



**STUDENT
REGULATIONS
FRAMEWORK
2020-21**

1. MODULES AND CREDIT

- 1.1 Modules
- 1.2 Individual Programmes of Study
- 1.3 Departments and Programmes
- 1.4 Stages and Levels
- 1.5 Mode of study – full time and part-time
- 1.6 BA and BSc Honours
- 1.7 Joint Honours programmes
- 1.8 Additional regulations relating to BA Combined Honours programmes

2. REGISTERING AND MAKING CHANGES

- 2.1 Registration
- 2.2 Module Registration
- 2.3 Teaching Timetable
- 2.4 Changing seminar/practical group
- 2.5 Changing modules
- 2.6 Changing programme registration
- 2.7 Internal programme transfers - Level 4
- 2.8 Internal programme transfers - Levels 5 and 6
- 2.9 Module Choices
- 2.10 Study abroad

3. ASSESSMENT REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES

- 3.1 Introduction
 - 3.2 Emergency Powers
 - 3.3 Module Assessment Boards (MABs) – General Administration
 - 3.4 Module Assessment Boards (MABs) – Membership and Quoracy
 - 3.5 Module Assessment Boards (MABs) – Business
 - 3.6 Module Assessment Boards (MABs) – Moderation of Marks
 - 3.7 Module Assessment Boards (MABs) – Decisions
 - 3.8 Module Assessment Boards (MABs) – Assessment Penalties
 - 3.9 Module Assessment Boards (MABs) – Finalising and Signing the Marksheet
-

- 3.10 Module Assessment Boards (MABs) – Convention for Reporting Resit Requirements to the PAB
- 3.11 Student Review Process
- 3.12 Extenuating Circumstances
- 3.13 Viva Voce Examinations
- 3.14 Progression and Award Boards (PABs) - General
- 3.15 Progression and Award Boards (PABs) - Constitution, Terms of Reference and Membership
- 3.16 Progression and Award Boards (PABs) - Process and Powers
- 3.17 Progression and Award Boards (PABs) - Decisions
- 3.18 Progression and Award Boards (PABs) - Delegation
- 3.19 Progression and Award Boards (PABs) - Minutes
- 3.20 Authority to Depart Exceptionally from University Regulations
- 3.21 Other Procedural Matters

4. EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES

- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Definition
- 4.3 The 'Fit to Sit' Principle
- 4.4 Evidence Base
- 4.5 Extenuating Circumstances and Valid Evidence
- 4.6 Timing of an Extenuating Circumstances Submission
- 4.7 Extenuating Circumstances Panels
- 4.8 Serious and Confidential Extenuating Circumstances
- 4.9 Intervention on a Student's Behalf
- 4.10 Data Protection Act 2018
- 4.11 Support for Students
- 4.12 Procedures at Partner Organisations
- 4.13 Misrepresentation and falsehood

5. PROGRESSION

- 5.1 Points of Progression
 - 5.2 Progression of Individual Students
-

6. RETRIEVAL OF FAILURE

- 6.1 Retrieval of Failure - Undergraduate Condonement
- 6.2 Retrieval of Failure – Postgraduate Condonement
- 6.3 Retrieval of Failure – Resit and Deferral
- 6.4 Retrieval of Failure - Retake
- 6.5 Retrieval of Failure - Failure on Undergraduate Programmes
- 6.6 Retrieval of Failure - Failure on Taught Postgraduate Programmes
- 6.7 Acceptance of Awards

7. AWARD CLASSIFICATION

- 7.1 General Regulations
- 7.2 Honours Degree Classification (current version)
- 7.3 Honours Degree Classification (previous version)
- 7.4 Foundation Degree Classification
- 7.5 Masters Degree Classification
- 7.6 Integrated Masters Degree Classification
- 7.7 Classification of other awards of the University

8. REGULATIONS FOR ACADEMIC AWARDS

- 8.1 Authority to Confer Awards
 - 8.2 Named Awards
 - 8.3 List of Awards
 - 8.4 Standards of Awards
 - 8.5 Entrance Requirements for Academic Awards
 - 8.6 Admission with Credit and Transfer between Programmes
 - 8.7 Credit Requirements for Academic Awards
 - 8.8 Maximum Period of Registration
 - 8.9 Classification of Awards
 - 8.10 Conferment and Certification of Awards
 - 8.11 Titles of Named Awards
 - 8.12 General Regulations relating to Awards of the University
-

9. FITNESS TO CONTINUE IN STUDY PROCEDURE

- 9.1 Introduction
- 9.2 Stage One Procedure
- 9.3 Stage Two Procedure
- 9.4 Return to Study

10. FITNESS TO PRACTISE PROCEDURE

- 10.1 Introduction
- 10.2 Acceptance on Programmes
- 10.3 Practise Placements
- 10.4 Professional Unsuitability
- 10.5 Interim Measures
- 10.6 Acceptable Behaviour
- 10.7 Stage One Procedure – Programme Level
- 10.8 Stage Two Procedure - Investigation
- 10.9 Stage Three Procedure – Fitness to Practise Panel
- 10.10 Right of appeal
- 10.11 Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education
- 10.12 Annual Report
- 10.13 Procedures at Partner Organisations

11. ATTENDANCE, INTERRUPTION, WITHDRAWAL AND FEES

- 11.1 Attendance
- 11.2 Absence through illness
- 11.3 Interruption of Studies
- 11.4 Withdrawing from the University
- 11.5 Tuition Fees
- 11.6 Recording of module results for students who withdraw or interrupt
- 11.7 Fees Policy for students who withdraw or interrupt

12. ASSESSMENT PRACTICES

- 12.1 Introduction
 - 12.2 Module assessment
-

- 12.3 Programme assessment
- 12.4 Penalties for Late Submission
- 12.5 Marking Procedures
- 12.6 Marking and Grading
- 12.7 Criteria used in assessment
- 12.8 Examination Timetables
- 12.9 Additional examination arrangement requests
- 12.10 General information on examinations
- 12.11 Procedure before an examination
- 12.12 Procedure during examinations
- 12.13 Equipment and resources
- 12.14 Procedure after examinations
- 12.15 Absence from an examination
- 12.16 Notification of results
- 12.17 External Examiners

13. SUBSTANTIAL ASSESSMENT TASKS

- 13.1 Introduction
- 13.2 Ethical Clearance
- 13.3 Dissertations and Honours Projects
- 13.4 Dissertations and Honours Project Requirements
- 13.5 Submission of Dissertations and Honours Projects
- 13.6 Feedback on Dissertations and Honours Projects
- 13.7 Library Dissertation and Honours Project Holdings
- 13.8 Undergraduate Independent Study Modules (ISM)
- 13.9 Right to Copy

14. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY PROCEDURE

- 14.1 Academic Integrity
 - 14.2 Academic Misconduct – general principles
 - 14.3 Definitions of academic misconduct
 - 14.4 Allegations of academic misconduct
 - 14.5 Academic Misconduct – Stage One procedures
-

- 14.6 Academic Misconduct – Stage Two procedures
- 14.7 Academic Misconduct – Stage Three procedures
- 14.8 Right of appeal
- 14.9 Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education
- 14.10 Annual Report
- 14.11 Procedures at Partner Organisations

15. STUDENT MISCONDUCT PROCEDURE

- 15.1 Introduction
- 15.2 Examples of Misconduct
- 15.3 Student Misconduct - Interim Measures
- 15.4 Harassment and Discrimination
- 15.5 Acceptable Behaviour
- 15.6 Student Misconduct – Stage One procedures
- 15.7 Student Misconduct – Stage Two procedures
- 15.8 Student Misconduct – Stage Three procedures
- 15.9 Right of appeal
- 15.10 Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education
- 15.11 Reconsideration of the same offence
- 15.12 Annual Report
- 15.13 Procedures at Partner Organisations

16. ACADEMIC APPEAL PROCEDURE

- 16.1 Introduction
 - 16.2 Right of Appeal
 - 16.3 Grounds of Appeal
 - 16.5 Acceptable Behaviour
 - 16.6 Responsibilities of Students
 - 16.7 Informal resolution
 - 16.8 Formal stage
 - 16.9 Review stage
 - 16.10 Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education
 - 16.11 Annual Report
-

16.12 Procedures at Partner Organisations

17. COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

17.1 The University's Commitment on Complaints

17.2 How to Complain

17.3 Acceptable Behaviour

17.4 Results of Complaints

17.5 Anonymity with regard to complaints

17.6 Confidentiality of complaints

17.7 Group Complaints

17.8 Early Resolution (Stage One)

17.9 Formal Stage (Stage Two)

17.10 Review Stage (Stage Three)

17.11 Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education

17.12 Annual Report

17.13 Procedures at Partner Organisations

1. MODULES AND CREDIT

1.1 Modules

1. All taught programmes leading to named awards involve a set of modules which, in the context of the award, have a specific status. Each module is defined by way of a standardised module descriptor conforming to the module template set out in the Quality Assurance Framework.
2. University programmes consist primarily of credit rated modules. Each credit represents a notional 10 hours of study. Modules may be completed within one term or semester, or span across two consecutive terms or semesters, but must normally be completed within an academic session.
3. **Compulsory** modules are those which must be taken for a student to be eligible for the named award for which he or she is registered. **Optional** modules are those modules from amongst which a student chooses, in order to accumulate the requisite number of credits to ensure eligibility for the award for which he or she is registered.
4. **Immersive** modules are normally delivered at the onset of a student's programme in order to integrate them successfully into university life and enhance retention.

1.2 Individual Programmes of Study

1. A programme of study is the set of modules that comprises a student's individual academic experience leading to a particular named award within a specific award framework.
2. The programme specification details the modules available on any programme of study.

3. Each student must be registered for one programme of study (named award) only, however they may apply to transfer from one programme to another subject to availability and their meeting the required criteria (see Section 2 of this Framework).

1.3 Departments and Programmes

Modules are provided by Schools, groups of staff with cognate academic interests, led by a Director of School, but they may contribute to a number of different Programmes. A Programme comprises defined modules provided by one or more Schools. Each Programme, or agreed group of Programmes, has a designated Programme Leader or Programme Area Leader with whom students may discuss any issues related to their Programme as a whole. Decisions about students' performance in a module, including confirmation of marks, are made at the Module Assessment Board owning the module (as indicated by the module code) regardless of the programmes it contributes to.

1.4 Stages and Levels

1. Each stage of an undergraduate degree programme consists of 120 credits of modules taken at an appropriate level. Programmes of 240 credits therefore consist of two stages (Stages 1 & 2); and programmes of 360 credits, such as the BA/BSc Honours degrees (except for top-up degrees), consist of three stages (Stages 1, 2 & 3). For most full-time students, there is a clear relation between years of study and stages and an even distribution of modules across the year of study. However, for part-time students a stage may require two or more years of study of modules.
2. A level is an indicator of the relative demand, complexity and depth of learning associated with a module or with a stage of a programme (see the QAA's Framework for Higher Education Qualifications available at www.qaa.ac.uk). The University offers the following levels of study: Level 4, Level 5, Level 6

and Level 7. Levels 4 to 6 are associated with undergraduate provision, and Level 7 is associated with postgraduate provision. An integrated Masters programme may include modules at both Level 6 and Level 7 in stage 3 of the programme.

3. At Level 4 (Stage 1) 120 credits of modules are taken by students. Level 4 modules receive a mark and credits, but only contribute to the final degree classification for Foundation Degrees. At Level 5 (Stage 2), students take 120 credits of modules. Level 5 modules receive a mark and credits and contribute to the final Foundation Degree or Honours Degree classification (except for top-up degrees). At Level 6 (Stage 3), 120 credits of modules are taken for Honours Degrees. For Integrated Masters programmes Level 6 and Level 7 credits may be taken at Stage 3, as detailed in the Programme Specification.
4. Integrated Masters programmes consist of four stages (at Levels 4, 5, 6 and 7) with a total credit value of 480 credits and a minimum of 120 credits at Level 7 at Stage 4. Students must obtain 120 credits at Level 6 (Stage 3) before progressing to Level 7 (Stage 4).
5. Top-up (or direct entry) degrees consist of 120 credits at Level 6 (Stage 3) and are explicitly validated as such, with direct entry to Level 6 (Stage 3) in all instances.
6. Foundation Degree programmes consist of two stages (at Levels 4 and 5) each of 120 credits.
7. Specific programmes can also include modules delivered at Level 3 (Stage 0), but only where this is explicitly set out in the relevant Programme Specification. This will not affect the application of the standard regulations for undergraduate provision to these programmes in their entirety.
8. Unless the Programme Specification states otherwise, every MA/MSc postgraduate taught programme is divided into two stages separated by a point of progression, normally after the taught elements have been completed. The taught stage comprises modules to the value of 120 credits at Level 7; the dissertation stage comprises a single dissertation rated at 60 Level 7 credits or

exceptionally two projects rated at 30 credits each at Level 7. The Masters award comprises 180 credits of modules at Level 7 and includes the dissertation.

9. The MRes award also comprises 180 credits of modules at Level 7 and includes the dissertation.
10. The requirements for the attainment of awards, including exit awards, are set out in Section 8 of this Framework.

1.5 Mode of study – full time and part-time

1. All full-time undergraduate students (on Honours and Foundation Degrees) must take a minimum of 120 credits in each year, usually comprised of six 20-credit modules (or the equivalent) in each year, normally three in each semester or two in each term. Students on accelerated degrees may take up to 200 credits per year across two stages. Exceptionally, where a Progression and Award Board has permitted a student to progress “trailing” a module, a student may take up to 80 credits in one semester or 60 credits in one term.
2. Part-time undergraduate students are subject to the same conditions of entry as full-time students, and the same awards are open to them except the BEd Honours, accelerated degrees, PGCE and BSc Honours Speech and Language Therapy awards. They will normally complete a programme of study leading to a degree with Honours in 5-6 years or a Foundation Degree in 3 to 4 years, but they could take longer provided they continue to engage with their studies – see Section 8 of this Framework. Part-time students may not take more than 80 credits per year or 40 credits per semester. Regulations governing progression and retrieval of initial failure apply equally to full-time and part-time students.
3. In cases where the University reviews and revalidates a programme and/or modifies the regulatory framework and/or changes the menu of modules available, part-time students who extend, or return to their studies following

interruption, may be required to change their registration in line with the new arrangements.

4. Students may apply to transfer from one mode to another on completion of assessment at the end of any semester. The appropriate form is available on the Student Portal. Students should be aware of the financial implications of a change to mode of attendance and should seek advice from their Personal Development Tutor, Student Support and Registry Services prior to requesting a change.

1.6 BA and BSc Honours

1. For BA or BSc Honours awards, details of the modules to be studied are contained within the relevant Programme Specification and programme handbook.
2. At Stage 1 students take 120 credits at Level 4 of which a minimum of 80 credits should be in the Single Honours programme. These modules normally include those compulsory modules which are prerequisites for the taking of the programme at Levels 5 and 6.
3. In order to take modules at Level 5, full-time students must normally have accumulated 120 credits by successfully completing six Level 4 modules including those that are the prerequisites for Level 5 and Level 6 modules in the programme concerned. Students take a minimum of 80 credits in the Honours programme at level 5. In order to take modules at Level 6, full-time students (except for top-up degree students) must normally have accumulated 240 credits by successfully completing six Level 4 and six Level 5 modules including those that are the prerequisites for Level 6 modules in the programme concerned. Students take all of their 120 credits in the Single Honours programme at level 6. Detailed regulations for progression are to be found in Section 5 of this Framework.

4. Only Level 5 and Level 6 modules are considered in the classification of non-top-up Honours awards. In the case of top-up Honours awards, only Level 6 modules are considered.
5. Dissertations consist of two single modules at Level 6 or a 40 credit Honours project. The two single modules may be taken concurrently or consecutively. If taken concurrently, the same mark is awarded to each of the single modules. If taken consecutively, the dissertation has two parts. Part One is initially assessed as continue/fail. On completion of Part Two, the same mark is awarded to each of the single modules.
6. With the approval of the Programme Leader or Programme Area Leader concerned, and provided the programme has validated ISM modules at the appropriate levels, a single 20-credit module may be taken as an independent study module (ISM) at either Level 5 or Level 6.

1.7 Joint Honours programmes

1. The title of a Joint Honours award defines a coherent programme of study, with modules from two single subjects and an approximate balance between the two subjects.
2. Students registered on Joint Honours programmes shall attempt at least 160 credits in total in each of the two subjects. The dissertation or project may be in either or both subjects.
3. For a Joint Honours award the first named title in the award will be determined by the dissertation or project. Where the dissertation or project is in both subjects, the title 'A and B' will be in alphabetical order.

1.8 Additional regulations relating to BA Combined Honours programmes

Students enrolled on BA Combined Honours programmes can obtain further details of the applicable regulations by request to Registry Services.

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2. REGISTERING AND MAKING CHANGES

2.1 Registration

1. Every student, whether full-time or part-time, and whether following a programme for a University award or not must complete University registration procedures. Students who do not register cannot attend teaching or access any other elements of their programme, such as placements, and their results will not be presented to the relevant Progression and Award Board.
2. Plymouth Marjon University will not admit an applicant to a programme of study if the application contains false or incomplete information. Moreover, the University Secretary and Registrar may exclude from the University any student whose application was based upon or included false or incomplete information.
3. The University Secretary and Registrar will terminate a student's registration on a programme under the following circumstances:
 - if a Progression and Award Board has excluded the student from the programme (Section 3 of this Framework);
 - if a Programme Leader or Programme Area Leader has reported that the student is no longer engaged with the programme (Section 11 of this Framework);
 - if the University Finance Department reports that the student has failed to discharge any liability to the University, e.g. tuition fees (Section 11 of this Framework);
 - if the Chair of an Academic or Student Misconduct Panel notifies a penalty of expulsion from the University (Section 14 and Section 15 of this Framework); or

- if a Fitness to Practice Panel requires the termination of a student's registration on a programme (Section 10 of this Framework).
4. Students who wish to change their programme of study must seek the prior advice of the Programme Leader or Programme Area Leader concerned and the approval of the Academic Information and Guidance Co-ordinator (based in Student Support) as required on the appropriate Programme Transfer Request Form (available from Learning Space).
 5. Any changes since registration **must** be notified, without delay, by either:
 - completion of the appropriate form (in the case of changes to programme of study, mode of attendance or registration status);
 - via the Student Portal (in case of changes to personal details such as address and telephone numbers): or
 - in writing (in the case of a change of name).

In case of difficulty or where further advice is needed, queries should be addressed to Registry Services (e-mail to registry@marjon.ac.uk is acceptable). **The University can accept no responsibility for any consequences if a student fails to meet these requirements.**

6. Students on professionally accredited programmes that require clearance from the Disclosure and Barring Services before commencing their programme of study must let the University Secretary and Registrar know, in writing, of any criminal conviction, caution, warning or reprimand received after they start their programme. Failure to do so may result in misconduct proceedings under these regulations and may result in the student being immediately withdrawn from that programme of study.

2.2 Module Registration

Students must ensure that they have been correctly registered onto relevant modules. Incorrect registration can have serious repercussions for examinations and other assessment and students who do not follow the correct procedures may not be able to submit work for modules for which they have failed to register. The University makes module registration information available to students in a variety of ways through Learning Space. Students must check this information and report any errors to Registry Services immediately using the link provided. Module Leaders must also check the accuracy of module lists regularly and report inaccuracies promptly to Registry Services. All modules will operate in accordance with their definitive module descriptor.

2.3 Teaching Timetable

Timetable information and seminar group allocations are posted on [LearningSpace](#) and the [Student Portal](#). For each module, the timetable for lectures and seminars are shown. Students who have any issues with their timetable must contact the Timetable Unit immediately.

2.4 Changing seminar/practical group

The published module lists indicate the seminar or practical group that has been allocated to the student where this applies. The timetable shows where and when these activities take place. Allocations are made to facilitate agreed programme combinations, to produce even distributions between groups, and to share out the less popular timetable slots. If a student wishes to request a change, this must be initially discussed with the Module Leader. If a change is made, the Module Leader must inform the relevant office(s) so that students can be contacted in an emergency.

2.5 Changing modules

1. Students wishing to change modules should first discuss the matter with the relevant Programme Leader or Programme Area Leader. Approval is subject to places being available, continued adherence to programme regulations, and the timetable facilitating this. The University advises students not to change modules after the second week of the semester, trimester or term. Late changes will only be accepted where the appropriate Programme Leader or Programme Area Leader is in agreement; moreover, late entry to a module will not constitute extenuating circumstances in relation to assessments. A student starting a module late is required to undertake all the assessments for that module; therefore, no student may join a module after the first assessment deadline has passed. A student will not be permitted to select an alternative module which results in a timetable clash being created.
2. The student must complete the Module Change Form available from Learning Space and forward it to Registry Services. Registry Services will consult with the Programme Leader or Programme Area Leader prior to amending the student record.

2.6 Changing programme registration

It may be possible to transfer from one programme to another. Any student who wishes to explore this option should discuss the situation in the first instance with the Academic Information and Guidance Co-ordinator as promptly as possible. Approval of a transfer is subject to places being available, to the suitability of entry qualifications, and to programme-specific regulations. For example, programmes leading to professional accreditation may require students to undertake and pass all modules regardless of any other academic credit they may have gained. Students who have failed one or more modules may apply to transfer but failed modules must be redeemed through successful re-assessment. If the change of programme is allowed, the University will notify the appropriate funding authorities.

2.7 Internal programme transfers - Level 4

1. Students wishing to change their degree programme during the first year should seek advice from the Academic Information and Guidance Co-ordinator in the first instance. Approval is subject to places being available and the regulations for the relevant award framework and programme e.g. requirements for Disclosure and Barring Service checks. Applications should be made on the Programme Transfer Request Form available from the Study and Learn: Registry Documents section of [Learning Space](#).
2. In the case of applications from students in their first year, received within ten working days of the start of teaching, it may be possible for a programme change to take immediate effect. In such cases, the student will be registered for the modules appropriate to their new programme(s) as listed in the initial module registrations.
3. Students wishing to apply for internal transfer should do so at the earliest opportunity following discussion with the Programme Leader and Academic Adviser.
4. A student who wishes to transfer programme after the time limits specified can either complete the current stage of their programme, or interrupt their studies and transfer at the start of the following academic year. They should seek advice from Student Support before deciding. Any transfer will be subject to the conditions listed in Section 2.6 of this Framework above.

2.8 Internal programme transfers - Levels 5 and 6

1. Students wishing to join, or change programmes at Levels 5 and 6 should seek advice from the Academic Information and Guidance Co-ordinator in the first instance. Approval is subject to places being available and the regulations for the award framework and programme e.g. requirements for Disclosure and Barring Service checks. Applications should be made on the

Programme Transfer Request Form available from the Study and Learn: Registry Documents section of Learning Space.

2. The transfer will only be permitted if the student has successfully completed the relevant stage(s) of their current programme; this includes modules that are prerequisites for entry to the next level in the programme to be taken. A directly equivalent programme of work completed successfully, or accredited prior learning (AP(E)L), may be acceptable instead of the published prerequisites for a module or for entry to a programme at Levels 5 and 6. The Academic Information and Guidance Co-ordinator will forward their recommendation to the relevant Programme Leader or Programme Area Leader, who will inform Registry Services of his or her decision so that the student record can be updated.

2.9 Module Choices

1. Registry Services makes the Module Choice process available to students on programmes with optional modules each year so they can select their modules for the following academic year. Programme Leaders or Programme Area Leaders will outline choices available to their students, where applicable, and provide programme information to students. Students complete the online choices process, and their choices are then signed off by the relevant Programme Leader or Programme Area Leader. Registry Services reserve the right to allocate module choices to any student who has not completed the process so that resource and timetable planning can proceed.
2. It may be possible to change these allocations subsequently (by the submission of a Module Change Form available from Learning Space) but only if there are sufficient places available and the timetable permits. Registry Services will query any choices that are incompatible with undergraduate regulations and permissible combinations.
3. In the majority of cases students are able to study the modules they have selected. However, if a module is not viable due to low enrolment numbers it

may be withdrawn. If so, the appropriate Programme Leader or Programme Area Leader will contact students affected, advise them of alternative replacement module(s) and advise Registry Services accordingly. Where choices are available students must complete and submit a Module Change Form as described above.

2.10 Study abroad

1. Students on full-time Honours degrees may undertake study abroad, for up to 60 credits of study at approved institutions on approved module-equivalent programmes as part of their programme. This is available to them during their second year of study, when undertaking Level 5 modules, and usually (but not exclusively) during the second semester. These equivalent programmes must be passed and failure will prevent progression to Level 6. Credits for the modules will be awarded but, as no grades are carried forward, this may have an impact on a student's final degree classification. Overseas study in Europe is conducted in accordance with the University's Erasmus Policy Statement.
2. Students who are interested in studying abroad, subject to available opportunities, should contact their Programme Leader/Programme Area Leader in the first instance. The relevant application form must be completed no later than March of the previous year for Semester A study, and no later than October of the relevant year for Semester B study. The relevant Programme Leader or Programme Area Leader must support the application, given the potential implications for any student.

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3. ASSESSMENT REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES

3.1 Introduction

1. These regulations set out the assessment responsibilities within Plymouth Marjon University relating to taught programmes of study and should be read in conjunction with other information in this Framework. What follows applies to the formal processes of the Module Assessment Boards and Progression and Award Boards relating to all taught provision.
2. The University operates a two-tier arrangement of Module Assessment Boards (MABs) and Progression and Award Boards (PABs) for all taught programmes.
3. Module Assessment Boards determine the final mark for each student in every module within their purview and award credit for the module to every student who has demonstrated achievement of the learning outcomes of those modules.
4. Progression and Award Boards make decisions relating to the progression of students in programmes and the consequence of failure at any stage of a programme. They also make recommendations for the conferment and classification of awards to Senate.
5. Module Assessment Boards must use the University standard module marksheets for all University-approved modules. On completion, the marks must be made available to Registry Services by the date and time stated in the Assessments Calendar.
6. The University Registrar and Secretary is responsible for the administration of all formal examinations and PABs, assisted by Registry Services staff and by the staff of other administrative offices.

7. The Directors of School are responsible for the academic standards and the content of examination papers or coursework assignments.

3.2 Emergency Powers

Exceptionally, circumstances beyond the control of the University might make it impossible to operate the processes of assessment in accordance with these regulations and procedures. In such circumstances, the Vice-Chancellor, as Chair of Senate may vary these regulations and procedures or vary the constitution or quoracy requirements of any board, panel or committee. The Vice-Chancellor will make the variation(s) known to staff and students by a written statement published either in hard copy or electronically or both. Before doing so, the Vice-Chancellor will notify the Chair of the Board of Governors in writing of the variation and the reasons for it. The Vice-Chancellor will also report the variation and the reasons for it to the next meeting of Senate. Specific powers relating to Module Assessment Boards and Progression and Award Boards are to be found in the relevant sections of these regulations. Guidance on the procedures to be followed when using these powers may be obtained from the University Registrar and Secretary.

3.3 Module Assessment Boards (MABs) – General Administration

1. Registry Services is responsible for drafting and publishing the schedule for all Module Assessment Boards and Progression and Award Boards. School-based administrative staff book rooms for these meetings and make portering and catering arrangements. Directors of School inform all internal examiners of the schedule that relates to them.
2. Directors of School, assisted by the appropriate offices, are responsible for ensuring that accurate marks, and annotations, are presented to the relevant University assessment boards.

3. Directors of School are responsible for liaising with External Examiners with regard to inspection of coursework and practical examinations.
4. Registry Services is responsible for the co-ordination of agreed marks from Module Assessment Boards and the presentation of these marks to the appropriate Progression and Award Board.

3.4 Module Assessment Boards (MABs) – Membership and Quoracy

1. Membership of a Module Assessment Board is as follows:
 - The Chair, who will normally be a Director of School or a Programme Leader nominated by a Director of School
 - The External Examiner(s) for the cognate groups of modules under consideration
 - Module Leaders of all modules to be considered by the Board.

In addition, the University Registrar and Secretary has the right to attend or to send a nominee.

2. A Module Assessment Board will be quorate if the following members are in attendance:
 - The Chair or nominated deputy
 - The External Examiner(s) (however, the Board may proceed if the External Examiner is exceptionally unable to attend in accordance with the procedure described in the External Examiners Handbook.)
3. The Chair is appointed on the authority of Senate and is accountable to Senate for ensuring that the Module Assessment Board fulfils its responsibilities in accordance with these regulations and procedures.

4. In addition to the membership, a person shall be appointed to act as Secretary to the Board to provide to the Chair of the Board as soon as possible after the meeting a draft record of the proceedings of the meeting. This will include a list of those present and the capacity in which they attended, all the decisions made and the reasons for them. The Chair is responsible for ensuring that minutes are circulated to members as soon as reasonably practicable after the meeting and that a copy is lodged with Registry Services 48 hours before any Progression and Award Board that will receive decisions of the Module Assessment Board.
5. No student may attend any part of a meeting of a Module Assessment Board, unless they are a member of staff or approved External Examiner who is coincidentally registered as a student on another programme of the University or elsewhere.
6. The role of the External Examiner, the associated rights and responsibilities and the procedure to be followed if the External Examiner is exceptionally unable to attend the meeting are described in the Handbook for External Examiners.
7. A Module Leader who is exceptionally unable to attend a meeting of a Module Assessment Board must provide written advice to the Board relating to the assessment of his or her module(s). If, exceptionally, she or he is unable to provide such advice, the Director of School will investigate the assessment of the module and report to the Module Assessment Board on behalf of the Module Leader.
8. Module Assessment Boards should start promptly and all members should have with them their own copies of relevant module descriptors, regulations etc.
9. In circumstances beyond the University's control where it is not possible to convene a normally constituted Module Assessment Board, the Vice-Chancellor, having received advice from the University Registrar and Secretary, will determine the arrangements necessary to conduct the business

of the meeting. In such circumstances, the decision and the reasons for it will be reported in full to the next meeting of Senate.

3.5 Module Assessment Boards (MABs) – Business

1. The Module Assessment Board will receive:

- the minutes of its previous substantive meeting and any intervening meetings;
- notification of any actions taken under delegated authority;
- the current approved module descriptor of each module;
- the examination papers, course work and other assessments used;
- the name of any student alleged to have been guilty of academic misconduct in relation to any of the modules under consideration and details of any action taken in relation to it;
- the previous annual report of the External Examiner and the response to it;
- the record of the relevant APL Board
- in respect of each student:
 - if appropriate, a report on any placement or work-based learning undertaken;
 - if appropriate, a report on any practical activity undertaken;
 - the overall mark for the module;
 - the mark for each assessment element (i.e. coursework, examination etc);
 - the mark for each component;

- a record against each assessment mark of any decision made by the Extenuating Circumstances Panel;
- a record against each mark showing if it is the result of the application of an assessment penalty, and if it is, the mark without penalty should also be available;

2. The Module Assessment Board shall:

- agree the final version of the minutes of the previous meeting to be a true record of that meeting and note any matters arising from them;
- receive the summary statistics available for each module and identify any anomalies which may require attention by the Board, or action for the next academic session;
- scrutinise the marks or grades relating to each module and the analysis of the marks and identify and obtain an explanation for any anomaly, or other cause for concern, and take any action considered necessary, seeking advice from the External Examiner;
- having taken any such action, make decisions in relation to each student, as described below, taking into account any decisions of the Extenuating Circumstances Panel;
- confirm the marks or grades for each candidate in each module, in accordance with those decisions;
- assign credit to individual students on the basis of the confirmed marks or grades;
- make recommendations for resit and/or deferral assessments for those students who have not been assigned credit;
- authorise the update of the Student Record System and the notification of confirmed marks to students;

- receive an oral report from each External Examiner concerning the standards achieved by students and the quality of the provision;
- review the response to the previous External Examiner's report and consider the rationale for any recommendations that have not been acted upon;
- consider the adequacy of all assessments used in each module and make recommendations for future assessments;
- formally delegate its authority to Chair's Action to resolve any cases arising from resit or deferral, or where, subsequent to the meeting, students present reasons and circumstances, considered by the Chair to be both acceptable and supported by satisfactory evidence, which have led to a mark or grade being wrongly confirmed. In all such cases the Chair must document her or his decision, the reasons for it, and the extent of any consultation and report the decision without delay to the University Secretary and Registrar and to the next meeting of the Module Assessment Board.

3.6 Module Assessment Boards (MABs) – Moderation of Marks

1. Module Assessment Boards may moderate marks as a collective decision, on the recommendation of an External Examiner, and after reviewing the full range of information if, in the opinion of the Board:
 - the pass threshold has been incorrectly applied; or
 - the marks do not fall within the expected mark distribution; or
 - the Director of School confirms that a School or programme management issue, including any such issue that has been identified via the formal complaints process, has disadvantaged all students taking the module.

