University of Warwick

Examination and Degree Conventions

The conventions listed below consolidate various resolutions of the Senate, the Examinations Committee, the Board of Undergraduate Studies, the Academic Quality and Standards Committee and the Faculty Boards concerning examinations for taught programmes of study. Due account has been taken of changes in procedures which have rendered certain resolutions obsolete or in need of further expansion. In many cases the Senate has commented more than once in a similar vein (e.g. about deadlines for the submission of syllabus changes); only the main reference (which is not necessarily the first or the latest) has been cited as the source of the regulation. In some instances the precise wording of the Senate minute has been modified (whilst retaining the meaning) so as to present a consistent format and style.

The substantive document was first approved by the Senate at its meeting on 5th November 1986. Resolutions have been incorporated up to and including the meeting of the Senate on 2nd July 2014.

These conventions should be read in conjunction with relevant Regulations in the University Calendar (Regulations 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 19, 37, 38, 39) and also the University’s Credit and Module Framework which may be found at:
http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/academicoffice/quality/categories/courseapproval/credit/.

Note: since the academic year 2001/02, the Examinations Committee has been replaced by the Board of Undergraduate Studies (and by the Board of Graduate Studies where the matter relates to taught postgraduate students).

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S. External Examiners for Undergraduate and Taught Postgraduate Degrees
T. Special Examination Arrangements for Students with Disabilities
A Materials allowed in Examinations

1. Candidates are forbidden to take into the examination room any books, papers, calculators, or any information storage and retrieval device, or any attache case or bag in which such items can be carried, unless there is an express provision otherwise in the case of a particular paper. Candidates are forbidden to pass calculators or any other item to one another during examinations (Regulation 10.2(4)).

2. a. The use of silent battery-operated calculators shall be permitted in examinations as recommended by departments, either for all their examinations or for specified papers only (Senate 37a/82-83).

b. Where the use of calculators has been approved the responsibility for identifying approved models or types and for verifying that only such models are used in the examination shall rest with the department organising that examination; departments shall also be responsible for informing students of any such restrictions (Senate 172c/81-82).

c. Except for the display of error or function messages, calculators with non-numeric displays shall not be allowed (Senate 172d/81-82).

d. The proper functioning of any calculator or batteries shall be the responsibility of the student (Senate 172e/81-82).

e. Any attempt at unauthorised use of a calculator prohibited under paragraphs 1, 2a, 2b or 2c above shall be dealt with under the Procedures to be adopted in the Event of Suspected Cheating in a University Test (Regulation 11)(Senate 172f/81-82).

f. The Warwick Business School is permitted to allow its students to use calculators as it may determine in the School’s examinations which have unrestricted open book status (BUGS 25(a)/02-02).

3. Candidates are forbidden to take into the examination room any devices which may emit noise or are likely to disturb other candidates (Senate  61 (b)/95-96). This specifically includes mobile phones (Senate 43/00-01).

4. Except in accordance with requirements for language examinations, or as may be approved by the Boards of Undergraduate or Graduate Studies, students are required to answer examination questions in English (Senate 174f/72-73, 64d/75-76).

5. a. Students whose first language is not English are permitted to use a bilingual dictionary during University examinations, except that bilingual dictionaries may not be used in certain examinations in which their use would negate the purposes of the examination. Such examinations will be publicised by the Academic Office in the Summer Term. See also f below.

b. A bilingual dictionary is defined as a single-volume, non-specialist, general-purpose bilingual translation dictionary covering English and the student's first language. Permitted dictionaries shall give only equivalent words and phrases in English and the first language and shall not include further explanatory text or appendices, other than of a trivial nature. Encyclopaedic, pictorial or specialist/subject- specific dictionaries (e.g. legal or business dictionaries) are not permitted.

c. Departmental Examination Correspondents or their nominated deputies are required to confirm a student as an appropriate user of a bilingual dictionary after consultation with the student's tutor (if necessary) before considering a request to certify a dictionary.
d. Students are required to provide their own dictionaries and Departmental Examination Correspondents or their nominated deputies are required to certify such dictionaries as suitable for examinations use prior to the examinations taking place in a similar fashion to the licensing system currently in use for electronic calculators, it being made clear to the students concerned that a dictionary may be checked by any member of staff before, during or after an examination period.

e. The student's name and registration number should be clearly indicated on the inside front cover of the bilingual dictionary, together with a departmental stamp and authenticated by the signature of the Departmental Examinations Correspondent or the nominated deputy.

f. Given the difficulties involved in certifying users and texts in examinations held overseas, the above scheme only applies to examinations administered at the University, except that:

(i) students taking resit examinations held at overseas centres but also administered at the University are permitted to use bilingual dictionaries provided they are already in possession of a correctly certified dictionary;

(ii) The Chair of the Board of Undergraduate Studies has given permission for Distance-Learning MBA students to present bilingual dictionaries for approval at the DLMBS September seminar.

( Senate 32(b) 96-97, Examinations Committee 10(a)/96-97, 14/96-97).

B Appointment of Invigilators

1. Members of the academic (and related) staff, post-doctoral fellows, conversational assistants and spouses of members of the academic staff shall be eligible to invigilate examinations (Senate 126g(i)/81-82), except that departments be permitted to nominate postgraduate research students instead of academic staff to invigilate examination sessions for as many of the invigilation sessions allocated to the department as they wish, it being noted that it would be the departments' responsibility to ensure that postgraduates attended the appropriate examination session and to find suitable replacements if they were unable to attend. The nomination of postgraduate research students as invigilators is on the basis that:

(a) that postgraduate research students only be permitted to invigilate.

(b) that postgraduate students should not act as Senior Invigilators.

(c) that the question of remuneration be a matter for local settlement between a department and the students.

(d) that the participation of postgraduate students in examination invigilation should be entirely voluntary. (Senate 39/94-95).

2. Invigilation duties shall be distributed to departments in proportion to the number of full-time teaching staff posts in each department (Senate 90a/77-78). When departments are asked to nominate more than one invigilator for a particular examination session, at least one of those nominated should be a member of academic staff (Examinations Committee 4(b)(ii)/99-00).

3. In nominating invigilators for examinations, departments shall ensure, as far as possible, a correspondence between the examining and invigilating responsibilities of members of staff
nominated, in order to make it possible to devolve upon relevant examiners some responsibility for monitoring variations in finishing lengths of papers, and the vetting of calculators and material used in open-book examinations (Senate 61a(ii)/79-80, 172c/81-82).

4. It shall be regarded as desirable but not essential that for all examinations with male and female candidates there should be an invigilator of each gender (126g(ii)/81-82).

5. a. A sum shall be allocated to each department on the basis of the number of invigilators provided under the formula specified in paragraph 2 above (Senate 151a/78-79).

b. Any member of a department wishing to claim personal payment from the above allocation for invigilation shall be permitted to do so (Senate 151b/78-79).

6. That, in cases where students are permitted extra time in an examination totalling more than 15 minutes and no request has been made for the student to sit the examination under special needs supervision, departments be required to nominate invigilators to cover the period of extra time in the examination room (Examinations Committee 11/91-92).

C. Collection and Delivery of Examination Scripts

(To be read in conjunction with the Regulations for Examiners, Regulation 10.1)

1. Where possible examiners should collect scripts from the examination room, but not until the Senior Invigilator is satisfied that all scripts have been collected (Examinations Committee 11d/76-77.appx).

2. Examiners who are not able to collect scripts themselves may authorise a colleague to collect them on their behalf.

3. Examiners are required to remain outside the examination room at the end of an examination until permitted to enter by the Senior Invigilator (Examinations Committee 9/91-92).

4. Examiners (or their nominees) who collect scripts from the examination room will be required by the Senior Invigilator to sign a receipt giving exact details of the number of candidates from whom scripts have been collected. It is the responsibility of the examiners to ensure, at the time of collection, that they have received the correct number of scripts from the invigilators (Examinations Committee 11d/76-77.appx).

5. Where answers to examinations are entered in several answer books it is the responsibility of the examiner(s) to sort the scripts in the department after receipt from the invigilators (Examinations Committee 11d/76-77).

6. Where the examiner does not collect the scripts from the examination room, scripts will be taken from the examination room to the Academic Office. Examiners will be informed by the Academic Office about distribution of scripts (Regulation 10.1 (5), modified).


These notes provide guidance to departments on the University’s regulations concerning the retention of examination scripts and how to prepare for, and respond, to students’ right, under the Data Protection Act 1998, to request copies of examiners’ comments. “Comments” in this instance includes any marks recorded on, or in relation to, examination scripts, essays etc.
The definition used in the 1998 Data Protection Act for "examination" includes "any process for determining the knowledge, intelligence, skill or ability of a candidate by reference to his performance in any test, work or other activity".

**Subject Access Requests**

Students have the right to make a request to obtain a copy of certain information recorded during the examination process and this is termed subject access. Information recorded by candidates during examination (e.g. their examination answers) are specifically exempted from subject access provisions. All other data associated with exams including ‘raw’ exam marks, examiners’ comments and exam board minutes are covered by ‘amended’ subject access provisions.

**Examination Marks and Examiners’ Comments:**

In the event of a Subject Access Request (SAR) the University must provide access to all examination comments, as defined above (excepting information recorded by candidates) either within 5 months of the request or 40 days after the official release of results (whichever is sooner). In all cases subject access requests should be directed to the University’s Data Protection Officer.

Internal and external examiners should be made aware that their comments are now accessible by students and should take care to ensure what they have recorded is both intelligible and appropriate. To enable the easy collection of information when a subject access request is made, departments should consider recording comments on attached marking sheets, rather than directly on examination scripts. Alternatively, where possible comments should be recorded in the margins of scripts. Where comments are hand-written and potentially illegible a word-processed copy may need to be provided.

Where examiners’ comments have been made directly onto scripts, the annotated script itself is exempt in the event of a SAR. However, if an annotated script is withheld, all comments must be reproduced on a separate form, which is available to the subject as a minimum requirement.

**Exam Board Minutes:**

Departments should be aware that exam board minutes will also include personal data which is being processed for the purpose of determining the results of examinations and therefore will be accessible by students making a subject access request; albeit subject to the exemption in the Act which allows personal data to be withheld for up to 5 months if the official results have not yet been announced. To protect the rights of third parties, information on other candidates should be deleted from the minutes before they are released.

**Retention of Examination Scripts:**

Rules concerning the retention of examination scripts are provided in University Regulations 10.1 (8) and (9) (below). Departments are advised to dispose of scripts promptly after the retention period has elapsed; the University will be unable to respond to subject access requests where exam scripts no longer exist.

A sample of student examination scripts and assessed work should be retained for quality assurance purposes: the latest advice from the Quality Assurance Agency suggests that for Institutional Audit purposes this should be the smallest possible sample consistent with demonstrating students’ achievement of learning outcomes and standards. Such a sample should cover all assessment methods, all award levels and provide examples of high, typical and low achievement in the areas selected. Ideally, each department should retain a copy of the most recent sample provided to external examiners on an annual basis for this purpose.
Regulation 10.1 Retention of Scripts

Undergraduate Material

(a) Scripts written in invigilated examinations which are held by the University and which contribute to final degree credit, and all assessed work which contributes to final degree credit shall be retained until 30 December following the meeting of the final-year Board of Examiners in the case of successful candidates, and until 30 December in the following year for all others.

