degrees

* 1. Progression to final level with 180 credits.
  2. Award degree with 300 credits, provided candidate achieved a minimum of 60 credits at level 6.
  3. Transfer back to Honours:

1. if the candidate has gained credits for all core and/or elective modules of the Certificate and Diploma levels of the associated Honours degree, or
2. where the programme learning outcomes/competencies can be achieved on completion of the award.

# Extract from the Code of Practice: Boards of Examiners

## Appendix 5 – Scaling Policy and Procedure

The following Policy and Procedure sets out the key principles that ***must*** inform the scaling of marks by Module Boards of Examiners. They **must** be applied only by Module Boards of Examiners and so can apply only when minimum thresholds for modules to be considered at such Boards have been met.

The application of scaling by a Module Board of Examiners **should**:

* be exceptional and only applied where other approaches (e.g. use of additional markers and/or moderation processes) do not resolve the issue;
* correct an unanticipated cohort-wide issue with an assessment and would normally require a review of the relevant assessment strategy and grading criteria ahead of any subsequent running of the module; and
* allow for scaling of a cohort’s marks downward as well as upward.

In circumstances where substantial issues have impacted on student performance in a cohort or across institutional cohorts then the application of scaling **must** be considered for all modules (e.g. widespread illness, substantial staff changes, other substantial event) with such consideration recorded by the board, and may be applied with a focus of ‘no detriment’ e.g. only allow for scaling of a cohorts marks upwards.

The following key principles underlie our scaling approach:

* Only marks for individual assessment elements, not whole modules, can be adjusted by scaling.
* Scaling ***must not*** reverse the rank order of students on any element to which it is applied.
* Scaling is applied to whole cohort and not to individual students or to sub-sets of the module cohort.
* Scaling ***must*** encompass the full range of marks for the element being scaled but can have increased or decreased impact at differing ends of that range - for example, while scaling **must** encompass the full range of raw marks for an element from 0 to 100, it can be calculated so as to lift lower marks more than higher marks so long as the requirement to not reverse the rank order of any pair of students is met.
* External Examiners ***must*** always be informed of, and have a chance to comment on, decisions otherwise taken by the Module Board of Examiners to scale marks;
* Any scaling applied in the consideration of results by Module Boards of Examiners prior to any reassessment ***must*** then continue to be applied consistently in subsequent Module Boards of Examiners where any remaining marks for extended submissions for that assessment element (i.e. those submitted at a later) are being finalised.
* Only where substantial issues have arisen (e.g. Covid-19) and the assessment of students bridges such substantial issues occurring (e.g. some students were assessed prior to and then some students were assessed post the issues, or in the case of students who complete the assessment as a first sit post the event) can scaling be considered for individual students or smaller groups of students. In these cases scaling **should** be considered in relation to the students’ or group of students’ wider module performance.

**Triggers and Criteria for Scaling**

The following is an indicative (not exhaustive) list of triggers for scaling to be considered. The occurrence of a trigger on this list does not require that scaling be undertaken but does require that it be considered. In cases where there is unresolved disagreement among the Module Board of Examiners about whether to re-scale the Chair of the Board will be the final arbiter.

* A range of marks that is significantly out of line with previous cohorts (i.e. over three previous years or up to that number where applicable – see ‘Determining Whether to Re-scale’, below) on the assessment element or module in question.
* A range of marks that is significantly out of keeping with the marks achieved by the same students on other modules at the same level.
* A distribution of marks out of keeping with previous cohorts or with the typical expectations for the module or assessment elements – e.g. an unusual concentration of marks or a bimodal curve where a bell curve might have been expected (or the reverse). (*Nb*. scaling ***must*** be applied only to assessment elements and not to overall module marks).
* Reasoned evidence of a problem with the relevant assessment element (e.g. where the problem is thought to have arisen from that element having converted to an online assessment element from a non-online original).

The rationale for any decision *not* to re-scale despite the presence of one or more of the triggers above, and likewise the rationale for any decision *to* re-scale for triggers other than those listed above, ***must*** be approved by the Chair of the Module Board of Examiners and explicitly recorded in the minutes. Where scaling is applied the scaling method (see below) ***must*** also be clearly and explicitly recorded in the minutes.

**Determining Whether to Re-scale**

The Module Board of Examiners **must** first establish whether there has been a ‘meaningful’ change (of more than one integer or rounded mark) in the mean assessment mark between the current year and the mean of the previous three years.

Secondly establish whether there has been a substantial change to the distribution of marks. Simply checking whether there has been a change to the mean, in comparison with the previous three years, will not identify whether marks have been either concentrated or dispersed in a different pattern to previous years.

Is there compelling evidence of a substantial change in the mean mark or in the grade distribution compared to the previous three years? If:

**Yes**: scaling is appropriate.

1. Examine the data to determine whether there is evidence of heteroscedasticity, and therefore a disproportionate effect on certain ranges.
2. If there is no evidence of heteroscedasticity then scale all marks equally.
3. If there is evidence of heteroscedasticity then mitigate as appropriate by applying a scaling method such as one of those outlined below.

**No**: scaling is not appropriate.

**Scaling Methods**

There is no single, correct scaling method that would be the most appropriate in every case. Four different methods are outlined below but Module Boards of Examiners can employ variations on these so long as the proposed scaling method is in line with the principles already set out, is approved by the Chair of the Board and is explicitly recorded in the minutes.

(a): A simple adjustment is to add or subtract a number of marks from each assessment for example adding 5 marks to all students for results deemed to be low (capping marks at a maximum of 100 if necessary). This method is simple but can be effective in correcting an anomaly.

(b): An alternative, to be used in order to raise low marks, reduce high marks and leave a mark of 50 unchanged, is to convert mark *X* to a revised mark *aX+b*, *e.g.*, use the conversion *revised mark* = *0.8 X + 10.*

(c): An alternative adjustment that can lift lower marks proportionately while having decreasing effect on higher grades (and lifting no marks over 100) requires that a percentage of the difference between the original mark and a mark of 100 is added to the original mark. This, then, is to convert mark X to a revised mark of X+((100-X) x Y%). If Y is 10%, for example, a mark of 40 would be raised to 46 (40+((100-40) x 10%) while a mark of 90 would increase to 91 and a mark of 99 would be unchanged (as it would increase to only 99.1).

(d) An alternative sophisticated adjustment that lifts marks in the middle band, especially around the pass-fail boundary, while having a decreasing effect on very high grades or very low grades (which are too far from the pass fail boundary) is where is the original mark (out of 100) and is a scaling exponent. Specifically, scales the marks up, scales the marks down and leaves the marks unchanged. The application of this measure can be a strategy to help achieve a desired average mark or proportion of passes for an assessment component.

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**Version Control**

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| **Version** | **Author** | **Date approved** | **Relevant sections** |
| 1 19 | Lisa Tees | NA | Migrated to new template |
| 1 20 | Lisa Tees | 17 March 2022, Senate | * Accreditation of Prior Learning replaced with Recognition of Prior Learning to reflect sector. * Level 7 compensation boundary changed to 45-49 to reflect sector. * Condonement is not applicable at the Preliminary Certificate level. * Compensation is applicable at the Preliminary Certificate level. * Changes to ‘referral’. A candidate may only be referred in a module once. * Replaces Mitigating Circumstances with Requests for Extensions and Additional Consideration. * Reference to the timeframes for resubmission is removed. |
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