2. The Chair of the Module Assessment Board must ensure that any moderation, and the reason for it, is recorded in the minutes.

3.7 Module Assessment Boards (MABs) – Decisions

1. The Module Assessment Board confirms grades awarded to individual students and module cohorts. It has the authority to review cohort results, but not individual student marks.
2. In the event of a rubric infringement such as attempting more examination questions than required, the Module Assessment Board will receive a mark that disregards the lower or lowest mark.
3. Where students are given target word counts or equivalents for an assessment, the instructions for the assessment should make clear before the student undertakes the assessment, by way of the relevant programme specification, what the consequences of exceeding or failing to reach the word count are. These are likely to be determined by the practice in a particular discipline or programme. Those consequences should be applied in the marking process and associated comment should be made in the feedback to the student. The Module Assessment Board should receive details of adjustments of this kind which will be fully recorded in the Module Assessment Board minutes.
4. The module mark reported to students and to the Module Assessment Board and Progression and Award Board will be a rounded integer as follows:
 - a decimal of x.50 or greater shall round up to the next highest integer;
 - a decimal lower than x.50 shall round down to the next lowest integer.
5. In respect of each student on each module, the Module Assessment Board must make one of the following decisions, which it will pass to the Progression and Award Board.

- a) **Passed** - confirms that the credit has been assigned. A module is passed if a student has achieved the module outcomes, the evidence for this being achievement of the overall module pass mark (40% for undergraduate modules, 50% for postgraduate modules) regardless of the mark achieved in any element of assessment. Note however that certain programme regulations may require all elements of some or all modules to be passed for professional accreditation purposes. In such cases the MAB will annotate the mark “n” to show that the module is not yet passed for professional accreditation purposes.
- b) **Failed** - confirms that the student has not achieved the module outcomes and that credit has not been assigned.
- c) **No Decision** – confirms either that the student has not satisfactorily completed the assessment of the module for a good reason that would not be considered under the Extenuating Circumstances Procedures, or that the Module Assessment Board has been unable to confirm the mark and assign credit because of some procedural delay. In all such cases the marksheet will be annotated with the letter “q” and the reason minuted. In such cases, the Chair should ensure that the reasons for such missing marks are noted in full, so that they can be accurately forwarded to the Progression and Award Board for decision-making purposes.
- d) **Decision Withheld** – confirms that the Module Assessment Board has made a decision but has withheld notification of it to the student and to the Progression and Award Board until the outcome of Academic Misconduct Procedures is known (in accordance with Section 14 of this Framework). In all such cases the marksheet will be annotated with the letter “s”. The annotation ‘m’ should be used only when academic misconduct has been confirmed and the work has been resubmitted to a passing standard.

3.8 Module Assessment Boards (MABs) – Assessment Penalties

1. Responsibility for the application of assessment penalties rests with the Module Assessment Board when it determines the final mark in the module.
2. All cases in which assessment penalties have been applied or in which work has not been accepted for assessment shall be reported to the Module Assessment Board and to the Progression and Award Board.
3. The Module Assessment Board will waive an assessment penalty, if it receives a decision from an Extenuating Circumstances Panel that late submission of that work was due to valid Extenuating Circumstances.
4. The Module Assessment Board cannot waive penalties imposed in accordance with the University's Academic Integrity Procedure, or impose any penalty for alleged academic misconduct. In the event of such an allegation coming to light at the meeting or being unresolved by the time of the meeting, the Module Assessment Board will make its decisions in the normal way. However, the Progression and Award Board will withhold them from the student until the outcome is known, annotating the marksheet with the letter "S".

3.9 Module Assessment Boards (MABs) – Finalising and Signing the Marksheet

1. When the Module Assessment Board has agreed the marks, with or without moderation, the Chair and the External Examiner sign the marksheet where paper copies are still provided, or together confirm the submission of marks into the student record. Where multiple marksheets require signature, a cover sheet may be signed instead to confirm this. The significance of this process, and the procedure to be followed if the External Examiner is unable or unwilling to sign the marksheet, is described in the External Examiners Handbook. The External Examiner does not normally undertake this process

for marksheets for modules that do not contribute to an award or the classification of an award, e.g. Level 4 modules in an Honours degree programme.

2. After the External Examiner has completed this process, no marks may be changed, other than in exceptional circumstances and with the written agreement of the External Examiner. Marks approved at the MAB may not be released to individual students until all assessment results are published by Registry Services.
3. NB: For Level 5 and 6 modules, any changes to the module mark sheets made at the Module Assessment Board must be recorded in the minutes.

3.10 Module Assessment Boards (MABs) – Convention for Reporting Resit Requirements to the PAB

1. Module Assessment Boards are required to make recommendations to the Progression and Award Board concerning students with failed modules and/or modules in which the assessment is deferred.
2. Students must always pass every element of assessment that the Board has set for their retrieval of failure. Specifically, resit marks cannot be combined with existing marks from passed elements, nor with each other, so that the student accumulates a module pass mark.
3. Chairs of Module Assessment Boards must ensure that notations, as approved by the University Secretary and Registrar, appear after each module score on the module mark sheet where resit assessment is to be recommended. See [Section 6 of this Framework](#) for further information about setting resit work. See [Section 4 of this Framework](#) relating to deferred assessment in cases of valid Extenuating Circumstances.

3.11 Student Review Process

1. The University Secretary and Registrar will assess the engagement and progress of its undergraduate students at appropriate points during the session with specific reference to:
 - Modules with a high number of fails
 - Student profiles that demonstrate a downward or upward trend from previous marks.
 - Any queries related to registration or enrolment.
2. The University Secretary and Registrar will then seek comments from the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Academic): Directors of School: Programme Leaders and Programme Area Leaders: and Student Support on any such matters before advising the appropriate Assessment Board. Decisions on the progression or continuing enrolment of any student or recommendations for the conferment of academic awards are the ultimate responsibility of the Progression and Award Boards (PABs).

3.12 Extenuating Circumstances

1. Action relating to extenuating circumstances must be taken strictly in accordance with the relevant Student Regulations, as set out in Section 4 of this Framework. Extenuating circumstances are circumstances that lessen or mitigate the apparent seriousness of academic failure. Typically they include illness, close family bereavement and severe emotional stress. They are temporary, abnormal and mostly unexpected circumstances that are beyond the student's control and that relate to a particular assessment or assessments. They are claimed by an individual student and are verified either through certificated evidence or by an appropriately qualified and impartial third party. Extenuating Circumstances do not include long-term conditions or circumstances that affect learning.

2. The Extenuating Circumstances Panel decides the validity or otherwise of claims for extenuating circumstances. No other body and no individual member of staff is authorised to rule on the validity or otherwise of a claim for extenuating circumstances. A Module Assessment Board or Progression and Award Board may not take into account any extenuating circumstances unless they have been reported to and considered by an Extenuating Circumstances Panel, and must then act in accordance with the recommendation of that panel.
3. The Chair of the Extenuating Circumstances Panel will notify Module Assessment Boards that Valid Extenuating Circumstances apply to named students in specific assessments in named modules.
4. Module Assessment Boards must, where Valid Extenuating Circumstances have prevented the student from submitting an assessment by the due date, waive the assessment penalty and ensure the assessment attracts the full mark it justifies on its merits alone.
5. In other cases of Valid Extenuating Circumstances, where no mark is recorded for an assessment, Module Assessment Boards may:
 - permit the assessment of the module in the form of the affected assessment(s) to be deferred until specified dates;
 - exceptionally, if it is not possible to replicate the original assessment, permit the assessment of the module by means of different assessment(s), which must be defined and made known to the student, to be deferred until specified dates.
6. In relation to any assessment, an assessment penalty imposed following Academic Misconduct and Student Misconduct Procedures described in Section 14 and Section 15 of this Framework over-rides any valid extenuating circumstances.
7. The Module Assessment Board will minute all decisions reached in respect of valid extenuating circumstances made known to it.

8. Chairs of Module Assessment Boards must ensure that "v" appears after each element of assessment on the module mark sheets where extenuating circumstances have been found valid whether or not the module has been passed. If the module pass mark has not been reached, then "E" annotation is combined with the "f" annotation on the MAB Module Marksheet as "Ef".
9. Module Assessment Boards make recommendations to the Progression and Award Board concerning students with failed modules and/or modules in which the assessment is deferred. Chairs of those Boards must ensure that notations appear after each module score on the module mark sheet where resit/deferred assessment is recommended. E.g.:
 - x1 one exam
 - c1 one item of coursework
 - c2 two items of coursework
 - x1c1 one exam and one item of coursework

The notations will appear on lists presented to the Progression and Award Board (i.e. "20Ef x1c1" indicates a deferred decision and a recommendation to the Progression and Award Board that the student attempts the examination and one piece of coursework). If the Module Assessment Board has waived a penalty for late submission of coursework, the "v" annotation remains, but no coursework/exam annotation is added.

3.13 Viva Voce Examinations

1. The University does not permit the use of viva voce examinations to determine an individual student's marks or to make recommendations for awards, unless such an examination is specified in the module descriptor as a method of assessment for all students on that module.

2. In such cases, the Director of School will make all arrangements, with both the External Examiner(s) and the students for the viva voce examination.

3.14 Progression and Award Boards (PABs) - General

1. The Progression and Award Board oversees the assessment of awards, decides on student progression and makes recommendations to Senate, or to another awarding body, on the award and category of award to be conferred upon individual students.
2. All named awards shall be assigned to the authority of a Progression and Award Board.
3. The Progression and Award Board shall convene meetings, to discharge the duties defined by these regulations. The University Secretary and Registrar shall schedule its meetings.
4. The Progression and Award Board shall exercise its powers in accordance with the standard of the award, the identified aims and objectives of any particular programme and the individual candidate's overall performance.
5. Only a Progression and Award Board constituted in accordance with these Regulations shall be authorised to recommend conferment on a student of an academic award of the University, or of any awarding body with which the University has a collaborative agreement.
6. The University's academic awards shall be conferred by Senate on behalf of the University in accordance with decisions of the Progression and Award Board. Senate will make recommendations to other awarding bodies with which the University has a collaborative agreement in accordance with decisions of the Progression and Award Board.
7. The decisions of Senate with regard to academic awards shall be determined by the signature of the Vice-Chancellor and University Secretary and Registrar, as Chair and Secretary of Senate respectively, upon the Pass List,

and shall accord with the recommendation of the Progression and Award Board.

3.15 Progression and Award Boards (PABs) - Constitution, Terms of Reference and Membership

1. The following have membership rights of Progression and Award Boards:

- Chair
- Progression and Award Board External Examiner(s) for awards under consideration
- Chairs or a nominee of the Module Assessment Boards relevant to the PAB
- University Secretary and Registrar or nominated deputy

Additional Registry Services staff may attend at the discretion of the University Secretary and Registrar.

2. The Chair is appointed on the authority of Senate and is accountable to Senate for ensuring that the Progression and Award Board fulfils its responsibilities in accordance with these regulations. The University Secretary and Registrar or nominee will advise and assist the Chair in this respect.

3. No student may be a member of a Progression and Award Board, unless they are a member of staff or approved External Examiner who is coincidentally registered as a student on another programme in the University or elsewhere.

4. The Progression and Award Board, when recommending the conferment of an academic award or considering the progression of students, shall be quorate with the following membership:

- Chair or nominated deputy

- Progression and Award Board External Examiner(s) for awards under consideration
- Chairs or a nominee of the Module Assessment Boards relevant to the PAB
- University Secretary and Registrar or nominee.

If exceptionally, a MAB Chair is unable to attend, the Board will be quorate provided that the Director of School has ensured that someone is present at the Board to represent students on all programmes in his/her School.

5. The role of the Progression and Award Board External Examiner and the associated rights and responsibilities are described in the External Examiners Handbook. If, exceptionally, the Progression and Award Board External Examiner is unable to attend the meeting, and the University is unable to arrange for one of the External Examiners for modules contributing to one or more of the awards to attend, then the Progression and Award Board External Examiner will:
 - as far as possible, make his or her views known to the Board before it meets
 - after the Board has met, write to the Chair of the Progression and Award Board stating the reason for absence, the extent of his or her involvement with the processes of assessment and signifying satisfaction with them. The letter shall not be considered to signify agreement with every decision of the Progression and Award Board.
 - the minutes of the meeting will record the Chair's agreement that the meeting should go ahead.
6. In circumstances beyond the University's control where it is not possible to convene a normally constituted Progression and Award Board, the Vice-Chancellor, on advice from the University Secretary and Registrar, will determine the arrangements necessary to conduct business of the meeting. In

such circumstances, the decision and the reasons for it will be reported in full to the next meeting of Senate.

3.16 Progression and Award Boards (PABs) - Process and Powers

1. The Progression and Award Board will receive:
 - the minutes of its previous meeting and any intervening sub-committee(s);
 - notification of any actions taken under the delegation of its authority at a previous meeting;
 - the relevant regulations, policies and procedures;
 - the confirmed marks and assigned credit from the appropriate Module Assessment Board(s) for each student registered for awards for which it is responsible;
 - decisions made by Module Assessment Board(s) with regard to failure and deferral;
 - a record against each module of Extenuating Circumstances found Valid by the Extenuating Circumstances Panel with an indication of action that remains to be taken;
 - the name of any student alleged to have been guilty of academic misconduct in relation to a module and details of any action taken in relation to it;
 - the annual report(s) of the Progression and Award Board External Examiner(s);
 - the name of any student in breach of University regulations from whom an official transcript/certificate will be withheld.

2. The Progression and Award Board will:

- before making decisions about any students, agree how it should exercise discretion with regard to extenuating circumstances and other factors affecting performance;
- agree the final version of the minutes of the previous meeting to be a true record of that meeting and note any matters arising from them;
- note any actions taken under authority delegated at its previous meetings;
- exercise its discretion to condone failure in accordance with the provisions of these regulations;
- in the event of Extenuating Circumstances having been found Valid in accordance with University regulations that have not otherwise been completed, exercise discretion as appropriate in accordance with the provisions of those and other regulations;
- determine whether to permit a student to progress to the next stage of a programme;
- determine whether any student shall be excluded from their programme of study on academic grounds;
- determine whether to allow any student to make good an initial failure in one or more modules by resit assessment;
- determine whether to allow any student to make good an initial failure in one or more modules by repeat assessment of the module;
- subject to the constraints of these regulations, require a student to repeat the assessment of a module where the resit requirements have not been successfully completed;
- determine whether a candidate's registration should be extended beyond the application of these or other University regulations;

- recommend the conferment and, as appropriate, categorisation of an award, including, as appropriate, an Aegrotat award;
- determine whether or not to defer recommending progression or the conferment of an award until specified conditions, within a specified time scale, have been met;
- authorise the publication of its decisions and recommendations;
- consider the previous annual report/s of the Progression and Award Board External Examiner(s) and the response to it, including a rationale for any recommendations that have not been acted upon, and refer any matters of concern to Senate;
- fulfil, as appropriate, any specific and additional requirements of any external accrediting body for the award recognised by Senate.

3.17 Progression and Award Boards (PABs) - Decisions

1. At the conclusion of each meeting the Chair shall sign a list of the decisions of the Progression and Award Board. The Minutes Secretary will then release the decisions in accordance with the approved Assessments Calendar.
2. The list shall show the name and/or Student Record System Identification Number of each student and the decision of the Progression and Award Board. The decision shall be one of the following:
 - **Progress:** this confirms that the student may continue to the next stage of the programme and, if appropriate, has been permitted to carry forward a module or modules for which credit has not yet been assigned.
 - **Recommend the award of [name of specific award]:** this confirms that an academic award is to be made to the student following, as appropriate, completion of the programme of study, withdrawal or exclusion.

- **Decision Deferred:** this confirms either that there is insufficient information on which to make a decision or that, due to Valid Extenuating Circumstances, the student has not yet been awarded sufficient credit to progress or secure an award. Such deferral may be in addition to a decision to allow resit assessment. The Progression and Award Board will not make the decision “Decision Deferred” following a resit if the timing of any deferred resit would make normal progress impracticable (see Section 3.16.2 of this Framework). Instead it will allow the student to repeat the assessment of the outstanding modules and will determine whether or not the student may progress before completion of the repeat assessment (see also Section 5 of this Framework).
- **Resit:** this confirms that further marks are to be confirmed and credit assigned, following an opportunity to make good an initial failure, before progression can be determined or an award can be recommended. This may be in addition to a decision of “Decision Deferred”.
- **Retake Module(s):** this confirms that the student may not continue to the next stage of the programme or be recommended for an award until there has been a successful repeat assessment. Students must enrol to retake module(s) and register for those modules in accordance with University regulations. Unless the Progression and Award Board specifically states otherwise the student must complete all the assessments required in the next delivery of the module and gain sufficient marks to pass the module. The mark for the repeated module is capped at the module pass mark. See also Section 6 of this Framework.
- **Exclude:** this confirms that the student may not continue to study for the named award for which she or he is registered at the University as a full-time student. This decision does not prevent the student transferring her or his registration to another programme of study within the University, subject to the agreement of the Programme Leader/Programme Area Leader (s) for that programme.

- **Decision Withheld:** this confirms that one of the above decisions has been determined but that it is not to be released yet by way of an official transcript/certificate. This is either because the student is in breach of the University's regulations in some respect or has not yet decided whether or not to accept the offer of an award prior to its recommendation. The Decision is released by subsequent Chair's Action.
3. The University Secretary and Registrar shall ensure that, as soon as practicable after the Board, students have sufficient further details of the Board's decisions to exercise their rights under these and any other regulations of the University. In particular, those further details must make clear any actions the student must complete in order to retrieve any failure.
 4. At the end of the meeting, the Progression and Award Board External Examiner will sign the Board Papers. Where multiple marksheets require signature, a cover sheet may be signed instead to confirm this. This endorsement signifies that the External Examiner upholds the effectiveness and adequacy of the assessment processes, with particular reference to the student profiles and issues of fairness. It does not necessarily indicate agreement with every individual mark or recommendation of the Board.

3.18 Progression and Award Boards (PABs) - Delegation

1. The Progression and Award Board can delegate to a subsidiary body its authority in relation to the progression of, and recommendation of awards to, students following resit assessment. It must define the membership and quorum of such a subsidiary body and prescribe the reporting arrangements to the Board.
2. The Progression and Award Board can delegate to the Chair its authority in relation to the progression and recommendation of awards to students arising from deferred decisions and the release of withheld decisions. It shall require the Chair to document her or his decision, the reasons for it, and the extent of

any consultation. The Chair shall report any such decision to the next meeting of the Board.

3. The Progression and Award Board can delegate to the Chair its authority in relation to the outcome of successful appeals (see Section 16 of this Framework). The Chair shall report any such decision to the next meeting of the Board.
4. The Progression and Award Board cannot delegate its authority in any other way.

3.19 Progression and Award Boards (PABs) - Minutes

1. The University Secretary and Registrar shall appoint a Minutes Secretary to draft the Minutes of the meeting of the Board and of any sub-committee.
2. In the case of the exercise of the discretionary powers described below, the minutes must include all the information specified within that regulation. In the case of the exercise of any other discretionary powers under these regulations, the minutes shall record in full the reasons for any decision to exercise discretion or not to do so.
3. The Chair of the Progression and Award Board shall ensure that approved draft minutes of meetings are issued to members within a reasonable time. The Progression and Award Board will receive and consider the minutes of its previous meeting as described in Section 3.16 of this Framework.

3.20 Authority to Depart Exceptionally from University Regulations

1. Within the constraints of the programme objectives and good practice within the UK Higher Education sector, the Progression and Award Board may depart from any of these regulations, except this regulation, in exceptional

circumstances if a strict application of the regulations would be unjust to a student or students. The Progression and Award Board will take advice from the Progression and Award Board External Examiner in relation to good practice in the sector.

2. In such a case the minutes must record all of the following information:

- a reference to this regulation;
- the name of the student(s);
- the regulation from which the Progression and Award Board wishes to depart;
- the full circumstances in which the Progression and Award Board considered it necessary to exercise the discretionary power under this regulation;
- the reason why the Progression and Award Board considered it necessary to exercise the discretionary power under this regulation; this should highlight the consequences of the exercise or non-exercise of such discretion for the student;
- the advice of the Progression and Award Board External Examiner in relation to good practice within the UK higher education sector;
- the reason why such discretionary power should not be exercised in respect of other students.

The Chair of the Progression and Award Board should report in writing via its Minutes Secretary to both the Vice-Chancellor and University Secretary and Registrar with regard to the departure from the regulations, so that this can be reported to Senate.

3.21 Other Procedural Matters

1. The University Secretary and Registrar will retain copies of mark sheets. At the end of the meeting the Board Administrator will collect and destroy all copies of the mark sheets distributed at the start of the meeting not removed by their owner.
2. All members of a Progression and Award Board or Module Assessment Board must exercise the strictest confidentiality regarding its proceedings. Board decisions are the decisions of all its members jointly and severally, regardless of the members' views before those decisions were finalised.
3. The University Secretary and Registrar is responsible for communicating the decisions of Assessment Boards and issuing statements relating to appeal procedures. Candidates whose results are not published by the deadline for procedural reasons will be notified separately at the same time. S/he will also retain award lists and details of Chair's actions taken after the PAB meeting.
4. Directors of School will ensure that overnight accommodation for External Examiners is arranged, where applicable, and inform them and relevant staff of those arrangements. Directors of School are also responsible for reimbursing expenses to External Examiners for their programmes in accordance with University Financial Regulations. The Academic Standards Officer is responsible for making arrangements for the payment of External Examiners' fees in association with Registry Services.

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4. EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES

4.1 Introduction

1. Students must undertake a wide range of assessments in different formats. This requires them to balance their workload and use time management skills to ensure that assessments are submitted to stated deadlines. However, the University recognises that serious adverse factors beyond a student's control (extenuating circumstances) can prevent them from completing assessments; this procedure enables them to be taken into account when considering a student's assessment profile.
2. The aim of these procedures is to:
 - make clear the types of serious adverse factors that the University will consider as extenuating circumstances and the process to be followed for dealing with them; and
 - ensure fair and equal treatment of all students when considering extenuating circumstances.
3. Students can download the Extenuating Circumstances Claim Form and find all the related information in the Registry Documents section on Learning Space. All forms should be submitted to Registry Services by the published deadlines and should be accompanied by documentary evidence. Decisions of the Extenuating Circumstances Panel are emailed to students as soon as possible after its meeting.

4.2 Definition

1. The University defines extenuating circumstances as: **“Critical matters that result in a major short-term impact on a student's ability to be able to**

complete, or submit, or attend, an assessment.” Extenuating circumstances can therefore be either:

- immediate events that prevent a student attending for, or submitting, an assessment; or
 - preliminary events that impact on a student’s ability to prepare for an assessment.
2. These procedures are not intended for students who have suffered long term difficulties that have prevented learning, except if they are registered with the Disability and Inclusion Advice Service (DIAS) in Student Support and have an approved request for flexibility with deadlines. Students whose circumstances exceed twenty working days must, therefore, discuss the matter with the Academic Information and Guidance Co-ordinator so that they can be supported.
 3. These procedures are intended to apply to individuals. They do not apply when a failure in programme management arrangements has disrupted the learning and assessment of a group or groups of students. In such cases, the Director of School and the programme team should provide appropriate remedies, taking advice from the University Secretary and Registrar. If those remedies are unsatisfactory, students may use the complaints procedure at Section 17 of this Framework.

4.3 The ‘Fit to Sit’ Principle

1. The University operates a ‘fit to sit’ approach to extenuating circumstances. This acknowledges that only the individual student concerned, with advice from others where appropriate, can know if an event has impacted upon his/her ability to undertake an assessment. Thus a student confirms that she or he is ‘fit to sit’ by submitting an assessment or sitting an examination and a subsequent claim will only be considered in exceptional circumstances, where a student is unable to reasonably make the required judgement.

2. It follows that students should only try to meet learning outcomes when they are fully fit to do so. The Extenuating Circumstances Panel will not judge the impact of particular circumstances on any individual, but will either accept that the evidence presented by the student meets the criteria or that it does not; if it does not, the claim will be rejected.
3. The Extenuating Circumstances Panel makes a recommendation to the Module Assessment Board that deals with the relevant module. Where there are valid extenuating circumstances, Module Assessment Boards must waive the assessment penalty, provided the work was submitted within ten working days of the due date of submission, and ensure the assessment attracts the full mark it merits. Students may not submit a further extenuating circumstances claim within this period to extend the time further, but this deadline may be varied exceptionally to take account of student vacations.
4. Where a student cannot submit the assessment within ten working days but has Valid Extenuating Circumstances, so that no mark is recorded for an assessment, Module Assessment Boards may:
 - permit the assessment of the module in the form of the affected assessment(s) to be deferred until specified dates;
 - exceptionally, if the same type of assessment cannot be used again, permit a different assessment(s), which must be defined and made known to the student, to be deferred until specified dates. Some assessments (for example, some professional placements) must be repeated exactly and may not, therefore, be available in defined resit/deferral periods. Students will be informed about such assessments in the programme handbook.
 - refuse to permit a deferred assessment if the student cannot pass the affected module by doing only the deferral work. In this case the Module Assessment Board will not offer the student a deferral and the decision will be made as if the extenuating circumstances were not valid.

4.4 Evidence Base

1. To be fair and transparent, applications for extenuating circumstances must be evidence based and judged within clearly defined guidelines. This also helps students who are not fit to undertake an assessment to understand the nature of the evidence required. The areas that are valid for extenuating circumstances, and the supporting evidence required, are stated in Section 4.5 of this Framework. Students should ask the Academic Information and Guidance Co-ordinator or the President or Deputy President of the Student Union for advice on how to apply and their chances of success. Supporting evidence must refer directly to how the extenuating circumstances have impacted upon the student's ability to complete or sit assessments.
2. A statement from a parent/guardian/spouse/partner will not be accepted as independent corroboration. Similarly, a statement from an academic member of staff will not be accepted without the appropriate documentary confirmation.
3. All evidence should be in English. Where, for example, a student is taken ill in their home country and corroborating evidence is provided in the language of that country, then it should be accompanied by a translation, certified officially as being accurate as advised by Registry Services.
4. Extenuating circumstances cover critical incidences and do not encompass normal life challenges. Thus the following incidences will not be valid under these procedures:
 - the down-time of University computer networks for short periods and problems with personal IT equipment;
 - loss of computer data, which should be backed-up;
 - erroneous e-submission, including e-submission to an incorrect module code;
 - ongoing, rather than emergency, accommodation problems;
 - personal/part-time job commitments;

- holidays;
- peaks in assessment work demands;
- financial difficulties;
- long-term illness or other incapacity lasting more than 4 weeks, for which students are advised to contact the Academic Information and Guidance Co-ordinator to discuss a possible interruption of studies;
- additional learning needs;
- complaints against individual members of staff, or complaints about the delivery of the module/programme, which are managed through the University's Complaints Procedure (see [Section 17 of this Framework](#)).

4.5 Extenuating Circumstances and Valid Evidence

The following general principles apply to the extenuating circumstances procedure:

- Extenuating circumstances cannot be valid for more than twenty working days.
- Evidence must include specific dates for the period of the claim and should correspond with the dates recorded on the claim form.

The different categories applicable and the types of evidence which will be required to support each claim are as follows:

Category A - Acute Illness or injury (less than five working days)

An acute illness is likely to have incapacitated the student on the date the assessment was due to have been undertaken or submitted. This includes personal injury or accident.

Such an illness may also result from an acute episode of a chronic condition for which the student may already have additional needs provision, but the effect has been more severe than normal.

Evidence Required

Medical Certificate signed while the illness or incident was affecting the student;

OR

The student's self-certification of illness or incapacity for a single period of up to 7 consecutive days; OR

Confirmation from DIAS via an Acute Episode form that the student is known to them and has had an exacerbation of an existing condition.

The Extenuating Circumstances Panel will normally consider this form of evidence to be Not Valid if used more than once in any academic year unless in relation to additional needs provision. This type of evidence may be provided on Self-Certification stationery or may take the form of a signed and dated statement by the student. Please note that hospital appointment letters are insufficient evidence of the impact of circumstances and must be supplied alongside other evidence.

Category B - Extended Illness or injury (less than twenty working days)

An illness that is likely to have incapacitated the student during the period he/she might have reasonably been expected to spend time on preparation for submission or for sitting an assessment. This encompasses personal injury/accident with extended impact.

Such an illness may also result from an acute episode of a chronic condition for which the student may already have additional needs provision, but the effect has been more severe than normal and for a period of longer than Category A.

Evidence Required

A doctor's medical certificate relevant to the period of the claimed extenuating circumstances and stating that the student was unfit to study. Evidence of hospitalisation, e.g. Discharge Notice. Please note that hospital appointment letters are insufficient evidence of the impact of circumstances and must be supplied alongside other evidence.

Category C - Illness or injury affecting another person

Acute illness, injury, or incident or exacerbation of long term or chronic condition, affecting another person or persons and which required the close and frequent attention of the student on the date the assessment was due to be undertaken or submitted, and could not have been reasonably supplied by anyone else.

Evidence Required

Medical Certificate signed while the illness or incident was affecting the other person, or some other medical evidence e.g. Hospital Discharge Notice or copies of prescriptions, together with a statement by the student about the nature of the relationship, explaining why their personal attention was necessary and why no-one else could have reasonably provided it. Please note that hospital appointment letters are insufficient evidence of the impact of circumstances and must be supplied alongside other evidence.

Category D - Bereavement

Death of immediate member of family, partner, or close friend on or close to the date the assessment was due to be undertaken or submitted or during the period the student might reasonably have been expected to work on it.

Evidence Required

Copy Death Certificate, Order of Funeral Service or newspaper article or announcement.

Category E - Personal Problems

Severe problems in the student's domestic or personal circumstances that would have prevented the student submitting an assessment on time or sitting an assessment OR which would have impacted severely on the student's ability to prepare for an assessment.

Evidence Required

Corroboration from a person with whom the student has a professional, not a personal, relationship e.g. a doctor or other health professional, a counsellor or other appropriate member of Student Support, or some other professional person who, through the nature of their professional relationship with the student, knows about his or her difficulties and can confirm the claim.

A supporting letter from a member of academic staff relating what the student has told them will not normally be accepted.

Category F - Court Attendance

Jury Service, or attendance at Court or a Tribunal as a witness, defendant or plaintiff, on the date the assessment was due to be submitted or assessment sat OR impacting on the period during which the student might reasonably have been expected to prepare for submission or revise for the assessment.

Evidence Required

Official correspondence from the Court or Tribunal confirming attendance requirement.

Category G - Work Commitment

Student must be studying part-time or by distance learning AND there must be an unanticipated and/or non-negotiable work commitment that either meant that the student was unable to attend on the date the assessment was due to be undertaken or submitted, or that the student was unable to work on the assessment during the relevant period.

Evidence Required

Letter of corroboration (that must explain why the commitment was non-negotiable and/or unanticipated) signed by the student's line manager or supervisor, or by an appropriately senior and authorised representative of the relevant organisation.

Category H - Cultural or Sporting Event

Student taking part as an individual or member of a team in an externally-organised cultural or sporting event which required absence from the University on the date the assessment was due to be undertaken or submitted, or for at least a week during the period she/he might reasonably have been expected to work on the assessment.

Evidence Required

Letter of invitation from a recognised organisation to the event or to join a team in an international event.

Students are advised to consult the Academic Information and Guidance Co-ordinator before accepting such an invitation.

Category J - Religious Observance

Observance of the student's religion as a result of which she/he is unable to attend the University at the date and time the assessment was due to be undertaken or submitted, and no alternative and reasonable arrangements could be agreed by the University.

Evidence Required

Confirmation from the University Chaplain that the religious observance is a reasonable one for a member of the faith, subject to consultation with the Head of Student Support and/or Inclusion Co-ordinator with regard to non-Christian faiths, AND a statement from the student explaining why the observance in question prevented their attendance and explaining what attempts had been made to agree a reasonable alternative arrangement.

Category K - Active Exercise of Citizenship

An unanticipated and/or non-negotiable commitment to duties associated with an elected office, membership of a voluntary organisation, or service with Reserve Forces, as a result of which, either the student was unable to attend on the date the assessment was due to be undertaken or submitted, or the student was unable to give time to the production of the assessment during the relevant period.

Evidence Required

Letter of corroboration that must explain why the commitment was non-negotiable and/or unanticipated, signed by the student's line manager or supervisor, or by an appropriately senior and authorised representative of the relevant organisation.

Category L - Transport Difficulties

Difficulties with public or personal transport which prevented attendance on the date the assessment was due to be undertaken or submitted, that could not reasonably have been anticipated and gave insufficient time for alternative arrangements to be made.

