



University of
Portsmouth

Unit Assessment Boards

Policy, Regulation and Procedure

Academic Registry

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UNIT ASSESSMENT BOARDS (UABS) – POLICY, REGULATION AND PROCEDURE

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UNIT ASSESSMENT BOARDS (UABS) – POLICY, REGULATION AND PROCEDURE

1. Basic Purpose and Process

- 1.1. UABs are the “first tier” in the “two tier” assessment board system adopted by the University. The “second tier” is the Board of Examiners.
- 1.2. They operate for groups of units (called “cognate groups”).
- 1.3. Faculties and Departments determine the combinations of units that form these “cognate groups”.
- 1.4. There are no “rules” as such for their grouping - the size can range from all the units offered in a Department to a specialist, subject level grouping that might include only a relatively small number of units.
- 1.5. The UAB is the key forum for the setting and maintenance of academic standards, rather than the Board of Examiners.
- 1.6. UABs confirm, for each unit in the relevant “cognate grouping”, the mark awarded to each individual student attempting assessment in that unit during the previous semester or year (as appropriate) regardless of which qualification the student is seeking or with which Department that qualification is associated.
- 1.7. UABs should consider, unit by unit, the marks presented.
- 1.8. Boards no longer need to consider marks at significant boundaries. It is now the policy of the University that all marks ending in a 9 will be rounded up to the next integer (so 39 become 40, 49 becomes 50 etc)
- 1.9. Additionally, the Board may moderate marks across the unit, as shown at section 5.
- 1.10. Extenuating Circumstances Panels, through the mark sheet, will inform UABs of cases of valid extenuating circumstances.
- 1.11. The UAB also makes a unit decision against each student, determined by the mark and application of the current “Examination and Assessment Regulations” of the University of Portsmouth. The decision may be one of Pass, Second Attempt Assessment(s), Deferred First Attempt Assessment(s), Second Attempt Assessment(s) and Deferred First Attempt Assessment(s) Pending or Repeat. It is this decision that the Chair of the UAB must ensure is published to students within three working days of the date of the meeting.
- 1.12. The UAB considers units in a sequence determined at the discretion of the Chair. This does not have to be level by level, and the same UAB may consider both postgraduate and undergraduate units.
- 1.13. The Examination and Assessment Regulations do **not** envisage or require discussion of individual students except in relation to valid extenuating circumstances and in cases where marks are close to significant boundaries. Such discussions will only relate to the student’s performance in the assessment artefacts of the unit in question and by reference to the unit’s approved learning outcomes and marking criteria; they will not consider student performance in other units.

- 1.14. The mark sheet will also indicate the “significance” of the student’s attempt at the unit, by which is meant whether it is a repeat attempt etc.

2. Quorum

- 2.1. The quorum for the meeting of the UAB held to confirm marks and publish results is defined, in respect of each individual unit considered, as:

- Chair (who is appointed on the authority of the Head of Department);
- the Unit Co-ordinator for the unit or an appointed nominee, who must have been involved with the assessment of the unit;
- the Head of Department/School or an appointed nominee.
- The subject External Examiner

- 2.2. The subject external examiner is now part of the quorum of the UAB. If exceptionally they are unable to attend the UAB, they should submit their views as detailed at **2.4**

- 2.3. It would be good practice for more than the minimum number of staff required by the definition of the quorum to attend.

- 2.4. If the Subject External Examiner is unable to attend the meeting she or he has to do two things. Firstly, as far as is possible, make their views known to the UAB before it meets. Secondly, after the Board has met, write to the Chair of the Board stating the extent of their involvement with the units during the year in question and signifying their degree of satisfaction with the processes of assessment.

- 2.5. If the quorum cannot be achieved, a decision of pending should be recorded (see **10.6** below).

3. Frequency of Meetings

- 3.1. UABs will normally meet once each academic year to confirm marks and publish results. Masters courses will normally have two meetings each academic year, one to confirm the taught unit marks and the second following the project unit.

- 3.2. UABs for units that either contribute to programmes with multiple intakes each year or to collaborative programmes may meet more than twice each academic year.

- 3.3. UABs may also meet to consider Second Attempt Assessment(s) results though the UAB may delegate this role to a specially identified “sub-group” of individuals. This delegation is on the authority of the UAB and must be recorded in the minutes of the main UAB meeting.

