



NEW AND REVISED STUDENT REGULATIONS

2018/19

For changes to the General Regulations for Degrees by Research and Thesis and research degrees for the 2018/19 academic year, please see [here](#).

ALL REGULATIONS

- General editorial and formatting changes.
- Amendment of all references to academic 'year' to 'Stage' to increase the relevance of all regulations and policies to a wider variety of flexible programmes.
- Amendment of all references to 'Chief of Operations and Estates' to 'Director of Student and Academic Services', following the cessation of the former role.

CREDIT AND QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

- Addition of the following new definitions to *Chapter 6: Definitions of Key Terms*:
 - **6.2 Co-requisite Module:** *A Co-requisite refers to two or more modules a student is normally required to study at the same time within the same Stage of a programme. This is not necessarily the same as a Core module which students are required to study as a compulsory element of a particular programme.*
 - **6.5.4 Joint Honours:** *A Joint Honours programme is a programme demonstrating an even (or near even) split of 60 credits per Stage from each subject area.*
 - **6.16 Prerequisite Module:** *A Prerequisite refers to a module a student is normally required to study prior to studying a module for which it is a*

prerequisite. This is not necessarily the same as a Core module which students are required to study as a compulsory element of a particular programme.

- *Chapter 3: Credit-Bearing Modules: Aston Module Achievement (AMA)* has been updated to also refer to the new Aston Credits term.
- An additional sentence has been added to *Section 6.9: Definition of Level*, clarifying that all programmes should have sufficient credit available, appropriate to the qualification Level of the programme, for a student to achieve the award without studying credits of a higher Level.
- *Section 6.10: Definition of Module*, now specifies that modules may be offered in exact multiples of 15 credits, from 15 upwards, following the University-wide transition to a 15/30 credit module structure. Programmes seeking to remain outside of the agreed structure due to PSRB restrictions, either temporarily or permanently, will need to request an exemption from this regulation on either a temporary or permanent basis.
- An additional paragraph has been added to *Section 6.13: Ordinary Degree*, clarifying that the modules a student must study to achieve an Ordinary Degree award are determined by the Representations Board that transfers the student to this pathway, and that the Learning Outcomes of the original programme on which they were enrolled remain relevant.
- *Section 6.15: Pass Mark*, now clarifies that Level 4, 5 and 6 modules retain their 40% minimum pass mark when studied as part of an Integrated Masters or postgraduate programme.

GENERAL REGULATIONS FOR FOUNDATION, GRADUATE DIPLOMA, UNDERGRADUATE, AND POSTGRADUATE TAUGHT PROGRAMMES

- Addition of the following definitions to all General Programme Regulations:
 - *A **Co-requisite** refers to two or more modules a student is normally required to study at the same time within the same Stage of a programme. This is not necessarily the same as a Core module which students are required to study as a compulsory element of a particular programme.*
 - *A **Prerequisite** refers to a module a student is normally required to study prior to studying a module for which it is a prerequisite. This is not necessarily the same as a Core module which students are required to study as a compulsory element of a particular programme.*

- The definition of Exceptional Circumstances has been amended in all General Programme Regulations to reflect the University's Fit to Sit Policy for Examinations and Timed Assessments:
 - *Exceptional Circumstances are circumstances which cause the student to:*
 - a) *perform less well in coursework ~~or examinations~~ than might have been expected on the basis of other work, or*
 - b) *fail to meet submission deadlines.*
 - c) *fail to attend a timed assessment or examination.*

GENERAL REGULATIONS FOR UNDERGRADUATE AND INTEGRATED MASTERS PROGRAMMES

- To align with the University's transition to a 15/30 credit module structure, a Programme Board may now allow a student to progress whilst trailing up to 30 credits, but only if the credits are related to a single 30 credit module. Please read [Regulation 1.17](#) of the regulations for more information.
- To align with the University's transition to a 15/30 credit module structure, a student's right to referral has been increased from 40 credits to 45 credits. Regulations 6.2, 6.4, and the Options in the Case of Failure Table have been amended to reflect this.
- The previous Regulation 6.5.3 has been removed, relating to the Ordinary degree. This regulation related to return to an Honours pathway, which following previous amendments to Ordinary Degree regulations, is no longer viable.