Evidence Required

Corroboration from a relevant and appropriate source.

Category M - Criminal Activity

The student was the victim of a crime that has been reported to the appropriate authority for investigation and that crime was likely either to have prevented the student's attendance on the date the assessment was due to be undertaken, or to have prevented the student from submitting the assessment on the due date.

Evidence Required

Corroboration of the reported crime from the Police or other investigating authority.

Category N - Computing Difficulties

Computing difficulties arising on computers or a network provided by the University for the purpose of a timed assessment such as a formal examination.

Evidence Required

Corroboration by the University's IT Services and Infrastructure Manager.

Category Q - Other

Exceptional extenuating circumstances that do not fall under any of the criteria defined above, including maternity and paternity. Students are advised to consult the Academic Information and Guidance Co-ordinator before submitting such a claim.

Evidence Required

The Academic Information and Guidance Co-ordinator will seek advice from the Extenuating Circumstances Administrators in Registry Services to determine what evidence would be appropriate, in the context of precedent and subject to the advice of the University Secretary and Registrar, to support such a claim. In the case of maternity and paternity, a birth certificate would be sufficient.

4.6 Timing of an Extenuating Circumstances Submission

1. An extenuating circumstances submission must normally be made by the end of the semester or term to which it relates. Submissions that relate to years already completed will not be considered.
2. Common deadlines for the submission of completed forms and evidence are published annually via the [Assessments Calendar](#). However, students should submit claims as early as possible and by no later than the published deadline, particularly with regard to major assessment tasks such as dissertations and ISMs, so that a decision can be made promptly.

4.7 Extenuating Circumstances Panels

1. The University Secretary and Registrar, as Chair of the Extenuating Circumstances Panel, can approve an extenuating circumstances claim that is clearly valid under University Regulations and established case law. Otherwise, it must be considered by the Extenuating Circumstances Panel. The Panel will receive a full report of all students under consideration, including those where Chair's Action has already been taken.
2. The Extenuating Circumstances Panel will have a quorum of three persons, with a gender balance where possible, as follows:
 - The University Secretary and Registrar (Chair)
 - A representative of Student Support (normally the Academic Information and Guidance Co-ordinator)
 - Director of School or nominee
 - In attendance: A secretary to the panel, who shall be an administrative member of Registry Services staff.
3. The University Secretary and Registrar may also convene a virtual Panel, outside formal meetings, to consider additional evidence and agree the

outcome of a claim. All such claims accepted must be reported to the Panel at the next available opportunity.

4. The Panel's decisions will be determined by the nature of the circumstances, the documentary evidence provided and the alignment with the requirements of Section 4.5 of this Framework.
5. If necessary, the Panel will request further evidence from the student, but it will not interview students as part of the decision-making process.
6. The student will be advised of the Panel's decision. If it decides that a submission is Not Valid the reasons for this will be stated.
7. The Panel's decisions inform the Module Assessment Boards and Progression and Award Boards. Appeals can only be made on the grounds set out in the academic appeals process described in Section 16 of this Framework.

4.8 Serious and Confidential Extenuating Circumstances

1. If a student would like serious extenuating circumstances to remain confidential, she or he may seek the advice of an appropriate member of staff who will decide whether or not the circumstances are both serious and confidential.
2. If satisfied that the circumstance is valid, the member of staff will report to the Extenuating Circumstances Panel that there is a serious and confidential extenuating circumstance which has affected specific assessments in named modules.
3. In such a case, the Panel will accept this intervention and the minute shall record only:
 - the student's name;
 - the name of the member of staff:

- the fact that the serious and confidential procedure has been applied;
- which modules and which assessments have been affected.

4.9 Intervention on a Student's Behalf

1. Exceptionally, for example due to the incapacity of the student, written statements on a student's behalf may be considered at the discretion of the Chair of the Extenuating Circumstances Panel. The student will need to consent to this, unless the circumstances themselves have made it impossible for the student to give consent, and the submission must make it clear how that consent has been given.
2. No other intervention on behalf of a student, except as set out in Section 4.8 of this Framework above, will be considered and the circumstances will therefore be Not Valid.
3. Where a written statement or other intervention on a student's behalf is made the Chair of the Extenuating Circumstances Panel will ensure that the minute records:
 - the intervention involved;
 - the reasons for its consideration;
 - the decision of the Panel and the modules and assessments affected.
4. Registry Services will inform the person making the intervention and the student of the Panel's decision.

4.10 Data Protection Act 2018

By submitting an extenuating circumstances form, students agree to the University holding this personal data in accordance with its Records Retention

Policy and its obligations under the Data Protection Act 2018, which aligns with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

4.11 Support for Students

1. Plymouth Marjon University places great emphasis on supporting its students. The University recognises that students who have recourse to these procedures may require additional support. Students are therefore encouraged to seek advice from Student Support which includes professional counsellors available via Student Support and the Academic Information and Guidance Co-ordinator; from their Personal Development Tutor; or from the Student Union.
2. During the course of their studies students may also experience personal issues that hamper their ability to learn, or undertake assessments, but do not meet the criteria for extenuating circumstances. In all such cases students should contact those identified above.

4.12 Procedures at Partner Organisations

All arrangements on collaborative programmes relating to extenuating circumstances are expected to align with those of the University.

4.13 Misrepresentation and falsehood

By submitting a claim, students certify that the information they have provided is true and complete, and that misrepresentation or falsehood related to extenuating circumstances may lead to the application of the Student Misconduct Procedures. The Extenuating Circumstances procedure is intended to be supportive and claims will be treated in good faith by University

staff. Students are encouraged to seek advice from Student Support or Registry Services if they have any queries about a claim.

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5. PROGRESSION

5.1 Points of Progression

1. Programmes of study leading to named awards may be divided into stages (see Section 1.4 of this Framework) separated by points of progression.
2. Unless specifically stated otherwise in the approved Programme Specification, points of progression will occur on the first day of the next semester or term to start after the meeting of the Progression and Award Board following the completion of study at a particular stage.
3. Where a placement, or other student experience, occurs across two stages of a programme, and its successful completion is a condition of the conferment of the award, the Progression and Award Board will determine where the point of progression lies. The Progression and Award Board may also determine the point of progression differently according to a student's circumstances. If it does so, the minutes shall record in each case the Board's reasons for so determining the point of progression.

5.2 Progression of Individual Students

1. Responsibility for all decisions relating to progression rests with the Progression and Award Board.
2. The Progression and Award Board will consider each student's overall performance at the first meeting following the student's completion of the study of each stage. If a student has obtained the credit required to complete that stage, including credit in all compulsory modules, the Board will permit him or her to progress to the next stage. This can be following condonement, resit, and/or repeat assessment.

3. On the authority of the Chair of the Progression and Award Board, a student may commence the study of a module or modules at the next stage before the Progression and Award Board has met to consider the results of the assessment of modules at the preceding stage. This will include the results of any referral or repeat assessment. However, a Module Assessment Board may not assign credit for a module or modules at any stage until the Progression and Award Board has confirmed that the student has been permitted to progress to that stage.
4. The Progression and Award Board, before or after any resit, may permit a student to progress to the next stage of a programme, where applicable to that programme. They can do so trailing failure in the assessment of one 20 credit module or two 10 credit modules, as long as they have attempted the assessment of the module and a mark is recorded either before or after any resit. This failure must be retrieved in accordance with the provisions for repeating modules in Section 6 of this Framework and this provision is not applicable to students on accelerated degrees.
5. As an alternative, not an addition, to the standard provision, a student registered on a professionally accredited degree programme may progress to the academic work of the next year of the programme if they have failed or been deferred in a placement module. However, they will then need to pass that module at the time set aside for placement learning in the next session. Arrangements may then be made for the next level placement to be postponed to the following year. If a student fails to complete a deferred or resit placement satisfactorily, they will be required either to interrupt their programme until they are able to satisfy the outstanding requirements or transfer onto an alternative programme of study.
6. Progression with trailing failure requires the Progression and Award Board to specify the modules to be taken to make good the failure and the time by which the assessment must be completed. Successful retrieval of this failure becomes part of the progression or award requirement of the next stage of the programme of study.

7. A student may be allowed to progress without sufficient credit, if an assessment has been deferred, and gain the necessary credit through assessment in modules where credit has not yet been assigned. The Progression and Award Board will decide the maximum shortfall of credit but, if the workload is manageable, a student will normally be allowed to progress.
8. If a student undertakes assessments and/or is awarded credit for prior learning such that the minimum required for progression is exceeded, the Progression and Award Board will, firstly, take account of the student's performance in all compulsory modules and then the student's best performance in optional modules up to the total required.

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6. RETRIEVAL OF FAILURE

NB - for details of fees relating to each of these retrieval processes, please refer to the University website.

6.1 Retrieval of Failure - Undergraduate Condonement

1. At each stage of assessment, Progression and Award Boards for undergraduate programmes will award credit for failed modules up to a maximum of 20 credits if **all** of the following conditions are met:
 - the module is not listed in the Programme Specification as a module that cannot be condoned;
 - the full range of marks is available to the Board (which specifically means that condonement cannot be granted if the student has no mark for a particular module(s) perhaps because of extenuating circumstances);
 - the average mark per credit for that stage (including the failing mark) is 40% or more;
 - the module has not been the subject of a confirmed instance of academic misconduct; and
 - the student has attempted the assessment of the module(s) and has achieved a mark of between 30% and 39% (or 40% and 49% for an Integrated Masters Programme where Level 7 modules are studied, in addition to Level 6, at stage 3).

The actual marks achieved for a condoned module will be recorded for classification purposes so that the student bears the consequences of their achievement in the module.

2. If more than 20 credits fall in the condonable range, the Progression and Award Board will not condone any of the modules.

3. The principle of condonement applies to marks attained in resits, retakes and deferred assessments, provided the conditions in Section 6.1.1 of this Framework for the relevant stage are met.
4. Condonement applied at one stage does not preclude condonement being applied in any or all subsequent stages.
5. Any transcript will show the actual mark achieved and will indicate that the credits have been gained by condonement.
6. If the module will not count towards the classification of a final award, the Progression and Award Board may condone the module without offering a resit opportunity.

6.2 Retrieval of Failure – Postgraduate Condonement

1. The Progression and Award Board for a taught postgraduate programme will condone marks for a module in the 40% - 49% range for the purposes of awarding credit, in accordance with 6.2.2 below.
2. Condonement decisions can only be made, once a student has been given the opportunity to resit for a 50% mark in the first instance, on the basis of a credit-weighted mean mark of at least 50% obtained across the requisite number of credits for the qualification being considered for award.
3. Modules for which condonement will not be allowed must be listed in the programme specification and made known to students at the start of each programme.
4. The credit-weighted mean mark calculated for classification purposes must use marks in their original form.
5. The limits of condonement are as follows:
 - For the award of a Master's degree, 30 credits;

- For the award of a Postgraduate Diploma, 30 credits;
 - For the award of Postgraduate Certificate, 30 credits.
6. Condonement will not be permitted where the module has been the subject of a confirmed instance of academic misconduct.

6.3 Retrieval of Failure – Resit and Deferral

1. The University defines a resit as a further attempt, following initial failure, at the assessment of a module, for a maximum module mark of the module pass mark (normally 40% for undergraduate modules and 50% for postgraduate modules), without the requirement to repeat any attendance.
2. The University defines a deferral as an attempt at the assessment of a module, following failure which is the subject of a valid claim of extenuating circumstances, for an uncapped mark, without the requirement to repeat any attendance. For accredited programmes where there is a requirement for students to pass all elements of the assessment, the resit mark for the module will be capped at the mark gained at the first attempt if the resit mark is greater than the module pass mark.
3. The Progression and Award Board will determine the period during which resit and deferral assessments must be attempted.
4. When the period determined by the Progression and Award Board has expired, the right to retrieve failure by resit or deferral assessment also expires, unless the Progression and Award Board determines that, because of valid extenuating circumstances, the period should be extended.
5. Immediately following the publication of results determined by Progression and Award Boards, the University Secretary and Registrar will ensure that candidates who have failed to satisfy the requirements for progression or an award are informed through a secure webpage (www.marjon.ac.uk/students/resultsonline).

6. Directors of School will ensure that resit and deferral requirements are published on LearningSpace in advance of the publication of results as stated in the Assessment Calendar.
7. Although resit and deferral assessments must assess the learning outcomes of the module in a similar manner to the original assessment, they do not have to be in exactly the same format. The Module Assessment Board may for example determine that resit and deferral will be by a single assessment regardless of the number or type of assessments that were failed or deferred. They must, however, ensure that deferred students are assessed on similar terms to those students who completed the assessment at the first attempt, and that the relevant module learning outcomes can still be addressed.
8. Resit and deferral coursework and examinations must not replicate the original assessment, except in the following cases:
 - initial failure in a dissertation or honours project on a taught programme will normally require the resubmission of a resit or deferral dissertation with the same title as the original work;
 - initial failure in an Independent Study Module will normally require the submission of work on the same agreed topic as the original work;
 - the same examination paper may be used with a different rubric, e.g. where there is a choice of questions, resit or deferral candidates are told when the resit or deferral examination starts which questions they must answer;
 - questions from an examination paper may be used to set the resit or deferral as coursework.
9. In setting resit and deferral assessments, Module Assessment Boards should take into account that, **on resit or deferral, students must pass every element of assessment the Board has set for their retrieval of failure.** Specifically, resit marks cannot be combined with existing marks from passed elements, nor with each other, so that a module pass mark results.

10. Resit and deferral coursework is normally submitted by the same method as the main assessment of the module.
11. Module Leaders must nominate an alternative contact, to be communicated to resit or deferral candidates, if they are to be absent from the University at any point during the first two weeks after results are published.
12. Directors of School must ensure that resit and deferral coursework is marked promptly after the date set for receipt.
13. The deadline stated is final, and resit coursework cannot be submitted late for a capped pass mark as it is already capped at the module pass mark. Resit coursework submitted after the deadline, therefore, will be treated as a non-submission in accordance with Section 12.4 of this Framework.
14. Resit and deferral assessments are conducted in accordance with the procedures set out in Section 3 of this Framework. However, the marks for resit assessment are not combined with any other marks. In order to pass the module by resit or deferral, a student must pass all the elements of assessment required by the Module Assessment Board to make good the failure.
15. Directors of School shall ensure that signed and completed mark sheets are uploaded into the system by the agreed deadline.
16. Students should be able to complete any resit or deferral work required of them. Resit and deferral examinations and the submission date for resit and deferral coursework for undergraduate programmes are set out in the University's Assessments Calendar; absence on holiday or work is not a valid extenuating circumstance in the case of non-submission. Failure to complete successfully each year's modules may prevent or delay progression to the next year of the programme of study or result in a student failing to gain an Honours degree.

6.4 Retrieval of Failure - Retake

1. The University defines a retake as a further attempt, following an initial or, exceptionally, a second failure, for a maximum mark of the module pass mark, at the assessment of a module. In some instances, individual candidates will be permitted a retake with or without attendance; in others attendance or non-attendance may be specified. The Progression and Award Board will determine whether the retake should be with or without attendance. Students who have failed more than 50% of the credits required for successful completion of a stage will also be considered by a Progression and Award Board for a retake of any stage of an undergraduate programme.
2. The Module Assessment Board and Progression and Award Board will deal with the outcome of retake assessments at the meeting scheduled to consider the next delivery of the module. A student who fails a module having retaken the stage can retrieve their failure by resit subject to the normal conditions, but will not normally be allowed to retake a module or the stage again. However, a student may apply to start a different programme and may apply for specific credits already achieved to be taken into consideration towards the new programme of study.
3. Unless the Progression and Award Board specifically states otherwise the student must complete all the assessments required in the next delivery of the module and gain sufficient marks to pass the module. The actual marks attained by the student in each element of assessment contribute in the normal way to the overall module mark which is capped at the module pass mark. The overall module mark will not be capped where a student is retaking modules as a first attempt.
4. The Progression and Award Board will only permit a student to retake a module that the Director of School has declared will run in the next session. Otherwise, the Progression and Award Board will require the student to take another specified module in order to make up the credit shortfall. Nevertheless, the module mark will be capped at the pass mark and the

number of overall attempts will continue to build up unless the module or modules are being taken as a first attempt.

5. Students must undertake sufficient learning activities to demonstrate the outcomes of the module as it is delivered in the next session. This remains the case if a student is allowed to progress trailing failure and timetable constraints prevent him or her from attending the retake module. If two or more examinations are held at the same time, the student should attend one examination and claim extenuating circumstances for the other.
6. Otherwise, students enrolled upon retake modules have the same rights to tuition and support as any other student enrolled upon the module.

6.5 Retrieval of Failure - Failure on Undergraduate Programmes

1. In the case of modules failed for the first time where condonement does not apply or has already been applied to another module, the Progression and Award Board will allow resit assessment in up to 50% of the credits required for successful completion of the stage. The nature of the resit assessment will be determined by the Module Assessment Board and shown upon the marksheet.
2. Some programme regulations require students to pass all or particular elements of assessment within modules in order to accumulate credit towards that particular programme. If that is the case, the Progression and Award Board may allow students to attempt resit or deferral assessments in more than 50% of the credits required for successful completion of the stage if they have achieved the overall module pass mark for those modules. In such cases the Progression and Award Board will determine the maximum number of assessments that may be attempted and record that decision in the minutes of its meetings.
3. The Progression and Award Board can exclude a student who fails more than 50% of the credits in a stage from a programme. If so, it may or may not

permit them to apply to re-take the entire year subject to the University's regulations and the agreement of the Programme Leader. Students re-taking the year must pay the full tuition fee, attend all lectures and seminars and take all of the assessments again as if for the first time; no marks can be carried over.

4. In the case of modules failed after a resit or deferral opportunity, the Progression and Award Board may allow the student to progress in accordance with Section 5.2.4 of this Framework (trailing fail).

6.6 Retrieval of Failure - Failure on Taught Postgraduate Programmes

1. In the case of modules failed for the first time where condonement does not apply or has already been applied to another module, the Progression and Award Board will allow resit assessment in up to 50% of the credits required for successful completion of the stage. The nature of the resit assessment will be as determined by the Module Assessment Board and shown upon the marksheet. Condonement cannot be applied if more than one module has been failed at a specific stage.
2. If a student fails modules following a resit opportunity, the Progression and Award Board will exclude the student and recommend the award of a Postgraduate Certificate or Postgraduate Diploma as determined by the credits that the student has accumulated on the programme.

6.7 Acceptance of Awards

If a student accepts an award which is conferred by a decision of the relevant Progression and Award Board, by choosing not to exercise his or her right of appeal, all further resit or retake opportunities available to the student lapse with immediate effect.

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7. AWARD CLASSIFICATION

7.1 General Regulations

1. Module Assessment Boards will determine module marks and report them to Progression and Award Boards as described in Section 3 of this Framework.
2. Unless stated otherwise in the approved programme specification, the Progression and Award Board will recommend classifications of its degrees and other academic awards in accordance with these regulations.
3. Where there is insufficient evidence to determine the class of an award but the Progression and Award Board is nevertheless satisfied that the student would have qualified for the award for which he or she was a candidate, had it not been for illness or other sound reason, an *unclassified Aegrotat award* may be recommended.

7.2 Honours Degree Classification (current version)

1. These regulations apply, with effect from 1st October 2013, to the classification of all bachelor degrees with honours.
2. If a student first registered before 1st September 2014 and has not interrupted his or her studies, the Progression and Award Board may also consider the regulations in force on the date of the student's first registration (see Section 7.3 of this Framework) and recommend the higher of the two possible classifications. A student who interrupts his or her studies will be subject to the classification regulations in force at the time of the resumption of studies.
3. All module marks at Levels 5 and 6 for non-top-up degrees will be presented to the Progression and Award Board as a whole number with any decimal below x.50 being rounded down and any decimal of x.50 or above being rounded up. For top-up degrees, all module marks at Level 6 will be presented in the same way.

4. If exceptionally a student has acquired more than the credits required at each of these levels, the Progression and Award Board will first take account of the marks in all compulsory modules for the award and title for which the student is registered, then the student's best performance in optional modules associated with that award and title, up to the total credit requirement. The Board will disregard all other marks.
5. The Progression and Award Board will recommend the classification calculated from all credits obtained at the applicable levels in accordance with the following classifications:

70+ First Class

60-69 Upper Second Class

50-59 Lower Second Class

40-49 Third Class

The overall weighted average will be presented at the Progression and Award Board as a whole number with any decimal below 0.5 being rounded down and any decimal of 0.5 or above being rounded up. The classification will then be determined by the following formula:

- The best marks achieved in 80 credits pursued at Level 6 will be given a weighting of 3 (i.e. they will count three times).
- The marks achieved in the remaining credits pursued at Level 6 and the best marks achieved in 40 credits pursued at Level 5 will be given a weighting of 2 (i.e. they will count twice).
- The marks achieved in the remaining credits pursued at Level 5 will be given a weighting of 1 (i.e. they will count once).

In exceptional circumstances, where a programme includes more than 120 credits pursued at Level 6, a proportional calculation will be applied.

6. If a student is admitted to Level 6 (whether to a top-up degree or, with credit, to a non-top-up degree), the classification will be determined by the following formula with regard to credits pursued at Level 6 only:
- The best marks achieved in 40 credits pursued at Level 6 will be given a weighting of 3 (i.e. they will count three times).
 - The marks achieved in the next best 40 credits pursued at Level 6 will be given a weighting of 2 (i.e. they will count twice).
 - The marks achieved in the remaining credits will be given a weighting of 1 (i.e. they will count once).

In exceptional circumstances, where a programme includes more than 120 credits pursued at Level 6, a proportional calculation will be applied.

7. If a student was admitted with credit other than as described in Sections 7.2.6 above, mean values will be calculated on the remaining credits *pro rata* and the Progression and Award Board will recommend the highest classification available, following as closely as possible the formula described in Section 7.2.5 above.
8. Modules that are not assigned a numeric mark, e.g. pass/fail modules, or are rated at Levels other than 5 or 6, do not count towards degree classification. Mean values will be calculated on the remaining credits *pro rata* and the Progression and Award Board will recommend a classification, following as closely as possible the formulae described in Section 7.2.5 above.
9. Where the overall weighted average falls within 1% of a higher classification, the higher classification will be applied.

7.3 Honours Degree Classification (previous version)

1. The previous Honours Degree Classification regulations may be applied to a student who first registered before 1st September 2014 and has not interrupted his or her studies. As explained in Section 7.2.2 of this Framework,

the Progression and Award Board may consider both the classification of Honours using the current regulations (as set out in Section 7.2 of this Framework) and the regulations in force on the date of the student's first registration (as set out below) and recommend the higher of the two possible classifications. However, in the great majority of cases the current regulations have proved to be more favourable.

2. Eligible students can obtain further details of the previous classification system by request to Registry Services.

7.4 Foundation Degree Classification

1. The credit-weighted mean of all module marks at Level 5, and the three best module marks at Level 4, will be presented to the Progression and Award Board as a whole number with any decimal below x.50 being rounded down and any decimal of x.50 or above being rounded up.
2. If exceptionally a student has acquired more than the credits required at Level 5, the Progression and Award Board will first take account of the marks in all compulsory modules for the award and title for which the student is registered, then the student's best performance in optional modules associated with that award and title, up to the total credit requirement. The Board will disregard all other marks.
3. The Progression and Award Board will condone modules in accordance with Section 6 of this Framework whether or not there are valid extenuating circumstances relating to their assessment, up to the maximum value of 20 credits.
4. The Progression and Award Board will recommend the classification calculated from the equally weighted mean of all Level 5 credits, and the three best module marks at Level 4, as follows:

70+ Foundation Degree with Distinction

60-69 Foundation Degree with Merit

5. Modules that are not assigned a numeric mark, e.g. pass/fail modules, do not count towards degree classification. Mean values will be calculated on the remaining credits *pro rata* and the Progression and Award Board will recommend a classification, following as closely as possible the formulae described in Sections 7.4.4 above.
6. Where the overall weighted average falls within 1% of a higher classification, the higher classification will be applied.

7.5 Masters Degree Classification

1. The credit-weighted mean of all module marks will be presented to the Progression and Award Board as a whole number with any decimal below x.50 being rounded down and any decimal of x.50 or above being rounded up.
2. If exceptionally a student has acquired more than the credits required for the award, the Progression and Award Board will first take account of the marks in all compulsory modules for the award and title for which the student is registered, then the student's best performance in optional modules associated with that award and title, up to the total credit requirement. The Board will disregard all other marks.
3. The Progression and Award Board will condone modules in accordance with Section 6 of this Framework, up to the maximum of value stated therein.
4. The Progression and Award Board will recommend the classification calculated from the equally weighted mean of all credits as follows:

70+ Masters Degree with Distinction

60-69 Masters Degree with Merit

50-59 Masters Degree Pass

5. If a student was admitted with credit, mean values will be calculated on the remaining credits *pro rata* and the Progression and Award Board will recommend the highest classification available, following the formula described in Section 7.5.4 above.
6. Modules that are not assigned a numeric mark, eg pass/fail modules, or are rated at levels other than Level 7, do not count towards degree classification. Mean values will be calculated on the remaining credits *pro rata* and the Progression and Award Board will recommend a classification, following as closely as possible the formula described in Section 7.5.4 above.
7. Where the overall weighted average falls within 1% of a higher classification, the higher classification will be applied.

7.6 Integrated Masters Degree Classification

The classification system applicable to Integrated Masters Degree awards will be determined by the student's point of exit. If a student exits with a Level 6 award (i.e. a Bachelor's Degree or Bachelor's Degree with Honours), then the undergraduate algorithm will apply as set out in Sections 7.2 and (where applicable) 7.3 of this Framework. If, however, a student exits with a Level 7 award (i.e. an Integrated Masters Degree) then the Masters Degree algorithm will apply, as set out in Section 7.5.1 of this Framework, and the classification will be determined by the credit-weighted mean of all module marks at Level 7 only.

7.7 Classification of other awards of the University

1. The Progression and Award Board will classify other academic awards of the University defined in the Regulations for Academic Awards as follows.

2. The credit-weighted mean of all module marks will be presented to the Progression and Award Board as a whole number with any decimal below x.50 being rounded down and any decimal of x.50 or above being rounded up.
3. If exceptionally a student has acquired more than the credits required for the award, the Progression and Award Board will first take account of the marks in all compulsory modules for the award and title for which the student is registered, then the student's best performance in optional modules associated with that award and title, up to the total credit requirement. The Board will disregard all other marks.
4. The Progression and Award Board will condone modules in accordance with Section 6 of this Framework whether or not there are valid extenuating circumstances relating to their assessment, up to the maximum of value stated therein.
5. The Progression and Award Board will recommend the classification calculated from the equally weighted mean of all credits as follows:

70+ with Distinction

60-69 with Merit

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8. REGULATIONS FOR ACADEMIC AWARDS

8.1 Authority to Confer Awards

1. Senate is responsible for conferment of academic awards on behalf of Plymouth Marjon University. Except for honorary degrees, an academic award is conferred only when Senate has confirmed the recommendation of the appropriate Progression and Award Board for the granting of that award. This is achieved when the University Secretary and Registrar, who is Secretary to Senate, signs the Progression and Award Board's recommendation for the award.
2. In the event that clarification of these Regulations is required to secure the conferment of an award within a specified time, the Vice-Chancellor, who is Chair of Senate, may interpret the Regulations on its behalf. Any such interpretation shall be reported to the next meeting of Senate.
3. The University will maintain a permanent record of all the academic awards it confers.
4. These regulations apply to all academic awards of the University wherever or however the teaching, learning and assessment takes place.
5. Credit is not in itself an academic award of the University and is not the subject of these regulations. Section 3 of this Framework includes the authority for the assignment of credit by Module Assessment Boards.
6. These regulations align with the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, August 2008, and the Higher Education Credit Framework for England: Guidance on Academic Credit Arrangements in Higher Education in England, August 2008.

7. Throughout these regulations, reference to a post holder shall include the post holder in person or any other person the University authorises to act in that capacity.

8.2 Named Awards

Each student of the University works towards a named award, normally of the University but may be registered for an award of another awarding body. The award is bound by the University's regulations and the relevant Programme Specification.

8.3 List of Awards

Level 4 awards

1. The University may confer the following Level 4 awards:
 - University Certificate
 - Certificate in Professional Studies
 - Certificate of Higher Education (Cert HE)
2. The award of Certificate in Professional Studies is linked only to programmes of study in the context of specific professional experience and designed to establish or build upon professional qualifications or registration.

Level 5 Awards

3. The University may confer the following Level 5 awards:
 - University Diploma
 - Diploma in Professional Studies

- Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE)
 - Foundation Degree
4. The award of Diploma in Professional Studies is linked only to programmes of study in the context of specific professional experience and designed to establish or build upon professional qualifications or registration.
 5. The Foundation Degree may be awarded as:
 - Foundation Degree Arts (FdA)
 - Foundation Degree Science (FdSc)
 6. The award of Foundation Degree Science (FdSc) is linked only to programmes in which studies are substantially based on science or mathematics and their applications.

Level 6 Awards

7. The University may confer the following Level 6 awards:
 - Bachelor's Degree
 - Bachelor's Degree with Honours
 - Graduate Certificate
 - Graduate Diploma
 - Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE)
 - Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) (International)
8. The Bachelor's Degree and the Bachelor's Degree with Honours may be awarded as:
 - Bachelor of Arts (BA)

- Bachelor of Education (BEd)
 - Bachelor of Education (International) (BEd International)
 - Bachelor of Science (BSc)
9. The award of Bachelor of Science (BSc) is linked only to programmes in which studies are substantially based on science or mathematics and their applications.
 10. The award of Bachelor of Education (BEd) is linked only to programmes of initial teacher training including a substantial element of teaching practice. Moreover, it is awarded only to students who have satisfied the Government's current requirements for the award of Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). This requirement must be recorded in the Programme Specification.
 11. The award of Bachelor of Education (International) (BEd International) is linked only to programmes of initial teacher training including a substantial element of teaching practice and where the award is taught wholly or in part overseas. This award does not carry UK Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) and does not entitle the holder to teach in maintained schools or non-maintained special schools in the UK.
 12. The award of Professional Graduate Certificate in Education is linked only to programmes of initial teacher training including a substantial element of teaching practice. The award of Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) (International) is linked only to programmes of initial teacher training including a substantial element of teaching practice and where the award is taught wholly or in part overseas. This award does not carry UK Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) and does not entitle the holder to teach in maintained schools or non-maintained special schools in the UK.

Level 7 Awards

13. The University may confer the following level 7 awards:

- Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE)
 - Postgraduate Certificate in Education (International) (PGCE International)
 - Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert)
 - Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip)
 - Master's Degree
 - Master's Degree (Integrated)
14. The award of Postgraduate Certificate in Education is linked only to programmes of initial teacher training including a substantial element of teaching practice. The award of Postgraduate Certificate in Education (International) (PGCE International) is linked only to programmes of initial teacher training including a substantial element of teaching practice and where the award is taught wholly or in part overseas. This award does not carry UK Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) and does not entitle the holder to teach in maintained schools or non-maintained special schools in the UK.
15. The Master's Degree (inclusive of Integrated) may be awarded as:
- Master of Arts (MA)
 - Master of Education (MEd)
 - Master of Science (MSc)
 - Master of Business Administration (MBA)
 - Master of Public Administration (MPA)
 - Master of Public Health (MPH)
 - Master of Research (MRes)
 - MSt
 - MSound

16. The award of Master of Education (MEd) is linked only to programmes of continuing educational professional development.
17. The award of Master of Science (MSc) is linked only to programmes in which studies are substantially based on science or mathematics and their applications.
18. The award of Master of Business Administration (MBA) shall be used for programmes that focus on the general principles and functions of management and the development of management skills. Students entering MBA programmes must have appropriate experience of managerial practice and should normally have at least 2 years of appropriate postgraduate work experience on admission.
19. The title Master of Public Administration (MPA) shall be used for programmes that focus on the general principles and functions of management and/or policy and administration in the public sector. Students entering MPA programmes must have appropriate experience of managerial practice and/or policy in the public sector and should normally have at least 2 years of appropriate postgraduate work experience on admission.
20. The title Master of Public Health (MPH) shall be used for programmes which take an interdisciplinary approach to areas related to public health. Students will be taught how to monitor, diagnose and regulate the health concerns of communities through public policies.
21. The Master of Research (MRes) is a taught postgraduate degree. The award of MRes shall be used to provide a structured research training programme which can act as a foundation for doctoral study or for a research career outside academia.
22. The award of MOst (Integrated Master's Degree) is a 4-year full time or 6-year part time pre-registration undergraduate and postgraduate degree, which is designed to develop a critical evaluation of the theory and practice of osteopathy. Recognised Qualification (RQ) status will be sought from the General Osteopathic Council (GOsC).