- 3.4. There should also be other meetings of the UABs.

- 3.4.1. There will need to be a meeting of a small sub-committee of the UAB to review statistical information that allows comparison of the cohort with previous cohorts, other units in the “cognate group”, and between cohorts of students on the same unit but from different pathways or programmes. . Departments typically convene this meeting after the referral period but before the next academic year begins.

- 3.4.2. There will need to be a meeting of a small sub-committee of the UAB, convened by the Associate Dean (Academic), before each semester to approve the assessment artefact(s) intended for use in that semester before students start any assessment in the unit.

4. External Examiners

- 4.1. The University refers to External Examiners involved with UABs as “Subject External Examiners”.
- 4.2. It is important that each unit has a Subject External Examiner assigned to it and that the Subject External Examiner is aware of their allocation of duties. The Chair of the UAB will not allow consideration of student performance in a unit where this has not occurred.
- 4.3. Subject External Examiners form part of the quorum requirement for a meeting of the UAB held to confirm marks and publish results (see **2.2** above).
- 4.4. The document External Examiners Regulations and Procedures published by Academic Registry defines the role and responsibilities of a Subject External Examiner.
- 4.5. The role of the Subject External Examiner is summarised as follows. They:
 - 4.5.1. Have the key role in relation to academic standards.
 - 4.5.2. Have a responsibility to ensure that the UAB, on behalf of the University, has assessed students fairly.
 - 4.5.3. Have a responsibility to ensure that decisions of the UAB appropriately match demonstrated learning outcomes and marking criteria for the unit.
 - 4.5.4. Have a responsibility to ensure that the UAB, on behalf of the University, has maintained standards at a unit level that is comparable with such assessments undertaken elsewhere in the United Kingdom.
 - 4.5.5. Have the power to see any assessment to help them to give this confirmation.
 - 4.5.6. Shall receive at the beginning of each teaching period and in respect of each unit for which they have responsibility, the unit assessment strategy and its relationship to the learning outcome(s) of the unit, together with a statement of the way in which the elements of assessment will meet the strategy.
 - 4.5.7. Shall receive, by the end of the Consolidation and Assessment Period or as soon as possible afterwards, a sample of assessment, the content of which is to be the subject of agreement between the Subject External Examiner and the Department/School.
 - 4.5.8. Attend the meeting(s) of the UAB held to confirm marks and publish results. If unable to attend, they should submit their views as detailed at **2.4**.
 - 4.5.9. Shall give their approval to any proposed modification of sets of marks following moderation before a UAB can confirm the marks.
 - 4.5.10. Shall complete the University Subject External Examiner report form and submit it to the Academic Registrar within four weeks of the date of the UAB.

- 4.5.11. Shall sign the mark sheet to signify general satisfaction with the effectiveness and adequacy of the relationship between the assessment strategy and the learning outcomes of the unit, although such signature does not necessarily indicate agreement with every confirmed mark.
- 4.5.12. Shall report to the Vice-Chancellor if they are unable to sign the mark sheet because they do not have such general satisfaction.
- 4.5.13. May wish to approve, or comment upon, assessments in advance of their being given to students - the way in which this is done is to be agreed between the Department/School and the Subject External Examiner, and must involve all assessment, i.e. coursework as well as examination.
- 4.5.14. May indicate in their report that they believe the UAB, on behalf of the University, is not maintaining standards at an appropriate level and comment on what they would wish to see changed.
- 4.5.15. May report in confidence to the Vice-Chancellor on any serious concern they have on assessment matters that put at risk the standards of the awards of the University.
- 4.5.16. May meet and discuss with students at any time in order to form an impression of the unit and its delivery.

5. Moderation of Marks

- 5.1. The UAB would normally consider moderation, after reviewing the full range of information, in the following circumstances if:
 - 5.1.1. The pass threshold has been incorrectly applied.
 - 5.1.2. The marks do not fall within the expected mark distribution.
 - 5.1.3. The Head of Department confirms that a course management issue has disadvantaged students.
- 5.2. If there is moderation of marks (which has to be agreed by the Subject External Examiner), such moderation should normally be for all marks in a particular assessment artefact (and such moderation may be downwards as well as upwards).
- 5.3. Moderation may also take the form of discounting an assessment artefact and extrapolating a unit mark from the remaining assessment artefacts, which shall be re-weighted accordingly.
- 5.4. The minutes of the meeting should record any moderation that has been agreed, together with the reasons it was applied, and the Subject External Examiner's agreement and the extent of her/his involvement in the decision making process.