GENERAL REGULATIONS FOR POSTGRADUATE TAUGHT PROGRAMMES

- The number of taught credits with numerical marks required for a postgraduate award to be made with either 'Merit' or 'Distinction' have been amended in Regulation 10.2.1 as follows:
 - *In order to award a Postgraduate Taught Programme with Merit or with Distinction at least ~~two-thirds~~ half of the taught credits required for the award should have numerical marks:*
 - a) *PG Cert: 30 ~~40~~ taught credits should have a numerical mark.*
 - b) *PG Dip: 60 ~~80~~ taught credits should have a numerical mark.*
 - c) *MSc: 60 ~~80~~ taught credits should have a numerical mark.*

The amendment has been made to allow for more effective RPL of relevant previous postgraduate qualifications to contribute to Aston awards.

GENERAL REGULATIONS FOR FOUNDATION DEGREE PROGRAMMES

- To align with the University's transition to a 15/30 credit module structure, a student's right to referral has been increased from 40 credits to 45 credits. Regulations 6.6, 6.8, and the Options in the Case of Failure Table have been amended to reflect this.

GENERAL REGULATIONS FOR GRADUATE DIPLOMA PROGRAMMES

- The definition of a Referred Assessment has been amended in line with the University's transition to a 15/30 credit module structure, allowing referral in up to 45 credits or up to one third of the taught credits for the programme, whichever is higher:
 - A **Referred Assessment** in a module is a new assessment in that module, of such form and timing as the [Board of Examiners](#) may determine, undertaken upon initial failure in that module without following any further tuition for the module. Referred assessments normally take place prior to the start of the next academic year. For Graduate Diploma Programmes, referred assessments in up to ~~40~~ 45 credits or up to one third of the taught credits, whichever is the higher credit total, may be taken at the next normal occasion.

GENERAL REGULATIONS FOR THE CONDUCT OF BOARDS OF EXAMINERS

- A number of changes have been made to *Section 2.6: Sufficient Evidence including Examination Papers and Scripts*:
 - *Regulation 2.6.2: Details of other final Stage non-examination assessments may be sent to the External Examiner(s) for approval in advance of the assessment being set. Programme Directors should agree which non-examination assessments are sent to External Examiner(s) at the outset of their tenure. (New Regulation)*
 - *Regulation 2.6.4: The guiding principle for any selection of scripts is that External Examiners will have enough evidence to determine that internal marking and classifications are of an appropriate standard and are consistent. External Examiners must see a sample of scripts from the top, the middle and the bottom of the range ~~and they must see all scripts of borderline candidates (normally, candidates whose overall average mark for the programme falls within 2% of a recognised mark boundary).~~*
- *Section 5.2: Exceptional Circumstances* has been amended in line with the University's Fit to Sit Policy for Examinations and other timed assessments, clarifying that examination-related exceptional circumstances are those that prevent a student from attending a timed assessment or examination only.

- The Criteria for the Appointment of External Examiners (Appendix 1) has been amended to allow external advisors and members of programme approval panels may be appointed as External Examiners after a period of five years has elapsed. The criteria now also specifies that an External Examiner appointment will not be considered reciprocal between institutions after a period of five years has elapsed since the date of the original appointment.