23. The award of MSound (Integrated Master's Degree) is linked only to programmes in which studies are based upon entry to the Games Industry with a combination of theoretical and practical knowledge at undergraduate level and technical, structural and strategic insight at postgraduate level. Programmes will incorporate both Level 6 and Level 7 work at Stage 3 of the undergraduate provision.

Honorary Awards

24. The University may confer any of its degree awards as an honorary degree. In addition, the following degrees may be conferred *honoris causa* in accordance with University Guidelines for the Award of Honorary Degrees:
- Master of Letters (MLitt)
 - Master of Music (MMus)

8.4 Standards of Awards

1. The University defines the standards of its awards in terms of the amount and the level of study undertaken, which builds upon the knowledge and skills expected of each student on commencement of their programme.
2. Except for the conferment of honorary awards, on completion of their studies, students are required to demonstrate outcomes in line with the qualification descriptors and the amount and level of study indicated in the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, August 2008, and the Higher Education Credit Framework for England: Guidance on Academic Credit Arrangements in Higher Education in England, August 2008.

3. The University's Senate ensures that programmes of study are designed so that students can demonstrate outcomes at the level appropriate for the awards to which they lead.

8.5 Entrance Requirements for Academic Awards

1. The General Entrance Requirement for a taught programme of study in the University is that an applicant has provided evidence of knowledge and skills to support the academic judgement that the applicant will succeed in his or her studies. The evidence required is likely to include the qualifications described herein or their equivalent.
2. The Programme Specification relating to a programme of study leading to an award of the University must state any additional entrance requirements for a specific programme.
3. Entry tariffs for each programme will be published on the University website.
4. The University will publish guidance for staff, students and applicants in its Admissions Policy.

8.6 Admission with Credit and Transfer between Programmes

1. In accordance with the University's Admissions Policy, evidence of prior certificated learning and/or prior experiential learning appropriate to the named award will allow a student to apply for admission to a programme of study with specific credit. The decision to allow admission with credit will exempt the student from specified whole modules the outcomes of which the student has already demonstrated. Students admitted by direct entry to any stage of a programme other than the beginning of its first stage are regarded as being admitted with credit, as endorsed at the appropriate Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) Board.

2. The University will make an academic judgement as to whether the learning is appropriate to the named award and which particular modules may be exempted. In doing so, the University will be bound by the General Entrance Requirement described in Section 8.5.1 of this Framework, by the limits imposed in this regulation and by the aims and outcomes of the programme as they are defined in the Programme Specification. The Admissions Officer will state any exempted modules in the formal offer letter to the applicant and inform the University Secretary and Registrar so the Student Record can be maintained. Documents and evidence relating to admission with credit will be retained in the student's file throughout his or her registration.
3. The total of specific certificated credit allowed to exempt the student from specified whole modules (as per Section 8.6.1 of this Framework) may not exceed the following limits:

Level 4

- University Certificate and Certificate of Professional Studies – zero.
- Certificate of Higher Education (Cert HE) – 60 credits.

Level 5

- University Diploma and Diploma of Professional Studies – zero.
- Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE) – 180 credits of which not more than 60 are at level 5.
- Graduate Certificate – zero.
- Graduate Diploma – 60 credits.
- Foundation Degree – 180 credits of which not more than 60 are at level 5.

Level 6

- Bachelor's Degree – 240 credits of which none may be higher than Level 5.

- Bachelor's Degree with Honours – 240 credits, of which no more than 60 may be at Level 6. Exceptionally, candidates with a certificated level 6 professional qualification may be admitted with a maximum of 300 credits, of which no more than 60 are at level 6.
- Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) – zero.

NB - in the case of top-up degrees, a similar requirement exists but this does not constitute 'advanced entry' *per se*. This is because Levels 4 and 5 are not offered on these specific programmes.

Level 7

- Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert) – zero.
 - Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) – zero.
 - Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip) – 60 credits.
 - Master's Degree – 90 credits.
4. Notwithstanding the overall limits on APL within this Framework, not more than 50% of the total credit requirement for an academic award of the University will be awarded on the basis of prior experiential learning alone. Where a proposal is made to increase this amount for all entrants to a programme, agreement from the University's Senate will be required. This must be sought at the point of programme approval and will not be applied retrospectively. This exemption will not be granted to individual applicants seeking entry to a programme.
 5. The approved Programme Specification for a named award may, exceptionally, specify higher or lower limits for admission with credit, for example at the request of an accrediting Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB), or may include in its Specific Entrance Requirements particular qualifications for which admission with credit will be permitted.
 6. Applications for the transfer of credit between University programmes will be considered on the basis of the equivalence of the curriculum studied. The

general principles in Section 8.6.2 of this Framework will apply, but subject to the student achieving the aims and outcomes of the programme, there will be no limit on the number or level of credits that may be transferred. The Programme Leader or Programme Area Leader will communicate his or her decision to the University Secretary and Registrar so that the Student Record can be maintained. Documents and evidence relating to the transfer of credit will be retained in the student's file throughout his or her registration and endorsed, where appropriate, at the APL Board.

7. Transfers of credit will normally be possible only at the defined stages of a programme or at a point when modules start or end.
8. The University will publish guidance for staff, students and applicants in its Admissions Policy.

8.7 Credit Requirements for Academic Awards

1. This regulation defines the minimum credit requirements for the recommendation of an award of the University to a student admitted in accordance with Section 8.5 of this Framework. However, the accumulation of credit at appropriate levels is a necessary but not sufficient requirement for the conferment of University awards.
2. The Programme Specification will state the modules that must or may be studied. It will also state any additional outcomes that are not assessed for the award of credit, but which a student must demonstrate before he or she can be considered for progression to the next stage and/or the award.
3. The Higher Education Credit Framework for England: Guidance on Academic Credit Arrangements in Higher Education in England, August 2008 describes the use of credit in UK higher education institutions and the definitions in these regulations have been set in line with that Framework.
4. The minimum credit requirements for awards of the University are as follows:

Level 4 Awards

- University Certificate – 60 credits at Level 4 or higher.
- Certificate of Professional Studies – 60 credits at Level 4 or higher.
- Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE) – 120 credits at Level 4 or higher.

Level 5 Awards

- University Diploma – 60 credits at Level 5 or higher.
- Diploma of Professional Studies – 60 credits at Level 5 or higher.
- Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE) – 240 credits at Levels 4 and 5 or higher, of which not more than 120 are at Level 4.
- Foundation Degree – 240 credits at Levels 4 and 5 or higher, of which not more than 120 are at Level 4.

Level 6 Awards

- Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) – 60 credits at Level 6 or higher.
- Graduate Certificate – 60 credits at Level 6 or higher.
- Graduate Diploma, Bachelor's Degree with Honours (top-up) – 120 credits at Level 6 or higher.
- Bachelor's Degree – 300 credits at Levels 4 and 5 and 6 or higher, of which not more than 120 are at Level 4 and at least 60 are at Level 6 or higher.

- Bachelor's Degree with Honours – 360 credits at Levels 4 and 5 and 6 or higher, of which not more than 120 are at Level 4 and at least 120 are at Level 6 or higher.

Level 7 Awards

- Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) – 60 credits at Level 7.
- Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert) – 60 credits at Level 7.
- Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip) – 120 credits at Level 7.
- Master's Degree – 180 credits at Level 7.
- Master's Degree (Integrated) – 180 credits at Level 7 with at least 120 credits at Stage 4 and 60 credits at Level 7 at Stage 3.

8.8 Maximum Period of Registration

1. The maximum period for registration for programmes of more than one year's duration is three years longer than the planned duration of the programme of study. However, for programmes of one year's duration, the maximum registration is three years for full-time students and five years for part-time students. Absolute maximum registration periods are as follows:-
 - Foundation Degree – 8 years
 - Bachelor's Degree (including with Honours) – 10 years
 - Master's Degree – 5 years
 - Master's Degree (Integrated) – 11 years
2. A student's registration for an award of the University will cease if two academic years elapse without the award of credit towards that award and the

Progression and Award Board will recommend any interim award for which the student may be qualified. For this purpose, an academic year will include any resit period and may be extended to allow for differences in the timing of Module Assessment Boards and Progression and Award Boards between years. Subject to Section 1 of this Framework, such a student may apply for admission with credit to that programme or another programme of the University.

8.9 Classification of Awards

1. The University will confer the Bachelor's Degree with Honours with one of the following classifications of honours:
 - First Class
 - Upper Second Class
 - Lower Second Class
 - Third Class
2. The University may confer all other Certificates, Diplomas and Degrees, except those conferred in **Honoris Causa** or **Aegrotat**, with the addition of one of the following classifications where applicable:
 - with Merit
 - with Distinction
3. The Progression and Award Board will use the method of classifying awards described in Section 7 of this Framework at the time it meets.

8.10 Conferment and Certification of Awards

1. A recommendation for conferment of an award of the University shall be confirmed when all the following conditions have been satisfied.
 - The student was a registered student on a programme of the University at the time of his or her assessment for an award.
 - The student has discharged all academic debt to the University (i.e. tuition fees).
 - Registry Services has confirmed that the student completed the programme leading to the award recommended.
 - The award has been recommended by the appropriate Progression and Award Board.
 - The recommendation for the award has been signed by the Chair of the Progression and Award Board confirming that all assessments have been carried out in accordance with the requirements of Senate.
2. The University will issue a certificate for each award it confers, on which will be recorded:
 - the name of the University
 - the name of the student as it appears on the list of recommendations submitted by the Progression and Award Board
 - the award and any classification
 - the title of the programme as approved by Senate
 - where appropriate, an endorsement that the programme was studied in association with an approved partner institution
 - any other approved endorsement

- the date of the Progression and Award Board's recommendation for the award
 - the signatures of the Chair and Secretary of Senate.
3. The University will issue to each student on completion of their studies a European Diploma Supplement which may include additional information.

8.11 Titles of Named Awards

The title will reflect accurately the field of study and should not mislead students or potential employers. An award may be untitled if the award itself sufficiently describes the content of the programme.

8.12 General Regulations relating to Awards of the University

Interim Awards

1. When a student withdraws from his or her programme of study, or a Progression and Award Board excludes her or him on academic grounds or determines that his or her maximum period of registration has expired, it will recommend the conferment of any interim award for which the student is qualified.
2. If the student subsequently uses that interim award within two years to gain admission with credit to the same programme or another programme leading to an equivalent award, then she or he must surrender that interim award.
3. The Postgraduate Certificate in Education is not an interim award and is not to be surrendered if it is used to gain admission with credit to a taught postgraduate programme of study.
4. A Foundation Degree is not an interim award and is not to be surrendered if it is used to gain admission with credit to an Honours Degree programme.

Aegrotat and Posthumous Awards

5. Where there is insufficient evidence to determine the class of an award but the Progression and Award Board is nevertheless satisfied that the student would have qualified for the award for which he or she was a candidate, had it not been for illness or other good cause, an unclassified Aegrotat award may be recommended.
6. Senate will not confer the Aegrotat award until the student, or a person authorised to act on behalf of the student, has signified acceptance of the Aegrotat award, or the maximum period of registration as defined in these regulations has elapsed.
7. An award may be conferred posthumously to a student who was a registered student at the time of death and satisfied the remaining general conditions for the conferment of the award as far as was practicable. If there is insufficient evidence to classify the award, the PAB will recommend an Aegrotat award be conferred posthumously.

Deprivation and withholding of award

8. In exceptional circumstances, on the recommendation of the relevant Progression and Award Board or a Student Misconduct Panel, Senate may deprive any person of any award conferred by the University. Such a recommendation may be made, for example, if the person was found to have been admitted to the University or recommended for the award on the basis of material misrepresentation or non-disclosure of facts, or following academic misconduct. In the case of an honorary graduate whose conduct in public life might harm the reputation of the University, the Vice-Chancellor may present a case to Senate for the annulment of the award.
9. The University will not permit a student who has undischarged liabilities to the University to attend any graduation ceremony. In addition, certification will be withheld if there are unpaid tuition fees.

Academic Dress

10. Graduands who attend a University graduation ceremony for the formal presentation of their academic award must wear Academic Dress, as defined by the University.

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9. FITNESS TO CONTINUE IN STUDY PROCEDURE

9.1 Introduction

1. This procedure will be used where concern about a student's mental or emotional well-being, health or behaviour is deemed to be sufficient that it could have an impact on the health and safety, welfare or ability to study of the student or other students or staff. A student is fit to continue in study if s/he is 'capable of living independently (with adequate support) whilst also being able to continue in study and not have such a negative impact on others in the study environment as to significantly impair the learning experience of others'.
2. Staff may initiate use of the procedure by raising a specific welfare concern, via the appropriate [form](#), with the Student Support Welfare Concern Group. The Student Welfare Concern process is primarily one of support, to ameliorate risk and prevent the deterioration of behaviour, including 'radicalisation' (i.e. being drawn into terrorism or extremist behaviour)¹. Staff should consult the University's [Mental and Emotional Well-being Guidelines](#) for more detailed advice on what signs to look for and what to do if a student is exhibiting concerning or disturbing behaviour. These [Guidelines](#) are located in the Student Section of the Staff Intranet.
3. Staff who are concerned about a student's health or behaviour should use this procedure. If there is a concern of this nature, it is appropriate to explore the student's health issues or pattern of behaviour as promptly as possible and agree supportive action.
4. A student 'giving cause for concern' is likely to be one who is behaving **out of character**. Members of University staff are expected to embrace and accept difference; a diverse range of backgrounds, abilities and disabilities will be represented. A student may therefore display behaviour that a casual observer

¹ See also Appendix 6 of the University's Policy on Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults.

may consider unusual but which is characteristic for that student. Therefore, signs to look for and which might give rise to the need to invoke the Fitness to Continue in Study procedures include but are not limited to:

- A number of third party reports about a student. These may be an indication that there is a need to address:
 - under-performance in academic work; frequent lateness/absence from lectures, missing deadlines or poor concentration;
 - lack of self-care; self-harm; suicidal thoughts; substance misuse;
 - unusually loud or aggressive behaviour or withdrawn or unusually quiet behaviour;
 - concern about how well a student may manage their learning experience on off-site activities (e.g. residential trips) within a module or programme, or year abroad study. Students may have been receiving support but staff may be concerned as to how well a student may cope in an unusual environment even when support issues have been addressed.
- 5. The Head of Student Support will keep relevant departments of the University fully informed of the outcome of any formal assessment of Fitness to Continue to Study, whilst keeping in mind the legitimate concerns around confidentiality, data protection and professional guidelines.
- 6. The procedure has two stages based on the perceived level of risk to the health and safety, welfare or ability of the student to continue in study or the risk to others posed by the health or behaviour of the student. Cause for concern can lead to the activation of the procedure at either of the stages as appropriate.
- 7. If staff are unsure about implementing this procedure, they should seek advice and discuss their concerns, anonymously and in general terms with a member of the Student Support Welfare Concern Group (i.e. the Student Counsellor, the Inclusion Co-ordinator or the Academic Information and Guidance Co-ordinator) or the Head of Student Support. The Group meets on a regular

basis to discuss student issues and concerns that have arisen within, or as referrals to, Student Support.

8. In situations in which a student on a professional programme is giving cause for concern, the Fitness to Practice procedures might also need to be invoked; in particular, this might apply with regard to the ability of a student to undertake or continue a placement. The Fitness to Continue in Study procedures will apply to all aspects of study that do not involve placement opportunities or similar contacts with external agencies. In situations where the application of Fitness to Continue in Study procedures results in the suspension of a student from their programme of study, this will apply to a student's entire programme of study necessarily including any placements. Thus in such cases, the suspension of the student will lead to the automatic suspension of any Fitness for Professional Practice procedures that are ongoing.

9.2 Stage One Procedure

1. Emerging concerns about an individual's health and safety and/or their effects on others, e.g. significant changes in appearance, attitude and/or behaviour, might require a response from the University and / or a referral to an external organisation (e.g. [Channel](#), [The Zone](#)), with the student's consent, where it is considered that external support may be more appropriate.
2. A member of staff with primary responsibility for a student's academic progress and/or well-being, such as a Personal Development Tutor, should in the first instance approach the student in a sympathetic and understanding way. Other staff should report their concerns to the Student Welfare Concern Group via studentsupport@marjon.ac.uk in order to make the approach.
3. The nature of the concerns should be clearly identified to the student and reported to the Student Support Welfare Concern Group, normally with the student's knowledge, using the Student Welfare Concern form. The student

concern will be brought to the next meeting of the Student Support Welfare Concern Group or, if appropriate, a special meeting will be convened.

4. The Group will consider the referral and nature of the concerns before deciding whether:
 - no further action should be taken; or
 - a member of the Student Support Welfare Concern Group should be appointed to liaise with the student and all staff concerned (by way of an informal meeting and/or other appropriate mechanisms) to offer and co-ordinate support and referrals, as appropriate: or
 - a case conference should be convened, on the grounds that there is evidence of persistent anti-social behaviour, withdrawal or extreme physical change / uncharacteristic episodes that have not been or are unlikely to be resolved without such a meeting.
5. If it is agreed that a case conference should be convened, the Head of Student Support will write to the student, detailing the arrangements made, and all relevant parties including the University Secretary and Registrar should be sent a copy of the letter.
6. The Head of Student Support (or nominee) will chair the meeting; a nominee of the appropriate Director of School (such as the Programme Leader or Programme Area Leader) will also attend, along with the Campus Services Manager and/or the Senior Resident Warden in cases where the student is a campus resident or where the behaviour occurred in a University residence. The student may choose to be accompanied by a friend, who should normally be a student of the University or a representative of the Student Union. Students with a disability also have the right to be accompanied by a support worker (e.g. sign language interpreter or mental health worker) as appropriate to their needs.
7. The meeting will seek to ascertain the student's perception of the issue/s identified. A clear, written statement from the member of staff calling the

meeting should be sent to the student and staff attending at least 48 hours before the meeting. During the meeting, it is important to reach agreement with the student with regard to addressing the concerns whilst outlining any consequences of (a) not keeping to the agreed actions and/or (b) continuing to give cause for concern. The Head of Student Support will write to the student, detailing the arrangements made, and all relevant parties including the University Secretary and Registrar will be sent a copy of the letter; the Head of Student Support is also responsible for keeping the Student Support Welfare Concern Group informed.

8. The student's case will continue to be monitored until all those involved agree that there is no continuing cause for concern. At this point, the Head of Student Support will write to the student to confirm that the procedures have come to an end, subject to their reactivation if this becomes appropriate. All relevant parties, including the University Secretary and Registrar, should be sent a copy of the letter.

9.3 Stage Two Procedure

1. Circumstances that cause ongoing concern or 'disturbing' behaviour considered to be a serious risk to health, safety or the good order or reputation of the University will cause Stage Two to be initiated, where they have not been or are unlikely to be resolved via Stage One.
2. In such instances, a member of the Student Welfare Concern Group will immediately convene a meeting of the Group, which will discuss and agree the next step and appoint a member to liaise with all concerned and make recommendations to the Head of Student Support as appropriate.
3. A formal meeting (the arrangements for which will be as for the Stage One Case Conference) will be called by the Head of Student Support (or nominee) to discuss the most appropriate course of action. The student will have the right either to represent themselves at the first part of this meeting, accompanied if desired, or to submit a written representation to the Head of

Student Support. Should the student fail to respond or fail to attend the case conference the case conference and formal adjudication may go ahead in their absence. The formal deliberations and recommendations will follow.

4. The formal meeting, chaired by the Head of Student Support (or nominee), will include representatives from the student's academic programme, the Marjon Student Union and the Student Support Welfare Concern Group. Their contribution, however, will be subject to Data Protection legislation and/or professional codes of confidentiality. The student may also choose to be accompanied by a friend, normally a member of the University, who has a right to be heard only at such points during the proceedings as the student has a right to be heard and has directed the 'friend' to speak on his or her behalf. The Head of Student Support will write to the student, detailing the arrangements made, and all relevant parties including the University Secretary and Registrar will be sent a copy of the letter.
5. In exceptional circumstances, and in the event of extreme unacceptable behaviour or serious risk to the student and/or other members of the University, students may be denied access to the University in whole or in part, including any accommodation they occupy, with immediate effect at the point of referral. This power will only be exercised, however, if the presence of that student on the campus would jeopardise the physical and/or mental well-being of any members of staff or of the student body, or otherwise harm the good order and discipline of the University. The Vice-Chancellor or (in the Vice-Chancellor's absence) the Deputy Vice-Chancellor or Pro-Vice Chancellor (Academic) will confirm this, on the recommendation of the Head of Student Support or nominee, either before or after the case conference takes place. Any denial of access under this provision will normally be reviewed at intervals of no more than one month and the Student Support Welfare Concern Group will continue to provide support, co-ordinated by the appointed member, to the student during this period.
6. In exceptional cases those involved in the case conference may conclude, on the basis of written evidence from an appropriately-qualified professional, that extreme unacceptable behaviour or serious risk to the student and/or other

members of the University, is likely to continue throughout the two-year period stipulated, in Section 8 of this Framework (the Regulations for Academic Awards), as the maximum period during which a student can remain registered without gaining credit. In such cases, or if the student's refusal to interrupt studies is likely to impair his or her ability to successfully complete their programme of study, they are empowered to recommend to the Vice-Chancellor or (in the Vice-Chancellor's absence) the Deputy Vice-Chancellor or Pro-Vice Chancellor (Academic), via the Head of Student Support, that he or she should be excluded permanently with immediate effect. The University Secretary and Registrar must also be notified immediately of any such recommendation.

7. The student's case will continue to be monitored until:
 - it is agreed by all those involved that there is no continuing cause for concern;
 - the student withdraws; or
 - the student's registration ceases, under Section 8 of this Framework (the University's Regulations for Academic Awards), on the basis that credit has not been obtained for a period of at least two years.

At this point, the Head of Student Support will write to the student to confirm that the procedures have come to an end, subject to their reactivation if this becomes appropriate. All relevant parties, including the University Secretary and Registrar, should be sent a copy of the letter.

9.4 Return to Study

1. Where the outcome of either of the above Stages is interruption, the student's appointed member of the Student Support Welfare Concern Group will continue to monitor the student's progress towards return and liaise with all parties as necessary. The student will be required to provide sufficient evidence, from an appropriate professional who has been working with the

student, to enable the Student Support Welfare Concern Group to recommend to the University Secretary and Registrar that the student is ready to return to study after interruption. In addition, the student may be required to agree a study support plan and/or obtain formal medical clearance, for example by way of an Occupational Health assessment. This is intended to respond to any ongoing support needs the student has as well as providing terms for the student's return. Should the student not adhere to the terms, or concerns re-emerge or escalate, proceedings can be re-instigated.

2. The appointed member of staff will be responsible for continued monitoring and co-ordinating support until the student no longer gives any cause for concern.
3. If, on the other hand, the evidence provided does not enable the Student Support Welfare Concern Group to recommend that the student is ready to return to study it will advise the University Secretary and Registrar of this and recommend a further period of interruption or withdrawal from the programme, stating the reasons for their decision. The Vice-Chancellor or (in the Vice-Chancellor's absence) the Deputy Vice-Chancellor or Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic) will confirm this, on the recommendation of the Head of Student Support or nominee.
4. The Head of Student Support will advise all relevant parties, including the University Secretary and Registrar, with regard to return to study after interruption and any related issues.

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10. FITNESS TO PRACTISE PROCEDURE

10.1 Introduction

1. Plymouth Marjon University offers a number of professionally-accredited programmes (as indicated in the relevant programme specifications). These programmes are practise-centred and are directed towards the achievement of professional competence. In such programmes academic success alone may not meet all of the professional requirements; for example, these might include ethical, moral or behaviour matters and in some situations the impact of certain physical and mental health conditions.
2. Upon graduation students must be able to contribute effectively to their chosen profession, and operate as competent professionals. This fitness to practise procedure aims to ensure that students are fit to practise whilst also helping to ensure user, client or pupil safety and public trust in the relevant profession.
3. Professionally-accredited programmes must also comply with the regulations and codes of professional conduct of their relevant controlling bodies, including the Department for Education's *Teachers' Standards* and those set by organisations known in the UK as Health and Social Care Regulators. The application of the procedures will be informed by any relevant Regulator-specific guidance.
4. In addition, students may undertake placement or work-based learning activities on any programme offered by the University, irrespective of its professional accreditation status. Whilst these programmes are not practise-centred and directed towards the achievement of professional competence *per se*, the University expects all students who are working in a professional setting to conduct themselves in an appropriately professional manner at all times. These procedures may be applicable to all students in respect of any module in which placement or work-based learning activities occur. However, their principal application is to professionally-accredited programmes.

5. These procedures are separate from the Student Misconduct Procedures (see Section 15 of this Framework) and will **only** be invoked in cases where a student's behaviour is giving cause for concern with regard to their fitness to practise. In addition, they will lapse once a decision to remove a student from a professionally-accredited programme has been made by an Assessment Board; this is because such a decision can then be challenged via the Academic Appeals procedure, which would be expected to take into account the same evidence base that would have been considered under these procedures. It may be appropriate, therefore, to defer any related Assessment Board decision until these procedures are complete.
6. If a student on a professionally-accredited programme is giving cause for concern, the Fitness to Study procedures might also need to be invoked. In such cases, the Fitness to Study procedures will apply to all aspects of study that do not involve placement opportunities or similar contacts with external agencies. However, if the application of Fitness for Study procedures results in the suspension of a student from their programme of study, this will apply to a student's entire programme of study including any placements; in such cases, the suspension of the student will lead to the automatic suspension of any Fitness to Practise procedures that are ongoing.
7. Where students are already in the workplace and attending a programme directly relating to their professional practise, either with or without the support of their employer, the University may contact employers where it has identified serious concerns about potential fitness to practise. This applies, in particular, with regard to the safety of users, clients or pupils, other members of the employer/placement provider and the student.
8. The University accepts that different standards of behaviour will normally be required of students at different stages of a programme. It recognises professional training as a place where exploration takes place and accepts that mistakes can, in fact, be made and addressed. However, it is also constantly vigilant in ensuring that all students on professionally accredited programmes are fit for practise in the relevant professional area; this involves

dealing promptly and appropriately with all cases in which fitness to practise is in doubt.

9. These procedures are conducted on the basis of 'the balance of probabilities', rather than the criteria of 'beyond reasonable doubt' which applies in criminal cases, as they are civil rather than criminal procedures.
10. Where a student submits a complaint during fitness to practise proceedings, it may be appropriate to pause the fitness to practise process while the complaint is being investigated. This will depend on the nature of the fitness to practise concerns and the nature of the complaint, and how they relate to one another.

10.2 Acceptance on Programmes

1. Before commencing a professionally-accredited programme, each student must undergo a Disclosure and Barring Service check. If a student would not fulfil the requirements of the relevant profession in this respect s/he would not be admitted to study for that profession or to practise it. The purpose of this DBS screening is to protect the public. The need to protect the public also applies to students throughout their programme and to professionals in practise. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that the DBS has been completed prior to commencing the programme of study.
2. In addition, trainee teachers must have the health and physical capacity to teach (as set out in the Education (Health Standards) (England) Regulations (2003)). The University will ensure that only those with the capacity to teach remain on the programme, using the guidance set out in Section 10.4 of this Framework.

10.3 Practise Placements

Practise in the care of users, clients or pupils is an essential part of professionally-accredited programmes. Students must be supervised by a named individual who holds effective and appropriate registration or other professional and academic qualifications and appropriate experience.

10.4 Professional Unsuitability

1. Sometimes, it becomes apparent that a student may not be suitable for the profession for which they are studying. The student, their tutors or a placement provider may be the first to notice this. Any student who has doubts about their suitability for the profession for which they are studying should discuss the situation informally with a tutor as soon as possible. Where a member of staff or placement provider feels that a student may be unsuitable the matter should be reported to the relevant member of staff at the University responsible for supporting students during the placement period. They should then discuss matters informally with the student. In some cases the issues of concern may be resolved by appropriate support and guidance. If the unsuitability is expected to be temporary, an interruption of study may be appropriate. If the matter cannot be resolved informally or if there is a risk to user, client or pupil care the formal procedure will need to be invoked.
2. Professional unsuitability can take various forms. The following are typical examples although this is not an exhaustive list:
 - Ongoing lack of motivation or interest and/or non-participation in learning activities (e.g. direct care, engagement in small group/problem-based learning, portfolio development, practise placements, presentations, timetabled academic sessions, academic or pastoral tutorials, clinical skills sessions);
 - Ongoing unwillingness or inability to accept guidance about involvement in the programme/professional practise;

- Ongoing inability to make/evidence professional judgements over and above personal value considerations as appropriate;
- Inconsistent, unreliable and/or inappropriate behaviour in the clinical, teaching, coaching and/or learning context, including inappropriate appearance/failure to follow applicable dress codes, poor timekeeping/attendance and inappropriate/excessive use of personal digital devices such as mobile phones;
- Emotional and/or inter-personal problems that adversely affect the clinical, teaching, coaching and/or learning context;
- Behaviour that adversely affects the operation of the clinical, teaching, coaching and/or learning context, including a failure to maintain appropriate boundaries with users, clients or pupils and/or patient confidentiality;
- Negligent misuse of social media in a placement or work-based learning context (please see the University's [Social Media Policy](#) for further guidance);
- Physical and/or Mental Health conditions, where the relevant adjustments and appropriate support would not prevent the student or others being at risk and/or where there has been a failure to seek help or engage with appropriate services;
- Competence issues; these would normally relate to whether the student was able to practise competently and safely by the progression point in each year of the programme. However, they could also stem from a holistic assessment of the student's capability, at the end of the programme, after relevant adjustments and appropriate support had been offered / provided.
- An inability, in a healthcare context, to recognise the duty of candour that applies to users or clients when something has gone wrong with their treatment or care, or has the potential to cause harm or distress.

- Health and safety breaches resulting from negligence, rather than malicious intent, on the part of the student.
- A failure to self-reflect, indicating a lack of insight on the student's part.
- Poor communication and/or language skills which affect the student's ability to practice.

10.5 Interim Measures

1. If there is evidence of a risk to user, client or pupil care at any point in these Procedures, the Programme Leader/Programme Area Leader should notify the Director of School. The Director of School may then authorise the immediate removal of a student from a current or prospective placement until this risk is no longer perceived to apply. Any such decision should be notified to the Registrar in writing. Under the terms of the Disclosure and Barring Scheme, which is administered by the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, the University is also required to notify the ISA of any such cases, as well as the outcome of its procedures; this duty is absolute, and overrides any concerns about data protection.
2. In addition some programmes (such as teacher training) will have support mechanisms that are activated prior to these procedures. These are as outlined in the relevant Programme Handbooks.

10.6 Acceptable Behaviour

The University recognises that involvement in the fitness to practise procedure can be a stressful experience for students. However, it also has a duty to ensure the safety and well-being of its staff and, for example, will not accept communication that is abusive, offensive or defamatory: aggressive, threatening, coercive or intimidating: and/or unreasonably persistent or

demanding. Such behaviour, therefore, might constitute an instance of student misconduct (see Section 15 of this Framework).

10.7 Stage One Procedure – Programme Level

1. If professional unsuitability is alleged, the placement supervisor/mentor, personal tutor, Programme Leader/Programme Area Leader or other appropriate member of academic staff will discuss the issue with the student and advise them in writing of any concerns that they have about his/her conduct, with the prior agreement of the Director of School. This would include any remaining concerns that have not been resolved informally. They will also supply him/her with any relevant documents/reports that support these allegations and direct him/her to appropriate sources of independent support (such as the Student Union and Student Support).
2. The Programme Leader/Programme Area Leader will convene and chair a meeting involving the student, his/her personal tutor and other appropriate members of academic staff. Where appropriate, the placement supervisor/mentor and a member of the institutional staff designated to support students during the placement period will also attend. At the meeting, the concerns and the student's progress will be discussed with a view to agreeing an action plan. The Programme Leader/Programme Area Leader will communicate the outcome of the meeting, and of any subsequent meeting held to review progress and/or to provide additional support, by letter to the student. This letter, which should normally be sent within five working days of the meeting, should be copied to the supervisor/mentor, personal tutor, Director of School, the University Secretary and Registrar, and/or other appropriate members of academic staff.
3. The student's case will continue to be monitored, normally by the originator of the Stage One procedures, until all those involved agree that there is no continuing cause for concern. At this point, the Director of School will write to the student to confirm that the procedures have come to an end, subject to

their reactivation if this becomes appropriate. All parties who were sent a copy of the letter referred to in the previous paragraph should also be sent a copy of the letter. If, on the other hand, the Programme Leader/Programme Area Leader cannot recommend that the student is ready to return to professional practise, they may recommend a further period of removal from professional practise to the Director of School, stating the reasons for their decision.