6. Definition of Pass Criteria

- 6.1. The definitions used are as follows:
 - 6.1.1. Assessment Component - an aggregated mark of a type of assessment contributing to the overall unit mark for a student, for example, coursework or examination. The mark in any assessment component will be calculated from marks earned in assessment artefacts.

- 6.1.2. Assessment Artefact - an individual piece of assessed work. For example, a coursework assignment or an exam paper.
- 6.1.3. Overall Mark - the unit mark calculated for a student from the assessment component marks, normally by means of a weighting (e.g. .3 for coursework and .7 for examination).
- 6.2. The pass criteria is a 40% overall mark, or grade equivalent.
- 6.3. Variations are possible, such as “thresholds” in assessment components, but the Head of Department must request these through the Academic Registrar for approval by Academic Policy Committee.
- 6.4. Where a unit is assessed entirely by artefacts marked as Pass/Fail and not given a mark, approval must be sought from Academic Policy Committee. This would normally be done through the course approval process for units on new courses or through the Unit Management approval process for units on existing courses.
- 6.5. There may be additional conditions (not in terms of marks or grades) set as part of the unit details. If such conditions exist, the Unit Description must clearly state them and Departments must inform students of the requirement in advance of registration on the unit.
- 6.6. Where a student is presenting Second Attempt Assessment(s), the UAB may only pass the student if the student has passed all assessment artefact(s) set as Second Attempt Assessment(s). Details of requirements of Second Attempt Assessment(s) are given at **10.3**.

7. Input Required

- 7.1. The UAB should receive a mark sheet for each unit. Where moderation has taken place, it will be indicated. The mark sheet must identify each student’s overall marks (and may include artefact and component marks by means of supplementary sheets). The mark sheet must allow identification of the student’s status in respect of the unit (e.g. studying the unit for the first time, offering Second Attempt Assessment(s), repeating the unit). The mark sheet shall indicate which students have had an assessment penalty applied (e.g. for late submission of work).
- 7.2. If Academic Policy Committee has agreed to a request for “thresholds” in components of assessment, the mark sheet shall indicate these thresholds.
- 7.3. The mark sheet informs the UAB of cases where students have claimed that extenuating circumstances affected particular assessment artefacts and the Extenuating Circumstances Panel has determined them to be valid.

8. Extenuating Circumstances

- 8.1. The UAB may make one of three possible decisions with regard to valid extenuating circumstances.
- 8.2. Where a student has missed an examination type assessment, it will record a decision of Deferred First Attempt Assessment(S), with the exception of those detailed at **8.4** and **8.5**, and offer the student the opportunity to complete a Deferred First Attempt Assessment(s) in the affected assessment artefact(s) during the Second Attempt Assessment Period.

- 8.3. Secondly, where a student has missed the due date for a coursework type assessment, waive the assessment penalty and ensure the assessment artefact attracts the full mark it justifies on its merits alone if it has been submitted within twenty working days of the due submission date.
- 8.4. Thirdly, the UAB may extrapolate a mark in cases where, in its academic judgement, the student has demonstrated in at least two other completed and unaffected assessment artefacts contributing to the final mark of the unit, that he or she has met the learning outcomes of the unit. In such a case, the UAB may extrapolate an overall mark for the unit from the completed and unaffected assessment artefacts. Where a mark has been extrapolated and this results in a Pass for the unit, it is not expected that the student is offered a Deferred First Attempt Assessment(s) as well. However, it must be remembered that a student has the absolute right to a Deferred First Attempt Assessment(s).
- 8.5. Chairs should make sure members of the UAB understand that, under the University's extenuating circumstance policy and with the exceptions listed at **8.5**, a student with a valid extenuating circumstance has an absolute right, should they wish to exercise it, to another attempt at a missed examination.
- 8.6. Extenuating circumstances cannot be submitted for Second Attempt Assessment(s) or defer work.