(b) The following are excluded from the provisions of paragraph (a) above:

(i) reports on individual pieces of laboratory practical work, provided that in either case the piece of work concerned contributes 5 per cent or less of the credit for that year of the course; and

(ii) first-year examination answers or assessed essays which individually contribute less than 1 per cent of the final degree result.

(c) Scripts and assessed work not contributing to final degree credit or else falling within (b) (ii) above shall be retained until 30 September following the Summer term meeting of the First-year Board of Examiners in the case of successful candidates, or until 31 December following the September meeting of the First-year Board of Examiners in the case of candidates allowed to proceed to the second year after the September examinations, and until 30 September in the following year for all others.

Postgraduate Material

Scripts and assessed work of taught postgraduate courses shall be retained until six months after the date of the invigilated examinations.

Notes:

In addition to the provisions concerning retention of scripts set out in paragraphs (8) and (9) above, the Senate has passed the following resolutions:

(1) That work contributing to final degree credit, including essays, dissertations, reports and laboratory notebooks, other than scripts completed in invigilated examinations, may, at the discretion of the appropriate department, be returned to candidates before the meeting of the Board of Examiners which will consider the marks awarded for that work, subject to the following conditions:

(a) That any mark awarded prior to the examiners’ meeting is subject to revision; that this will be made clear to the candidate concerned before disclosing any such marks.

(b) That material which is returned will be re-submitted by the candidate in order that it is available at the examiners’ meeting.

(2) That Chairs of Departments, when considering whether to return work to students, should bear in mind the possibility of such works being altered before re-submission, and should consider the procedures they should adopt if a student fails to re-submit.

(3) That the decisions under resolution (1) should not apply to reports on individual pieces of laboratory practical work, provided that the piece of work concerned contributes 5 per cent or less of the credit for that year of the course. Examiners may, however, require those items to be re-submitted by the student as in (1) above.
E. Release of Results

1. a. No information whatever may be given to any candidate prior to the publication of examination results by the authorised University body, except that it is permitted to discuss first- and intermediate-year examination results with students immediately after meetings of the relevant Boards of Examiners prior to the results being posted on University noticeboards.

   b. Paragraph a. above may be waived in exceptional cases by the Chair of the appropriate Board of Examiners.

   (Faculty Board resolutions 1970/71, Senate 176a(ii)/75-76, 23(b)/89-90).

2. At its meetings on 6th March, 1991, 4th December, 1996 and 4th July 2007, the Senate resolved that the University adopt a policy of disclosure of examination marks in accordance with the following guidelines (Senate 59(a)/90-91, 32(b)/96-97 and 94(d)/06-07):

   a. Departments must only disclose module marks to students on an individual, confidential basis (e.g. via a securely authenticated intranet or in an individual tutorial). Where marks are disclosed by staff directly, only staff authorized to do so by the Head of Department may release such information.

   b. If a student wishes for a print-out or other written statement of his or her marks from his/her department, the student must normally make a written request for this to the Departmental Head or Personal Tutor.

   c. Module marks shall be made available to students via the portal www.warwick.ac.uk/evision once they have been approved by the relevant Board of Examiners and processed by the relevant academic department using (or uploaded to) the University’s mark-entry system.

   d. It is the responsibility of the member of academic staff authorised to disclose marks to a student to ensure that the correct marks are disclosed.

   e. Marks shall not be disclosed to third parties without a student’s written permission, except that marks may be disclosed in transcripts and confidential references (unless a student has explicitly specified otherwise).

   f. The policy of disclosure of marks is to apply equally to all records of marks, whether held in manual or electronic form.

   g. Marks are to be defined as the marks for each whole separately examined course component or element of assessed work (not whole year averages) and confirmed by the appropriate Board of Examiners. They must be in accord with the University’s agreed marking and classification conventions. Marks for individual elements of assessed work contributing to an overall assessed component of a module may be disclosed to students, subject to it being made clear to them that such marks were provisional and subject to moderation by the appropriate Board of Examiners. (Senate 32(b)96-97).

   h. If a penalty for late submission of assessed work has be applied, as set out under Regulation 36.3(1) (a), students must be provided with both the original mark for the assessed element and the mark with the penalty deducted. It must be clearly stated to students which mark will contribute to the final module mark. The mark with the penalty deducted will be the mark considered by the relevant Board of Examiners and must be the
mark recorded as the module result in the University student record system.

i. When marks are disclosed to students they should be accompanied by a qualifying statement reminding students that degree classification is related not only to individual marks, but also to the profile of the whole examination performance and that a Board of Examiners, in arriving at its academic judgment, also takes into account other relevant factors (e.g. health circumstances).

j. Where possible and if appropriate, the disclosure of marks should be accompanied by academic guidance.

k. If intermediate-year marks disclosed to students may subsequently be moderated by an External Examiner, the student must be informed that the marks are provisional.

l. Under the current terms of the Data Protection Act 1998 any marks retained on computer for more than the 40-day period permitted for processing purposes are liable for disclosure, and therefore any records of marks held on a computer must not be more detailed than those disclosed to students (and see further section D above).

m. Undergraduate candidates may only appeal degree classifications approved by Boards of Examiners and the Senate under the terms set out under Regulation 8.12.

3. It is the responsibility of each department to maintain a complete record of the marks in intermediate and final-year examinations of all the students in the department (Senate 66l/71-72).

4. Examination results will be published officially by the displaying of the Pass List in University House. Duplicates of these pass lists may be displayed on departmental noticeboards as soon as the official copy is displayed.

5. Students who are required to resit or withdraw, or whose degree status is otherwise changed, shall be notified by the Academic Office.

F. Submission of Assessed Work

This section should be read in conjunction with Regulation 36.3 in the University Calendar, which sets out penalties to be applied in the case of late submission of assessed work.

1. a. Assessed work contributing credit towards a final undergraduate degree classification is comparable to work completed under examination conditions as laid down in the Regulations for the Invigilation of Examinations, in that it is necessary to ensure that such work is the candidate's own.

b. Supervisors may offer general advice and critical comment on such work at all stages but shall not at any stage suggest amendments to drafts in such a way as to contravene the principle that work submitted should be the candidate's own.

   (Senate 199b/83-84)

2. Departments are required to publish official deadlines for the submission of all assessed work (Senate 151e(ii.2.A)/76-77).

3. A designated person within each Department shall receive all submissions of assessed work and keep a carefully dated record for the information of the Examiners' Board (Senate 151e(ii.2.B)/76-77).
4. Requests for extensions to a published deadline may be granted only by the Head of the Department responsible for examining the module and only in those cases where a student with appropriate medical or compassionate grounds makes the request either before the deadline has passed or within three days of the expiry of the deadline unless there are specific circumstances which warrant an extension of this period (Senate 151e(ii.2.C)/76-77, 143b(i)/78-79).

5. With respect to the certification by students of illness claimed as mitigation in the case of non-submission or late submission of assessed work, the Senate has approved the following policy:

(a) To avoid unnecessarily burdening local GPs with requests from students for medical certificates covering short-lived, minor illnesses which coincide with assessment tasks, students are allowed to self-certify such illnesses in certain circumstances. This is analogous to members of staff self-certifying for absence from work due to short-lived, minor illnesses.

(b) Absence from a major assessment event must be covered by a doctor’s note to avoid late penalties or a mark of zero. This includes University-administered examinations, substantial assessed essays and pieces of assessed coursework which contribute at least ten per cent of the overall module mark.

(c) Where an assessment contributes ten per cent or less of the module credit self-certification by students is permitted. In these circumstances students are required to provide their self-certificate within three days of their return to University after an illness covered by the policy, and departments may, where appropriate, grant an extended deadline. Departments may not excuse students from any piece of assessed work on the basis of self-certification of illness, although where the department sets out standard procedures credit normally assessed in smaller pieces of assessed coursework may be transferred to other assessment events on the same module.

(d) Major or prolonged illnesses should always be covered by a doctor’s note. Self-certification by students will not be accepted for illnesses lasting more than seven days.

(e) Repeated self-certification by any student will lead to further investigations or requirements for a doctor’s note. As a guide, students should not normally be permitted to self-certify absence on more than two occasions during an academic year. Departments should record all occurrences of self-certification covering assessment tasks (Senate 53(a)/06-07).

6. In respect of a medical certificate submitted in accordance with Regulation 12, or self-certification submitted in accordance with paragraph 5 above, departments should record the date of the examination or the assessment submission date, the date of receipt of the medical certificate or self-certification, and the outcome resulting from consideration of the medical certificate or self-certification.

7. Where the departmental Head decides to permit an extension of 15 days or more, his decision shall be reported to the Chair of the Board of Undergraduate or Graduate Studies as appropriate (Senate 143b(iii.b)/78-79, 30g/79-80).

8. Students are required to submit assessed work in a suitable electronic form which allows the department concerned readily to submit the work to plagiarism detection software, except that Head of Department have the discretion to permit students to submit assessed work in manuscript form should there be individual circumstances justifying this (Senate 94(e)/06-07).
G. Marking of Work for degree credit

1. a. All summative assessment should be considered by two examiners except for assessments which weighted at 3 CATS or less (see also (c) below). This provision shall also apply to resit or other examinations taken in vacations.

   b. The work to be considered shall be marked by one examiner and moderated by a second (using an appropriate method of moderation as outlined in the University’s Guidance on Moderation, available at: http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/aro/dar/quality/categories/examinations/moderation); where the marks differ by a class, and cannot be resolved between the two markers, the work shall be referred to a third marker. In cases where the mark cannot be resolved by University markers, the case may be referred to the External Examiner. The moderator shall be expected to moderate the general level of the marks and their spread. The moderator shall also be responsible for checking the transcription and addition of the marks.

   c. In cases where the final assessment mark is an aggregate of a collection of small pieces of work (of 3 CATS or less) sample moderation of some of the elements of assessment should be undertaken, it being noted that:

   (A) examiners should be provided with agreed mark schemes and/or model answers where applicable;

   (B) arrangements must be made for considering the array of marks and careful checking of the transcription and addition of marks.

   (AQSC 117/13-14)

2. All marks, including the initial marks of the first and second markers, shall be available to the External Examiner(s) (Senate 153d(i.D)/83-84)

3. The Senate, at its meeting on 19th June, 1991, resolved that University-wide anonymous marking of examinations be introduced with effect from the beginning the Summer Term 1992 in accordance with the practice proposed in paper EC.16/90-91, anonymity to apply up to the point where marks are agreed by internal markers (Senate 89(a)/90-91).

The practice proposed in paper EC16/90-91 and approved by the Senate is as follows:

(a) Anonymity in Marking

   For scripts to be identifiable in the absence of a name each candidate should enter on the scripts his or her University card number. It is desirable that this number is used for the following reasons:

   (i) students already have a degree of familiarity with their card numbers which should lessen the risk of error on their part. They are also required to have their University cards with them at examinations.

   (ii) there will normally be a number of students who turn up to take examinations for which they have failed to register; use of the University card number means that an identification number is already available for such candidates.
(iii) the University card number renders students readily identifiable in relation to other central and departmental records.

(b) In the examination room:

Candidates are required to enter their University card number on their scripts and to obscure their name. The seating plan list will be produced to include card numbers as well as names to guide students who may attend without their cards.

At the conclusion of the examination, while it will not be possible to check the scripts by name, they can be checked by seat number, which candidates will continue to write on their scripts. If it is necessary to determine names for checking purposes, reference can be made to the attendance slips.