10.8 Stage Two Procedure - Investigation

1. If the matter is not resolved by this course of action, or if the matter is so serious that an immediate investigation is required the Director of School, on the advice of colleagues as appropriate, will initiate an investigation to be held as soon as reasonably possible. The investigator will be a member of academic staff from the same School, normally on another professionally-accredited programme, who has had no involvement with the student. The Director of School will inform the student that Stage Two has been initiated, and invite them to an interview which will proceed in the presence of the investigator and at least one other member of the School.
2. The investigator will collate and present the evidence that will determine whether or not a student's fitness to practise is impaired. The investigator will take into account any relevant accrediting body criteria as notified to them by the Programme Leader/Programme Area Leader.
3. Following the investigatory interview with the student (at which the allegations and any evidence which supports them will be made clear to the student) the investigator may meet with others, e.g. institutional placement staff, placement supervisor/mentor, witnesses to events and relevant professional practitioners. The investigator shall examine the circumstances of the alleged unsuitability from all perspectives, including that of the student, and maintain records of the investigation including records of complaints, notes of meetings held, interviews and statements.

4. When the investigation is complete, subject to any deferral that might be required to obtain a medical report, the investigator will submit a report to the Director of School. If the Director of School considers, in the light of the investigator's report, that the student's behaviour is insufficiently serious or persistent to call their fitness to practise into question at the present time, he or she may determine the following courses of action:
 - No further action;
 - To allow continued practise for a specified period, following which a further assessment will be made;
 - A formal warning to be placed on the student's record.
5. The resultant decision letter, which should normally be sent within five working days of the conclusion of the investigations, should be copied to the supervisor/mentor, personal tutor, Programme Leader/Programme Area Leader and/or other appropriate members of academic staff as well as the University Secretary and Registrar and the Academic Standards Officer. Any documents that have been explicitly taken into account in reaching a decision, where these have not been supplied by the student, should be supplied to the student at this point.

10.9 Stage Three Procedure – Fitness to Practise Panel

1. If the Director of School considers, in the light of the investigator's report, that the student's behaviour is serious or persistent enough to call their fitness to practise in question, the case will be referred to a Fitness to Practise Panel. The investigator, however, will not serve on the Panel. The Fitness to Practise Panel will consider evidence presented by the investigator and the student, with a view to deciding whether the student's fitness to practise is impaired; its decision will be taken with reference to the balance between user, client or pupil and public safety, the interests of the student and the need to maintain trust in the profession.

2. The Director of School will refer the matter accordingly to the Academic Standards Officer by way of a signed report consisting of the investigator's report, the associated evidence, and authorisation to proceed. On receiving such a report, the Academic Standards Officer will convene a Fitness to Practise Panel which shall comprise:

- A member of Senate (Chair) who has had no involvement with the student and who teaches or has taught on a professionally-accredited programme.
- A member of Senate or Programme Leader who has had no involvement with the student.
- A member of the Executive Committee of the Student Union, normally the President or Deputy President, who also has no involvement with the student.

In addition, where practicable and at the request of the Chair, the Panel may include up to two external advisors with professional expertise of the relevant discipline. They may either be academic colleagues at other institutions where the discipline is taught or professional colleagues with appropriate knowledge and experience. The advisors may attend the Panel hearing in person or provide written commentary on the basis of the available evidence.

The Academic Standards Officer, or a nominee, will act as Secretary to the Panel and proceedings may also be recorded, either electronically or by a minute taker, by mutual agreement. The Panel will not meet unless all members and the Secretary are present. The Academic Standards Officer will endeavour to ensure an adequate gender balance in the Panel.

3. The student shall be informed of the date of the meeting of the Panel not less than ten working days in advance; this deadline can only be reduced with the student's written consent. They will be invited to appear in person but, in exceptional circumstances, the Panel may also hear a case, at the discretion of the Chair advised by the Academic Standards Officer, in their absence. A Panel can be scheduled at any time in the calendar year; however, reasonable steps will be taken to schedule this at a point in the year when the student would normally be present in the University.

4. The student may be accompanied by a 'friend', to provide support and speak only when instructed to do so by the student. The name and status of any such 'friend', who cannot be an employee of the University, must normally be notified to the Academic Standards Officer no less than five working days in advance of the hearing. The University must grant its consent beforehand for the 'friend' to attend the meeting, but requests by students to attend a hearing in the company of an independent, knowledgeable and objective supporter from the relevant profession will normally be accepted. The student may also choose to call witnesses in his or her defence, including employees of the University where appropriate.
5. The Academic Standards Officer shall normally circulate the list of witnesses to be called, and all relevant documentation, to all parties not less than five working days before the meeting. Where this is not possible, the Academic Standards Officer will advise the student who will have the right to request a postponement. Additional papers supplied by or on behalf of the student will be circulated thereafter with the proviso that, in exceptional circumstances, the Panel may decide to adjourn a hearing in order to secure a written response. The documentation will include any relevant accrediting body criteria and/or institutional guidance, as notified to the investigator by the Programme Leader/Programme Area Leader.
6. The refusal or failure of a student to attend will not invalidate the Panel's proceedings, provided that he or she has been given sufficient notice as set out above. A Panel can be scheduled at any time in the calendar year; however, reasonable steps will be taken to schedule this at a point in the year when the student would normally be present in the University.
7. At the outset of the hearing the Chair of the Panel shall identify the issues to be determined, the persons entitled to attend the hearing and the documents supplied to the Panel. They will also ask the student to confirm that they have understood the procedures and have no concerns with regard to procedure.
8. The Director of School, or a nominee, will then outline the case against the student, before the Chair invites witnesses to give evidence. Members of the

Panel may question witnesses directly and the student, or his or her 'friend', may question the Director of School, or nominee, and the witnesses through the Chair.

9. The Chair shall then invite the student, or his or her 'friend', to respond. The Chair and other members of the Panel may question the student on the statement and/or the documentary evidence. Witnesses may question the student through the Chair.
10. At the conclusion, the Chair shall offer the student the opportunity of making a closing statement (which should not introduce new evidence), once the witnesses have left, before the Panel considers its decision in private. In all cases, the student shall have a right to make a final statement to the Panel before it considers its decision.
11. The possible outcomes of a fitness to practise hearing include the following:
 - Fitness to practise is not impaired and the student has no case to answer.
 - Whilst there is evidence of inappropriate conduct, fitness to practise is not currently impaired.
 - The student's fitness to practise is impaired and a sanction is appropriate.
12. The purpose of imposing a sanction is to protect users, clients or pupils and the public, to maintain trust in the profession and to ensure that students whose fitness to practise is impaired are dealt with effectively. Accordingly, if a sanction is imposed an appropriate rationale should be provided in the decision letter.
13. In order of severity, the sanctions available to the Panel include the following:
 - A formal warning to be placed on the student's record:
 - An undertaking on the part of the student, to be reviewed after an appropriate period of time:
 - Conditions on the student's continued participation in the programme:
 - Suspension from the programme:

- Removal from the programme, with the opportunity of transfer to an appropriate stage of an alternative programme (if available) at an appropriate time.
14. The resultant decision letter will be drafted by the Academic Standards Officer for the approval of the Chair. It shall also constitute the official record of the hearing including, where this is applicable, the reasons for imposing a specific penalty or penalties and an explanation as to why a lesser penalty was unsuitable
 15. The letter will normally be sent to the student within ten working days of the hearing and within thirty-five working days of the commencement of the Fitness to Practise Procedure at Stage One. If this is not possible, exceptionally, the student will be kept informed. Where practicable, the student will be given the opportunity to receive the letter by way of an interview at which at least two members of University staff are present..
 16. Where a decision has been taken to suspend or remove a student from a programme, it will take immediate effect. A decision to remove a student from a programme will be referred to the University Secretary and Registrar for implementation.
 17. If the University has a duty to inform the Independent Safeguarding Agency, the Department for Education, a designated Health and Social Care Regulator or any other Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body of the outcome of any Fitness to Practise proceedings, the decision letter will set out the notification arrangements. These will vary according to the context; for example, there may be a external requirement for educational institutions to report fitness to practise cases as part of their annual reports, along with details of individual students who have been subject to fitness to practise procedures.
 18. Where a a student is not removed from a programme their case will continue to be monitored, normally by the originator of the Stage One procedures, for the remainder of the academic year or until all those involved agree that there is no continuing cause for concern. At this point, the Director of School will write to the student to confirm that the procedures have come to an end,

subject to their reactivation if this becomes appropriate. All relevant parties should be sent a copy of the letter.

10.10 Right of appeal

1. At all stages of the process, a student has the right of appeal against the decision and/or the penalty imposed on any or all of the following grounds:
 - that the procedures were not followed properly;
 - that the decision maker(s) reached an unreasonable decision;
 - that the student has new material evidence that they were unable, for valid reasons, to provide earlier in the process;
 - that there was bias or reasonable perception of bias during the procedure;
 - that the action the provider has decided to take is disproportionate, or not permitted under the procedures.

Any such appeal must be submitted in writing to the Academic Standards Officer, within ten working days of the date of the letter communicating the decision.

2. The Academic Standards Officer will refer the appeal to a member of Senate or the Senior Management Team who has had no involvement with the student. The appeal stage will normally be concluded within fifteen working days of the receipt of the appeal; if a delay is envisaged, the appellant will be notified in writing before the end of the fifteen working day period. If valid grounds to proceed with the appeal are not found, the University's Fitness to Practise Procedures will have been exhausted and the Academic Standards Officer will advise the student accordingly.
3. If, however, it is found that there may be additional evidence that could not reasonably have been provided to the original hearing, or procedural irregularities, the Academic Standards Officer will reconvene the original

decision-making body with new membership of a similar status. This will always lead to an additional interview or hearing, under the procedures appropriate to the relevant Stage, which will not involve the participation of anyone involved in the original decision. In all such cases, the appeal process may lead to the confirmation, reduction or quashing of any sanction originally imposed, but not to an increased sanction.

4. The student will be notified in writing of the decision, normally within five working days of the hearing, in accordance with the procedures appropriate at the relevant stage. The decision letter will confirm that the University's Fitness to Practise Procedures have been exhausted.

10.11 Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education

1. If an appellant remains dissatisfied after the appropriate internal processes have been exhausted, they can ask the University to issue a Completion of Procedures letter in order for the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) to review their appeal.
2. The University must issue a Completion of Procedures letter in order for the OIA to review an appeal. A Completion of Procedures letter will be issued automatically where valid grounds for re-hearing the appeal are not found at the review stage.
3. All requests for review must be made to the OIA within twelve months of the date of issue of a Completion of Procedures letter. For full details please contact <http://www.oiahe.org.uk>.

10.12 Annual Report

Each year, the Academic Standards Officer submits a report on student casework to Senate, detailing (anonymously) general matters or issues arising

from recent Fitness to Practise cases. The Academic Standards Officer will also collate and present anonymised monitoring information with regard to Fitness to Practise Panel hearings to Senate on a regular basis. Senate will forward recommendations to other relevant bodies, such as the Board of Governors and the Student Experience Council, so that broad concerns can be shared and appropriate action taken.

10.13 Procedures at Partner Organisations

1. In accordance with the Good Practice Framework issued on behalf of the HE sector by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator and Plymouth Marjon University's Collaborative Provision Regulations and Procedures, all students registered for the University's awards have the ultimate right to complain to the University, irrespective of where they are studying. This right of complaint, however, is not absolute and is subject to the precise wording of the partnership agreement.
2. The partner organisation, accordingly, should ensure that clear information and guidance with regard to fitness to practise is made available to all students registered for the University's awards. This should include clear information about the sequence of processes involved and make clear the channels through which dissatisfied students can contact the University directly.
3. Once the internal procedures of the partner organisation have been fully exhausted, students who wish to take their case to the University for review should ask the Academic Standards Officer in writing if they are eligible to do so. Students may request a review of the decision on the following grounds only:
 - A review of the procedures followed at the formal stage;
 - A consideration of whether the outcome was reasonable in all the circumstances;

- New material evidence which the student was unable, for valid reasons, to provide earlier in the process.
4. If a case is eligible for review, the Academic Standards Officer will refer the challenge to a member of Senate or the Senior Management Team who has no involvement with the partnership. If the challenge is upheld the case will be referred back to the partner organisation to be reheard under its own procedures. Otherwise, the University will not refer the case back to the partner organisation to be reheard and the Academic Standards Officer will advise the student accordingly. This will include advice with regard to a student's further right of appeal to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA).

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Equality Impact Assessment Preliminary EIA conducted for SRF, December 2010. Updated Equality Analysis Form to be submitted.

11. ATTENDANCE, INTERRUPTION, WITHDRAWAL AND FEES

11.1 Attendance

1. Students registered on programmes of study are required:
 - to be in attendance throughout the academic session, subject to the specific requirements of their programme of study including scheduled breaks;
 - to participate fully in their studies;
 - to be present at lectures, seminars, tutorials and other assigned academic activities, including assessments;
 - to submit work when required;
 - to fulfil all other academic requirements of their programme.

Significant absences not only affect the performance of a student but also reduce the benefits of participation for others. The University may withdraw students from their programme if their participation has been unsatisfactory. If funding is terminated due to non-attendance, students may not receive support for future funding.

2. A Director of School, on the advice of the relevant Programme Leader or Programme Area Leader and other relevant institutional staff, may refuse a student access to placement, work experience or a practical activity if poor attendance at preparatory sessions meant that the student would be ill-prepared for the activity, or would be a Health and Safety risk to themselves or others. The relevant Programme Leader or Programme Area Leader will communicate further information on the requirements for both attendance and practical activity to students.
3. Satisfactory attendance is a basic condition of accepting public finance for higher education. The Student Loans Company and other relevant

Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies require the University to inform them promptly if a student fails to start a programme or ceases to attend.

4. The University is also required to notify UK Visas and Immigration if any student who does not have the right of abode in the UK fails to start a programme, ceases to attend, is absent due to illness for an extended period of time, or has a consistently poor record of attendance (for example, frequent unexplained absences).
5. If a Programme Leader or Programme Area Leader believes that a student has withdrawn from the University (or programme) or has ceased to attend, s/he must notify Registry Services in writing immediately. Registry Services will then contact the student in writing, allowing ten working days for a response, before terminating the student's registration.
6. Students who require a leave of absence due to legitimate medium to long term commitments (including maternity or paternity) should contact Student Support as soon as is practicable, to enable the relevant support to be put in place.
7. Students who are not enrolled on distance learning programmes are expected to reside either on the University campus, or within a practicable daily commuting distance of it. The University reserves the right to terminate a student's registration, in exceptional circumstances, if their relocation makes it impossible for them to travel to the campus and back in a single day.

11.2 Absence through illness

Students prevented by illness from taking part in their programme for more than seven successive days should ensure that a certificate signed by a medical practitioner is submitted to the Programme Leader or Programme Area Leader, or to a representative of Student Support who will forward the form to the Programme Leader or Programme Area Leader on the student's behalf. Please note that medical conditions that develop during a programme

may be subject to occupational health investigation to comply with professional body requirements.

11.3 Interruption of Studies

1. Circumstances sometimes arise which make it very difficult for students to continue with their studies. It may be possible to arrange an interruption of studies subject to the maximum period of registration permitted for the programme of study. Representatives of Student Support will advise on academic implications and financial consequences.
2. The Interruption Form is available on LearningSpace. Students must inform Registry Services of any changes to their registration via the approved form, and a failure to do so may make a student liable for repayment of loans.
3. The assessment results of students who interrupt or withdraw during the academic year will be handled as described in Section 11.6 of this Framework below. This will enable return at an agreed point in the subsequent academic year.
4. If a student has interrupted their studies for more than two years, the Progression and Award Board will normally exclude them from their programme in accordance with the University's Regulations for Academic Awards (see Section 8.8 of this Framework).
5. The unavailability of modules and/or the constraints imposed by the University timetable may affect the resumption of studies. A condition of students being permitted to interrupt their studies is that they must accept any such consequences. Poor academic progress is not an acceptable reason for interruption of studies and a student must not gain an assessment advantage through interruption of studies. Therefore, all assessment marks (including any zeros) for the period up to and including the date of interruption must stand. Students are subject to the regulations in force at the time of return, inclusive of any increase in tuition fee.

5. Students who interrupt on health grounds are required to provide evidence, from an independent professional, indicating that they are fit to resume prior to re-registration with the University. The names of students interrupting on health grounds will be forwarded to Student Support so that the appropriate support, including a decision on whether a Return to Study meeting is required, can be put in place.

11.4 Withdrawing from the University

1. Students who are considering withdrawing from the University should contact Student Support for advice in the first instance. If they decide to withdraw, they must complete the Withdrawal Form available from LearningSpace and ensure that books borrowed from the Library have been returned, accounts due have been settled and accommodation agreements properly terminated. The University will make every effort to recover debts and this may involve outside agencies.
2. If a student intends to transfer to another institution this should be indicated on the Withdrawal Form and relevant details provided. Failure to do this, under government guidelines, could jeopardise future funding as students may be deemed to have withdrawn from all study and funding may be terminated.
3. Students must notify Registry Services of the exact date of withdrawal in order to minimise liability for fees and other expenses due to the University and/or funding organisations such as the Student Loans Company. They must also ensure that the University is aware of any changes to their registration. Failure to inform Registry Services in writing via the approved form will mean that the student may be liable for repayment of loans.
4. The University asks students, by way of the withdrawal form, for their reasons for withdrawing. This is to ensure that it is providing the appropriate services and support. If a student responds, then the data will be used for this purpose and none other.

11.5 Tuition Fees

1. Unless other funding arrangements are in place, students are required to pay tuition fees for their programme of study, as set out in the appropriate fee schedule. Students must pay tuition fees as part of the registration process and/or provide proof of a tuition fee loan in the form of the authorising letter from the funding partnership.
2. Students cannot complete registration until payment arrangements have been made with the Finance Office. Moreover, **please note that any student who fails to pay tuition fees may be withdrawn from the course until all debt for the year is paid in full.**
3. Part-time and modular fees are pro-rata to the full-time fees according to the credit value of the modules.

11.6 Recording of module results for students who withdraw or interrupt

1. The cut-off dates, after which module results for students interrupting or withdrawing from their programme will be recorded, are posted on the University website.
2. A student who withdraws from or interrupts their programme of study may complete the first half of the teaching, up to the date shown in the relevant table, for a given module free of consequence – i.e. the module(s) will not form part of their profile for that year, and, if they return, the module(s) will be taken as an uncapped first attempt. However, after the relevant dates shown in the tables, a student will be deemed as having had an attempt at the module(s); subsequent attempts at the module(s) or their direct replacements will then be capped at the module pass mark and a charge levied.

11.7 Fees Policy for students who withdraw or interrupt

1. Students who withdraw prior to the end of their programme will be liable to a pro-rata fee payment for the time spent on their programme of study on the following basis. Dates based on the standard term dates are given below for indicative purposes only and are not exhaustive: in the case of non-standard entry, students who withdraw will be charged in accordance with the terms of the specific provision.
 - Students withdrawing for any reason before the end of the second week after the programme starts will be exempted from fees.
 - Students withdrawing for any reason between the end of the second week after the programme starts and the start of the University Easter Vacation will be charged a proportion of the course fee as set out in the fee schedule. This will be calculated *pro rata* on the number of teaching weeks before withdrawal based upon a 30-week teaching year.
 - Students who withdraw on or after the start of the University Easter Vacation will be charged the full year's fee and will not be entitled to any rebate.
 - In all of the above, any part of a week shall be charged as a full week calculated up to and including the following Friday.
 - In all of the above, pro-rata fees will be calculated on the basis of the academic year set out for the programme of study.
2. Students interrupting study during the year will be treated as withdrawing students (see above) for the purposes of tuition fee calculations.
3. Students returning to study after interruptions from the previous academic year(s) will be treated as continuing students for fee purposes, provided that they return to the same programme and in the same mode of study.

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12. ASSESSMENT PRACTICES

12.1 Introduction

1. Plymouth Marjon University has defined a range of assessment regulations and procedures that underpin the maintenance of standards within the University. These are detailed in Section 3 of this Framework. All its assessment and classification conventions are in the public domain, including the procedures of Module Assessment Boards (MABs), the procedures of Progression and Award Boards (PABs), the work of External Examiners and procedures relating to the disclosure of marks to students.

Assessment design, approval and review

2. Identifying appropriate assessment opportunities and criteria is important when designing a programme. The University has adopted programme design criteria, which are informed by the expectations and practices set out in the UK Quality Code For Higher Education; the University's approach to assessment is also aligned to the QAA advice and guidance relating to assessment.
3. Responsibility for the quality and standards of assessment lies with the designated members of academic staff. The University's Strategies and Policies provide the supportive framework.
4. Validation and review of programmes involves scrutiny of assessment processes. The Periodic Review and Validation Panels follow the guidelines on assessment published by the University. As good practice, during the review, the amount and type of assessment should be addressed.
5. The collection of feedback from students, through a number of routes, is an integral part of programme review. Informal feedback can occur through the Programme Leader or Programme Area Leader, through module tutors, and/or through Personal Development Tutors. Formal feedback is via mid-module and semester/term evaluations, which specifically ask for feedback on

assessment methods and loads. In addition Staff-Student Liaison Committees provide further opportunities for assessment issues to be addressed and, in addition, consider External Examiner reports. Student feedback is systematically referred into the University's quality mechanisms at the appropriate level.

Programme assessment procedures

6. University-wide procedures for the smooth running of programme assessments are adopted in order to ensure that there is internal consistency and external confidence in the University's standards. These are made explicit to staff and students in the relevant University documentation.

Responsibilities for supervising assessment and related procedures

7. At the programme level the day-to-day responsibility for assessment lies with module teams. Individual tutors are responsible for setting, marking, making arrangements for second marking / moderating work, recording provisional marks, and returning the work to students on time.
8. At the University level overall responsibility for assessment and related procedures lies with Senate. The University Secretary and Registrar is responsible for managing the administration of examination processes, assessment boards and accreditation of prior learning; the Academic Standards Officer manages appeals and complaints procedures within the Quality and Academic Standards Unit.
9. Registry Services will make arrangements for examinations and for timetabled in-class tests that directly contribute to final module marks, as defined by the University's Assessment Calendar. Module Leaders are also responsible for ensuring that any additional arrangements for students are adhered to for practical examinations and presentations.
10. Directors of School, Programme Leaders, Programme Area Leaders and External Examiners have significant responsibilities for maintaining standards

on particular programmes. These are defined in the University's **Annual Monitoring Procedures** and in Section 3 of this Framework.

12.2 Module assessment

All taught modules have a set content and form of assessment (including the weighting of elements of assessment). Students are provided with information relating to assessment, at the beginning of their module, by their programme teams through the programme/module information available on Learning Space. The content of this information conforms to the approved Programme Specification and Module Descriptors.

12.3 Programme assessment

1. Submission dates for all programme assignments are provided by programme teams at the start of each module, and are published in the programme/module information available on Learning Space. Changes to the published submission date may only be changed if:
 - there is good reason for doing so;
 - that doing so will not impact adversely on students' assessment schedules;
 - if all registered students have been informed in writing in advance.

In the case of taught postgraduate dissertations the submission date will normally be fixed by the Progression and Award Board and published in the relevant programme documentation.

2. Students will be given target word counts or equivalents for programme assessments. The instructions for the assessment should make the consequences of exceeding or failing to reach the word count clear before the student undertakes the assessment.

3. Word counts include footnotes, quotes and reference citations within the text of the work. The reference list, bibliography and appendices are excluded, as are captions for images, figures or tables.
4. Programme assessments must be submitted via the appropriate means in a format agreed by the Module Leader, normally via Turnitin. Submissions made in the absence of Turnitin must have the University's signed programme assessment report form or agreed equivalent attached. A receipt recording the student number and the exact time of submission will be issued or recorded via the electronic audit trail inherent to a Turnitin submission. Where required the receipt should be retained by the student as proof of submission until after publication of the results relating to that module.
5. The University may make and authorise third parties to make copies of any work submitted for assessment but only for the following purposes:
 - assessment of work;
 - comparison with databases of earlier answers or works or other previously available works to confirm that a student's work is original; and
 - addition to databases of works used to ensure that future works submitted at this institution and others do not contain content from a student's work.

The University will not make any more copies than are necessary for these purposes, will only use copies made for these purposes and will only retain such copies as remain necessary for those purposes.

6. The Programme Leader or Programme Area Leader will provide students with further details concerning the arrangements for the submission of programme assessments, including resit work, at the beginning of the academic session. The feedback is returned to students, either on the programme assessment report form or other agreed format. A copy of the feedback is also made available to the appropriate office.
7. The University requires marked work to be returned to students with feedback within twenty working days of the submission deadline. If there are reasons

beyond the marker's control why this will not be possible, the Module Leader must inform all students of the reason for the delay, and state the date by which students can expect to receive their returned programme assessments.

8. **N.B. - all marks remain provisional until confirmed by the relevant Module Assessment Board.**
9. Non-submission of programme assessments will be awarded a mark of zero (in accordance with the University generic grade descriptors, as set out in Section 12.6 of this Framework).

12.4 Penalties for Late Submission

1. Extensions to submission dates for programme assessments for individual students are not permitted, except where a student is registered with the Disability and Inclusion Advice Service in Student Support and there has been an approved request for flexibility with assessment deadlines. A student who is unable to meet a submission date for a programme assessment (and this includes an approved flexible submission date), must consult the Extenuating Circumstances procedures described in Section 4 of this Framework.
2. Programme assessments submitted after the published submission time and date, but within ten working days of that date, will be marked. The mark awarded will be subject to a reduction of ten marks per day (or part of a day, and by this anything received after the deadline will be considered to be a day late and so on), for a maximum of five working days or until the module pass mark has been reached: thereafter, programme assessments will be capped at the module pass mark if received within ten working days. In each case, the mark the work merits will also be shown on the programme assessment. This does not apply to resit work, which is already capped at the module pass mark. Resit work submitted after the deadline will receive a mark of zero.

3. Work submitted more than ten working days after the published submission date will be marked for formative purposes only, but a mark of zero will be awarded and recorded.
4. The assessment penalties described above may only be waived if the student has successfully applied for Extenuating Circumstances. Therefore the marks, as described above, remain until the Module Assessment Board meets and responds to the recommendations of the Extenuating Circumstances Panel.
5. If Extenuating Circumstances have been deemed valid the Module Assessment Board will be charged with taking the appropriate course of action. All actions will be recorded in the MAB minutes.
6. All work will receive written feedback, irrespective of whether or not the work can achieve its actual grade.
7. These late submission penalties apply only to standard numerically marked assessment. For all non-standard assessment, students should refer to the relevant Module Descriptor.

12.5 Marking Procedures

1. The University's approach to marking is shaped by the expectations, practices and guidance set out in the UK Quality Code For Higher Education, and by practice across the sector as communicated by its External Examiners.

Anonymous marking

2. The general marking practice for modules delivered at Level 5 or above is that for summative assessment, where possible, the identity of the student should be unknown to the marker(s). Modules delivered at Level 4 (and, where applicable, Level 3) are not subject to this requirement.
3. Every examination script for modules delivered at Level 5 or above should be marked anonymously.

4. Where possible, programme assessments for modules delivered at Level 5 or above will be marked anonymously. At the beginning of a module, students will be notified via programme and module information of those assessed activities for which their anonymity will be preserved and those for which it will not.

Double marking

5. Double marking is where two markers assess the work. The purpose of double marking is to ensure the accuracy and consistency of marking, and thus to verify the marks. A sample reflecting the range of marks and classifications should enable the two markers to ensure that they are marking consistently and accurately against assessment criteria and grade descriptors.
6. Student work for assessment is sample double marked internally and made available to external examiners. The minimum sample is the square root of n (where n is the number of students on the module), rounded up to the nearest whole number. Marks are usually only recorded on the work once the double marking process is complete.
7. Blind double marking is where the student work is independently assessed by two markers, neither of which is aware of any comments made or mark awarded by the other. Any assessment may be double blind marked on a discretionary basis, although this will typically apply to individual pieces of work constituting at least 75% of the assessment of modules which are greater than 20 credits and where the credits contribute to the final award. It is the expectation that all Level 6 and 7 dissertations and honours projects are double-marked.
8. Once double marking (including blind double marking) has taken place, first and second markers agree marks for each assessment. Ordinarily, if the marks are within a 5% tolerance band, the first marker's grade should be maintained. Where the double marking process reveals that markers are more than 5% apart, they will need to agree the grade for the individual piece of work. Should the double marking process result in marks falling outside the 5% tolerance band for all assessments within the sample then the entire

corpus of grades should be reconsidered, and moderated as necessary, to ensure that a consistent approach is maintained across all assessments on a module.

9. Exceptionally, where no agreement can be reached between first and second markers, a third party, who must have appropriate subject expertise and standing and be a member of the relevant School, should mark the work and adjudicate. The decisions of the third marker, which should be clearly recorded, are final. External Examiners must not be used to resolve marking disagreements.
10. Once double marking has taken place the full set of marks for the assessment can be confirmed. Marks can then be entered on the programme assessment report form and the work returned to the students. Similarly, marks for examinations can be recorded on the module marksheet. No assessments, or marks, should be returned to students unless the set of marks, as a whole, has been agreed.
11. Markers should maintain clear records which should be available to other markers and External Examiners, as necessary. However, whilst markers' records identify a mark and provide a justification for this judgement, the programme assessment report form should only present the final, agreed mark, and feedback which warrants the grade, so as to provide students with clear and helpful information.
12. Whilst markers may decide to record their justifications for examination marks, they are advised not to record them directly on examination scripts. This is because students have the right to request any comments written on scripts under data protection legislation which would, in turn, require the release of the scripts themselves.

Moderation

13. Module teams should review the patterns of the full range of marks for elements of assessments within a module. The review may consider the pattern of marks in relation to

- Other assignments
 - Previous history of the module
 - Other modules on this and other programmes
 - External norms
14. Action resulting from moderation could involve the rescaling of the entire assignment, if the pattern of marks is considered to be anomalous, or, if it displays no pattern at all, remarking of an entire assessment may be necessary. Moderation should be used in annual monitoring of modules and could be taken as evidence for the need for a modification to the learning, teaching and assessment of the module. Evidence of moderation should be kept and shared with the External Examiner

External examiners

15. In addition to internal double marking and moderation as described above, all student work for assessment is subject to sampling by the External Examiner appointed with responsibility for the relevant cognate group of modules. The size and nature of the sample and the rights and responsibilities of the External Examiner are described in the University's Handbook for External Examiners, but the External Examiner has the right of access to all assessed work at all FHEQ Levels.

12.6 Marking and Grading

1. The following scheme is used in all summative assessment for Honours degrees.

CLASS AND NUMERICAL EQUIVALENT

First class	70-100
Upper second	60-69
Lower second	50-59

Third 40-49

Fail 1-39

No work submitted 0

2. The following scheme is used in all summative assessment for undergraduate programmes other than Honours Degrees (or the related exit awards).

GRADE AND NUMERICAL EQUIVALENT

Distinction 70-100

Merit 60-69

Pass 40-59

Fail 1-39

No work submitted 0

3. The following scheme is used in all summative assessment in Masters level programmes.

GRADE AND NUMERICAL EQUIVALENT

Distinction 70-100

Merit 60-69

Pass 50-59

Fail 1-39

No work submitted 0

4. Unless an assignment has 'absolute' answers then the following grade points will apply within each classification band:

- High – threshold plus 8% (58%, 68% etc.)
- Medium – threshold plus 5% (55%, 65% etc.)

- Low – threshold plus 3% (53%, 63% etc.)
- Pass – threshold plus 0% (50%, 60% etc.)

The purpose of this is to enhance clarity and consistency across the marking process.

5. The University has developed Generic Grade Descriptors, which inform assessment across its programmes in a non-prescriptive manner. The Descriptors focus on the development of knowledge and understanding and intellectual skills. Each grade presented assumes that the lower level criteria have been achieved. Staff are encouraged to mark across the full range of grades.