9. Anonymous Marking

- 9.1. The University operates a policy of anonymous marking for all assessments including course work, unless it is impracticable.
- 9.2. Where assessment is subject to anonymous marking, the assessment artefact has to remain anonymous until the point of data entry into the University student record system.
- 9.3. UABs do not have to consider students anonymously.
- 9.4. Provisional decisions of UABs, where published, should show marks by student number to fulfil the requirements of the Data Protection Act. Please see section 14 below for further details of how to publish marks.

10. Decisions Possible

The possible decisions are as follows:

10.1. Pass

- 10.1.1. The UAB shall PASS students who meet pass criteria, including any approved "thresholds" that apply to the programme on which they are registered. The UAB assigns the credit specified in the approved Unit Description to students who have PASSED the unit.

10.2. Second Attempt Assessment(s)

- 10.2.1. UABs shall give students who do not meet pass criteria the opportunity of Second Attempt Assessment(s) depending on their status.
- 10.2.2. The UAB is responsible for approving the form Second Attempt Assessment(s) shall take for a unit.

- 10.2.3. Second Attempt Assessment(s) may take the form either of another assessment artefact of the type failed, or of another type of assessment artefact. Alternatively, Second Attempt Assessment(s) may take the form of a single assessment artefact undertaken by all students who have failed the unit regardless of which, or how many, assessment artefacts they have failed in that unit.
- 10.2.4. The UAB has discretion over the Second Attempt Assessment(s) requirements, except that it should treat students in a similar position in a consistent way.
- 10.2.5. The UAB should set the time for completion or submission of Second Attempt Assessment(s) within the parameters defined by the Academic Year dates, as published annually by the Academic Registry on the authority of Academic Council. The current schedule for is Annex A to these guidelines.
- 10.2.6. The UAB has the additional responsibility of ensuring Departments appropriately record the approved form of Second Attempt Assessment(s) on the Student Record System and clearly communicate the details of the decision to students.
- 10.2.7. The Second Attempt Assessments will be marked with the artefact mark capped at the pass mark of the unit. The overall unit mark will be recalculated with the capped Second Attempt Assessment marks but the overall unit mark will not be capped. That mark shall be annotated on the transcript with the legend "Passed after Second Assessment". Where the Unit Assessment Board has prescribed a single re-assessment task that allows the student to demonstrate achievement of the unit's learning outcome, the capped Second Attempt Assessment mark will be used for all the failed assessment artefacts.
- 10.2.8. The UAB cannot consider Second Attempt Assessment(s) that have been submitted unless there has been a decision of Second Attempt Assessment(s) made at a previous meeting of the Board, and, in the case of full-time and sandwich undergraduate students only, a Board of Examiners has confirmed the decision.

10.3. **Deferred First Attempt Assessment(s)**

- 10.3.1. If there is a valid extenuating circumstance recorded or determined against any missed examination, the UAB shall normally make a decision of Deferred First Attempt Assessment(s) against the student in that unit.
- 10.3.2. The UAB may delegate authority to the Chair to confirm marks and grades arising from deferred decisions.
- 10.3.3. A UAB may also defer decisions for whole groups of students, for example, where the UAB awaits the Subject External Examiner's approval for moderation, or where a course management issue has resulted in marks not being available to the UAB, or where the quorum defined at 2.1 above has not been achieved.

10.4. **Second Attempt Assessment and Deferred First Attempt Assessment(s)**

- 10.4.1. If there is a valid extenuating circumstance recorded or determined against any missed examination in the same unit where a student has failed

another artefact, the UAB shall normally make a decision of Second Attempt Assessment and Deferred First Attempt Assessment(s) against the student in that unit.

10.4.2. The Second Attempt Assessment(s) will be undertaken under the provisions at 10.2.

10.4.3. The Deferred First Attempt Assessment(s) will be undertaken under the provisions at 10.3.

10.5. **Repeat**

10.5.1. This decision is recorded if the student has failed a Second Attempt Assessment(s) or a Deferred First Attempt Assessment(s).

10.5.2. This decision may be overturned should the Board of Examiners opt to exclude the student.

10.6. **Pending**

10.6.1. The UAB may record a decision of Pending for whole groups of students, for example, where the UAB awaits the Subject External Examiner's approval for moderation, or where a course management issue has resulted in marks not being available to the UAB, or where the quorum defined at 2.1 above has not been achieved.

10.7. **Unit Result Pending**

10.7.1. The UAB may record a decision of Unit Result Pending where the student has a valid ECF for a piece of coursework and the coursework has not yet been received and marked.