The seating plan will be produced in two versions, one with numbers only (subsequently provided to examiners) and one with names and numbers, both of which shall be annotated by the invigilators as required. The Academic Office representative will collect the names and numbers version at the end of the examination session.

(c) Marking of examination scripts.

Marking of scripts from invigilated examinations will be done without any knowledge of the candidate's name. The marker will however have available the numbers-only version of the seating plan returned with the scripts showing early leavers, etc.

Mark-sheets may then be converted by parent departments into names for the purposes of examination boards.

4. Where temporary members of academic staff are teaching a module (e.g. to cover for a permanent member of staff on sabbatical leave, or "bought-in" teachers for particular aspects) then they may be involved in the marking but overall charge for the marking of the examinations or assessed work must be the responsibility of a permanent member of staff (e.g. the normal lecturer for the module).

5. The assessment of a module gives rise to one (only) module result. A module result is derived from the assessment of one (only) module (different arrangements for assessment apply on the MBChB course) (Senate 93(d)/07-08).

6. Every module has a pass mark. For undergraduate modules (levels C, I and H) this is 40%. For postgraduate modules (level M and D) this is normally 50% (Senate 93(d)/07-08).

7. Module results contribute to overall degree results in direct proportion to their credit weighting, as set out in the relevant degree classification conventions (Senate 93(d)/07-08).

8. There are different schemes for combining module results from different years of degrees and other courses in calculating the final overall result for the course. For example, on three-year Honours degrees the following weighting is typical for Arts and Social Studies courses:

   Year 1: 0%: Year 2: 50%: Year 3: 50%. On three-year Honours degrees in the Faculty of Science the following is typical: Year 1: 10%; Year 2: 30%; Year 3: 60% (Senate 93(d)/07-08).

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H. Essay Banks
1. Departments may establish and control essay banks (Senate 158a(ii)/77-78).

2. In consultation with their Staff/Student Liaison Committee Departments shall decide:
   a. the number of essays to be placed in the bank for each course.
   b. whether the essays should bear original tutorial comments.
   c. whether assessed and tutorial essays should be included.

   (Senate 158a (ii.2/4)/77-78).

3. Where assessed essays are involved Departments are required to advise their External Examiner(s) (Senate 158a(ii.4)/77-78).

4. Departments running such schemes shall report on them annually to the Academic Registrar (Senate 158a(iv)/77-78).

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I. Suspected Cheating in a University Test

(To be read in conjunction with the Regulations Governing the Procedure to be Adopted in the Event of Suspected Cheating in a University Test, Regulation 11)

1. All candidates shall be notified by their Department in writing on an annual basis of the provisions of the University's Regulations in relation to suspected cheating in a University test. This information shall be supplemented with further details in writing about the Department's requirements in relation to assessed work, and particularly the acknowledgement of source material (Senate 43a(i/ii)/78-79, 122b(iii)/80-81).

2. Departments shall normally require students to complete standard forms of declaration for submission with assessed work, as an additional means of ensuring that students are fully apprised of the serious view taken by the University of cheating in assessed work (Senate 122b(ii)/80-81).

3. The Academic Quality and Standards Committee and the Senate have approved the following guidelines for Departments on considering cases of improperly acknowledged reproduction of the work of another person(s) in essays or other forms of assessed work:

   Regulation 11 sets out the procedures to be followed where a suspicion arises that cheating has occurred in a University test, essay, dissertation, report or other assessed work. Regulation 11 sets out a generic definition of “cheating” as “an attempt to benefit oneself or another, by deceit or fraud. This shall include reproducing one’s own work or the work of another person or persons without proper acknowledgement”.

   Part A of Regulation 11 relates to allegations of cheating which arise during tests conducted under University examination conditions, and such allegations must always be referred to a University Investigating Committee.

   Part B of Regulation 11 sets out the procedures that should be followed where a suspicion of cheating arises in all other forms of University assessment. Heads of Department (or their authorised deputies) have an important role to play in all such cases, and the guidance below has been drawn up to assist Heads of Departments in this process.

   (a) All candidates shall be notified by their Department in writing on an annual basis of the provisions of the University's Regulations in relation to suspected cheating in a University test.
This information shall be supplemented with further details in writing about the Department's requirements in relation to assessed work, and particularly the acknowledgement of source material (Senate 43a(i/ii)/78-79, 122b(iii)/80-81). Typically, such departmental guidance provides detailed advice to students on when and how to acknowledge properly the use of other persons' work through the use of quotation marks, footnotes and bibliography and how these apply to different forms of publications, including materials from the internet. Departments should ensure that such guidance is made readily available to students through handbooks and on departmental websites and that students are regularly advised (e.g. at inductions and at least annually thereafter) to refer to it when preparing assessed work. Departments should also make clear to students the possible outcomes of an offence of cheating, including the penalty of a mark of zero, with the potential result of not being eligible to qualify for the degree or award for which they are registered and the potential impact of a mark of zero on their progression or award. For example, if a module has only one piece of assessment and the student receives a penalty mark of zero without resit, this may mean he/she will not be able to qualify for his/her degree or award, depending on the course regulations and conventions.

(b) Departments should consider what additional measures, other than the provision of written guidance, should be taken in order to advise students of both University and departmental requirements as regards proper citation and acknowledgement of other persons' work in assessments. Consideration should be given to providing students, early in their courses, with the opportunity of carrying out formative or trial assessments and having these checked, possibly through the use of source identification software, as a means of alerting them to poor practices and of the means available to departments to detect cheating.

(c) Departments shall normally require students to complete standard forms of declaration for submission with assessed work, as an additional means of ensuring that students are fully apprised of the serious view taken by the University of cheating in assessed work (Senate 122b(ii)/80-81). To avoid the problem of the inappropriate repetition of material in different pieces of assessed work, departments are advised that assessed work submission forms should also include a statement similar to the following: “No substantial part(s) of the work submitted here has also been submitted by me in other assessments for accredited courses of study whether at Warwick or elsewhere, and I acknowledge that if this has been done an appropriate reduction in the mark I may otherwise have received will be made”. Examination papers may, if appropriate, include a rubric about the repetition of material within the examination paper (AQSC 14/09-10).

(d) In cases where a student makes substantial use of direct quotations from the work of another person or persons, mere reference in an appended bibliography, unsupported by footnotes giving precise references, shall be regarded as insufficient acknowledgement of source material, and shall render a student liable to penalties under Regulation 11 (Senate 37f(i)/82-83).

(e) It is the responsibility of the Head of Department to conduct, or to appoint an authorised deputy to conduct, the initial investigation of suspected cheating cases that arise in assessments other than tests conducted under University examination conditions. The purpose of this investigation is to determine whether there is sufficient prima facie evidence that cheating has occurred to justify a formal allegation of cheating being put to the student.

Departments need to consider what machinery it is most appropriate to establish to carry out initial investigations of cheating, bearing in mind that in cases of suspected plagiarism considerable work may be required to identify possible sources that have been plagiarised. Departments may establish a panel or committee of academic staff to carry out such initial investigations, which has the advantage that the Head of Department, who may be called on subsequently to adjudicate on the allegation of cheating, will not be directly implicated in the initial investigation.

Departments also need to consider what information should be conveyed to the student at the initial investigation stage and, in particular, where it is the practice of the department to inform students of their provisional marks, what if any mark to record where a suspicion of cheating has
arisen. In general, where the suspicion of cheating arises prior to students being given feedback or provisional marks, it is best to avoid giving the student whose work has fallen under suspicion any indication of a provisional mark. If necessary, the student should be advised that their work is being investigated to determine if there is evidence that cheating may have occurred, that the student will be advised in due course of the results of that investigation and will at that stage have a full opportunity to make representations about the matter. All staff should be advised that they should not, prior to the conclusion of the initial investigation by the Head of Department or his or her authorised deputy, make any comment to the student about the reasons why a suspicion of cheating has arisen, the possible outcomes of the investigation, or the consequences that might follow should an allegation of cheating subsequently be upheld.

Departments also need to consider what procedures to adopt, where a suspicion of cheating has arisen in relation to one piece of work, in respect of investigating other work submitted by the student during the academic year in question or over the whole of their course. If it is the departmental practice automatically to extend investigations to other work submitted by the student, it is the best practice to include a warning about this in the departmental guidance issued to all students (see 1 above). In other cases, the individual student should be warned an extended investigation will be carried out.

(f) The Academic Quality and Standards Committee and the Senate has approved the following guidelines for Departments on considering cases of improperly acknowledged reproduction of the work of another person(s) in essays or other forms of assessed work:

(i) The Academic Quality and Standards Committee recommends that, in considering cases of improperly acknowledged reproduction of the work of another person(s) in essays or other forms of assessed work (plagiarism), Departments should be guided by a distinction between negligence (where a student is basically guilty of careless or incompetent academic practice) and misconduct (where there is judged to be deliberation in the actions of a student). Departments are advised that unacknowledged copying would itself constitute prima facie evidence of deliberation, but that Heads of Departments (or their deputies authorised to deal with such cases) will need to assess the circumstances of the individual case in deciding whether to regard an instance of copying as negligence or misconduct. Relevant circumstances might include:

(A) the stage the student has reached in his/her studies;

(B) any mitigating factors;

(C) the particular nature and extent of the unacknowledged copying and any evidence of the student’s motivation.

(ii) Instances judged to be negligence are appropriately dealt with by the marker(s) concerned treating the work like other work of a poor academic standard, that is, the unacknowledged copying will normally be reflected in the mark awarded to the work. Depending on the individual circumstances, a Department may wish to take a more lenient approach, which might involve such penalties as:

(A) allowing resubmission of the original work with revised referencing;

(B) allowing resubmission of another piece of work on a different topic, the work to be marked normally;

(C) allowing resubmission of a new piece of work for a reduced or capped mark.
A subsequent offence (in whatever context) should normally be regarded as misconduct (see 4. below) rather than as a second offence of negligence.

Instances of misconduct, where the Department judges the action of a student to be deliberate, should be dealt with under Regulation 11 (specifically Regulation 11 (B) (2)). Depending on the particular circumstances and the nature and degree of the misconduct, the Head of Department might impose a penalty within the following range:

(A) resubmission of the original work with revised referencing;
(B) re-submission of another piece of work on a different topic, the work to be marked normally;
(C) re-submission of a new piece of work for a reduced or capped mark;
(D) a reduction in mark, to a maximum of zero for the piece of work in which plagiarism has occurred.

Penalties (A) – (C) are only likely to be appropriate if there is substantial evidence in mitigation of the misconduct and they have not already been used in any prior case of negligence concerning the same student.

In formulating penalties, Departments should take into account natural justice and be satisfied that the overall consequences of penalties are proportionate to the misconduct.

If in a particular case the Head of Department feels that a penalty exceeding d(iv) above would be appropriate, then he/she may refer the case to an Investigating Committee as under Regulation 11 (see further section 8 below).

Second offences of misconduct should normally be referred to an Investigating Committee.

If it determines that misconduct has taken place, an Investigating Committee will (depending on the particular circumstances and the nature and degree of the misconduct) normally impose a penalty within the following range:

(A) A reduction in mark, to a maximum of zero for the piece of work in which plagiarism has occurred, with or without the removal of any resit rights that would normally relate to the work;
(B) A reduction in mark, to a maximum of zero for the module to which the work in which plagiarism has occurred contributes, with or without removal of any resit rights that would normally relate to the module;
(C) A reduction in or cap on the level of the student’s final qualification;
(D) No award (with or without removal of any resit rights) or recommendation of the termination of a student’s registration (by referral to the University Discipline Committee).