LEVELS 4, 5 and 6

1st (90–100%). Outstanding work which:-

- demonstrates analytical and critical acumen
- demonstrates the ability to develop and sustain a personal judgement which is well grounded in leading current research
- demonstrates the ability to present a clear, structured, articulate and persuasive argument

1st (80–90%). Exceptional work which:-

- demonstrates thorough, critical understanding of current knowledge
- demonstrates a critical awareness of the principles and practices of the discipline

1st (70–79%). Excellent work which:-

- demonstrates a thorough and comprehensive understanding of the discipline
- shows evidence of extensive, relevant reading which includes up-to-date research
- reveals originality and insight
- demonstrates ability to critically evaluate complex ideas

2.1 (60–69%). Very good work which:-

- demonstrates a sound understanding of the discipline
- shows effective and competent use of literature
- demonstrates a clear understanding of complex ideas
- demonstrates the ability to analyse, interpret and organise information effectively
- demonstrates a wide reading base
- is a clear, concise and well-structured presentation

2.2 (50–59%). Good work which:-

- demonstrates a generally sound understanding of the discipline
- makes good use of relevant literature
- demonstrates ability to synthesise information into a clear, well-structured account / argument

3rd (40–49%). Fair work which:-

- demonstrates an understanding of the discipline
- shows evidence of relevant reading
- demonstrates ability to work towards tasks set, but more descriptive than analytical
- demonstrates the ability to organise work appropriately

Borderline fail (35-39%). Weak work which:-

- demonstrates a basic understanding of the discipline
- demonstrates some evidence of reading
- demonstrates evidence of broadly working towards the task(s) set

Weaknesses may be identified in one or more of the following:-

fragmentary coverage; errors and omissions; organisation and presentation; misconceptions; inclusion of irrelevant information; misinterpretation of instructions.

Fail (30-34%). Inadequate work which:-

- demonstrates a basic and partial understanding of the discipline
- some evidence of reading
- limited focus on task(s) set

Inadequacies may be identified in one or more of the following:-

assessment guidelines not followed; little engagement with the discipline; errors / omissions; poorly presented work.

Fail (20-29%). Poor work which:-

- demonstrates little understanding of the discipline

Poor work may be evidenced by one or more of the following:-

basic misunderstanding or misinterpretations; inability to meet the requirements of the assessment; poor organisation and presentation; inclusion of inappropriate material.

Fail (10-19%). Incompetent work which:-

- demonstrates very limited evidence of understanding of the discipline
- follows few or none of the tasks set

Incompetent work may be evidenced by one or more of the following:-

inclusion of irrelevant information; little evidence of engagement with the task; little evidence of engagement with the discipline.

Fail (1-9%). Unacceptable work which:-

- demonstrates minimal or no understanding of the discipline

Unacceptable work may be evidenced by one or more of the following:-

work which is not presented in an acceptable manner; work which is not written in an appropriate manner; work which does not evidence appropriate reading; no evidence of engagement with the discipline.

Fail (0%). Non-submission.

LEVEL 7 PROGRAMMES

Pass with Distinction (90-100%). Work which:-

- is thought-provoking, presenting challenging evidence-based insights and proposals
- work which is of publishable quality

Pass with Distinction (80-89%). Work which:-

- contributes to the knowledge base of the discipline
- effectively challenges theoretical frameworks
- displays methodological rigour
- demonstrates qualities consistent with publishable material

Pass with Distinction (70-79%). Work which:-

- demonstrates confident, detailed and informed knowledge of the discipline
- demonstrates qualities of self-critical, independent learning
- displays a confident / competent grasp of complex issues
- displays evidence of originality and innovation

Pass with Merit (60-69%). Work which:-

- demonstrates a secure and relevant knowledge base
- is analytical in style and critical in interpretation

- demonstrates a fluent style and uses an appropriate language

Pass (50-59%). Work which:-

- demonstrates a competent understanding of the discipline
- reveals knowledge and understanding of key issues
- addresses issues within a structured framework
- demonstrates analytical and critical acumen
- is well organized and presented

Condonable Fail (40-49%). Work which:-

- displays relevant knowledge of the discipline
- reveals some evidence of a systematic, coherent and analytical engagement with the discipline
- is generally competent but may be conceptually weak
- contains irrelevant materials

Fail (30-39%). Work which:-

- demonstrates limited understanding of the discipline
- reveals weaknesses / flaws in argument
- uses an insufficient range of sources
- has a poor style / structure

- is partially incomplete

Fail (20-29%). Work which:-

- displays insufficient engagement with or lack of understanding of the discipline
- shows limitations in the ability to formulate / sustain a clear argument
- does not meet the expectations of the task set

Fail (10-19%). Work which:-

- has serious errors and / or major omissions
- is poorly communicated / presented
- is incomplete / does not focus on the task set

Fail (1-9%). Work which:-

- unacceptable work which lacks evidence of understanding the discipline
- includes inappropriate / irrelevant information
- lacks any evidence of an appropriate reading base
- has marginal or no engagement with the task

Fail (0%). Non-submission.

6. Transcripts record the numerical marks obtained for modules (which are presented as whole numbers with any decimal below x.50 being rounded down and any decimal of x.50 or above being rounded up).

12.7 Criteria used in assessment

The assessment criteria of particular assignments are based on the University's generic level and grade descriptors. Students should be made aware of these criteria, and of any additional criteria upon which their work is being judged.

12.8 Examination Timetables

1. Registry Services arranges examinations, including the equivalent within a digital context, and produces the examination timetable. **Please note that the arrangements set out below may need to be varied in a digital context, and that appropriate advice will be issued if this is the case.**
2. Module Leaders are responsible for providing assessment details, including those for in-class tests, to Student Administration by the start of the semester. Students may have examinations on consecutive days and up to two examinations on one day. Students should make sure that they are punctual for University examinations in accordance with given instructions (see Section 12.11 of this Framework). Examination timetables are posted on LearningSpace and, where applicable, outside the examination room during the period of the examinations. The date of publication will normally be not later than:
 - the last week of November for Term 1 examinations
 - the second week of December for Semester A examinations
 - the first week of March for Term 2 examinations
 - the third week of April for Semester B examinations

- the final week of May for Term 3 examinations
 - the first week of August for resit examinations
2. The Schools are responsible for issuing examination papers, where applicable, in advance for seen examinations. Papers will be available from Student Administration fifteen working days before the date of the examination.

12.9 Additional examination arrangement requests

1. Additional examination arrangements are normally determined by the University's Disability and Inclusion Advice Service (DIAS) team.
2. If requests have not been made in sufficient time for the additional arrangement to be made, normally at least ten working days before the date of the examination, the student should not attempt the examination without the additional arrangements but make use of the Extenuating Circumstances procedure to seek a deferral. Additional Arrangements are put into place by Registry Services who notify students of the details of their examination.

12.10 General information on examinations

1. Candidates' names are not to be written, where applicable, on examination scripts or answer book covers.
2. It is important that candidates bring their library card or other photographic identification to all their examinations where physical attendance is required.
3. No unauthorised materials or equipment should be taken into Examinations Halls/Rooms.
4. Examinations begin at 9.30 am and at 2.15 pm unless otherwise stated on the Examination timetable. Students with Additional Arrangements will be informed of their adjusted start time. For examinations that include Reading

Time (RT) the module will be annotated by RT10 or RT05 on the Exam Timetable. The Reading Time must be taken before the published start time. The rubric on the examination paper will state exactly what the Reading Time can and cannot be used for and Module Leaders must ensure that students are aware of this information before the examination takes place.

5. The duration and the nature of the examination will be printed on the front of the examination paper, where applicable, and will be made known to students in programme and/or module handbooks.
6. Any property of value found in Examination Halls/Rooms at the end of an examination session will be handed in to the Main Reception.
7. Examination papers must be checked for clarity and accuracy prior to printing. Module Leaders are required to make themselves available for 15 minutes before and 15 minutes after their examination start time on their University telephone extension number or online.

12.11 Procedure before an examination

1. Students should present themselves, where physical attendance at the examination venue is required, no later than the published start time for the examination. Therefore, candidates are strongly advised to allow for delays caused by traffic, weather conditions etc. when planning their journey. Students arriving late may be admitted up to 15 minutes after the start of an examination but they will not be allowed additional time after the published end time of the examination. Students that arrive in excess of 15 minutes late will be recorded as not attending and a mark of zero recorded for the assessment.
2. Candidates should wait quietly outside the Examination Hall/Room so as not to disturb the concentration of candidates whose examinations are in progress. Candidates will be told when they can enter the Examination

Hall/Room. **Silence** must be observed on entry, whilst in the Examination Hall/Room and on leaving the Examination Hall/Room.

3. On no account should candidates occupy any seat other than the one with their examination number. Candidates having difficulty in finding their seat should ask one of the invigilators for assistance.
4. In the case of absence from an examination through ill-health or other serious reason, the candidate (or someone acting on their behalf) should claim extenuating circumstances in accordance with Section 4 of this Framework.

12.12 Procedure during examinations

1. Candidates will find their examination paper, an answer booklet and other requisite stationery on their desks when they enter the examination room. Candidates are not permitted to write until they are instructed to begin the examination. Cover sheets can be completed after the examination has ended. Candidates will be told when they can start the examination and the examination paper should not be opened before this instruction is given. Candidates should check that they have the correct examination paper and stationery before the examination commences.
2. For examinations of two hours or more, no candidate may leave during the first hour or the last thirty minutes of the session other than in exceptional circumstances, and may only do so with the permission of the invigilator. For examinations of less than two hours, candidates are not permitted to leave the Examination Hall/Room in the first half or the last quarter of the examination, including candidates who finish their examination early, other than in exceptional circumstances. A candidate who temporarily leaves the Examination Hall/Room for illness or other reason acceptable to the invigilator must be accompanied by a member of University staff.
3. Candidates who feel unwell during the examination and are, as a result, unable to continue, should inform an invigilator immediately. All answer books

(used and unused) will be collected from candidates before they are permitted to leave the Examination Hall/Room. A candidate who leaves an examination without the consent of an invigilator will not be permitted to resume the examination.

4. All work, including rough work, must be undertaken in the answer books provided. Additional sheets of paper, such as graph paper and drawings, must be clearly marked with the candidate's Student Registration Number and fixed to the relevant answer booklet. Answer booklets are to be given to the invigilator on request. Pages may not be removed from an answer booklet, nor may an answer book be removed from the examination room. Mathematical tables, charts, etc which may be provided for candidates' use are the property of the University, and may not be removed from the examination room.
5. No candidate may take into the examination room, or possess whilst in that room any books, notes or other material or equipment which has not been authorised, including any electronic equipment. No candidate may aid or attempt to aid another candidate, or obtain or attempt to obtain aid from another candidate. Any behaviour that may prejudice the performance of other candidates, in the view of the invigilator, is also considered to be academic misconduct. The procedures for dealing with academic misconduct and the penalties available are described in Section 14 of this Framework.
6. Any attempt by a candidate to invalidate the anonymity of their script may also be construed to be academic misconduct and dealt with under the procedures described in Section 14 of this Framework.
7. Candidates will be instructed, via the examination paper, via the rubric provided, as to the range of permissible aids (such as calculators). The programme team must ensure that the rubric on the examination paper is correct. The candidate must bring the calculator to the Examination Hall/Room and ensure that a spare battery is available. A candidate who brings into the examination a calculator other than a type specified in the examination rubric commits academic misconduct.

8. The use of mobile devices is not permitted during an examination. A student who uses a mobile device during an examination to send or receive any message or engage in information transfer commits academic misconduct.
9. Invigilators may inspect any materials or items in the Examination Hall/Room, or in any candidate's possession, at any time during the examination. They are also empowered to remove from any student suspected of cheating (as defined in Section 14 of this Framework) and confiscate all answer books on the desk at the time. The invigilator will issue a new book and the student may continue the examination by proceeding to the next question on the paper. The invigilator will report all cases of suspected academic misconduct at once to the University Secretary and Registrar. Any notes or similar unauthorised material or equipment introduced into the examination room by the candidate must be handed over to the invigilator who will attach them to their report.
10. Candidates are expected to provide a script that is clearly legible. They are also advised to attempt the full number of questions required, even if the answer to the last one is short or in note form.
11. If a candidate ignores the rubric on the examination paper and answers too many questions, all the questions will be marked and only the required number of answers with the highest marks will count towards the assessment.
12. Food and drink, other than a bottle of water, must not be brought into an examination room, where applicable, unless prior arrangements with Registry Services have been made.

12.13 Equipment and resources

1. Candidates will not normally be permitted to type their answers, in a physical examination, unless their confirmed Additional Arrangements permit use of a computer.
2. In open note and open book examinations candidates are allowed the use of notes or reference books. Tutors will inform candidates if they are permitted

the use of notes or books and the invigilators will be informed accordingly. Notes and/or reference material, as permissible aids, will also be noted in the question paper rubric. The use of dictionaries during examinations is *not* allowed, unless specified on the examination paper.

12.14 Procedure after examinations

1. At the end of the examination, candidates will be told to stop writing. Candidates should then remain seated until they have completed all the details required on the examination answer cover sheet, arranged the pages in order and fastened them together with any other material (e.g. graph paper), written their candidate number and question number at the top of each of the answer sheets, and ensured that all rough work is crossed out and attached to the answers. Candidates must make sure that all the relevant answers and supplementary papers are fastened together and attached to the answer cover sheet.
2. When everything is completed to their satisfaction, candidates should leave their scripts on the desks and exit the Examination Hall/Room as quietly and quickly as possible so arrangements can be made for the next set of examinations. All candidates, whether they leave early or when the examination has ended, must take their belongings and their litter with them. Candidates must not under any circumstances stand and wait at another candidate's desk. Except for the question paper and materials brought in by the candidate, examination materials, used or unused, must not be taken out of the Examination Hall/Room.

12.15 Absence from an examination

1. If a student is prevented by serious circumstances from attending any examination or part of any examination he or she must follow the extenuating circumstances procedure in Section 4 of this Framework.

2. In the absence of valid extenuating circumstances, a student who misses an assessment will be deemed to have failed it and a mark of zero will be awarded.

12.16 Notification of results

1. Registry Services notifies students of their confirmed marks, the decisions of Progression and Award Boards and the consequences of those decisions by way of a password protected page that may be accessed directly at www.marjon.ac.uk/students/resultsonline or via LearningSpace.
2. Provisional marks may also be issued in certain circumstances for **general guidance only**, but students are advised that significant changes may occur when the marks are finalised. These include the possibility of a provisional mark of 40% or more changing to a failing mark.
3. Registry Services will make a transcript of module marks available to students who have successfully completed their programme. Continuing students should discuss their marks with their Personal Development Tutors at the beginning of the next academic year.
4. The arrangements for publishing results of postgraduate taught programmes and in partner institutions will be as notified to students by the Programme Leader or Programme Area Leader or Personal Development Tutor in consultation with the University Secretary and Registrar, but will follow this procedure as closely as possible.
5. Students should access their results immediately and refer any queries to Registry Services within five working days of publication. They should also ensure that they are able to complete any resit work that has been set over the summer.

12.17 External Examiners

1. In common with all Higher Education institutions in the UK, the University appoints External Examiners.
2. Each Examiner considers student performance in a designated cluster of modules associated with one or more programmes. External Examiners help the University to ensure that justice is done to students, past present and future, that the standard of academic awards is maintained and that assessments are conducted in accordance with the approved regulations.
3. External Examiners submit written annual reports to the University. A Progression and Award Board (PAB) External Examiner, appointed from among the current External Examiners, is responsible for maintaining consistency of standards across programmes and award frameworks at the same level and for commenting on the University's Assessment Regulations and Procedures (see Section 3 of this Framework).
4. Details of the External Examiner arrangements applicable to a specific programme can be obtained by contacting the Academic Standards Officer in writing, although please also note that the University seeks to safeguard the impartiality of the External Examiner process at all times. For this reason, it regards any unauthorised attempt by a student to contact an External Examiner as gross misconduct, the possible penalties for which include expulsion.
5. Detailed information about the role of, and for, External Examiners is contained in the Handbook for External Examiners.

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13. SUBSTANTIAL ASSESSMENT TASKS

13.1 Introduction

Substantial assessment tasks include Dissertations, Honours Projects, Independent Study Modules and other modules of 30 credits or more, and typically have a single assessment point. They usually involve researching a topic which has been agreed and approved by a programme tutor. Detailed information on substantial assessment tasks will be found in Programme and Module information provided by the programme team.

13.2 Ethical Clearance

Students should seek ethical clearance for all assessment tasks which involve research, following the procedures used by researchers at the University as laid down in the University's Research Ethics Policy and Code of Conduct. Programme teams will make students aware of this, and support students through the process of seeking ethical clearance in accordance with the Policy.

13.3 Dissertations and Honours Projects

1. Dissertations and honours projects involve students working independently but with supervision provided by an appropriate tutor, at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Detailed guidance on what is required will be provided in the Programme and / or Module information.
2. Dissertations and honours projects are taken in the final stage of study (Level 6 for undergraduate dissertations; Level 7 for postgraduate dissertations). They are typically worth 40 credits or more and therefore cannot be considered for condonement (see Section 6 of this Framework).

3. Dissertations and honours projects must be an original piece of work and should not exceed the word limit as published in the information provided by the programme team.
4. The nature and timing of the undergraduate and postgraduate dissertations and honours projects will be subject to approval at programme level and will follow the University's published Assessments Calendar.

13.4 Dissertations and Honours Project Requirements

Students must follow the requirements specified by their programme team, including the nature and format required for the work. All sources consulted must be fully acknowledged throughout in accordance with the University's requirements. Further guidance is available from the Student Information Handbook.

13.5 Submission of Dissertations and Honours Projects

1. Students must follow the format for submission as detailed by their programme team and set out in the module information. The University normally retains a copy.
2. Please also refer to Section 4 of this Framework with regard to Extenuating Circumstances.

13.6 Feedback on Dissertations and Honours Projects

Feedback on the dissertation/honours project will be provided to the student in the normal timeframes, (please also refer to Section 12.3 of this Framework), and should be available no later than the day the final results are posted.

13.7 Library Dissertation and Honours Project Holdings

1. Selected dissertations/honours projects will be made available electronically via the Library, typically for a period of five years. This will not affect ownership or copyright of any original material contained within the dissertation/honours project.
2. Students who do not wish their dissertation/honours project to be made available, if selected, can opt out. They can do so either by completing the relevant section on the dissertation/honours project report form or by advising the Head of Library in writing at any time thereafter.

13.8 Undergraduate Independent Study Modules (ISM)

1. Undergraduate programmes may also have validated Independent Study Modules (ISMs). An ISM is a single module (20 credits) at Level 5 or 6 that enables students to negotiate a topic for independent study under the supervision of a tutor. An ISM is distinct from and cannot form part of the dissertation/honours project.
2. Details of what the module involves can be found in the relevant Programme and/or Module information. The content of ISMs must be drawn from the areas of study within, or related to, the student's programme of study.
3. The Programme Leader must approve registration for an ISM and the topic; submission dates for ISMs, where applicable, are notified in the relevant Programme and/or Module information.
4. An Independent Study Module (ISM) should not exceed 5,000 words or the equivalent student effort (where graphical, video, audio or other non-written material is involved). ISMs must be in addition to the minimum number of taught modules in any one year.

5. In order to ensure that students are equipped to meet the demands of independent study, they will not be permitted to undertake an ISM before the second semester at Diploma Level (Level 5). Students can only take one ISM across their entire programme of study.
6. Please also refer to Section 4 of this Framework with regard to Extenuating Circumstances.

13.9 Right to Copy

The University retains the right to copy any work submitted for assessment, be it in print or electronic format, in order to carry out its processes of assessment and for administrative purposes. Students cannot opt out of this arrangement.

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14. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY PROCEDURE

14.1 Academic Integrity

1. Academic Integrity relates to ethical practice in all areas of academic activity and professional conduct. Academic Integrity is guided by adherence to agreed principles that ensure fairness and create an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect. It assumes a level of honesty and rigour that enables academic activities - such as teaching, learning, assessment and publication - to function for the benefit of all members of the University and the external community.
2. Plymouth Marjon University seeks to foster an intellectual and ethical environment based on the principles of academic integrity. Students who embrace academic integrity understand that there are conventions of academic practice which both display and ensure academic integrity and that they must:
 - properly acknowledge and cite all use of the words, results or ideas of others.
 - properly acknowledge all those who have contributed to a piece of work.
 - ensure that all work submitted as his or her own as part of an assessment or other academic activity is produced without the aid of impermissible materials or impermissible collaboration.
 - ensure that data and results are obtained by ethical means and reported accurately without suppressing any results inconsistent with his or her interpretation or conclusions.
 - treat all other students in an ethical manner by neither facilitating academic dishonesty by others nor obstructing their academic progress.

It is necessary to follow these principles in order to ensure that:

- everyone is given credit for his or her ideas, words, results, and other academic activity.
 - all student work is fairly evaluated and no student has an inappropriate advantage over others.
 - each student's intellectual and professional development is ensured.
 - each student is supported towards a successful transition to graduate employment and future careers, as employers will expect graduates to have acquired the attitudes and behaviours that academic integrity demands.
 - the reputation of the University for integrity in its teaching and research is maintained and enhanced.
3. The acquisition of relevant study skills such as effective note-taking, ability to critically evaluate other writers' theories and concepts and presentation skills will help students to understand these conventions.
4. Failure to adhere to these principles leads to poor academic practice. It can also lead to an offence of academic misconduct and, in serious cases, can threaten the reputation of the University. Every member of the University community therefore has a responsibility for ensuring that the highest standards of academic integrity are upheld. The sanctions that will be applied where academic misconduct has been established, which can ultimately involve the cancellation of credit and/or expulsion, are set out below.

14.2 Academic Misconduct – general principles

1. The University recognises three particular areas of misconduct, as follows:
- Personal misconduct
 - Professional misconduct

- Academic misconduct

Academic Misconduct is defined in greater detail below. Personal and Professional Misconduct are the subject of separate procedures (see [Section 15 of this Framework](#)). A particular case of alleged misconduct might span more than one of these areas.

2. The University is committed to safeguarding the standard and integrity of its awards by the prevention and/or detection and punishment of academic misconduct in assessed work. Accordingly, students are expected to display academic integrity by not acting in any way which is likely to gain unfair academic advantage in an assessment; where a student acts in this way, an offence of academic misconduct has been committed. **Regardless of their intentions, any student who breaches these regulations will be considered to have committed academic misconduct.** Academic misconduct can be investigated at any time, and where it is proven after an award is made the University reserves the right to withdraw that award.
3. Cases of alleged academic misconduct are dealt with by way of a three-stage process. At each stage, additional and more severe penalties become available; the cancellation of credit becomes available at the third and final stage. In the case of repeated misconduct, the University reserves the right to escalate a case of misconduct to a subsequent stage.
4. Every student is assigned to a School and is accountable to the Director of that School. This will be the School in which the majority of a student's programme of study is based.
5. All students will be invited to attend the interviews associated with these procedures. Where attendance is not possible, then correspondence may be used in place of the interview and the procedures may be modified to reflect this, subject to the agreement of the Academic Standards Officer.
6. The University determines allegations of academic misconduct on the basis of the balance of probabilities, rather than the criteria of beyond reasonable doubt which applies in criminal cases.

14.3 Definitions of academic misconduct

Examples of behaviour that could be construed as academic misconduct (please note that these are not exhaustive) include:

- Plagiarism – when a student takes and uses as his or her own, the thoughts, writing, visual material or inventions of others without proper attribution (in contravention of the Guidance on Referencing and Scholarship).
- Self-plagiarism - this involves the submission of material already prepared for one assessment task for another such task. A piece of work may only be submitted for assessment once. Submitting the same piece of work twice (or a significant part thereof), will be regarded as an offence of 'self-plagiarism'. A student who intends to quote an excerpt from material that has already been submitted for another assessment task should seek the advice of the Module Leader before doing so; any such excerpt must be appropriately referenced (see Guidance on Referencing and Scholarship).
- Unauthorised collusion – when students join together to pass off as the work of one (or a specified number of people) the work of more than one (or a specified number of people). Where students are required to work in groups as part of an assessment, module tutors are expected to make it absolutely explicit in their instructions whether the students should produce common or individual work and the extent of permissible collaboration. Taking a copy of another student's work without their permission also amounts to unauthorised collusion, although sanctions will only apply in such cases to the student who copied the work.
- Cheating – when a student brings books, notes or other material or equipment of value in answering examination questions, or any means of accessing information of value, into the examination room which has not been explicitly authorised: fails to comply with the instructions given concerning conduct in examinations: or obtains an examination paper in advance of its authorised release. Similarly, any student who is authorised

to leave the examination room temporarily is not permitted to consult any source regarding the content of his/her examination whilst absent from the room.

- Contract cheating or 'ghosting' – when a student submits work that has been produced in whole or part by another person and/or organisation on their behalf. This may include the purchase of an assessment from an organisation or an individual or an unpaid contribution from a partner, friend or family member. A student who makes available work to another student (of the University or elsewhere) also commits this offence, whether in exchange for financial gain or otherwise
- Fabrication – when a student makes up data or other such content, manipulates content and/or tampers with documentation in order to gain an unfair academic advantage. Fabrication also occurs when a student falsely claims to have conducted experiments, observations, interviews or any form of research which s/he has not carried out.
- Impersonation – when a student enters into an arrangement with another person who fraudulently represents them at an examination or test. Please note that where an offence of impersonation takes place, both the impersonator (if a student of the University) and the student impersonated will be the subject of misconduct procedures.
- Unethical conduct – when a student fails to gain ethical approval where appropriate, coerces or bribes project participants and/or breaches confidentiality with regard to information on individuals gathered during data collection, or otherwise breaches ethical codes of practice that are applicable to the student's programme of study.

14.4 Allegations of academic misconduct

1. Alleged academic misconduct should always be investigated within the School in which the majority of a student's programme of study resides. Where it

involves a module located outside that School, appropriate subject-specialist advice should be sought where necessary although, normally, the decision as to whether or not an offence of academic misconduct has been committed can be taken independently of subject knowledge.

2. Staff should refer all cases of alleged misconduct for investigation to the appropriate responsible officer, which will be the Programme Leader/Programme Area Leader. Where a student's programme of study crosses two Schools, this will be the Programme Leader/Programme Area Leader in which the majority of a student's programme of study resides.

14.5 Academic Misconduct – Stage One procedures

1. Where assessment is undertaken at Level 5 or above, i.e. at a higher level than Year One of an honours degree or a foundation degree (see [Section 1.4 of this Framework](#)), the responsible officer must always refer the case to Stage Two (see Section 14.6 of this Framework).
2. Where assessment is undertaken at Level 4, i.e. in Year One of an honours degree or a foundation degree (see [Section 1.4 of this Framework](#)) and poor scholarship is identified as the most likely cause of academic misconduct, the responsible officer may permit the assignment to be resubmitted for an uncapped mark. This will normally follow an advisory meeting between the responsible officer and the student.
3. The responsible officer will communicate his or her decision to the student in writing, normally within five working days of the advisory meeting. As an assignment can be resubmitted for an uncapped mark at Stage One, there is no right of appeal at this stage.

14.6 Academic Misconduct – Stage Two procedures

1. In all cases where academic misconduct is suspected on assessment undertaken at Level 5 or above, and in cases where academic misconduct is suspected on assessment undertaken at Level 4 and the procedures set out in Section 14.5 of this Framework are considered insufficient, the responsible officer will forward the relevant Turnitin Similarity Report to the Director of School. Where it is suspected in an examination, the principal invigilator will prepare the report in association with at least one other invigilator or member of staff; the responsible officer should then counter-sign the report and pass it to the Director of School.
2. If the standard of assessed work is completely out of line with that of previous work and/or written in a style that raises credibility issues, thus raising the possibility that contract cheating or 'ghosting' has occurred, the evidence presented to the Director of School should consist of copies of other work submitted during the academic year in conjunction with the suspect piece/s of work.
3. In cases where, in the opinion of the Director of School, the potential severity of an offence of academic misconduct identified at Stage Two would justify suspension from the University, the cancellation of credit (covering one or more modules affected by serious academic misconduct) or expulsion, he or she shall refer the matter direct to Stage Three (on the prior advice of the Academic Standards Officer if appropriate), providing a written rationale in the context of his or her incident report.
4. Otherwise, he or she will impose the following penalties to the student by e-mail, which will attach the relevant supporting evidence:
 - re-submission of work free of academic misconduct to be assessed for a capped mark of 40% (or 50% for postgraduate work) for the assessment.
 - re-submission of work, free of academic misconduct, to be assessed for a capped mark of 0% in the relevant assessment element or, in more serious cases, for the module as a whole; credits will be awarded if a passing

standard of 40% (or 50% for postgraduate work) has been reached in the module overall.

5. In response to the e-mail from the Director of School, the student will have the right to request an interview in person with the Director of School within ten working days so that they can contest the decision and/or provide additional information. The e-mail must draw the attention of the student to this right, and the decision taken will remain provisional until this period of time has elapsed. It is distinct from the appeals procedure, which can only be invoked after a decision has been confirmed.
6. The Director of School will normally undertake such an interview in person, although in exceptional circumstances he or she may also nominate the Director of another School to undertake this task. The student should be informed of the date, time and place of the interview in writing at least five working days before the hearing and be provided with a copy of these Procedures. Where this deadline is not met, the hearing will only proceed, at the stated date and time, with the student's consent.
7. Should the student fail to attend the interview without good reason, the decision taken by the Director of School will be confirmed. Such an interview can be scheduled at any time in the calendar year, but reasonable steps will be taken to schedule it at a point in the year when the student would normally be present in the University.
8. The interview will proceed in the presence of at least one other member of the School or Academic Management Office (AMO), as well as any other witnesses as appropriate. The student may be accompanied by a 'friend', to provide support and speak only when instructed to do so by the student. The name and status of any such 'friend', who cannot be an employee of the University, must normally be notified to the AMO no less than five working days in advance of the hearing. The University must grant its consent beforehand for the 'friend' to attend the meeting.
9. The decision letter should normally be sent within five working days of the interview, or immediately if the student has decided not to request such an

interview by the deadline. It should be copied to the Academic Standards Officer so that a central record can be maintained.

10. All proven cases of academic misconduct at Stage Two shall be considered as failure of the module, normally requiring resubmission of the work to be undertaken at the normal time for resit work.

14.7 Academic Misconduct – Stage Three procedures

1. In cases where the severity of an offence of academic misconduct identified at Stage Two is potentially such as to justify suspension from the University, the cancellation of credit (covering one or more modules affected by gross academic misconduct) or expulsion, the Director of School or nominee will provide a written rationale for recommending a formal hearing at Stage Three of the Procedures to the University Secretary and Registrar.
2. In all cases the rationale must state the name(s) of the student(s) against whom the allegation is made and the nature of the alleged academic misconduct, with a brief description of it and all available evidence. It should also include the names of any witnesses who can support the allegation and the name and role of the person signing the report.
3. The University Secretary and Registrar will instruct the Academic Standards Officer to recruit an Investigator, who will be an academic member of Senate who has had no involvement with the student. The Investigator will review the report and seek additional evidence where he or she considers it necessary. In so doing, he or she may draw upon the support of the Academic Standards Officer where appropriate and proportionate.
4. The investigatory process might involve further interviews with the student, other students and other staff members at the Investigator's discretion. Additional Investigators may be appointed in exceptional circumstances, with one of the Investigators operating as the Principal Investigator for the purposes of reporting to the Panel Chair.

5. The University Secretary and Registrar will also instruct the Academic Standards Officer to convene an Academic Misconduct Panel. Once the Investigator's report is available, the Panel will meet. This Panel shall comprise:
 - An academic member of Senate (Chair) who has had no involvement with the student;
 - An academic member of Senate or a Programme Leader, who has had no involvement with the student;
 - A member of the Executive Committee of the Student Union, normally the President or Deputy President, who also has no involvement with the student.

The Academic Standards Officer, or a nominee, will act as Secretary to the Panel and proceedings may also be recorded, either electronically or by a minute taker, by mutual agreement. The Panel will not meet unless all members and the Secretary are present. The Academic Standards Officer will endeavour to ensure an adequate gender balance in the Panel.

6. The student shall be informed of the date of the meeting of the Panel not less than ten working days in advance; this deadline can only be reduced with the student's written consent. They will be invited to appear in person but, in exceptional circumstances, the Panel may also hear a case, at the discretion of the Chair advised by the Academic Standards Officer, in their absence. A Panel can be scheduled at any time in the calendar year; however, reasonable steps will be taken to schedule this at a point in the year when the student would normally be present in the University.
7. The student may be accompanied by a 'friend', to provide support and speak only when instructed to do so by the student. The name and status of any such 'friend', who cannot be an employee of the University, must normally be notified to the Academic Standards Officer no less than five working days in advance of the hearing. The University must grant its consent beforehand for the 'friend' to attend the meeting. The student may also choose to call

witnesses in his or her defence, including employees of the University where appropriate.