11. **Decisions after Second Attempt Assessment(s)**

11.1. If the UAB, or delegated "sub-group", is considering a student's performance in Second Attempt Assessment(s), the UAB may record a decision of either Pass or Repeat, depending on whether the assessment artefact(s) meet the pass criteria.

11.1.1. The Second Attempt Assessments will be marked with the artefact mark capped at the pass mark of the unit. The overall unit mark will be recalculated with the capped Second Attempt Assessment marks but the overall unit mark will not be capped. That mark shall be annotated on the transcript with the legend "Passed after Second Assessment". Where the Unit Assessment Board has prescribed a single re-assessment task that allows the student to demonstrate achievement of the unit's learning outcome, the capped Second Attempt Assessment mark will be used for all the failed assessment artefacts.

11.2. Students will not be allowed to carry forward Second Attempt Assessments or Deferred First Attempt Assessments into the next academic year.

12. Disabilities

- 12.1. It would be good practice to keep a personal record at Departmental level of each student, which records details of any disability and of allowances/entitlements in respect of that disability (e.g. the extra time allowed in examinations), together with confirmation that the allowances have been applied.
- 12.2. Copies of these records should be available to each UAB covering students from the Department, for the Chair to be able to refer to in the case of any individual student. Any discussion requires a brief Minute for that student under that unit.

13. Sequence of Agenda Items per Unit

- 13.1. Is Board Quorate for this Unit? If not quorate, the Department must convene a further meeting as soon as possible and, in any case, in time to provide the Board of Examiners with the necessary information in accordance with the approved University schedule, given at Annex A to these guidelines.
- 13.2. Are there any exceptional circumstances relating to the assessments in the Unit or any course management issues that may have affected student performance? (E.g. disruption of the examination by a fire drill, unavailability of key resources, an unfair assessment that disadvantaged students.) If so, has the Head of Department followed the procedure at 9 of the Unit Assessment Boards section of current Examination and Assessment Regulations and what allowance is she or he proposing to make in respect of this?
- 13.3. The Board must receive a mark sheet that provides the information detailed at section 7.
- 13.4. Moderation: if the Subject External Examiner has agreed proposed moderation in advance of the meeting, the mark sheet must make this plain. If the UAB decides to moderate marks, but the Subject External Examiner is unable to attend the meeting, then the Board record decision pending but should delegate authority to the Chair to agree moderation with the Subject External Examiner and subsequently to confirm the marks.
- 13.5. Confirmation of each student's mark, following the processes described at 1.7 to 1.10 above. Where the UAB takes decisions in respect of extenuating circumstances (please see section 8 above) and where the student has not yet achieved the pass criteria in the overall unit mark and the outcome is anything other than as detailed at 8.1 or 8.2, the minutes must record these decisions.
- 13.6. Agreement of Second Attempt Assessment(s), Deferred First Attempt Assessment(s) and repeat requirements and timings. These would typically be "generic" to the Unit rather than decided individually. Any individual exceptions to the "generic" Second Attempt Assessment(s) requirements should be agreed and recorded in the minutes (by name of student).

14. Publication of Results

- 14.1. UABs must publish a list of decisions (i.e. Pass, Second Attempt Assessment(s), Deferred First Attempt Assessment(s), Fail Or Pending) within three working days of the meeting. The current "Examination and Assessment Regulations" of the University of Portsmouth prescribe no method for doing this, other than to remind staff that the provisions of the Data Protection Act must be followed. If a

department publishes decisions in a public place, therefore, they should not be by name but rather by registration number.

- 14.2. Students have a right to disclosure of marks under the Data Protection Act and should have received indicative marks already. There is no University requirement, however, to publish marks. Departments may choose to publish marks. The University Student Record System has standard reports that allow the publication of marks by name or number. The means of publication may be a notification of personal results to the students by letter or through password protected web-site access, or it may be by a publicly displayed class list of marks that should refer to students by registration number not student name.
- 14.3. Published marks may take the form of grades but a student has the right to receive marks if they apply for disclosure under the Data Protection Act. Given the inconvenience and expense such requests would inevitably cause to Departments, it may be more sensible simply to release to all students their marks. This remains a departmental decision, however.
- 14.4. Good practice would require Departments to notify students with Second Attempt Assessment(s) or Deferred First Attempt Assessment(s) individually about what they have to do to pass and when they must do it.