Where, following an initial investigation, it is determined that there is sufficient evidence to proceed with a formal allegation of cheating (misconduct), the Head of Department or his or her authorised deputy then needs to consider how to proceed under the Regulation and, in particular, whether the matter is serious enough to require that it should be referred directly to a University
Investigating Committee or is of such a relatively minor nature that it can be determined within the department under Regulation 12B(2)(b). The latter provides that the maximum penalty that can be imposed within the department is a mark of zero in the piece of work to which the allegation relates (with or without the opportunity to resubmit or to undertake a further assessment).

There are certain circumstances (other than in a test carried out under invigilated examination conditions) in which an allegation of cheating (misconduct) must be referred through the Academic Registrar for consideration by a University Investigating Committee. These are:

(i) Where the allegation relates to a research thesis submitted for examination for a higher degree;

(ii) Where the allegation relates to an assessment that contributed to the previous approval of an award or honour to the student.

Other circumstances where the Head of Department should normally refer an allegation of cheating (misconduct) directly for consideration by a University Investigation Committee are:

(i) Where it is considered that the allegation of cheating is of such a serious nature that, if proven, a penalty of a mark of zero in the particular piece of work will not be sufficient. Examples might include where the student is alleged to have stolen work from another student or to have accessed work from a commercial internet site.

(ii) Where the circumstances indicate that, although a mark of zero in the particular piece of work might be a sufficient penalty in relation to the specific offence, such a mark or the finding of cheating itself is likely to have more serious academic or professional consequences for the student. Examples of such consequences would be:

(A) Where the mark of zero in the particular piece of work is likely to lead to failure in the whole module or other unit of assessment and potentially result in the student not being eligible to qualify for the degree or award for which they are registered;

(B) Where there are multiple allegations of cheating, affecting more than one module or unit of assessment, against the same student which, if proven, may have similar consequences for the student as outlined in (i) above;

(C) Where there may be difficult issues of evidence relating to the case that can best be handled through a full Investigating Committee. In this respect, allegations of collusion involving two or more students should normally be referred directly to a University Investigating Committee;

(D) Where the allegation is such that a finding of cheating is likely to lead to referral of the student to a Fitness to Practice Committee (under Regulation 34) or otherwise to their future eligibility to undertake professional practice being seriously at risk.

(1) Where it is decided that an allegation of cheating (misconduct) is suitable to be considered first within the department, the Head of Department or his or her authorised deputy should normally first inform the student formally in writing of the allegation against him or her, including providing any annotated copy of the assessment in question and/or report from source identification software indicating the sources from which the student is alleged to have copied. The student must then be given a reasonable opportunity to respond to the allegations, either in writing or orally or both.

It is important that the Head of Department or authorised deputy considering such allegations and representations is scrupulous in approaching the matter with an open mind and that due weight is
given to any contrary evidence, explanations or mitigating circumstances put forward by or on behalf of the student (see section (f) above).

Where an allegation of cheating is found to be proven, it is important to note that the a mark of zero in the piece of work to which the offence relates is the maximum penalty that can be imposed at departmental level and that other lesser penalties are also open for consideration as appropriate in the particular case (see further section 6 above). It is also important that the Head of Department or authorised deputy should decide, in every case, whether the student should have the opportunity to resubmit the piece of work or to undertake a further assessment, e.g. in order to overcome a failure in the piece of work or in the module or other unit of assessment to which it relates. Where the student is to be given such an opportunity to resubmit or to undertake a further assessment, it is also open to the Head of Department or authorised deputy to specify the maximum mark for which the new assessment will be eligible (e.g. a bare pass mark).

(m) Information on penalties for plagiarism imposed by all departmental Chairs shall be collected and reported to the University via Annual Course Review reports (BUGS 4 (f)/13-14).

4. In cases where a student makes substantial use of direct quotations from the work of another person or persons, mere reference in an appended bibliography, unsupported by footnotes giving precise references, shall be regarded as insufficient acknowledgement of source material, and shall render a student liable to penalties under Regulation 11 (Senate 37f(i)/82-83).

5. Where a candidate in an invigilated examination takes an answer script out of the room and returns it later to the examiner or other person, a formal mark of zero shall be submitted to the Board of Examiners together with a mark awarded for the work contained in the script and a report from the examiner; it shall be at the discretion of the Board of Examiners whether to accept the normal mark.

6. Where an examination script (or one or more answer books from a multi-script answer) is misplaced, the Board of Examiners have the discretion to interview the candidate if the absence of the mark places him or her just below or in a borderline between two classifications (Senate 76j/83-84).

J. Boards of Examiners for Undergraduate Degrees

Note: Where appropriate, these procedures also apply to the “Review Panels” established under the provisions of Regulations 8.1.4(d) and (e).

Membership

1. Boards of Examiners shall be appointed annually by the Steering Committee on behalf of the Senate (Regulation 9.1(1), 9.2(1), Senate 123b/77-78).

2. In determining the membership of final-year Boards of Examiners for “end-on” degrees, Chairs shall have regard to continuity by including at least one member of the relevant second-year board (preferably the Chair or Secretary) as a member of the subsequent final examiners’ board (Senate 35/78-79 appx.IIc(iv)).

Board Procedure

3. Persons outside the University may be appointed to membership of Boards of Examiners where appropriate, provided such persons have recent experience of examining either in a University or in public examinations of a comparable standing (Senate 64a/75-76).
4. The Academic Registrar will send to the Secretary of each Examination Board a list of candidates due for examination in the appropriate degree course.

Procedure at the meeting of the Board:

5. It shall be the responsibility of the Secretary of the Examination Board:
   a. to ensure that the quorum is observed, as defined in Regulations 9.1 and 9.2.
   b. in accordance with the conventions on External Examiners, to ensure the presence of the External Examiner(s) at the meeting of a Final-Year Board of Examiners and where possible at the meeting of the Second-Year Board (if a member of that Board).
   c. to advise the Chair of the Board of Examiners of those courses of action open to the Board under the appropriate regulations.
   d. to ensure that members of the Board are aware of the conventions of the Board.

6. Following the meeting of the Board of Examiners the Secretary shall send to the Academic Registrar:
   a. A Pass List in the approved format, dated and signed by the Chair and Secretary of the Board, and by the External Examiner(s); if more than one page needs to be used each page must bear the appropriate heading, date and signatures. The Pass List shall not include the name of any candidate who has failed or on whom a decision is still pending (Senate 165b/81-82).
   b. A report of the meeting dated and signed by the Chair and Secretary of the Board, and the External Examiner(s), including a decision on every candidate being considered.
   c. A report of cases where the Board of Examiners wishes to make a recommendation to the Senate not in conformity with the normal degree Regulations.
   d. A list of the members present at the meeting.
   e. Precise details of the modules and, in each case, the method of assessment and assessment requirements for students required to resit.

7. The Academic Policy Committee, at its meeting on 10th June 1999, resolved that departments be asked to follow the good-practice guidelines below regarding minute-taking for Boards of Examiners:
   a. A minute-taker should be identified in good time before the meeting.
   b. The minutes should record the attendance and note the quoracy of the meeting.
   c. Minutes should give decisions on all candidates due to consideration by the Board (even if it is only to note that a particular candidate has withdrawn or intends to withdraw).
   d. Minutes should record any candidates selected for *viva voce* examination, with a note of the criteria for selection.
   e. Any resit requirements should be stated unambiguously and in full, e.g. code/title/length of paper(s) to be resat, number and length of assessed essays to be resubmitted with submission date.
f. Special cases should be recorded indicating the nature of any mitigating factors (e.g. medical or personal), noting all items of documentary evidence considered by the Board or any of its sub-committees (e.g. “letter from General Practitioner dated 00/00/00”) and recording any vote taken by the Board. The final decisions or recommendations to higher bodies on such cases should be recorded clearly and fully, with a brief indication of the reasoning behind them (e.g. “on the grounds of serious recurrent medical problems throughout the 00/00 academic year”).

g. Minutes should record any further action required of the Board/department arising on a decision, together with a note of who is to take the action (e.g. the preparation of documentation for another University committee).

h. External Examiners should be sent a copy of the minutes after the final meeting of a Board of Examiners, for their information.

i. Boards of Examiners shall not normally reopen decisions which have been made and published but if new evidence does come to light any revised decision shall be subject to approval by the Senate. (Senate 59c(v)/81-82).

Resits

8. Candidates who fail their final examinations shall not be required to resit papers in which they have already achieved a pass mark, such pass marks being carried forward for consideration alongside the marks obtained for the papers retaken (Senate 31e/78-79).

9. Candidates shall not be permitted to resit a final examination more than once (Regulation 8.1(7)).

Mitigating Circumstances

10. University Guidelines for Consideration by Undergraduate and Postgraduate Boards of Examiners of Examination Candidates Notifying Mitigating Circumstances are as follows:

   [a single set of guidelines is now applicable to UG and PGT]

(a) Students should be informed by departments of the need to submit mitigating evidence in writing (with professional or other suitable documentary corroboration as appropriate) at the earliest possible stage and by such a date as may be required for the appropriate meeting. In cases where students have been prevented, for medical reasons, from attending an examination or any part of an examination, the student should submit (to the Head of the student’s department) a medical certificate showing his/her inability to complete the examination at the prescribed time. If at all possible this should be not later than three days following the last day of his/her University examinations.

(b) Departments should ensure that this procedure is made clear to students through departmental handbooks and other available means. They should also advise students about how this information might be used (see 4 and 5 below). In the case of medical evidence, the following advice to students is suggested: “When requesting medical evidence to support your application for mitigation you are advised to make clear to your doctor that the information will be shared with a number of people, and to discuss with your doctor the most appropriate wording of the medical evidence. You might find it helpful to share this advice with your doctor”.

(c) All mitigating evidence, whether directly from a candidate or from a personal tutor or other member of University staff on behalf of a candidate, should be communicated in writing to the Secretary of the Board of Examiners in advance of the Board meeting to ensure clarity of information and that a proper record exists and can be subsequently kept. New verbal and anecdotal information about candidates should not be introduced in the course of a Board meeting unless circumstances genuinely make this unavoidable.
(d) Departments should have a procedure for considering such evidence normally by means of a pre-meeting, before the Final Board. A written record of decisions relating to mitigating evidence should be kept with a brief indication of the reasoning behind them. The external examiners may attend this pre-meeting but are not required to do so. However, external examiners should normally be consulted about the recommendations to be made to the Board of Examiners in advance of the meeting.

(e) Boards of Examiners will normally accept the recommendations of the pre-meeting without the need for further discussion of the personal or medical circumstances affecting students’ academic performance. Only in very exceptional circumstances will the Board request to see the evidence presented to the pre-meeting. Where a request from a member of the Board is made for disclosure of such evidence, the Chair shall determine whether the circumstances of the case are so exceptional as to require disclosure, having particular regard to the sensitivity of the information to the student and to any other persons whose identity might be disclosed. Evidence should only be disclosed on the express authority of the Chair of the Board of Examiners and on the strict understanding that all members of the Board are bound by a strict requirement of confidentiality and non-disclosure of the evidence.