8. The Academic Standards Officer shall normally circulate the list of witnesses to be called, and all relevant documentation, to all parties not less than five working days before the meeting. Where this is not possible, the Academic Standards Officer will advise the student who will have the right to request a postponement. Additional papers supplied by or on behalf of the student will be circulated thereafter with the proviso that, in exceptional circumstances, the Panel may decide to adjourn a hearing in order to secure a written response.
9. The refusal or failure of a student to attend will not invalidate the Panel's proceedings, provided that he or she has been given sufficient notice as set out above. A Panel can be scheduled at any time in the calendar year; however, reasonable steps will be taken to schedule this at a point in the year when the student would normally be present in the University.
10. At the outset of the hearing the Chair of the Panel shall identify the issues to be determined, the persons entitled to attend the hearing and the documents supplied to the Panel. They will also ask the student to confirm that they have understood the procedures and have no concerns with regard to procedure.
11. The author of the incident report, or a nominee, will then outline the case against the student, before the Chair invites witnesses to give evidence. Members of the Panel may question witnesses directly and the student, or his or her 'friend', may question the author of the incident report (or nominee) and the witnesses through the Chair.
12. The Chair shall then invite the student, or his or her 'friend', to respond. The Chair and other members of the Panel may question the student on the statement and/or the documentary evidence. Witnesses may question the student through the Chair.
13. At the conclusion, the Chair shall offer the student the opportunity of making a closing statement (which should not introduce new evidence), once the witnesses have left, before the Panel considers its decision in private. In all

cases, the student shall have a right to make a final statement to the Panel before it considers its decision.

14. In addition to the penalties available at Stages One and Two, the Panel may impose any or all of the following penalties:
 - suspension from the University, for a maximum period of one academic session;
 - the cancellation of credit (covering one or more modules) with or without the possibility to retake the modules for a capped or uncapped module mark as determined by the Panel;
 - expulsion from the University (actual or suspended).
15. The resultant Stage Three decision letter will be drafted by the Academic Standards Officer for the approval of the Chair. It shall also constitute the official record of the hearing including, where this is applicable, the reasons for imposing a specific penalty or penalties and an explanation as to why a lesser penalty was unsuitable.
16. The letter will normally be sent to the student within ten working days of the hearing and within forty working days of the commencement of the Academic Integrity Procedure. If this is not possible, exceptionally, the student will be kept informed. Where practicable, the student will be given the opportunity to receive the letter by way of an interview at which at least two members of University staff are present. Where a decision has been taken to suspend or expel a student, it will take immediate effect.
17. If the University intends to inform the Independent Safeguarding Agency, the Department for Education or any other Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body of the outcome of any misconduct proceedings, it will include notification of that decision within the decision letter.

14.8 Right of appeal

1. At Stages Two and Three of the process, a student has the right of appeal against the decision and/or the penalty imposed on any or all of the following grounds:
 - That the procedures were not followed properly;
 - That the decision maker(s) reached an unreasonable decision;
 - That the student has new material evidence that they were unable, for valid reasons, to provide earlier in the process;
 - That there is bias or reasonable perception of bias during the procedure;
 - That the penalty imposed was disproportionate, or not permitted under the procedures.

Any such appeal must be submitted in writing to the Academic Standards Officer, within ten working days of the date of the letter communicating the decision.

2. The Academic Standards Officer will refer the appeal to an academic member of Senate who has had no involvement with the student for consideration. The appeal stage will normally be concluded within fifteen working days of the receipt of the appeal; if a delay is envisaged, the appellant will be notified in writing before the end of the fifteen working day period.
3. If valid grounds to proceed with the appeal are not found, the University's Academic Integrity Procedure will have been exhausted and the Academic Standards Officer will advise the student accordingly.
4. If, however, it is found that there may be additional evidence that could not reasonably have been provided to the original hearing, or procedural irregularities, the Academic Standards Officer will reconvene the original decision-making body with new membership of a similar status. This will always lead to an additional interview or hearing, under the procedures

appropriate to the relevant Stage, which will not involve the participation of anyone involved in the original decision. In all such cases, the appeal process may lead to the confirmation, reduction or quashing of the penalty originally imposed, but not to an increased penalty. This re-hearing will be final and there will be no further right of appeal thereafter.

5. The student will be notified in writing of the decision, normally within five working days of the hearing, in accordance with the procedures appropriate at the relevant stage. The decision letter will confirm that the University's Academic Integrity Procedure has been exhausted.

14.9 Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education

1. If a student remains dissatisfied after the appropriate internal processes have been exhausted, they can ask the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) to review their case. For full details please contact <http://www.oiahe.org.uk>.
2. The University must issue a Completion of Procedures letter in order for the OIA to review a case of academic misconduct. A Completion of Procedures letter will be issued automatically where valid grounds for re-hearing the case are not found at the review stage and otherwise on request; however, where a Completion of Procedures letter is issued before the review stage has been conducted the letter will make it clear that the student has not completed the University's internal processes. All requests for review must be made to the OIA within twelve months of the date of issue of a Completion of Procedures letter.

14.10 Annual Report

Each year, the Academic Standards Officer submits a report on student casework to Senate, detailing (anonymously) general matters or issues arising

from recent academic misconduct cases. The Academic Standards Officer will also collate and present anonymised monitoring information with regard to Student Misconduct Panel hearings to Senate on a regular basis. Senate will forward recommendations to other relevant bodies, such as the Board of Governors and the Student Experience Council, so that broad concerns can be shared and appropriate action taken.

14.11 Procedures at Partner Organisations

1. In accordance with the expectations set out in the UK Quality Code For Higher Education and the University's Collaborative Provision Regulations and Procedures, all students registered for the University's awards have the ultimate right to complain to the University, irrespective of where they are studying. This right of complaint, however, is not absolute and is subject to the precise wording of the partnership agreement.
2. The partner organisation, accordingly, should ensure that clear information and guidance with regard to academic misconduct is made available to all students registered for the University's awards. This should include clear information about the sequence of processes involved and make clear the channels through which dissatisfied students can contact the University directly.
3. Once the internal procedures of the partner organisation have been fully exhausted, students who wish to take their case to the University for review should ask the Academic Standards Officer in writing if they are eligible to do so. Students may request a review of the decision on the following grounds only:
 - That the procedures were not followed properly;
 - That the decision maker(s) reached an unreasonable decision;
 - That the student has new material evidence that they were unable, for valid reasons, to provide earlier in the process;

- That there is bias or reasonable perception of bias during the procedure;
 - That the penalty imposed was disproportionate, or not permitted under the procedures.
4. If a case is eligible for review, the Academic Standards Officer will refer the challenge to an academic member of Senate who has no involvement with the partnership. If the challenge is upheld, the case will be referred back to the partner organisation to be reheard under its own procedures. Otherwise, the University will not refer the case back to the partner organisation to be reheard and the Academic Standards Officer will advise the student accordingly. This will include advice with regard to a student's further right of appeal to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA).

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15. STUDENT MISCONDUCT PROCEDURE

15.1 Introduction

1. Plymouth Marjon University is committed to upholding the highest standards of behaviour in an atmosphere conducive to learning, and in accordance with its Values. Students are expected to conduct themselves in ways which ensure that this is the case. These procedures provide a mechanism for dealing with conduct which falls short of what is acceptable (hereafter referred to as 'misconduct') and harms the good order and discipline of the University in so doing. They operate in the context of the University's general and specific rules, regulations, policies and strategies.
2. Please note that the University's interest in misconduct is not limited to the time spent on its premises and that, therefore, students are deemed to be members of the University at all times and in all media, including electronic transmission of information and publishing to the Internet.
3. The University recognises three particular areas of misconduct, as follows:
 - General misconduct
 - Programme-specific misconduct
 - Academic misconduct

The Student Misconduct Procedure covers general and programme-specific misconduct. Academic misconduct is covered in the University's Academic Integrity Procedure, which constitutes Section 14 of this Framework. A particular case of alleged misconduct might span more than one of these areas.

4. Cases of alleged general and programme-specific misconduct are dealt with by way of a three-stage process. The first stage focusses on supporting students to address their behaviour. The second stage introduces a range of penalties; the most serious penalties of suspension and expulsion become available at the third and final stage. In the case of repeated misconduct, the

University reserves the right to escalate a case of misconduct to a subsequent stage.

5. These Procedures only apply to students. Any student seeking to make an allegation of inappropriate conduct against an employee of the University should pursue the allegation initially with the Director of People and Organisational Development (see Section 17.2.5 of this Framework).

15.2 Examples of Misconduct

1. Examples of unacceptable behaviour which involve a potential offence of general misconduct include:
 - Physical aggression (whether or not this results in physical injury).
 - Verbal aggression (to include all forms of communication including face-to-face and telephone conversations, letters, e-mails, social media and all other forms of electronic media). Please see the University's Social Media Policy for further guidance.
 - Threatening behaviour.
 - Harassment (conduct towards others which is perceived as a negative act and which is unwanted, offensive, worrying, stressful or intimidating to the recipient: see Section 15.4 of this Framework for a fuller definition).
 - Anti-social, disruptive and/or offensive behaviour (including drunken behaviour and/or excessive noise), even where there is no evidence of any deliberate intention to cause harassment or inconvenience.
 - Theft or deception, including the use of forged, falsified or fraudulent documentation to gain an advantage.
 - Involvement with illegal drugs, either as a consumer and/or supplier.

- Bringing the University or its staff or students into disrepute with partner organisations and/or the wider community or via social media. Please see the University's Social Media Policy for further guidance.
- Harming or attempting to harm the good order and discipline of the University.
- Compromising the safety of and/or wellbeing of staff, other students, or visitors.
- Damage to University property or the property of others.
- Misuse of computing or University network facilities.
- Misuse of the University's fire-fighting or other safety equipment.
- Unauthorised recording of any University-related activity, event or meeting.
- A persistent refusal to pay a fine.
- Infringements of a Tenancy Agreement to reside on the campus not covered by the above.

2. Examples of behaviour that could be construed as programme-specific misconduct, in addition to the examples given above, are as follows:

- Behaviour that would bring the programme or associated profession (if applicable) into disrepute.
- Inappropriate behaviour towards staff and/or students in a programme-specific context (including, but not confined to, the examples set out in Section 15.2.2 of this Framework).
- Inappropriate behaviour on placement or in work-based learning activities including:
 - abuse (physical, sexual or emotional);

- any action or omission on placement that may place a client's / pupil's safety at risk;
 - aggressive or threatening behaviour;
 - alcohol or drug abuse;
 - breach of confidentiality (except under the provisions of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998);
 - behaviour that indicates a lack of honesty and trustworthiness, e.g. misrepresentation of qualifications at the time of admission, forging of documents or signatures;
 - acceptance of gifts, hospitality and other considerations, apart from small tokens of appreciation, or allowing any gift to influence the quality of care provided to the donor or to others;
 - malicious or wilful damage to practice placement premises;
 - unjustified refusal to carry out a reasonable and lawful instruction;
 - failure to respect clients as individuals and/or failure to protect the interests and dignity of clients irrespective of gender, age, race, ability, sexuality, economic status, lifestyle, culture, religion or of any other irrelevant distinction;
 - forming an inappropriate relationship with a client or acting in an inappropriate way with or towards a client.
- Malicious or wilful misuse of social media in a programme-specific context (please see the University's [Social Media Policy](#) for further guidance).
 - Unauthorised contact with an External Examiner or external professionals involved with a student's programme of study.
 - Disruption of an examination or other formal assessment.

- Unauthorised recording of any programme-specific activity, event or meeting.
3. Please note that these are not exhaustive. Moreover, specific instances of misconduct might combine two or more of these examples.
 4. Issues of professional unsuitability, where these do not involve allegations of misconduct, are dealt with by way of separate Fitness to Practice procedures (see Section 10 of this Framework).

15.3 Student Misconduct - Interim Measures

1. In exceptional circumstances, students charged with misconduct may be denied access to the University in whole or in part, including any accommodation they occupy, with immediate effect. This will take account of students' rights under the legislation protecting tenants and licensees and suitable alternative accommodation will be provided if the denial of access is likely to lead to hardship.
2. This power will only be exercised, however if the Vice-Chancellor (or, in the Vice-Chancellor's absence, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor or Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic)) decides, on the joint recommendation of the Head of Student Support or nominee and University Secretary and Registrar, that the presence of that student on the campus would jeopardise the physical and/or mental well-being of any members of staff or of the student body, or otherwise harm the good order and discipline of the University.
3. Denial of access will normally apply where a student has been charged with a major criminal offence (i.e. an offence for which a custodial sentence is possible) relating to the alleged misconduct. Any denial of access, under this provision, will automatically cease to apply when a decision letter relating to the alleged misconduct has been issued. Denial of access will be subject to regular review (normally at monthly intervals) and a student can challenge the denial of access by sending a written submission to the Vice-Chancellor (or

nominee): the challenge will be referred to a member of the Senior Management Team who has had no involvement with the student or the case for review. The decision of this senior colleague will be final and there will be no further right of appeal.

4. If a risk to client / pupil care is perceived at any point in these Procedures the Director of School, on the joint recommendation of the Head of Student Support or nominee and University Secretary and Registrar, may authorise the removal of a student from a current or prospective placement or work-based learning activity until this risk is no longer perceived to apply. Under the terms of the Disclosure and Barring Scheme, which is administered by the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, the University is also required to notify the ISA of any such cases, as well as the outcome of its procedures; this duty is absolute, and overrides any concerns about data protection.
5. Students charged with a criminal offence may also be subject to the Student Misconduct Procedures with regard to the same offence; proceedings will be opened but suspended until such time as the criminal case has been resolved. This does not affect the capacity of the University to remove a student from the campus, or from placement, as above.
6. The University reserves the right to invoke these Procedures, irrespective of the outcome of a related criminal case. This is because it determines allegations of misconduct on the basis of 'the balance of probabilities', rather than the criteria of 'beyond reasonable doubt' which applies in criminal cases.

15.4 Harassment and Discrimination

1. The University defines harassment and discrimination, in the context of these procedures, as conduct or behaviour which is unwanted by the recipient and is offensive, intimidating or hostile; which interferes with the recipient's study performance; and/or induces stress, anxiety, fear or sickness in the recipient. What is perceived as harassment by one person may not seem so to another;

however, if conduct is perceived as a negative act and is unwanted, offensive, worrying, stressful, and/or intimidating to the recipient then these procedures may be invoked.

2. **The University will not tolerate harassment under any circumstances or however motivated.** All members of the University community have a responsibility, therefore, to ensure that they do not perpetrate, incite, encourage or condone any form of harassment within the University.
3. Individuals may fear victimisation if they complain of harassment. It should be remembered that victimisation of the complainant is itself unlawful even if it is subsequently found that no harassment occurred.
4. The Equality Act 2010 prohibits three types of harassment that the University uses to guide its understanding. These are:-
 - Harassment related to a 'relevant protected characteristic'
 - Sexual harassment and
 - Less favourable treatment of a student because they submit to or reject sexual harassment or harassment related to sex or gender reassignment

The following is broadly taken from the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) on the meaning and understanding of harassment derived from the Equality Act 2010 Guidance.

Harassment related to a 'relevant protected characteristic'

5. Following advice in the Equality Act 2010, the University includes the following as 'relevant protected characteristics':-
 - Age
 - Disability
 - Gender Reassignment
 - Race
 - Religion or Belief

- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

Pregnancy and maternity are not protected directly under the harassment provisions. However, harassment related to pregnancy and maternity would amount to harassment related to sex

6. Harassment occurs when unwanted conduct, which is related to a relevant protected characteristic, has the purpose or effect of:-
 - violating the student's dignity, or
 - creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the student
7. Unwanted conduct covers a very wide range of behaviour, including spoken or written words or abuse, imagery, graffiti, physical gestures, facial expressions, mimicry, jokes, pranks, acts affecting a student's surroundings or other physical behaviour.
8. The word unwanted means essentially the same as 'unwelcome' or 'uninvited'. 'Unwanted' does not mean that express objection must be made to the conduct before it is deemed to be 'unwanted'. A serious one-off incident can amount to harassment.
9. Unwanted conduct 'related' to a protected characteristic has a broad meaning and includes the following situations:-
 - where the student has a protected characteristic
 - where there is **any** connection with a protected characteristic (whether or not the student has that protected characteristic themselves) or it is assumed there is a connection with a protected characteristic

Sexual Harassment

10. Sexual harassment occurs when a person engages in unwanted conduct (as defined in paragraph 6 above) which is of a sexual nature.
11. Conduct 'of a sexual nature' can cover verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct including unwelcome sexual advances, touching, forms of sexual assault, sexual jokes, displaying pornographic photographs or drawings or sending emails or sharing social media posts with material of a sexual nature.

Less favourable treatment for rejecting or submitting to unwanted conduct

12. The third type of harassment occurs when a student is treated less favourably by an education provider because the student has submitted to, or rejected, unwanted conduct of a sexual nature or unwanted conduct which is related to sex or gender reassignment. This applies when the unwanted conduct creates for them any of the circumstances defined in paragraph 6 above. Under this type of harassment, the initial unwanted conduct may be committed by the education provider who treats the student less favourably, or by another person.
13. Any student wishing to report an act of harassment should contact Student Support via studentsupport@marjon.ac.uk. Where a discriminatory incident is considered to have taken place this can be reported using the [Report and Support Form](#). Any such complaint should set out as specifically as possible the nature of the harassment/discrimination, the identity of the harasser(s), dates of occurrence etc. The complaint will be dealt with thereafter in accordance with these Procedures, inclusive of any right of appeal.
14. A student who considers that they have been harassed: receives a complaint of alleged harassment: or witnesses harassment may wish to seek advice, support and/or counselling before deciding how to proceed. In such

circumstances, students should contact their Personal Development Tutor, Student Support or the Student Union.

15. In dealing with allegations of harassment, the Head of Student Support or nominee will ensure that complainants are kept informed of the progress of a case, including its outcome. However, this does not extend to an automatic right to receive copies of correspondence between the University and the alleged harasser. If a complainant has any concerns about how the matter was handled, or the outcome, they will be directed to the Student Complaints Procedure (see Section 17 of this Framework). If the harasser's behaviour is found to have had an adverse impact on the complainant, then a discretionary remedy might be offered by the University.
16. The complainant will not be exposed unwillingly to any face-to-face meeting with the alleged harasser(s). If a hearing is convened, then the alleged harasser(s) (and or their representative) will be allowed to challenge any points made by the complainant, as relayed to them by the Chair, in offering their defence. Moreover, the complainant will have exactly the same right to be accompanied by a 'friend', where applicable, as the alleged harasser.
17. If, following a complaint, an investigation determines that a claim of harassment is malicious and fictitious and that the allegations have been brought in order to cause harm or detriment to the alleged offender(s), this in itself may constitute a serious act of harassment which will be dealt with in accordance with these Procedures.
18. Whatever the outcome of any investigations, the University will not tolerate any form of intimidation, victimisation or discrimination against any complainant(s), alleged offender(s) or members of the University community involved in these investigations. Any form of retaliatory behaviour against another member of the University in any of these situations will be liable to these procedures.
19. There will be no time bar, exclusion or redemption allowed for acts of past harassment that have continued undetected or unreported until an event prompts it to be detected or reported - provided the reason for institutional

ignorance has been through the tolerance and/or fear of retribution on the part of the individual(s) subjected to the harassment.

15.5 Acceptable Behaviour

The University recognises that involvement in the Student Misconduct Procedure can be a stressful experience for students. However, it also has a duty to ensure the safety and well-being of its staff and will, for example, not accept communication that is abusive, offensive or defamatory: aggressive, threatening, coercive or intimidating: and/or unreasonably persistent or demanding. Where such behaviour is displayed, therefore, it might constitute an instance of student misconduct in its own right.

15.6 Student Misconduct – Stage One procedures

1. Staff or students should refer all cases of alleged student misconduct to the Head of Student Support or nominee in the first instance. Where a potential offence of misconduct is reported by a visitor to the University, a member of staff or a student will need to instigate the procedures on their behalf.
2. Stage One focuses on supporting students and, accordingly, no sanctions can be imposed at this stage of the procedure. Instead, the Head of Student Support or nominee will discuss the allegations with the student, in person, and advise them with regard to their future conduct.
3. Accordingly, students are expected to co-operate with the Head of Student Support or nominee. Should the student not respond to the request for an interview or fail to attend the interview without good reason, this might be sufficient grounds in itself for escalation to Stage Two.
4. The Head of Student Support or nominee will write to the student after interview to confirm the outcome and any recommendations with regard to future conduct. This will be copied to the Academic Standards Officer, so that

a central record can be kept, and a record will be kept on the Student Support database.

15.7 Student Misconduct – Stage Two procedures

1. In cases where an allegation of student misconduct has been identified which might lead to a sanction being imposed, the Head of Student Support or nominee will refer the matter to the University Secretary and Registrar, via the Academic Standards Officer, by way of a written incident report. The preparation of the report should take any sensitive personal issues and/or potential clashes of interest into account.
2. The report will state the name of the student against whom the allegation is made, the date, time and place of the alleged misconduct if known and applicable and the nature of the alleged misconduct with a brief description of it. It should also include the names of any witnesses who can support the allegation and notes of any interviews and discussions undertaken.
3. In cases where, in the opinion of the Head of Student Support or nominee (and colleagues as appropriate), the potential severity of an offence might justify suspension or expulsion, he or she will also provide a written rationale for recommending a formal hearing at Stage Three of the Procedures in the context of his or her incident report.
4. The University Secretary and Registrar will instruct the Academic Standards Officer to recruit an Investigator, who will be a member of Senate or Senior Management Team (Chair) who has had no involvement with the student (or, where applicable, the complainant). The Investigator will review the report and seek additional evidence where he or she considers it necessary. In so doing, he or she may draw upon the support of the Academic Standards Officer where appropriate and proportionate.
5. This investigatory process might involve further interviews with the student, other students and other staff members at the Investigator's discretion.

Additional Investigators may be appointed in exceptional circumstances, with one of the Investigators operating as the Principal Investigator for the purposes of reporting to the Panel Chair.

6. The University Secretary and Registrar will also instruct the Academic Standards Officer to convene a Student Misconduct Panel. This shall comprise:
 - A member of Senate or Senior Management Team (Chair) who has had no involvement with the student (or, where applicable, the complainant);
 - A member of Senate, Programme Leader or Manager who has had no involvement with the student (or, where applicable, the complainant);
 - A member of the Executive Committee of the Student Union, normally the President or Deputy President, who also has no involvement with the student (or, where applicable, the complainant).

The Academic Standards Officer will endeavour to ensure an adequate gender balance in the Panel.

7. Once the Investigator's report is available, the Panel will meet. This meeting will also be attended by the Academic Standards Officer who will offer procedural advice, where required, and record the decision taken.
8. Where a sanction is agreed at Stage Two, any or all of the following penalties can be imposed:
 - a fine, not exceeding £250, in addition to any appropriate restitution for damage or loss (to be reported in writing, using the designated form, to Finance);
 - the prohibition of entry to specified social areas and/or University social functions for the time specified by the responsible officer;
 - the removal of a student either from a specific Hall of Residence or from campus accommodation in its entirety, subject to their legal rights as tenants;

- a formal warning as to a student's future conduct, accompanied by such reasonable conditions as may be deemed appropriate;
 - conditions concerning the student's future conduct or access to facilities;
 - the suspension of access to specific School-based facilities for a fixed period of time;
 - suspension or removal from a programme that is professionally accredited, with the option to transfer to a non-accredited programme at a similar level (if available) with immediate effect.
9. The Panel may also refer the matter to Stage Three if, on the basis of the finalised evidence base, it now considers that the potential severity of an offence could justify suspension or expulsion.
 10. The resultant decision letter, which will be drafted by the Academic Standards Officer for the approval of the Chair, should normally be sent within thirty working days of the commencement of the Student Misconduct Procedures at Stage One along with the Investigator's report. This will also provide information about the next steps in the process (including the student's right of appeal) and details of who the student can contact with any queries.

15.8 Student Misconduct – Stage Three procedures

1. In cases where the severity of an offence is potentially such as to justify suspension or expulsion, the decision will also be subject to a formal hearing of the Student Misconduct Panel.
2. The Academic Standards Officer, or a nominee, will act as Secretary to the Panel and proceedings will also be recorded electronically. Recordings will be made available to all participants on request. The hearing will not take place unless all members and the Secretary are present.

3. The student shall be informed of the date of the hearing not less than ten working days in advance; this deadline can only be reduced with the student's written consent. They will be invited to appear in person but, in exceptional circumstances the hearing may take place, at the discretion of the Chair advised by the Academic Standards Officer, in their absence or may be conducted virtually in whole or in part. A hearing can be scheduled at any time in the calendar year; however, reasonable steps will be taken to schedule this at a point in the year when the student would normally be present in the University.
4. The student may be accompanied by a 'friend', to provide support and speak only when instructed to do so by the student. The name and status of any such 'friend', who cannot be an employee of the University, must normally be notified to the Academic Standards Officer no less than five working days in advance of the hearing. The University must grant its consent beforehand for the 'friend' to attend the hearing. The student may also choose to call witnesses in his or her defence.
5. The Academic Standards Officer shall normally circulate the list of witnesses to be called, and all relevant documentation, to all parties not less than five working days before the hearing. Where this is not possible, the Academic Standards Officer will advise the student who will have the right to request a postponement. Additional papers supplied by or on behalf of the student will be circulated thereafter with the proviso that, in exceptional circumstances, the Panel may decide to adjourn a hearing in order to secure a written response.
6. The refusal or failure of a student to attend will not invalidate the hearing's proceedings, provided that he or she has been given sufficient notice as set out above. A hearing can be scheduled at any time in the calendar year; however, reasonable steps will be taken to schedule this at a point in the year when the student would normally be present in the University. Where a student has been denied access to the University under the provisions set out in Section 15.3.1 of this Framework, this will be waived to enable the student to attend the interview.

7. At the outset of the hearing the Chair of the Panel shall identify the issues to be determined, the persons entitled to attend the hearing and the documents supplied to the Panel. They will also ask the student to confirm that they have understood the procedures and have no concerns with regard to procedure.
8. The Chair will then outline the case against the student, before inviting witnesses to give evidence. Members of the Panel may question witnesses directly and the student, or his or her 'friend', may question the witnesses through the Chair.
9. The Chair shall then invite the student, or his or her 'friend', to respond. The Chair and other members of the Panel may question the student on the statement and/or the documentary evidence. Witnesses may question the student through the Chair.
10. At the conclusion, the Chair shall offer the student the opportunity of making a closing statement (which should not introduce new evidence), once the witnesses have left, before the Panel considers its decision in private. In all cases, the student shall have a right to make a final statement to the Panel before it considers its decision, including any mitigating circumstances or factors that they believe should be taken into account.
11. In addition to the complete range of penalties available at Stage Two, the Panel may impose any or all of the following penalties:
 - suspension from the University, for a maximum period of one academic session;
 - expulsion from the University (actual or suspended).

A student's previous disciplinary record may be taken into account when determining the penalty, but the Chair and the Academic Standards Officer will withhold it from the Panel until a decision has been taken as to whether not an offence has been committed.

12. The resultant Stage Three decision letter will be drafted by the Academic Standards Officer for the approval of the Chair. It shall also constitute the official record of the hearing including, where this is applicable, the reasons for

imposing a specific penalty or penalties and an explanation as to why a lesser penalty was unsuitable.

13. The letter will normally be sent to the student within ten working days of the hearing and within forty working days of the commencement of the Student Misconduct Procedures at Stage One. If this is not possible, exceptionally, the student will be kept informed. Where practicable, the student will be given the opportunity to receive the letter by way of an interview at which at least two members of University staff are present. Where a decision has been taken to suspend or expel a student, it will take immediate effect.
14. If the University intends to inform the Independent Safeguarding Agency, the Department for Education or any other Programme, Statutory or Regulatory Body of the outcome of any misconduct proceedings, it will include notification of that decision within the decision letter.

15.9 Right of appeal

1. A student has the right of appeal against the decision and/or the penalty imposed on the following grounds:
 - That the procedures were not followed properly.
 - That the decision maker(s) reached an unreasonable decision.
 - That the student has new material evidence that they were unable, for valid reasons, to provide earlier in the process.
 - That there is bias or reasonable perception of bias during the procedure.
 - That the penalty imposed was disproportionate, or not permitted under the procedures.

Any such appeal must be submitted in writing to the Academic Standards Officer, within ten working days of the date of the letter communicating the

decision. If the student does not appeal within this timeframe, then the Academic Standards Officer will close the case.

2. The Academic Standards Officer will refer the appeal to a member of Senate or the Senior Management Team who has had no involvement with the student for consideration. The appeal stage will normally be concluded within twenty working days of the receipt of the appeal; if a delay is envisaged, the appellant will be notified in writing before the end of the twenty working day period.
3. If valid grounds to proceed with the appeal are not found, the University's Student Misconduct Procedures will have been exhausted and the Academic Standards Officer will advise the student accordingly.
4. If, however, it is found that there may be additional evidence that could not reasonably have been provided to the original hearing, or procedural irregularities, the Academic Standards Officer will reconvene the original decision-making body with new membership of a similar status. In all such cases, the appeal process may lead to the confirmation, reduction or quashing of the penalty originally imposed, but not to an increased penalty. This re-hearing will be final and there will be no further right of appeal thereafter.
5. The student will be notified in writing of the decision, in accordance with the procedures appropriate at the relevant stage. The decision letter will confirm that the University's Student Misconduct Procedures have been exhausted. If the University's handling of the procedure is found to have had an adverse impact on the student, then a discretionary remedy might be offered by the University.

15.10 Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education

1. If a student remains dissatisfied after the appropriate internal processes have been exhausted, they can ask the University to issue a Completion of

Procedures letter in order for the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) to review their appeal.

2. The University must issue a Completion of Procedures letter in order for the OIA to review an appeal. A Completion of Procedures letter will be issued automatically where valid grounds for re-hearing the appeal are not found at the review stage.
3. All requests for review must be made to the OIA within twelve months of the date of issue of a Completion of Procedures letter. For full details please contact <http://www.oiahe.org.uk>. The University will draw the student's attention to any exceptional factors that mean that it is particularly important for the student to bring the matter to the OIA's attention promptly.

15.11 Reconsideration of the same offence

Normally, the University will not reconsider an offence once these procedures have been invoked. However, if new evidence emerges which, for a good reason beyond its control, was unavailable to the University at the time of the original investigation, the University reserves the right to reconsider an allegation and, in exceptional circumstances, re-open proceedings. If this applies, then a new Student Misconduct Panel will be recruited and this will not include any previous members.

15.12 Annual Report

Each year, the Academic Standards Officer submits a report on student casework to Senate, detailing (anonymously) general matters or issues arising from recent student misconduct cases. The Academic Standards Officer will also collate and present anonymised monitoring information with regard to Student Misconduct Panels to Senate on a regular basis. Senate will forward recommendations to other relevant bodies, such as the Board of Governors

and the Student Experience Council, so that broad concerns can be shared and appropriate action taken.

15.13 Procedures at Partner Organisations

1. In accordance with the Good Practice Framework issued on behalf of the HE sector by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator and Plymouth Marjon University's Collaborative Provision Regulations and Procedures, all students registered for the University's awards have the ultimate right to complain to the University, irrespective of where they are studying. This right of complaint, however, is not absolute and is subject to the precise wording of the partnership agreement.
2. The partner organisation, accordingly, should ensure that clear information and guidance with regard to student misconduct is made available to all students registered for the University's awards. This should include clear information about the sequence of processes involved and make clear the channels through which dissatisfied students can contact the University directly.
3. Once the internal procedures of the partner organisation have been fully exhausted, students who wish to take their case to the University for review should ask the Academic Standards Officer in writing if they are eligible to do so. Students may request a review of the decision on the following grounds only:
 - That the procedures were not followed properly.
 - That the decision maker(s) reached an unreasonable decision.
 - That the student has new material evidence that they were unable, for valid reasons, to provide earlier in the process.
 - That there is bias or reasonable perception of bias during the procedure.

- That the penalty imposed was disproportionate, or not permitted under the procedures.
4. If a case is eligible for review, the Academic Standards Officer will refer the challenge to a member of Senate or the Senior Management Team who has no involvement with the partnership. If the challenge is upheld, the case will be referred back to the partner organisation to be reheard under its own procedures. Otherwise, the University will not refer the case back to the partner organisation to be reheard and the Academic Standards Officer will advise the student accordingly. This will include advice with regard to a student's further right of appeal to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA).