15. Minutes

- 15.1. The Chair of the UAB is responsible for the production of minutes of the meeting, in accordance with University conventions. The Chair shall appoint a secretary to assist her or him in the exercise of this responsibility.
- 15.2. Minutes should consist of:
 - an attendance list (showing what items the member was in attendance for);
 - apologies;
 - confirmation of the previous minutes;
 - any matters arising (for example, approval of Chair's action);
 - for each unit considered, a copy of the mark sheet produced for the meeting and of the same mark sheet updated by the decisions of the UAB;
 - for each unit considered, a note of the application of any discretion with regard to moderation of assessments, confirmation of student marks, exercise of powers in relation to extenuating circumstances, a note as to whether the unit falls outside the expected marks range (an average of between 50% and 70% for the unit), the generic Second Attempt Assessment(s) requirements and timings, the generic Deferred First Attempt Assessment(s) requirements and timings, any individual departures from these generic requirements and timings for Second Attempt Assessment(s) and Deferred First Attempt Assessment(s);
 - for each unit, a note to record where dispute has been raised about the application of disability allowances and how (if) that has been resolved;
 - a note of delegation arrangements.
- 15.3. A template of minutes, in Word format, is available from the Academic Registry. Please contact, by e-mail, george.allison@port.ac.uk for further details.

16. System Support

- 16.1. The University's Student Records System, referred to as Student Records, (previously known as Jupiter), is designed to offer support to the UAB processes, primarily through the production of detailed reports for each unit. This also enables

the publication of results and the notification of detailed outcomes to students via the Student Portal. The update of Student Records following each UAB meeting will allow each Department to produce a comprehensive report for a Board of Examiners, regardless of the student's distribution of units across Departments and Faculties. The schedule attached at Annex A exists to allow this to happen.

Annex A YEAR, BREAK, AND ASSESSMENT DATES INCLUDING UABS, BOES, GRADUATION, SECOND ATTEMPT ASSESSMENT PERIOD AND EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES

Academic Year 2015-2016

1 The approved dates for the academic year 2015-2016 are:

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|-------------------------------------|---|
| Induction Week (all Years) | Monday 14 September 2015 to Friday 18 September 2015 |
| Autumn Teaching Block | Monday 21 September 2015 to Friday 11 December 2015 |
| Christmas Break | Monday 14 December 2015 to Friday 1 January 2016 |
| Spring Teaching Block | Monday 4 January 2016 to Thursday 24 March 2016 |
| Easter Break | Friday 25 March 2016 to Friday 15 April 2016 |
| Consolidation and Assessment Period | Monday 18 April 2016 to Friday 27 May 2016 (Within this period the formal examination weeks run from Tuesday 3 May 2016 to Friday 27 May 2016) |
| Graduation Weeks | Monday 11 July 2016 to Friday 22 July 2016 |
| Second Attempt Assessment Period | Monday 4 July 2016 to Friday 22 July 2016 |

- 2 Unit Assessment Boards (UABs) shall meet in the week Monday 13 June 2016 to Friday 17 June 2016.
- 3 Boards of Examiners (BOEs) shall meet in the week Monday 27 June 2016 to Friday 1 July 2016.
- 4 Courses with non-standard academic years and/or exemption from the requirements of the academic year structure may have their Boards or additional Boards at other times and dates, but must advise students and Academic Registry of the dates that will apply.
- 5 Graduation Week will need to consist of at least 14 ceremonies to accommodate anticipated student numbers. Graduation will occur at specific dates yet to be confirmed in the weeks beginning 11th and 18th July 2016. Exact dates of specific ceremonies will be set in January 2016.
- 6 The “Examination and Assessment Regulations”, state that Academic Council shall prescribe each year a fixed period or periods in which “second attempt assessment” (formerly known as “referral”) must be completed.
- 7 The schedule contained herein is to apply for the academic year 2015-2016.
- 8 The “second attempt assessment period” does not apply to Collaborative Programmes.
- 9 For all other students undertaking their assessments within the standard academic year, the “second attempt assessment period”, as defined by students submitting or completing “second attempt assessments”, will run between Monday 4 July 2016 and Friday 22 July 2016 inclusive.
- 10 For courses with non-standard academic years and all postgraduate, the “second attempt assessment period”, as defined by students submitting or completing