[Paper BGS 97/08-09 (revised), approved by the Board of Graduate Studies in April 2009 (BGS minute 88/09-10 refers); the Academic Quality and Standards Committee in June 2009 (AQSC minute 84/09-09); and the Board of Undergraduate Studies in November 2009 (BUGS minute 10/09-10)]

Marking conventions: Undergraduate Modules Taken By Students First Enrolling BEFORE October 2008

15. The above conventions are available on the Teaching Quality Office website at:

http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/academicoffice/quality/categories/examinations/marking/ug0107/

Marking conventions: Undergraduate Modules Taken By Students First Enrolling in Autumn Term 2008 ONWARDS

12. The above conventions are available on the Teaching Quality Office website at:

http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/academicoffice/quality/categories/examinations/marking/ug08/

Exchange of Marks

13. In the case of joint degrees, Boards shall ensure that marks in each subject are expressed in the same numerical currency (Senate 177b (ii.A)/78-79).

14. a. Marks for outside options shall be returned to the appropriate Board of Examiners expressed in numerical form (Senate 177b (ii.B)/78-79).

b. Marks conveyed by established individual degree subject Examiners' Boards (usually the Second-Year Board) to the Part-Time Degrees Honours Level Board of Examiners should ensure that a suitable form of words is given to convey any relevant comments on an individual student's performance (Senate 179b (ii)/86-87).

15. Under no circumstances should marks be sent through the internal mail.

Short-weight marks
16. a. Boards of Examiners (except in the case of cumulative credit degrees within which no short-weight conventions exist) shall adopt a common practice for indicating short-weight marks, which shall include a mark for the paper as a whole with no allowance made for short-weight, an average mark for that part of the paper actually attempted, and the number of questions attempted (Senate 177b(iii.A)/78-79).

b. Short-weight shall be excused only exceptionally, where redeemed by excellence in one or more questions (Senate 177b(iii.B)/78-79).

Scaling

17. a. Any scaling of marks should be carried out before Boards of Examiners meet.

b. That in the case of marks contributing to degree credit (except for first-year courses) scaling should only be carried out with the knowledge and consent of the External Examiner.

c. That, in the case of first-year students, examiners should inform their departmental representative(s) on the appropriate First-Year Board of Examiners about any scaling procedures and obtain their consent to these prior to the meeting of the Board (Examinations Committee 15/91-92).

Second-year entrants

18. a. Students admitted directly into the second year shall have their final degree classification calculated in a different ratio if all three years contribute to the final classification, e.g. Biological Sciences 1st: 10, 2nd: 30, 3rd: 60 became: 2nd: 33.3, 3rd: 66.7 (Senate 25k/86-87, modified).

b. Secretaries of Final-Year Boards of Examiners should:

i. present to their Boards a grid showing the students' weighted and unweighted marks for each year contributing towards the final degree classification.

ii. report to their Boards on the procedures followed for any students entering the course directly into the second year or transferring into the second or third year and confirm to the Board that the procedures have been followed in each case (Senate 33h (i)-(ii)/86-87).

Undergraduate Degree Classification Conventions for Boards of Examiners – for Candidates First Enrolling BEFORE Autumn Term 2008

19. The above conventions are available on the Teaching Quality Office website at:

http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/academicoffice/quality/categories/examinations/conventions/

Undergraduate Degree Classification Conventions for Boards of Examiners (for students enrolling from Autumn Term 2008 ONWARDS)

20. The above conventions are available on the Teaching Quality Office website at:

http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/academicoffice/quality/categories/examinations/conventions/
First-Year Boards of Examiners

21. Harmonised conventions for First-year Boards of Examiners are available on the Teaching Quality Office website at:

http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/academicoffice/quality/categories/examinations/conventions/

22. Before the meeting of the First-year Board of Examiners the Chair of each department shall convene a meeting of examiners in that department so that the department can present a firm recommendation for the guidance of the Board (Faculty Boards' decisions).

23. For every student resitting in the Summer vacation, there shall be a written statement from the Personal Tutor if the tutor cannot be present at the meeting of the First-Year Board of Examiners. Personal Tutors shall be reminded in June of this obligation and it shall be the responsibility of the Chairs of departments to ensure that such written statements are available to the Board (Faculty Board's decisions).

24. Where the quorum rules for a First-year Board includes reference to tests being considered this shall be deemed to include tests which have been passed by all candidates (Regulation 8.1 (2c, 3d), Senate 94a(iii) /82-83).

Requirements for Taught Postgraduate Awards

25. Examination and examination board requirements for Taught Postgraduate Awards are available on the Teaching Quality Office website at:

http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/academicoffice/quality/categories/examinations/conventions/ptg/

Procedures for declaration of interest

26. Where an examiner has or has had a close personal relationship with an examinee or with a relative of an examinee, which might therefore be generally held to impair impartial conduct on the part of the examiner, he/she should inform the Chair of the Board of Examiners (or Chair of the Department as appropriate) as early as possible of the existence of that relationship. The examiner is not obliged to disclose the details of that relationship (Senate 116g/85-86).

27. The relationships which should lead to a declaration of interest under paragraph 26 above include:
   i. kinship
   ii. sexual relationship
   iii. business or financial relationship

(Senate 116g/85-86)

28. The Chair of the Board of Examiners or the Chair of Department (in consultation with the Chair of the Board of Undergraduate Studies or Graduate Studies where necessary) shall decide what action, if any, should be taken. The possible courses of action will depend upon the level of the relationship and its contemporaneity but should be selected with the principal aim of protecting the academic standing of the University's degrees and of being fair to the student concerned and to other students (Senate 116g/85-86).

29. Where an examiner has declared a relationship in accordance with paragraph 26 above, a brief and confidential note of that declaration and of any action taken should be appended to the formal
K. Examination Arrangements for Visiting and Exchange Students

1. The same examination arrangements as adopted for home students shall normally be adopted for visiting students attending the full academic year (Senate 94d(i)/82-83, 180b(iii)/82-83).

2. Special arrangements may be made for visiting/exchange students who study at the University for part of a year, such that they cannot follow full modules and complete the normal assessment tasks (Senate 93(d)/07-08).

3. The appropriate Sub-Faculty or equivalent Faculty committee may approve requests from departments concerning a variation in assessment method for visiting students attending for less than a full academic year, or for exceptions to the requirements of paragraph 1 above (Senate 180b(i,ii)/82-83).

4. Once a particular variation in assessment method has been approved for a given module under paragraph 2 above it shall be deemed a precedent for future cases which shall not need to be submitted again (Senate 180b(v)/82-83).

5. Examination marks for each Visiting and Exchange Student shall be approved by the Board of Examiners for the second year of the appropriate degree course (or whichever Board meets latest) and forwarded to the International Office for the preparation of transcripts (Senate 130b/84-85).

6. Marks for each examination taken by Visiting and Exchange Students shall be reviewed by one of the Boards of Examiners controlled by the department offering the module examined, in order to assess the appropriateness of particular modules being offered to future Visiting Students (Senate 130b/84-85).

7. If the examination marks of a Visiting or Exchange Student need to be released to the student's home University before the meeting of the appropriate year Board of Examiners, a clear statement shall be included to the effect that these marks are provisional and subject to approval (Senate 130b/84-85).

8. Visiting and Exchange Students have no right of resit and shall be advised of their position in this respect in advance (Senate 130b/84-85).

9. There shall be a standard convention for converting the University's examination marks into American grades, as approved by the Examinations Committee, but Departments are permitted to negotiate their own equivalents for specific exchange schemes (Senate 130b/84-85).

10. Where a UK visiting student seeking formal assessment attends for a full academic year, the modules followed shall be examined by the approved method of assessment for full-time undergraduates (Senate 156a(i)/86-87).

11. Where a UK visiting student seeking formal assessment attends for part of the academic year, the Department shall seek the approval for any variation in the usual method of assessment for the modules followed, using the procedures under (2) above (Senate 156a(ii)/86-87).

12. In the case of a UK visiting student merely attending modules at the University and receiving no assessment, there shall be no requirement to register the modules centrally as part of the normal module/examination registration process (Senate 156a(iii)/86-87).
13. The Academic Quality and Standards Committee has recommended that Faculty Boards should formulate assessment loads for visiting part-year students in line with a 40:40:20 CATS model (AQSC 39/01-02):

The Board of the Faculty of Science subsequently resolved:

(a) that it would not be possible for all courses or modules within the Faculty to set special methods of assessment for part-year students and that individual module tutors should be responsible for making this decision in the first instance;

(b) that it was understood that if appropriate assessment methods could not be set, candidates should not be accepted for a part-year of study;

(c) that the Board supported the proposal that all new and revised module proposals should indicate if part-year students can be considered and, if yes, how they may be appropriately assessed and assigned credit when their visit does not include the traditional period of study for the module.

The Undergraduate Studies Committee of the Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences subsequently resolved:

(a) That given the inconsistency of assessment loads within and between departments in the Faculty a single consistent faculty-wide assessment load could not be determined by the Committee;

(b) That a recommendation be made to departments that they formulate a single assessment load for visiting part-year students for all modules offered within their departments in line with the 40:40:20 CATS model, for incorporation into the Notes of Guidance to be published by the International Office.

The Board of the Faculty of Arts subsequently resolved:

(a) That the Faculty would attempt to operate consistency in assessment methods at departmental level;

(b) That the Faculty would seek to identify commonalities in exceptions to standardise assessment methods given the high numbers of students requesting special treatment.

The Board of Undergraduate Studies subsequently resolved that faculties and departments be encouraged to adopt as much consistency in assessment methods for visiting part-year students within and between departments as it was possible to attain.

L. Absence for Medical Reasons from a University Examination for a First Degree.

(To be read in conjunction with the Regulations Governing the Procedure to be Adopted in the Event of Absence for Medical Reasons from a University Examination for a First Degree or the BSc, M Eng, Regulation 12).

1. Where a candidate has missed on medical grounds 30% or less of the credit towards the final degree, and is being considered for an Honours degree under paragraph 4b of Regulation 12, the procedures to be adopted by Boards of Examiners for determining the class of degree to be awarded shall be at the discretion of Boards of Examiners, except that, with a view to ensuring that so far as possible such candidates neither benefit from, nor are penalised by their absence,
Boards of Examiners are advised to take into account the following factors:

a. the candidate's performance in that part of the examination completed;

b. such evidence as might be available to the Board by way of marks for course work relating to the candidate's expected level of performance in that part of the examination missed.

(Senate 84a/78-79)

2. In cases where a student is prevented for medical reasons from attending an examination, serious consideration should be given to the possibility of making special invigilation arrangements if the student would thereby miss 30% or less of the examinations, and accordingly remain eligible under paragraph 4b of Regulation 12 for consideration for an Honours degree by the Board of Examiners. Exceptionally, where the Chairs of the Department and the Chairs of the Board of Examiners consider it appropriate, application may also be made in medical cases to the Board of Undergraduate Studies for permission to set special papers (Senate 185/82-83 appx (c.ii)).

3. It shall be the responsibility of a student's department to provide an adequate scribe and/or invigilator in cases where scriptorial facilities need to be provided for separately invigilated candidates either under paragraph 2 above or for other reasons, it being understood that the student concerned would be responsible for payment for such services. If the student cannot obtain a grant from his Local Education Authority or other outside source for such payment the University will pay for the services of a scribe. Very small departments who have a problem in supplying scribes in such cases should consult the Academic Registrar (Senate 126d/81-82, 37b/82-83).