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16. ACADEMIC APPEAL PROCEDURE

16.1 Introduction

1. The University, in accordance with the Good Practice Framework for Handling Complaints and Academic Appeals and the expectations set out in the UK Quality Code For Higher Education, defines an academic appeal as a 'request for a review of a decision of an academic body around a mark, outcome or decision'.
2. These procedures describe how students may submit an academic appeal and the grounds on which they may do so. Students should read these procedures carefully before deciding whether or not to formally appeal, and should also note that parallel procedures are in place for complaints (see Section 17 of this Framework). If a student is in doubt over any matter relating to an intended appeal, advice may be sought from the Academic Standards Officer.
3. Appeals will be treated with due diligence and confidentiality. However, those considering an appeal will normally require access to all the documentation presented in support of it in order to come to an informed decision.
4. Appeals will not always produce the outcome preferred by an appellant. However, whatever the decision, the appellant will be informed of the result of an appeal and the reasons for it.
5. If an academic appeal is of a particularly sensitive nature, and a student would like to make some early enquiries on a confidential basis, s/he should contact the President or Deputy President of the Student Union or the Academic Information and Guidance Co-ordinator in Student Support for advice.
6. Students making a formal appeal are described in this section of the Framework as 'appellants'.

16.2 Right of Appeal

1. Students have a right of appeal against decisions taken, by the designated Assessment Board on behalf of the University, that affect their academic progress. These procedures set out the grounds of appeal permitted.
2. Students should note that the University's complaints procedure (see Section 17 of this Framework) should be invoked in other areas of potential dispute. There may be appeals against academic decisions that refer to matters or allegations that are, or that become, the subject of a formal complaint. In such circumstances the Complaints Panel will convene after the appeals procedures have been completed.
3. Students will not be disadvantaged in any respect by submitting an academic appeal.

16.3 Grounds of Appeal

1. **Appeals must be lodged on either or both of the following grounds:**
 - (a) **Material circumstances** (i.e. circumstances affecting the student's performance of which a Board of Examiners had been unaware when reaching its decision, *but only if* the student is able to demonstrate that she or he had been unable, for a sound and acceptable reason related to the circumstances themselves, to make them known through the Extenuating Circumstances procedures); and/or
 - (b) **Procedural irregularities** (i.e. alleged irregularities in the formal conduct of an assessment or in reaching another academic decision, including alleged prejudice or bias on the part of one or more examiners and/or markers and adverse decisions with regard to extenuating circumstances).

Evidence for each ground of appeal invoked must be provided. In exceptional circumstances, where this might advantage the appellant or where an

appellant has not cited a specific ground for appeal, an appeal may also be considered on permitted grounds which have not been cited.

2. Appeals can only be lodged against specific module marks. It is not, therefore, possible to lodge an appeal against an overall result including a degree classification.
3. A successful appeal cannot result in the raising of a mark that has already been confirmed by an Assessment Board. Instead, it will normally result in the granting of an additional assessment opportunity; so that no student is disadvantaged by the outcome of a successful appeal, the higher of the two module marks will then be recorded.

16.4 Exclusions from Appeal

1. The following grounds **cannot** be considered as the basis for an appeal:
 - Dissatisfaction with the academic judgement of the internal and external examiners and/or markers including the Board of Examiners;
 - Matters of dispute that are within the remit of the student complaints procedure (see Section 17 of this Framework).
2. As required by the University's Marking Procedures set out in Section 12.5 of this Framework, a sample of work from each assignment is double-marked to ensure the accuracy and consistency of marking. This would normally rule out a successful appeal on the ground of procedural irregularities, involving alleged prejudice or bias.
3. Academic appeals submitted outside of the timeframe set out in Section 16.8 of this Framework will only be considered if the appellant can show reasonable grounds for not submitting the appeal within the deadline.
4. Issues relating to the quality of teaching or supervision, or other circumstances that relate to the delivery of a programme of study before the point of assessment (including the submission of a thesis or dissertation) cannot be

pursued by way of these procedures. They should instead be raised under the University's student complaints procedure within the stated timeframe (see [Section 17.8.2 of this Framework](#)).

16.5 Acceptable Behaviour

1. The University recognises that lodging an academic appeal can be a stressful experience and that the overwhelming majority of appellants do so in an appropriately constructive way. However, it also has a duty to ensure the safety and well-being of its staff.
2. Students (and, where appropriate, their representatives) are expected to use the established procedures and channels of communication to bring and resolve academic appeals. Under those circumstances, they can expect University staff involved in their appeal to be impartial, fair and above all helpful. However, the University will take action to protect its staff from unacceptable behaviour and will, for example, not accept communication that is abusive, offensive or defamatory: aggressive, threatening, coercive or intimidating: and/or unreasonably persistent or demanding.
3. If an appellant's behaviour is deemed to be unacceptable, the University will explain the reason(s) for this and will ask the appellant to modify his/her behaviour. If the unacceptable behaviour continues, action will be taken to restrict the appellant's communication with the University on the authorisation of the University Secretary and Registrar. Under such circumstances, the appellant will be issued with a letter that sets out the reason(s) why his/her behaviour has been deemed unacceptable and the action/s that will be taken in response.
4. Any restrictions imposed will be appropriate and proportionate and may include the following (please note that these are not exhaustive):
 - Requiring contact in a particular form (e.g. by letter only)
 - Requiring that contact takes place with a single, named individual

- Restricting telephone calls to specified days and times
 - Asking the appellant to appoint a representative to correspond with the University
 - Asking the appellant to enter into an agreement about their conduct
5. Where an appellant behaves unacceptably during a telephone conversation or a face-to-face meeting the University may, as a last resort, terminate the call or the meeting.
 6. Where unacceptable behaviour on the part of an appellant continues, despite the appellant's communication with the University having been restricted, the University may terminate consideration of the appeal. Under these exceptional circumstances, a Completion of Procedures Letter (as per Section 16.10 of this Framework) will be issued.
 7. The University may also refuse to process an academic appeal if it considers it to be frivolous or vexatious, issuing a Completion of Procedures Letter accordingly. Examples of frivolous or vexatious appeals include, but are not necessarily restricted to, the following:
 - Academic appeals which are obsessive, harassing or repetitive
 - Academic appeals which seek unrealistic and unreasonable outcomes
 - Academic appeals which are designed to cause disruption or annoyance
 - Demands for redress which lack any serious purpose or value
 8. Anyone making malicious allegations concerning the reputation or conduct of members of staff in the context of an appeal may be subject to Student Misconduct proceedings, on the grounds that they have harmed or attempted to harm the good order and discipline of the University, and/or brought the University or its staff or students into disrepute.

16.6 Responsibilities of Students

1. The responsibility for compiling documentation in support of an appeal, including any supporting evidence, rests with the appellant (i.e. the student) in accordance with the procedures set out in Section 16.8 of this Framework.
2. Students should note the time constraints outlined in these procedures and respond to any communications relating to their appeal in a timely manner.
3. Students should ensure that they are fully aware of the timing and the conditions of any assessments, including the deadlines that apply to them. Where this responsibility has not been exercised, the University reserves the right to decide that a valid case for appeal has not been made.
4. **A student who submits an appeal must continue to undertake all resit opportunities, as its success cannot be guaranteed.**

16.7 Informal resolution

Academic appeals can only be made formally, following the publication of results. However, students who may have grounds for appeal, or who seek clarification of an Assessment Board's decision, are invited to discuss their concerns with the appropriate Director of School or Programme Leader/Programme Area Leader immediately following the publication of results. In certain circumstances, where appropriate and proportionate, students may be provided with a written outcome which will be taken into account in the event of a subsequent appeal.

16.8 Formal stage

1. Students can appeal only **after** the relevant Board has met and the official communication notifying results has been sent. Students who are aware that

they might wish to lodge an appeal at this point are advised to retain any relevant correspondence and associated paperwork.

2. An appellant should lodge an intention to appeal as directed in the official communication. They will then be sent the required form, which must be returned to the Academic Standards Officer (either by way of e-mail with scanned attachments in .pdf or .jpg format: receipted delivery to the Registry Services hatch or University Reception; or, if posted, by Recorded or Special Delivery) with all relevant supporting evidence within twenty working days from the date of the communication notifying results. **An appellant should send copies of any evidence supplied in support of their appeal, to avoid any risk that the originals will be lost.** Appellants will also be invited to complete an anonymous questionnaire for equality monitoring purposes.
3. On receipt of the completed appeal form, the Academic Standards Officer shall acknowledge the appeal and forward it to an academic member of Senate who has no involvement with the appellant. Should the appeal also include grounds for a complaint (in accordance with Section 17 of this Framework) then the Academic Standards Officer will advise the appellant that the appeal can only be considered in relation to the stated grounds. The Academic Standards Officer will also advise the appellant that separate complaints procedures, as set out in Section 17 of this Framework, will need to be invoked within the stated timeframe.
4. When investigating the appeal, the academic member of Senate may decide to seek additional information either from relevant University colleagues and/or the appellant. Where supplied by University colleagues, this will accompany the decision letter sent to the appellant. In exceptional cases, the academic member of Senate may decide to meet with colleagues and/or the appellant in order to obtain additional information, making a brief note of the meeting which will also accompany the decision letter.
5. Once the academic member of Senate has reached a decision, they will communicate their decision to the Academic Standards Officer who will advise the appellant in writing. The University aims to communicate its decision as

quickly as possible and within twenty working days of receipt; if a delay is envisaged, i.e. in excess of five working days, the appellant will be notified in writing before the end of the twenty working day period.

6. If the appeal is upheld, the case will be referred back to the Chair of the Module Assessment Board (MAB) or Progression and Award Board (PAB) so that they can take Chair's Action to change the Board's initial recommendations. In this case, the University will follow its normal procedures, including involvement of External Examiners where appropriate. Care will be taken to ensure student confidentiality and equity in the treatment of marks.
7. Once the relevant Board changes its original recommendation, Registry Services shall confirm the change of recommendation to the appellant and report to its next meeting.
8. If the appeal is not upheld, the Academic Standards Officer shall set out a student's right of further appeal in the decision letter. This will explain the grounds under which an appellant may request a review of the decision, and make it clear that if the appellant does not take the academic appeal to the review stage within the time limit for doing so the appeal will be closed automatically.

16.9 Review stage

1. The appellant may request a review of the decision on the following grounds only:
 - That the procedures were not followed properly.
 - That the decision maker(s) reached an unreasonable decision.
 - That the student has new material evidence that they were unable, for valid reasons, to provide earlier in the process.
 - That there is bias or reasonable perception of bias during the procedure.

Any such request must be submitted in writing to the Academic Standards Officer, within ten working days of the date of the letter communicating the decision.

2. The Academic Standards Officer will refer the challenge to an academic member of Senate who has had no involvement with the appellant or the appeal. If valid grounds for re-hearing the appeal are not found, the University's Academic Appeal procedure will have been exhausted and the Academic Standards Officer will advise the student accordingly. This will constitute a Completion of Procedures Letter (see Section 16.10 of this Framework).
3. If, however, it is found that there are valid grounds for re-hearing the appeal, the decision will be overturned and the Academic Standards Officer will re-convene the formal stage of the appeals procedure. The appeal will be re-heard, accordingly, by an academic member of Senate who has had no involvement with the appellant or the appeal under the procedures set out in Section 16.8 of this Framework. This re-hearing will be final and there will be no further right of appeal thereafter.
4. The review stage will normally be concluded within ten working days of the receipt of the appellant's request. Where it is agreed that the formal stage should be re-convened, the timescales set out in Section 16.8 of this Framework will apply and the processing time recorded for the appeal will be reset accordingly.

16.10 Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education

1. If an appellant remains dissatisfied after the appropriate internal processes have been exhausted, they can ask the University to issue a Completion of Procedures letter in order for the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) to review their appeal.

2. The University must issue a Completion of Procedures letter in order for the OIA to review an appeal. A Completion of Procedures letter will be issued automatically where valid grounds for re-hearing the appeal are not found at the review stage and otherwise on request. If a Completion of Procedures letter is issued before the review stage has been conducted, the letter will make it clear that the student has not completed the University's internal processes.
3. All requests for review must be made to the OIA within twelve months of the date of issue of a Completion of Procedures letter. For full details please contact <http://www.oiahe.org.uk>.

16.11 Annual Report

The Academic Standards Officer submits an annual report on student casework to Senate, detailing (anonymously) general matters or issues arising from recent academic appeals. The report will also include anonymised monitoring information with regard to the students who have made appeals. Senate will forward recommendations to other relevant bodies, such as the Board of Governors and the Student Experience Council, so that broad concerns can be shared and appropriate action taken.

16.12 Procedures at Partner Organisations

1. In accordance with the expectations set out in the UK Quality Code For Higher Education and the University's Collaborative Provision Regulations and Procedures, all students registered for the University's awards have the ultimate right to appeal to the University, irrespective of where they are studying, if the partnership agreement does not require them to appeal to the University direct. This right of appeal, however, is subject to the precise wording of the partnership agreement.

2. The partner organisation, accordingly, should ensure that clear information and guidance with regard to academic appeals is made available to all students registered for the University's awards. This should include clear information about the sequence of processes involved.
3. Once the internal procedures of the partner organisation have been fully exhausted, where this is applicable, students who wish to take their case to the University for review should ask the Academic Standards Officer in writing if they are eligible to do so. The appellant may request a review of the decision on the following grounds only:
 - That the procedures were not followed properly.
 - That the decision maker(s) reached an unreasonable decision.
 - That the student has new material evidence that they were unable, for valid reasons, to provide earlier in the process.
 - That there is bias or reasonable perception of bias during the procedure.
4. If a case is eligible for review, the Academic Standards Officer will refer the challenge to an academic member of Senate who has no involvement with the partnership. If the challenge is upheld, the case will be referred back to the partner organisation to be reheard under its own procedures. Otherwise, the University will not refer the case back to the partner organisation to be reheard and the Academic Standards Officer will advise the student accordingly. This will include advice with regard to a student's further right of appeal to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA).

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17. COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

17.1 The University's Commitment on Complaints

1. Plymouth Marjon University is committed to delivering a high-quality service and encourages its students to tell it where there is cause for concern and a case for improvement. Whilst this is normally achieved through student feedback mechanisms at module and programme level, there are exceptional occasions where a complaint needs to be taken further.
2. The University annually reviews its complaints framework with a strong emphasis being placed upon protecting the consumer rights of its students. It has been reviewed to be as clear and concise as possible, reflecting the University's commitment to plain English in public communication. Further details of the University's compliance with the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) can be found [here](#).
3. Students who are considering making a complaint, or who need help or further information, are advised to discuss the matter first with the Student Union and/or Student Support.
4. The University, in accordance with the Good Practice Framework for Handling Complaints and Academic Appeals and the expectations set out in the [UK Quality Code For Higher Education](#), defines a complaint as 'a specific query about an aspect of experience of the provider'. It aims to handle all such complaints in a way that:
 - Encourages informal conciliation
 - Is fair and efficient
 - Treats complaints with appropriate seriousness, sympathy and confidentiality
 - Facilitates early resolution

- Allows the University as a whole or a particular part of the University to learn from the experience
 - Aligns with the University's commitment to equality and diversity
 - Has due regard to any applicable law
5. Students making a complaint will be described in this section of the Framework as 'complainants'.

17.2 How to Complain

1. The University's complaints procedures are set out below. Students who complain may wish to inform affected members of staff that they are doing so under the procedures.
2. The University's complaints procedures focus on matters that affect the quality of a student's learning opportunities. However, students should also note that for the following matters of potential dispute, separate procedures apply:
 - Unacceptable conduct on the part of a student (see below)
 - Unacceptable conduct on the part of a member of staff (see below)
 - Academic appeals (see [Section 16 of this Framework](#))
 - Complaints against the Student Union (procedures available from the Student Union)
 - Complaints concerning the admissions process, including those from current students who have applied to register on another University programme. The appeals and complaints process relating to admissions can be found on the University website at [Handbooks, Regulations and Procedures](#).
3. If a complaint refers to matters or allegations that are, or that become, the subject of an appeal against an academic decision, the Complaints Panel will

convene after the appeals procedures have been completed.

4. Where unacceptable conduct on the part of a student is alleged, the allegation should be pursued initially with the Head of Student Support so that the appropriate procedures, as set out in Section 15 of this Framework, can be instigated. This is because students are not employed by the University and, therefore, are not part of the service that it provides.
5. Where unacceptable conduct on the part of a member of staff is alleged, the allegation should be pursued initially with the Head of Human Resources (via Student Support at the discretion of the student). A student who is dissatisfied with the way in which their allegation has been dealt with can invoke the formal stage of the complaints procedures; whilst a Complaints Panel cannot consider or authorise disciplinary action against a member of staff, it may review the conduct of the staff disciplinary procedures and recommend their re-opening where appropriate.

17.3 Acceptable Behaviour

1. The University recognises that bringing a complaint can be a stressful experience, but that the overwhelming majority of complainants do so in an appropriately constructive way. However, it also has a duty to ensure the safety and well-being of its staff.
2. Students (and, where appropriate, their representatives) are expected to use the established procedures and channels of communication to bring and resolve formal complaints and, under those circumstances, they can expect University staff involved in their complaint to be impartial, fair and above all helpful. However, the University will take action to protect its staff from unacceptable behaviour and will, for example, not accept communication that is abusive, offensive or defamatory: aggressive, threatening, coercive or intimidating: and/or unreasonably persistent or demanding.

3. If a complainant's behaviour is deemed to be unacceptable, the University will explain the reason(s) for this and will ask the complainant to modify his/her behaviour. If the unacceptable behaviour continues, action will be taken to restrict the complainant's communication with the University on the authorisation of the University Secretary and Registrar. Under such circumstances, the complainant will be issued with a letter that sets out the reason(s) why his/her behaviour has been deemed unacceptable and the action/s that will be taken in response.
4. Any restrictions imposed will be appropriate and proportionate and may include the following (please note that these are not exhaustive):
 - Requiring contact in a particular form (e.g. by letter only)
 - Requiring that contact takes place with a single, named individual
 - Restricting telephone calls to specified days and times
 - Asking the complainant to appoint a representative to correspond with the University
 - Asking the complainant to enter into an agreement about their conduct
5. Where a complainant behaves unacceptably during a telephone conversation or a face-to-face meeting, the University may, as a last resort, terminate the call or the meeting.
6. Where unacceptable behaviour on the part of a complainant continues, despite the complainant's communication with the University having been restricted, the University may terminate consideration of the complaint. Under these exceptional circumstances, a Completion of Procedures Letter (as per Section 17.11 of this Framework) will be issued.
7. The University may also refuse to process a formal complaint if it considers it to be frivolous or vexatious, issuing a Completion of Procedures Letter accordingly. Examples of frivolous or vexatious complaints include, but are not necessarily restricted to, the following:

- Complaints which are obsessive, harassing or repetitive
 - Complaints which seek unrealistic and unreasonable outcomes
 - Complaints which are designed to cause disruption or annoyance
 - Demands for redress which lack any serious purpose or value
8. Anyone making malicious allegations concerning the reputation or conduct of students or members of staff in the context of a complaint may be subject to misconduct proceedings, on the grounds that they have harmed or attempted to harm the good order and discipline of the University, and/or brought the University or its staff or students into disrepute.

17.4 Results of Complaints

Complaints will not always produce the outcome preferred by a complainant. For instance, policy decisions or resourcing beyond the University's control may affect the level of service provided. In addition, a successful complaint might not benefit a complainant directly if it results, for example, in service improvements applicable to students in the future.

17.5 Anonymity with regard to complaints

1. In general, those about whom complaints are made, under these specific procedures, will be informed about the source and content of a complaint. If this is likely to deter a student from making a complaint, they are invited to contact the Academic Standards Officer to discuss. An anonymous complaint will only be investigated in exceptional circumstances, where there is a compelling case (supported by appropriate evidence) to justify its investigation.
2. A copy of the complaint will normally be supplied to all affected parties.

3. A complainant will not suffer recrimination as a result of making a complaint unless it contains malicious unfounded allegations.

17.6 Confidentiality of complaints

The University expects the confidentiality of the documentation generated by a complaint to be respected by all parties. Where disclosure is necessary to progress a complaint, the affected party will be notified in advance of the disclosure.

17.7 Group Complaints

1. On occasions, a group of students might wish to raise a complaint. Under these circumstances, the best way to do so is by way of a single form submitted by an identified spokesperson. Each member of the group must agree in writing, by way of an attachment to the form, to the spokesperson and they will also be invited to submit separate copies of the equal opportunities monitoring form. Where separate forms are submitted, the University reserves the right to process them together.
2. The decision letter will be sent to the spokesperson (where applicable) at the early resolution and formal stages. However, as each member of the group would have the ultimate right to ask the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) to review their complaint if it remains unresolved after the final stage of the process (as per Section 17.11 of this Framework), separate Completion of Procedures Letters will be issued at that point.

17.8 Early Resolution (Stage One)

1. Students are invited to raise any issues informally with the appropriate members of staff, with a view to resolving any issues at a local level. The

appropriate members of staff include, but are not necessarily restricted to, the following:

- Academic: Programme/Programme Area Leader and/or Personal Development Tutor
- Accommodation: Campus Services Manager
- Equality and Diversity: Inclusion Co-ordinator
- Estates (apart from accommodation): Head of Estates
- Finance: Head of Finance
- IT: IT Services and Infrastructure Manager or Head of Digital Innovation
- Library: Head of Library
- Registry/Student Administration: Administrator to the Registrar
- Sports Centre: Sports Centre Operations Manager
- Welfare: Head of Student Support

Any issues that do not fall into these categories should be communicated to the Head of Student Support in the first instance.

2. Concerns can be raised either verbally or in writing at this stage. The appropriate member of staff will contact the student and discuss the concern with relevant colleagues before responding. A central record will not be kept at this point, although members of staff are encouraged to alert their senior managers and other relevant colleagues to any multiple concerns relating to the same issue, so that appropriate remedies can be considered.
3. If an informal remedy is not possible or appropriate, concerns should be raised in writing, stating the precise remedy sought, by way of the concerns pro-forma available from the Academic Standards Officer. An anonymous questionnaire for equality monitoring purposes will also be supplied at this point.

4. The concerns pro-forma should be returned to the Academic Standards Officer, who will normally forward it to an appropriate member of the Senior Management Team or Senate. However, complaints with regard to the way in which Human Resources has investigated an earlier complaint of alleged unacceptable conduct, on the part of a member of staff, will be escalated direct to the formal stage. This may also apply, at the discretion of the Academic Standards Officer in consultation with the Registrar, if the issues raised are particularly complex and require detailed consideration. In exceptional circumstances, a complainant may ask to initiate the formal process immediately and any such request will be considered on its merits.
5. All such concerns must be raised within twenty working days of the most recent event or decision to which they relate. Where a complainant fails to meet this deadline, the concern may be rejected on the grounds that a sound investigation can no longer be conducted.
6. The senior member of staff will investigate the concern and advise the Academic Standards Officer, supplying the precise sources of evidence that have been drawn upon so that an appropriate evidence base can be maintained centrally. The Academic Standards Officer will then respond in writing to the complainant, normally within fifteen working days of receipt of the complaint. If a delay is envisaged, the complainant will be notified in writing before the end of the fifteen working day period. Where a complainant requests additional information, every effort will be made to provide this within ten working days of the receipt of the request.
7. The senior member of staff may suspend consideration in exceptional circumstances, where relevant supporting evidence has not been supplied or a practicable remedy has not been proposed. Where additional information is requested from a complainant in order to clarify their concern, this should normally be received within twenty working days of the request. In such cases, where any discrepancies have not been addressed within this period the University reserves the right, exceptionally, to reject a concern without further consideration and issue a Completion of Procedures Letter accordingly.

17.9 Formal Stage (Stage Two)

1. If the complainant remains dissatisfied with the response from the relevant senior colleague, they should contact the Academic Standards Officer to request a Complaints Submission Form.
2. The Academic Standards Officer will supply the Complaints Submission Form, which (if not already supplied at the early resolution stage) will include an anonymous questionnaire for equality monitoring purposes, and indicate any possible sources of advice and support as appropriate. As per Section 17.8.2 of this Framework, the Academic Standards Officer will supply the form if a complaint is escalated immediately to the formal stage.
3. Completed Complaints Submission Forms must be received within twenty working days of the conclusion of the early resolution stage; otherwise, they will normally be rejected on the grounds that a sound investigation can no longer be conducted.
4. The complainant should send copies of any evidence supplied in support of their complaint, to avoid any risk that the originals will be lost. Moreover, complainants should respond to any communications relating to their complaint in a timely manner.
5. The Academic Standards Officer will normally acknowledge all complaints within five working days of receipt, and issue a decision within thirty-five working days of receipt if possible. If a delay is envisaged, the complainant will be notified in writing before the end of the thirty-five working day period. Where exceptional factors affect the timing of these procedures, reasonable attempts will be made to avoid undue delay in the processing of complaints. Where a complainant requests additional information, every effort will be made to provide this within ten working days of the receipt of the request.
6. Whilst every attempt will be made to expedite complaints that may require particularly swift action, due process will always be carried out and arrangements for Complaints Panel hearings will not be compromised.

7. On receipt of the completed submission form and associated evidence, the Academic Standards Officer will nominate a member of Senate, who has no involvement with the student or the complaint, to investigate the complaint. He or she will determine the witnesses to be called to the Complaints Panel and the documentation to be circulated to all parties in advance of the meeting, advised by the Academic Standards Officer as appropriate.
8. The member of Senate investigating a complaint may suspend consideration in exceptional circumstances, where relevant supporting evidence has not been supplied or a practicable remedy has not been proposed. Where additional information is requested from a complainant, this should normally be received within twenty working days of the request. In such cases, where any discrepancies have not been addressed within this period the University reserves the right, exceptionally, to reject a complaint without recourse to a Complaints Panel and issue a Completion of Procedures Letter accordingly.
9. Subject to any suspension of consideration as above, the Academic Standards Officer will convene a Complaints Panel. This shall comprise:
 - The member of Senate appointed to investigate the complaint (Chair).
 - A member of Senate or Programme/Programme Area Leader who has no involvement with the student or the complaint.
 - A member of the Executive Committee of the Student Union, normally the President or Deputy President, who also has no involvement with the student or the complaint.

The Academic Standards Officer, or a nominee, will act as Secretary to the Panel and proceedings may also be recorded, either electronically or by a minute taker, by mutual agreement. The Panel will not meet unless all members and the Secretary are present. The Academic Standards Officer will endeavour to secure an adequate gender balance in the Panel.

10. The complainant shall be informed of the date of the meeting of the Panel and the venue, which will normally be a formal meeting room on the University

campus, not less than ten working days in advance; this deadline can only be reduced with the complainant's written consent. They will be invited to appear in person but, in exceptional circumstances, the Panel may also hear a case, at the discretion of the Chair advised by the Academic Standards Officer, in their absence. A Panel can be scheduled at any time in the calendar year; however, reasonable steps will be taken to schedule it at a point in the year when the student would normally be present in the University.

11. The student may be accompanied by a 'friend', to provide support and speak only when instructed to do so by the student. The name and status of any such 'friend', who cannot be an employee of the University, must normally be notified to the Academic Standards Officer no less than five working days in advance of the hearing. The University must grant its consent beforehand for the 'friend' to attend the meeting. The student may also choose to call witnesses in his or her defence.
12. The Academic Standards Officer shall normally circulate the list of witnesses to be called, and all relevant documentation, to all parties not less than five working days before the meeting. Where this is not possible, the Academic Standards Officer will advise the complainant who will have the right to request a postponement. Complainants have the right to call witnesses on the same basis as the University; any such witnesses should also be notified to the Academic Standards Officer not less than five working days before the meeting.
13. The meeting will commence with private discussions within the Panel to clarify matters of process. The complainant will then be called to appear, along with any member of the University they have nominated, followed by the members of University staff involved in the complaint. The complainant and the members of University staff will then be invited to make a statement to the Panel, after which the Panel will interview all parties in order to obtain the information it requires to reach an informed decision. This may involve discussion between the complainant and the members of University staff, which must be conducted through the Chair of the Panel. The complainant will then be invited to make a final statement to the Panel, in the absence of the

members of University staff, after which the Panel shall consider its decision in private. In exceptional circumstances, the Panel might reserve its decision, pending the outcome of additional investigations and appropriate correspondence.

14. The Academic Standards Officer shall notify the complainant in writing of the Panel's decision, and the reasoning behind that decision, normally within five working days and not less than ten working days of the meeting. This letter, which will also constitute the official record of the meeting, will explain the grounds under which a complainant may request a review of the decision, and make it clear that if the complainant does not take the formal complaint to the review stage within the time limit for doing so the complaint will be closed automatically.
15. The University may award compensation to a complainant when a complaint is upheld either in whole or in part. A proposed compensatory payment is agreed, in the first instance, by a Complaints Panel. Compensatory payments can only be agreed by a Complaints Panel and cannot, therefore, be made at the early resolution stage (Stage One).
16. The University's compensation protocol for formal complaints will determine the level of the payment, and will be supplied to complainants for information where applicable. Payments that exceed a predetermined amount will be subject to the ratification of the University's Senior Management Team. Contestation of the payment offer can only be considered at the review stage (Stage Three) on the grounds that the outcome was unreasonable.

17.10 Review Stage (Stage Three)

1. The complainant may request a review of the decision on the following grounds only:
 - That the procedures were not followed properly.
 - That the decision maker(s) reached an unreasonable decision.

- That the student has new material evidence that they were unable, for valid reasons, to provide earlier in the process.
- That there is bias or reasonable perception of bias during the procedure.

Any such request must be submitted in writing to the Academic Standards Officer, within ten working days of the date of the letter communicating the decision.

2. The Academic Standards Officer will refer the challenge to a member of Senate or the Senior Management Team who has had no involvement with the student or the complaint. The challenge will be copied to University staff for information only, and no response from them will be sought or anticipated at this stage.
3. If valid grounds for doing so are identified, the Academic Standards Officer will convene another Complaints Panel under the formal stage of these procedures. This will be convened with a different membership to ensure objectivity. If valid grounds are not identified, the Academic Standards Officer will advise the complainant that the University's internal complaints procedures have been exhausted and issue a Completion of Procedures Letter accordingly (as per Section 17.11 of this Framework).
4. The review stage will normally be concluded within fifteen working days of the receipt of the challenge. If a delay is envisaged, the complainant will be notified in writing before the end of the fifteen working day period. Where it is agreed that another Complaints Panel should be convened under the formal stage of these procedures, the timescales set out in Section 17.9 of this Framework will apply and the processing time recorded for the complaint will be reset accordingly.

17.11 Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education

1. If a complainant remains dissatisfied after the appropriate internal processes have been exhausted, they can ask the University to issue a Completion of Procedures letter in order for the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) to review their complaint.
2. The University must issue a Completion of Procedures letter in order for the OIA to review a complaint. A Completion of Procedures letter will be issued automatically where valid grounds for re-hearing the complaint are not found at the review stage and otherwise on request. If a Completion of Procedures letter is issued before the review stage has been conducted, the letter will make it clear that the student has not completed the University's internal processes.
3. All requests for review must be made to the OIA within twelve months of the date of issue of a Completion of Procedures letter. For full details please contact <http://www.oiahe.org.uk>.

17.12 Annual Report

The Academic Standards Officer submits an annual report on student casework to Senate, detailing (anonymously) general matters or issues arising from complaints received during the previous academic session. The Academic Standards Officer will also collate and present anonymised monitoring information to Senate on a regular basis with regard to students who have made complaints. Senate will forward recommendations to other relevant bodies, such as the Board of Governors and the Student Experience Council, so that broad concerns can be shared and appropriate action taken.

17.13 Procedures at Partner Organisations

1. In accordance with the expectations set out in the UK Quality Code For Higher Education and the University's Collaborative Provision Regulations and Procedures, all students registered for the University's awards have the ultimate right to complain to the University, irrespective of where they are studying. This right of complaint, however, is not absolute and is subject to the precise wording of the partnership agreement.
2. The partner organisation, accordingly, should ensure that clear information and guidance with regard to formal complaints is made available to all students registered for the University's awards. This should include clear information about the sequence of processes involved and make clear the channels through which dissatisfied students can contact the University directly.
3. Once the internal procedures of the partner organisation have been fully exhausted, students who wish to take their case to the University for review should ask the Academic Standards Officer in writing if they are eligible to do so. The complainant may request a review of the decision on the following grounds only:
 - That the procedures were not followed properly.
 - That the decision maker(s) reached an unreasonable decision.
 - That the student has new material evidence that they were unable, for valid reasons, to provide earlier in the process.
 - That there is bias or reasonable perception of bias during the procedure.
4. If a case is eligible for review, the Academic Standards Officer will refer the challenge to a member of Senate or the Senior Management Team who has no involvement with the partnership. If the challenge is upheld, the case will be referred back to the partner organisation to be reheard under its own procedures. Otherwise, the University will not refer the case back to the partner organisation to be reheard and the Academic Standards Officer will

advise the student accordingly. This will include advice with regard to a student's further right of complaint to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) (as per Section 17.11 of this Framework). The review stage will normally be concluded within fifteen working days of the receipt of the request; if a delay is envisaged, the complainant will be notified in writing before the end of the fifteen working day period.

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