“second attempt assessments”, will run for three weeks from the first Monday following the date of the relevant “main” meeting of the Board of Examiners

- 11** For all students, all “second attempt assessment” must be submitted in or completed during the “second attempt assessment period”. “Second attempt assessment” tasks and dates may be communicated to students in advance of the “second attempt assessment period” subject to the following caveats:
- Re-sit examinations and tests must be scheduled to take place within the “second attempt assessment period”
 - “Second attempt” coursework assignments must be submitted at the end of the “second attempt assessment period”
 - Students must be clearly warned that the decisions of UABs and BOEs may mean that any work undertaken before the “second attempt assessment period” proves to be redundant because the volume of individual “second attempt assessment” necessary may mean that the student has the opportunity for “second attempt assessment” withdrawn. Additionally there is the possibility of compensation in a single unit at any level of a course.
 - The warning given to students must be approved by the Academic Registrar as conforming to the Academic Regulations of the University of Portsmouth.
- 12** For all students, meetings of Unit Assessment Boards and Boards of Examiners to consider the result of “second attempt assessment”, often known as “Re-sit Boards”, must be completed before Clearing begins in mid-August. Colleagues are reminded that the “Examination and Assessment Regulations” do not prescribe a constitution or quoracy requirement for “re-sit” Boards. It is open to departments or faculties to make all such decisions, for the full range of programmes for which they are responsible, at a meeting of a relatively small group of staff. This is equally true for Unit Assessment Boards and Boards of Examiners but any such policy must be given effect in the minutes of the main meetings.
- 13** “Second attempt assessment” may take the form of either another assessment artefact of the type(s) failed, or of another type of assessment artefact. “Second attempt assessment” may, alternatively, take the form of a single assessment artefact undertaken by all students who have failed the unit regardless of which, or how many, assessment artefacts they have failed in that unit. The Head of Department has responsibility for approving the form “second attempt assessment” shall take for a unit. The Head of Department has the additional responsibility of ensuring the approved form of “second attempt assessment” is recorded appropriately on the Student Record System and clearly communicated to students.

- 14 The “second attempt assessment” will have the mark awarded restricted to the pass mark if the student has met or exceeded the pass standard (40% unless an exemption has been agreed). If the student has not met the pass standard the actual mark earned at the “second attempt” will be recorded. Following a “second attempt”, the overall unit mark will be calculated using the normal method of calculation for establishing the overall unit mark but this calculation will use the “second attempt” mark instead of the “first attempt” mark in any assessment where a “second attempt” is recorded. The mark so calculated will be used as the overall mark for the unit to be reported to Unit Assessment Boards and Boards of Examiners, and confirmed for classification and transcript purposes. *For the avoidance of doubt, this will mean that units passed as a result of “second attempt” assessment(s) will not have their overall mark capped to the pass standard mark, although the “second attempt assessment” itself will be so capped.*
- 15 Students who miss a re-sit date or submission date during the “second attempt assessment period” will be deemed to have failed.
- 16 In respect of examination type assessments, Extenuating Circumstance Forms have to be submitted by the end of the Consolidation and Assessment Period. In the academic year 2015-2016 this date is Friday 27 May 2016. In respect of coursework type assessments, Extenuating Circumstance Forms have to be submitted by Friday 24 June 2016. Students are advised to submit their forms however as the circumstances occur and not to store them up for the dead-line date.
- 17 There will be no facility to submit and consider Extenuating Circumstances in respect of the “second attempt assessment period”. This is because it is not possible to have: a deferral of a “second attempt assessment”; or a deferral of a “deferred first attempt assessment”; or a “second attempt assessment” of a failed “deferred first attempt assessment”. However, further deferred assessment opportunities may be allowed as a reasonable adjustment agreed in response to a student’s disability or a course management issue.
- 18 Students must identify specific assessment artefacts affected by the extenuating circumstance. Claims that generalised performance has been affected but which do not specify the assessment artefacts will not be accepted.
- 19 Extenuating Circumstance Forms will not be accepted if submitted after the deadlines published above, unless there is a good reason for the late submission that is related to the circumstance itself. The student must have fully explained that reason in an accompanying supporting statement.
- 20 Where valid extenuating circumstances are approved for an assessment artefact against which a penalty for late submission has been imposed, the penalty shall be lifted.