4. Students who fail to attend examinations on medical grounds for a second time, shall thereafter be regarded as temporarily withdrawn pending receipt of medical advice, and shall not be considered again by Boards of Examiners until they are fit to attend the examinations. Such temporary withdrawal shall not normally exceed two years, after which the student's department shall consider whether it is in the best interests of the student to continue in this way rather than to withdraw permanently (Senate 126i(a).81-82, 180d(ii)/82-83).

5. The membership of the Aegrotat Committee of the Senate shall include the Chairs of the Faculty Undergraduate Studies Committees in Arts and Social Sciences and the Chair of the Sub-Faculty of Science with the Chair of the Board of Undergraduate Studies in the chair, with provision for personal tutors of the candidates concerned to be in attendance at meetings of the Committee (Senate 85b/78-79).

6. Chairs of Boards of Examiners shall obtain reports for the Aegrotat Committee from tutors at an early stage in cases where students already had a record of medical problems, it being noted that this documentation should in any case be available to Boards of Examiners if they are to exercise their powers to award a degree to students who had missed 30% or less of their examinations, under paragraph 4b of Regulation 12 (Senate 185/82-83 appx (c.i)).

M. Approval of Degree Courses and Course Syllabuses

1. On the recommendation of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee the Senate approved a revised process for the approval of new modules and amendments to modules w.e.f. the academic year 2010/11. Full details are available on the Teaching Quality Office website at:
2. For inclusion in UCAS, new undergraduate degree courses need to be approved by the Board of Undergraduate Studies, the Academic Quality and Standards Committee and the Senate no later than at the final meeting of the Autumn Term two years before the degree is due to be introduced (Senate 95e(vii)/85-86).

3. When submitting proposals for new degree courses for consideration by Sub-Faculties, Faculty Boards, the Boards of Undergraduate and Graduate Studies, Academic Quality and Standards Committee and the Senate, departments shall provide information according to the requirements publicised by the Academic Quality and Standards Committee.

4. When presenting syllabuses for new degree courses to the Faculty Boards, departments shall at the same time submit their recommendations to the Board of Undergraduate (or Graduate) Studies and the Academic Quality and Standards Committee, and the Faculty Board shall inform the Board of Undergraduate (or Graduate) Studies of its recommendations to the Senate concerning the new degree syllabus, so that the Senate can consider reports from all committees at the same time (Senate 153c(i).85-86).

5. Individual course syllabuses submitted by departments to Sub-Faculties and Faculty Boards shall include information requirements as publicised by the Academic Quality and Standards Committee.

N. Pass Degrees

At its meeting on 1 December 2004, the Senate approved the following recommendations of the Boards of the Faculties concerning credit loads for the award of Pass degrees and routes for Pass candidates to be reinstated to Honours:

Faculty of Arts

1. Pass degrees are awarded on the basis of a reduced load at Honours level.

2. The Pass degree load shall be defined as 6 out of a total of 8 units, 7 out of 9, or 8 out of 10 (equivalent to a band of 75-80%)

3. Routes to a Pass degree shall be:

   (a) students may, as a result of weak academic performance, be placed on a Pass degree during any year prior to their final year, and may have an opportunity to be reinstated subsequently to Honours, either by passing their second- or third-year examinations, or by sitting a departmental test at the beginning of their final year;

   (b) students who fail to meet the conditions for a third class Honours degree may be awarded a Pass degree.

Faculty of Science

4. A student placed on a Pass load should normally be required to take a minimum load of 90 CATS during each year whilst on a Pass load.
5. A student placed upon a Pass load may return to an Honours load subject to the permission of the student’s department.

**Faculty of Social Sciences**

6. Pass degrees may be awarded on the basis of a reduced load at Honours level or may be awarded at the end of the final year after a full Honours load has been taken.

7. If a Pass degree is offered by the department, a student may be placed on a Pass degree in response to a poor performance which suggests they are incapable of sustaining a full Honours load.

8. Students are put on a Pass degree:

   (a) at the end of their first year by decision of the First-Year Board of Examiners in Social Sciences, upon the recommendation of the student’s department;

   (b) at the end of their second-year either by decision of the second-year Board of Examiners (if in existence) or by the Chair of the Department, if there is no second-year Board in operation;

   (c) at the end of their penultimate or final year by decision of the relevant Board of Examiners;

   (d) at the end of the second and/or penultimate year the decision on a student’s progression will normally be guided by the principle of keeping open the possibility of an Honours degree wherever feasible.

9. Students on Pass degree courses may be permitted to take a full Honours load at the discretion of the Director of Undergraduate Studies or the Head of the Department in order to facilitate their progression back to an Honours degree track.

10. Having proved their ability to carry the work load required at Honours level, students may be permitted by the Board of Examiners, the Director of Undergraduate Studies, or the Head of Department back on an Honours degree track after passing their penultimate-year or final-year examinations, or by sitting a Departmental test at the beginning of their final year.

(Please note: the number of references is for the sake of example and does not correspond to the actual references in the document.)

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**O. Examination Methods**

1. Permitted lengths of examinations are 1 hour, 1 hour 30 minutes, 2 hours and 3 hours; this limit shall also apply to individual sections of an examination where students are required or permitted to register for them separately (Senate 61a(i)/79-80).

2. Proposals for open book examinations, reading time, seen question papers and multiple choice questions, shall be referred to the Board of Undergraduate Studies (Senate 136a(iii)/72-73).

3. **Open Book Examinations**

   a. Books from the University Library may not be brought into any examination.

   b. Departments are required to specify on the rubric of the examination paper what restrictions there are on the books which candidates may bring into the examination. (Examinations Committee 12d(ii)/85-86)
4. **Reading Time**

   a. Reading time shall only be granted in the case of those examinations where a substantial time is needed for a student to make a carefully considered choice between questions of a lengthy, detailed or intricate nature (Senate 151e(ii.1.B)/76-77).

   b. There shall be a standard reading time of fifteen minutes (Senate 151e(ii.1.A)/76-77).

   c. During the period of reading time candidates may make notes on the question paper only, but may not start their answers (Senate 92a/73-74).

   d. Departments are required to include a specimen paper with submissions to the Board of Undergraduate Studies for reading time (Senate 148b/80-81).

5. **Seen Question Papers**

   a. A seen examination paper is an examination paper issued in whole or in part to students in advance of the written examination. The date of issue shall be a specified number of days (normally 21) before the day on which the relevant examination is scheduled (Senate 151e(i.4.A)/76-77).

   b. The specified period, and any subsequent proposal to change it, shall be a matter for the Board of Undergraduate Studies (Senate 151e(i.4.C)/76-77).

   c. The attention of the External Examiners shall be drawn to the use of seen papers in the light of possible collusion between students. (Senate 31c/83-84).

6. **Individual Classroom Performance and Group Work**

   a. Individual classroom performance and group work may be included in the assessment of modules in the MBA and the MSc in Management Science and Operational Research programmes, at the discretion of the course instructor. Classroom performance may not account for more than 20% of the module mark and group work may not account for more than 40%. If both methods are used, together they may not account for more than 40% of the total mark.

   b. All modules carrying such forms of assessment must be clearly marked in the Course Regulations.

   c. Provision should be made for the holding of a *viva voce* in the event of a low mark being awarded for individual classroom performance which contributed to a candidate receiving a borderline mark in that particular module (Senate 129b/87-88).

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**P. Option Modules and Assessment for Individual Students.**

1. A student's choice of option modules from the lists in the Course Regulations is subject to the approval of the Head of the student's department, and may be subject to departmental rules concerning prerequisites and prohibited combinations of modules. No student shall be permitted to take the same module more than once (Senate 138, 192/77-78).

2. The inclusion of a particular module in the Course Regulations shall not imply that the module is available in any one academic year (Senate 138, 192/77-78).

3. **Applicable to Final-year Students Only in the academic year 2013/14:**
a. Of the total credit obtainable by a candidate for an undergraduate degree [including MEng, MMath etc] not less than 50% must normally be obtainable from tests which are conducted under examination conditions as laid down by the University's Regulations for the Invigilation of Examinations, except that departments may request approval from the Board of Undergraduate Studies to permit the required proportion of unseen examination for a degree course to be not less than 35%, on the basis that the proportion of assessed work beyond 50% is accounted for by a substantial piece(s) of work (e.g. a dissertation or project) undertaken on an individual basis (Senate 909a(i)/70-71, 151e(i.1.A)/76-77, Senate 1st October 2003).

b. Departments are required to submit to the Board of Undergraduate Studies for its consideration any requests for exemption from the 50% Rule for individual students (Senate 151e(i.1.A)/76-77).

c. In the context of the 50% Rule for Undergraduate Degrees, the Senate has resolved that the definition of an examination should be as follows:

“An examination is a piece of work that contributes to the overall mark for a module or course which is undertaken in a controlled environment under the supervision of either examiners and/or invigilators and within a set time-frame. The product of the examination may be a written script (Written Examination), a performance for example in Theatre Studies (Performance Examination), a laboratory experiment (Laboratory Examination) or an oral conversation or presentation (Oral Examination). A record of examinations or other assessments which between them contribute at least 80% of the module mark must normally be available for scrutiny by a moderator and/or external examiner, which may be in the form of a script, audio-visual recording etc (Senate minute 116(a)/05-06).

d. Degree syllabuses shall not normally be drawn up in a way which make it impossible for students to abide by the conditions laid out in paragraph 3a above (Senate 31f/83-84).

Explanatory Note on a. – c. above:

For all students who started their degree programme before 2013, half of the marks contributing towards an undergraduate degree by credit weight had to come from tests conducted under examination conditions unless an exemption had been granted, which could take that minimum examined proportion down to 35%.

The 50% rule only applied to undergraduate degrees, and from 2013/14 will no longer apply to new students or intermediate -year students – instead academic departments will be able to determine their own assessment strategies, with appropriate requirements in place regarding the proportions of examined element in a degree programme. In 2013/14 the 50% rule will continue to apply to students in their final year (see a.- c above). From 2014/15 the 50% rule will only apply to part-time students continuing in their final year (ie final 120 CATS) of study if the final year (ie final 120 CATS) commenced before 2014/15.

4. It shall be the responsibility of the Head of the department, or the Heads of the relevant departments in the case of a joint degree course, to ensure that details of the syllabuses and method of testing for the following academic year are published during the summer vacation and made available to students at the beginning of each Autumn Term (Senate 136a(vi)/72-73).

5. It shall be the responsibility of Heads of departments to ensure that students are fully aware of the requirements of paragraph 3a above and the implications for their choice of modules (Senate 151e(i.1.B)/76-77).
6. It shall be the responsibility of Heads of departments to ensure that the details of the syllabuses and methods of testing, which they shall publish before the beginning of the academic year, contain a clear statement in the case of each individual module of the percentage balance between assessment and written work in that module (Senate 151c(i.1.C)/76-77).

8. The assessment scheme approved for a module shall apply to all students taking the module. Students taking option modules outside their own department shall be examined on those modules according to the conventions of the department setting the examination (Senate 151c/76-77).

9. There are provisions for departments to seek approval to vary the Course Regulations for individual students, and for approval to be given for students to take unusual options. Course Regulations cannot be varied arbitrarily. Departments may not permit students to take modules which are outside the Course Regulations except by following the formal approval procedure for this sort of variation. Departments must have procedures for allocating students to modules where some modules are likely to be over-subscribed (Senate 93(d)/07-08).

Heads of department have the authority to approve variations to Course Regulations for individual students in respect of optional modules. There will be no need to inform the Academic Registrar, but there can be no relaxation in the agreement under which there is no guarantee to accommodate the unusual option in the teaching timetable or in the examination timetable. If the student's particular combination of modules, as approved by the department, proves to be impossible to schedule in the examinations timetable, the department will be responsible for supervising any special examination arrangements (Senate 30th November, 1988).

Students may only vary their module choice for core modules with the permission of the Chair of the relevant Faculty Undergraduate/Graduate Studies Committee/Sub-Faculty. With the exception of Science students taking a credit overload recognised through the Seymour formula, proposals for an individual student to register for more or less credits than is normal for a particular year of study can be approved by the Chair of the relevant Faculty Undergraduate/Graduate Studies Committee/Sub-Faculty only where supported by a compelling case (Senate 93(d)/07-08).

10. For students on degrees for which the course regulations permit them to take credit above the normal load for a year’s study of 120 CATS (or such larger figure as may be specified in the relevant course regulations) and up to the maximum permitted load of 150 CATS, their mean mark, in each year of study, shall be the greater of the following two marks:

(i) The arithmetic mean of the marks for all modules taken, weighted according to their credit weighting;

or

(ii) The arithmetic mean of the subset of whole modules, weighted according to their credit weighting, which minimally satisfies the course regulations and results in the highest mark (AQSC 109(b)/12-13).

11. Where departments permit students to register for more modules than required, and subsequently de-register from some of those modules, students may not de-register from a module after a significant proportion (10%) of the assessment has been undertaken (Senate 93(d)/07-08).

12. Course Regulations stipulate the range of optional modules from which students may choose. If the Course Regulations or the department permit a student to take a module at a lower level than suggested by their year/stage of study (e.g. a final-year undergraduate taking a level C [first-year] module), the credit rating of the module cannot be altered. If a department believes that the
module should not count at its full credit weight, it should not permit students to take that module. The Assessment Conventions Working Group has proposed limits on the amount of credit from a lower level that can be counted towards degree classification decisions (Senate 93(d)/07-08).

13. Some modules offer students a choice of assessment methods. Where this is the case, students may not change their chosen assessment method to discount a failure to submit a required piece of assessed work, nor change their chosen assessment method after the deadline for a significant proportion (10%) of the module assessment has passed. To ensure equity in the treatment of students and to enable the exam timetable to be constructed efficiently, students may not change their chosen assessment method after the end of the fifth week of the Spring Term, even where this is before the deadline for submitting the first piece of assessed work (Senate 93(d)/07-08).

14. Where students take an intercalated year, the assessment is usually not counted towards the degree. There is normally a requirement that the student produces a report or other work based on the intercalated year, and this is assessed. Where the report is not of a passable standard, the student is normally transferred to a variant of the degree without Intercalated Year, and the degree certificate makes no mention of the intercalated year. Details should be included in Course Regulations and Course Specifications (Senate 93(d)/07-08).

15. Students resitting examinations without residence at the University are entitled to sit an examination paper based upon the module content they studied whilst in residence and, if the module has undergone anything other than very minor modifications in the following year, a separate paper must be set (Senate 30(c)/88-89).

Q. **Registration for Examinations**

1. Students choose and register for modules in line with the process published by the Academic Office. Their choices are governed by the relevant Course Regulations (Senate 93(d)/07-08).

2. Procedures for the registration for examinations shall be issued to each student, including notification of the registration period the deadlines, and any penalties liable under paragraph 5 below:

   a. in the case of full-time students the Academic Office shall issue registration instructions to the students via their departmental address and/or my.warwick (Senate 78a(i.C)/80-81).

   b. in the case of part-time and In-service students, instructions may be issued by arrangement between the Academic Office and the departments concerned (Senate 78a(i.B)/80-81).

3. It shall be the responsibility of departments to use the same names and module codes in all references to modules as are used in the Course Regulations, to publicise the titles and examination codes provided by the Academic Office for all modules for which they are responsible, and to explain to students on their modules which examination codes correspond to those modules (Senate 78a(i.C/D)/80-81).

4. It shall be the responsibility of students to ensure that they register for the correct modules and examinations, and to obtain any departmental authorisation required by the registration procedures, before submitting their registration (Senate 78a(i.C)/80-81).

5. The Senate may impose a fee for registrations first submitted later than the deadlines referred to under paragraph 2 above, at a level to be determined from time to time; appeals against the fee for late examination registration shall not normally be considered, but in exceptional cases a submission may be considered by the Academic Registrar and the Chair of the Board of Undergraduate Studies (Senate 78a(i.E)/80-81, 34a/81-82, 41b(ii)/85-86).
6. In the case of degree courses in the Faculty of Science which have variable degree loads, students may de-register from examinations up to such deadlines as are approved by the Board of the Faculty of Science and the Board of Undergraduate Studies; appeals for extension to the deadlines shall be considered by the Chair of the Sub-Faculty of Science (Senate 34e(iii)/81-82, Sub-Faculty convention).

7. Amendments to registration details submitted late after the end of the Spring Term shall not normally be allowed to cause changes to the examination timetable; any clashes for the student(s) concerned shall be dealt with by special arrangements made by the student’s department (Senate 78a(i.G)/80-81).

8. Examination registration submitted for the first time after the publication of the examination timetable shall be accompanied by the letter from the student's personal tutor confirming the department's awareness of the requirements of paragraph 7 above (Senate 78a(i.F)/80-81).

9. Students who fail to register by the appointed date shall not normally be permitted to sit examinations except with the approval of the Steering Committee (Senate 136d/79-80). The appointed dates shall be:

- **Summer term examinations**: Friday of the penultimate week of the Spring Term.
- **September examinations**: 1st August.
- **Autumn and Spring Term examinations**: 3 weeks before the examination, or by agreement with the departments concerned.

10. Members of the public attending individual modules shall not normally be permitted to register for or take the examinations or submit work for assessment (Senate 24b(i)/81-82).

Resit Candidates

12. Heads of departments will be notified by the Academic Office, after the publication of the Summer examination results, of all the students in their Department who have been required to resit examinations in September.

13. Candidates for resit papers (other than those taking a further first attempt) shall be charged a fee; resit students are normally expected to make themselves available for examinations in the Summer vacation at the University, but where examinations have been arranged abroad for candidates for whom special arrangements have been approved by the Board of Undergraduate Studies, they shall be charged an examination registration fee higher than that levied for examinations conducted at the University, whether being taken as resit examinations or first attempts (Senate 34b(i)/81-82).

R. **Scheduling of Examinations**

Note: for these purposes a student's year of study shall be defined as either "first year" or intermediate year" or "final year".

1. Examinations may be scheduled on weekdays or on Saturdays, but shall not be scheduled for Sundays, public holidays or other occasions when the University is closed (Senate 136a/79-80, 126h/81-82).

2. a. Examinations which are taken by students on different years of study shall normally have separate and different papers set for students from each year, if there is no available overlapping examination period.
b. Departments may seek exemption from the Board of Undergraduate Studies from the requirements of paragraph (a) above in accordance with criteria to be determined from time to time by the Board.

(Senate 78a(ii.A)/80-81)

3. Departments considering applications by students to take unusual options shall also consider the implications for examinations scheduling, including the possibility that in some cases separate examination papers might have to be set. Where the taking of an unusual option causes intractable scheduling problems it shall be the responsibility of the student's department to arrange any separate invigilation of such examinations as may be required (Senate 78d/80-81, 34e(ii)/81-82).

4. "Open Book" examinations in which there are no restrictions on the materials which candidates can take into the examination rooms may be scheduled in a separate room from other examinations, even if that means that they would be held on Saturday mornings or afternoons (Senate 32c/86-87).

5. Regarding the scheduling of Examinations for MBA (Distance Learning) at overseas centres, the Senate has resolved:

(a) That all examinations held at overseas centres for the MBA (Distance Learning) programme be scheduled, as far as practicable, to coincide with the Warwick examination timetable.

(b) That, at overseas centres where it is impossible to coincide with the Warwick examination timetable and/or there are a small number of students spread over parts A and B, examinations should be scheduled to run as close as is feasible to the Warwick timetable and, where possible (i.e. where no students are resitting examinations), examinations for parts A and B should be scheduled to run simultaneously.

(c) That, in order to restrict further the possibility of inter-centre communication between students, all question papers should be collected with the scripts at the end of the examination and no student should be permitted to remove their question paper from the examination room (Senate 30(d)/88-9)

S. External Examiners for Undergraduate and Taught Postgraduate Degrees

Note: the references to "degree" shall throughout also be taken to include Diplomas, Certificates and any other qualifications awarded by the University where an External Examiner is appointed; the words "department" or "departmental" include as appropriate Schools, Joint Schools or Graduate Schools of the University; "second year" shall be taken to include the third year of a four-year degree course and any other intermediate year.

Except as indicated all conventions are based on Senate minute 31a/84-85.

The Role of the External Examiner

1. The Role of the External Examiner is to ensure that:

a. degrees awarded are comparable in standard to those in similar degree programmes in other universities in the United Kingdom;
b. the assessment system is fair and is fairly operated in the classification of students;

c. degrees awarded are at the appropriate level as set out in the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (Chapter A1 of the UK Quality Code) and take appropriate account of the relevant Subject Benchmark Statement;

d. students achieve the learning outcomes for the degrees set out in the relevant Course Specifications.

Eligibility for Appointment

2. At its meeting on 6 July 2011, the Senate has approved the following guidelines for the appointment of new External Examiners for taught courses, to be effective for new appointments from the 2011/12 academic year (these are in accord with the “National Criteria for the Appointment of External Examiners” set out in the Universities UK Review of external examining arrangements in universities and colleges in the UK (2011)):

(1) Every external examiner will be expected to have:

- knowledge and understanding of UK sector agreed reference points for the maintenance of academic standards and assurance and enhancement of quality
- competence and experience in the field covered by the course
- academic qualifications/professional qualifications to at least the level of the qualification being externally examined
- experience of setting examinations and running assessment procedures (either externally or internally)
- sufficient standing, credibility and breadth of experience within the discipline to be able to command the respect of colleagues. Appointees should normally have experience in a university or department that is comparable in reputation to that of Warwick
- familiarity with the standard to be expected of students in the course to be examined
- fluency in English
- met the criteria set out by professional and accrediting bodies
- awareness of modern developments in the design and delivery of the flexible curriculum
- expertise in the enhancement of the student experience

(2) Former staff and students of the University can only be re-appointed as external examiners after a period of not less than five years has passed since they left the University.

(3) Retirees can be considered provided they have sufficient evidence of continuing involvement in the academic area in question.

(4) External Examiners should hold no more than two external examiners appointments at any point in time.

(5) To avoid potential conflicts of interest, external examiners should not be appointed if they are covered by any of the following categories:

- Court or Council member
- governor
- near relative of a member of staff or student involved with the programme of study
- an examiner on a cognate course in the institution
- anyone closely associated with the sponsorship of students on the course
- anyone closely associated with placements or training
- anyone required to assess colleagues who are recruited as students to the programme of study
- anyone in a position to influence significantly the future of students on the programme of study
• anyone involved in collaborative research activities with a member of staff (noting that external examiners may be appointed from within fields in which large-scale collaborative research projects are common and integral to the field)
• anyone who has been directly involved as an external examiner of the validation panel for the programme.

(6) Reciprocal arrangements between institutions are not allowed.