Andrew Rees
Academic Registrar, June 2013

Annex B

EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES - Guidelines for Unit Assessment Boards

Extenuating Circumstances are circumstances relating to a student's health and /or personal life which are of a sufficiently serious nature to result in her or his being unable to attend, complete, or submit an assessment on time. The Regulations relating to Extenuating Circumstances and the Criteria by which they will be judged are reproduced in the current Examination and Assessment Regulations.

The University of Portsmouth operates a "fit to sit" policy. If a student attends an examination or hands a piece of coursework in on time, they are claiming that they were fit to do so and can not submit an extenuating circumstances form – all claims where they have attended or submitted the assessment on time will be rejected.

Students cannot submit extenuating circumstances for deferred First Attempt Assessments or Second Attempt Assessments. They can only submit extenuating circumstances for the first attempt in an academic year. There should be no cases of extenuating circumstances to consider for the Boards to consider Second Attempt Assessment Unit Assessment and Deferred First Attempt Assessments.

Problems with course management that have affected student performance, either individually as part of a group, should be remedied as a result of students following the student complaints procedure. The Department may also anticipate the effect of such problem and through the Head of Department, acting in consultation with the Academic Registrar, regard these as generic extenuating circumstances, which may require some proposed remedy. These processes may result in the Unit Assessment Board being asked to endorse or consider proposed remedies.

Unit Assessment Boards will be informed by Extenuating Circumstances Officers whether a student has valid extenuating circumstances, and if so, which assessment artefacts have not been completed, attended or submitted on time. Unit Assessment Boards will not be informed of what the extenuating circumstances are, nor should they spend time discussing them.

The UAB may make one of four possible decisions with regard to valid extenuating circumstances.

Firstly, where the student has missed an examination, it will record a decision of Deferred First Attempt Assessment and offer the student the opportunity to complete a Deferred First Attempt Assessment in the affected assessment artefact(s). Dates should be set for the completion of Deferred First Attempt Assessment but these should be sensitive to the student's circumstances bearing in mind students cannot trail units into the next year. The Chair of the Board shall ensure written communication takes place with the student giving details of the Deferred First Attempt Assessment and its timing.

Secondly, where a student has had an assessment penalty imposed in relation to an assessment artefact by virtue of late submission and also has a valid extenuating circumstance in relation to that assessment artefact, then the penalty will be cancelled and the assessment artefact given the full mark it justifies on its merits alone provided the work was submitted within twenty working days of the due date of submission.. Students can not submit a further extenuating circumstances claim within this period to extend the time further. If this has not been done, the Unit Assessment Board must do it. The UAB, exceptionally, may lift penalties for late submission in the absence of any student claim or Extenuating Circumstances Officer decision. If it does this, the Chair of the UAB must cause the minutes of the meeting to record clearly the grounds for exercising such discretion. The UAB cannot waive, under any circumstance, an assessment penalty where the Extenuating Circumstances Officer has determined that a student's claim is invalid. Where the

coursework has not been received because the student is still within the time period for submitting it late and attracting the full marks, the Unit Assessment Board shall record a decision of PENDING and will delegate the decision to Chairs Action following the UAB. The UAB cannot waive penalties imposed in accordance with the University Disciplinary Procedures.

Thirdly, the UAB may extrapolate an overall mark in cases where, in its academic judgement, there is sufficient evidence, from at least two other completed and unaffected assessment artefacts contributing to the final mark of the unit, that the learning outcomes of the unit have been met. An example would be where there are a number of small assessments progressively building on a competence and achievement of the final tested competence demonstrates competence in the earlier assessments. In such a case, the UAB might judge that the student had successfully demonstrated the learning outcomes of the unit and would extrapolate a mark by discounting the affected assessment and re-calculating an overall mark by re-weighting the unaffected assessment artefacts accordingly.

Chairs should make sure members of the UAB understand that, under the University's extenuating circumstance policy, a student with a valid extenuating circumstance, who can achieve a pass by undertaking the affected examinations, has a right to another attempt at the affected examination provided that they can pass the unit within the Second Attempt Assessment Period.

All decisions taken by a Unit Assessment Board in respect of valid extenuating circumstances made known to it must be recorded in the minutes, together with a reason for the decision reached.