(7) The replacement of an external examiner from an institution by a colleague from the same department in the same institution is not allowed.

(8) There should not be more than one person from a single department of the same institution appointed to act as an external examiner at one time.

(9) The duration of an external examiner’s appointment shall be four years.

(10) An external examiner may be reappointed in exceptional circumstances but only after a period of five years has elapsed since his/her last appointment.

(11) The appointment of an external examiner can be terminated by the institution, approved at a senior level, if he/she fails to fulfil his/her obligations at the end of any single year of appointment, or if a conflict of interest arises which cannot be satisfactorily resolved.

(12) Colleagues who are new to external examining or have professional experience relevant to a professional or vocational programme can be appointed provided they are part of a team and mentored by an external examiner who meets the criteria outlined under 1-9 above.

(13) Once appointed, institutions should make it clear to external examiners what their duties and obligations are, including those relating to attendance and feedback, and any legal obligations.

(Senate minute 100/10-11).

3. Where the multiple commitments of an External Examiner would necessitate his or her absence from a joint honours examining board, departments shall normally consider making alternative arrangements to cover the subject areas in question, for example, either by replacing one of the examiners for the corresponding single honours course by special joint degree appointments or by finding one External Examiner with sufficient expertise in both disciplines to make a single appointment (Senate 35/78-79 appx.IIb(iii)).

Information for External Examiners

4. a. Each External Examiner, on appointment, shall be sent by the Academic Registrar a written statement about the role and functions of External Examiners, and the Regulations concerning External Examiners.

b. Each External Examiner, on appointment, shall be sent by the Secretary to the relevant Board(s) of Examiners a written statement about the place of the degree examination in the University's system of education in that subject, and on the organisation and phasing of the relevant curriculum, together with details of the marking scheme, conventions, course handbooks and other materials specific to the degree(s) being examined.

Rights and duties of External Examiners

5. In order to carry out the duties under paragraph 1 above, the External Examiner may:
(a) participate where appropriate in assessment processes for the award of degrees, and in some cases have an involvement in the setting of questions or papers;

(b) comment and give advice on course content, balance and structure; on degree schemes; on assessment processes and on schemes for marking and classification;

(c) advise on problem cases;

(d) moderate and approve examination question papers which contribute to final classification, including courses where the external examiner is not a member of the Examiner’s Board for that year of study;

(e) consider any work undertaken outside the University and written reports of such work, and report on the appropriateness of its standard and content for the course.

6. External Examiners shall be a member of the relevant Final-year Board(s) of Examiners, and, at the discretion of the Board, the Boards of Examiners for earlier years which also contribute to final classification, and shall attend meetings of the Board of Examiners to consider final examination results.

7. a. An External Examiner shall have access, on request, to any scripts and assessment material contributing to final classifications so that a report can be made to the Board of Examiners on the standard of marking.

b. In those cases where it is agreed that the inviting department should make a selection of scripts to be sent to an External Examiner, the principles for such a selection should be agreed in advance. Where an External Examiner sees only a selection of scripts in this way, he or she should normally see the scripts of borderline candidates. The External Examiner shall also have the opportunity to request to meet candidates should he/she wish. In such instances the purpose of the meeting should be agreed in advance.

c. The External Examiner shall ensure that special consideration is given to candidates whose performance places them at the top and bottom of the group as a whole, or whose performance falls on the borderline between two classifications.

d. The External Examiner shall participate in any viva voce conducted with respect to paragraph c. above (noting that viva voce examinations will not be conducted for students on undergraduate courses who commenced their studies in autumn 2008 and later). In all other oral examinations the External Examiner shall monitor any selection procedure and shall attend by mutual agreement with the Department. The principles for the selection of candidates for viva voce or oral examination should be agreed with the External Examiner(s).

e. The External Examiners shall satisfy themselves that work undertaken outside the University and written reports of such work, are of an appropriate standard and content for the degree or diploma concerned.

f. The External Examiner shall, in the case of undergraduate students reading “end-on” degrees at the end of their second year (e.g. a student in Physics and Business Studies whose second year would be substantially as the Physics second year, and whose third year would consist entirely of Business Studies modules), prepare, at the end of the student’s second year, a report for the Final-year Board. This procedure is necessary to ensure that the second-year examination for the first subject is given appropriate weight in determining the overall final class list. However, this report may be prepared at any time between the time the second-year
examinations are taken and the meeting of the relevant Final-year Board the following summer.

Procedures relating to Boards of Examiners

8. a. No University degree shall be awarded without the participation in the examining process of at least one External Examiner.

b. All External Examiners shall normally be present at each meeting of a final-year Board of Examiners, and no meeting of a final-year Board of Examiners shall be held without the presence of at least one External Examiner, except in the case of a very small postgraduate degrees or very small undergraduate joint degrees where if the External Examiner is unable to be present a written report on all candidates from the External Examiner for the Board of Examiners shall be acceptable, provided that any such arrangements have the prior consent of the Senate or of the Vice-Chancellor acting on behalf of the Senate (Senate 35/78-79 appx.IIb(iv), 56a(i)/78-79).

c. Each External Examiner shall confirm by joint signature with the Chair and Secretary of the Board of Examiners, endorsement of the outcomes of the assessment process they have been appointed to scrutinise. Such endorsement indicates not that the External Examiner agrees with every individual assessment decision, but that he/she is satisfied with the conduct of the assessment process. External Examiners have the right to withhold their signature if they have strong concerns about the assessment process. In the event of an External Examiner withholding a signature, a full report should be made by the Board of Examiners to the Senate.

d. In the event of a disagreement on the mark to be awarded for a particular unit of assessment or on the final classification to be derived from the array of marks of a particular candidate at an examiners’ meeting, very careful account shall be taken of the views of the External Examiner.

External Examiners’ Reports

9. All External Examiners are required to submit an annual written report on a standard form. The report, which will not be published, remaining confidential to the University, seeks explicit responses to the topics listed below:

(1) the standards demonstrated by the students;

(2) the extent to which standards are appropriate for the award or award element under consideration;

(3) the design, structure and marking of assessments, including any good practice observed;

(4) the procedures for assessments and examinations;

(5) whether or not External Examiners have had sufficient access to, and the power to call upon, any material needed to make the required judgements;

(6) where possible, students’ performance in relation to their peers on comparable courses;

(7) the coherence of the policies and procedures relating to external examiners and their consonance with the explicit roles required of them;
the curriculum, its aims, content and development, including any good practice observed;

resources as they impact upon student performance in assessments;

the basis and rationale for any comparisons of standards made;

the strengths and weaknesses of the students as a cohort;

the quality of teaching and learning methods which may be indicated by student performance, including any good practice observed;

The functioning of the collaboration between University and partner institution(s) (for collaborative courses only)

any recommendations the External Examiner may have.

whether issues raised in previous report(s) have been or are being addressed.

External Examiners’ reports should be sent to the Vice-Chancellor within one month of the meeting of the relevant Board of Examiners. Reports will be copied to the Chairs of the appropriate departments and Chairs of the Boards of Examiners and will be made available on request to an incoming External Examiner. In line with Warwick’s normal quality assurance and enhancement policies and processes the report will be discussed at a departmental meeting (or equivalent) at which student representatives may be present. Reports will be made available to such other bodies and persons within the University as is deemed appropriate. Copies may also be provided to external bodies which request them and which have a legitimate concern (e.g., professional accreditation bodies), unless the External Examiner explicitly indicates that he or she does not wish this to be done. We cannot guarantee that the contents of your report would not be released if requested under the Freedom of Information Act. External Examiners may, if they wish, submit a further report in confidence to the Vice-Chancellor for the Senate, on any matter relating to the degree or its examinations.

When External Examiners’ reports are circulated to Chairs of Departments, they will be asked to complete a pro-forma noting any action taken in response to any recommendations the reports may contain or the reasons for no action being taken; these responses will be forwarded to the relevant External Examiner.

The University makes publicly available the names, positions and institutions of its External Examiners. The University will make clear to students that it is inappropriate to make direct contact with External Examiners. Should this occur, External Examiners should not enter into any correspondence with the student but should notify the University immediately.

12. External Examiners’ fees are only paid following receipt of the annual report

13. External Examiners' reports shall be circulated:

i. to the Chairs and Secretaries of the appropriate Board of Examiners for consideration of comments pertaining to the examination marking procedures;

ii to the Heads of the appropriate department(s) for consideration of comments about course content and structure;

iii to the Registrar for consideration of comments relating to administrative procedures for examinations (Senate 66a(i)/85-86, 37(d), (i)/89-90).
14. The general assumption is that departments will identify the key issues in reports themselves and act appropriately, but the Board of Undergraduate Studies and the Board of Graduate Studies will highlight issues of particular concern in reports and require responses from the relevant department.

15. a. Reports are to be prepared each year (w.e.f. 2002/03) in the Spring Term by the Board of Undergraduate Studies and the Board of Graduate Studies covering the issues raised in External Examiners’ reports. These reports should include:

- Contextual reference to first degree classifications data (local and national) or relevant postgraduate information contained in the Academic Statistics publication.

- A summary of the process of report consideration.

- Commentary on the general issues raised in reports in areas including: standards and comparability; student achievement; methods of assessment; curricular matters; examining arrangements and operation of External Examiner system.

- Particular examples of good practice highlighted in reports.

- Significant issues raised in individual reports on which a response was required from the department together with an indication of any action taken.

- A summary chart, by department, highlighting key issues from year to year (to provide a visible means of gauging the broader significance of a particular issue and to track recurring themes).

(The Board Secretaries are expected to use their discretion in the compilation of these reports to ensure that mechanistic commentary or irrelevant material is avoided.)

b. The above reports (but not the actual External Examiners’ reports) are submitted to the AQSC with any additional comments made by the Boards.

c. The above procedure will also apply to the Partnerships and Distance Learning Sub-Committee which will identify issues of particular concern in relevant External Examiners’ reports for transmission to the relevant meetings of the Boards of Undergraduate/Graduate Studies in the Spring Term (the Boards of Undergraduate/Graduate Studies will also receive the reports of External Examiners for partnership/distance learning courses alongside the reports for all other courses).

(Senate minute 87(b)/01-02).

Associate External Examiners

16. a. For the degree in Mathematics, Operational Research, Statistics and Economics, there shall be an External Examiner(s) (normally the External Examiner in Statistics) together with Associate External Examiners (Senate 30f(i)/79-80).

b. The Senate, on the recommendation of the appropriate Faculty Boards, may appoint Associate External Examiners for other degrees.

c. Associate External Examiners shall be full members of the appropriate Board of Examiners, but shall not count against the quorum.

Fees

17. The fees payable to External Examiners and Associate External Examiners shall be adjusted each
year in line with the average percentage increase in academic salary scales, on the basis that any adjustment would take effect from 1st August next following any revision of pay scales from 1st April (Senate 35c(ii)/82-83).

18. The fee structure for taught Masters' programmes approved by the Senate at its meeting on 28th November 1990 requires departments to keep accurate records of dissertations graded by examiners and to communicate this information promptly to the Academic Office in order that the fees might be calculated (Senate 32/90-91).

T. Special Examination Arrangements for Students with Disabilities

The University's Policy on Special Examination Arrangements for Students with Disabilities, as approved by the Senate in 2011/12, can be found at:

http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/academicoffice/examinations/undergraduate/special_examination_arrangements/

JAT/Exam&DegConv
10/09/14