GUIDE TO EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

- An additional paragraph and minor amendments have been added to the 'What should I do if I feel I won't perform well in an exam?' section of the guidance, making explicit the University's Fit to Sit policy for examinations and timed assessments:
 - Please note, however, that if you attend an examination or other fixed time assessment, the University considers that you have declared yourself 'Fit to Sit' the assessment. Where you have declared yourself 'Fit to Sit', the Examination Board will normally consider you to have made a valid attempt at the assessment, subject to consideration of factors affecting performance which may arise subsequent to beginning the assessment.
- The section defining exceptional circumstances has been amended to reflect the Fit to Sit Policy:
 - Exceptional circumstances are circumstances which cause the student to:
 - a) Perform less well in coursework ~~or examinations~~ than might have been expected on the basis of other work, or
 - b) Fail to meet submission deadlines.
 - c) Fail to attend a timed assessment or examination.
- Jury Service has been added to the list of commonly accepted exceptional circumstances, and the following examples have been added to the list of circumstances that do not meet exceptional circumstances regulations:
 - Not following submission instructions, leading to incorrect, incomplete or non-submission.
 - Death of a pet (not including assistance animals)

ASSESSMENT POLICIES

- Section 1.7, relating to the marking of substantial Final Stage projects, has reclassified substantial as projects carrying more than 30 credits (previously 20 credits). These projects should be blind double-marked.
- A new Section 2 has been added, providing four guiding principles on Word Counts and Limits for assessments:

- Assessments that specify a word count should express this as either a single figure and/or a range.
- Assessments that specify a word count, either as a limit or range, should clearly articulate what is and is not considered part of the word count.
- When an assessment is determined to have exceeded the designated maximum word count by more than 10%, this will be taken into account during the marking process.
- There is no additional penalty for assessments that fall below a specified word limit or range.

EXAMINATION AND CLASS TEST REGULATIONS FOR CANDIDATES

- A new Section C has been added, defining the University's Fit to Sit Policy for examinations and timed assessments:
 - *By entering an assessment room and viewing an examination or assessment paper, students will be regarded as having deemed themselves fit to be able to undertake the assessment in question, subject to consideration of factors affecting performance which may arise subsequent to beginning an assessment which are notified to the Board of Examiners by the student. Where a student has deemed themselves fit to sit, the Examination Board will normally consider the student to have made a valid attempt at the assessment. (New Regulation)*
- A clarification has been added to Sections 10 and 25, regarding use of calculators, to confirm that where required, a type of calculator other than the Casio FX-83, Casio FX-85, HP10s or HP10s+ series may be specified via the assessment rubric.
- Regulations on the provision of dictionaries have been amended as follows:
 - ~~26: No dictionaries may be used in any examination except where the relevant School has given permission in advance for an appropriate foreign language dictionary, issued by the Examinations Office, to be used if requested.~~
 - 28: Erasmus and exchange students who wish to use a foreign language dictionary in examinations that allow the use of a foreign language dictionary, should indicate this on MAP (My Aston Portal) by the end of the third week of their enrolment. Candidates who wish to use a foreign language dictionary in examinations should indicate this on MAP (My Aston Portal) by the end of the third week of the commencement of each Stage of their programme. In no circumstances is a candidate allowed to use a dictionary which they have

brought into the examination room. Unless specified on the rubric, all students will have access to a copy of the Oxford English Dictionary to refer to.

INVIGILATION PROCEDURES FOR EXAMINATIONS

- Section 5 has been updated to reflect current Chief Invigilators report practice, as carbon copy forms are no longer used by the University:
 - *Chief Invigilators are required to complete and return the Chief Invigilator's report form at the end of the examination session. The Chief Invigilator can request a copy of the report by including their email contact details at the bottom of the report form. ~~The pink copy should be retained for the School Examinations Officer or the Chairman of the Board of Examiners.~~ Comments made in these reports are essential in monitoring the status of candidates (see #18 below) and invaluable in maintaining acceptable conditions in examination rooms.*
- A clarification has been added to Sections 16d and 27, regarding use of calculators, to confirm that where required, a type of calculator other than the Casio FX-83, Casio FX-85, HP10s or HP10s+ series may be specified via the assessment rubric.
- Section 17, regarding early invigilation checks during examinations, has been updated to reflect current policy on identity checks of students whose faces are obscured:
 - *After a few minutes, the Invigilators should walk along the aisles, checking Student ID cards and also that candidates have not left bags, notes or other unauthorised material near or on their desks. Any such material should be moved to the rear of the examination room. Also, a visual check of the calculator must be made at this time. If a candidate's face is obscured, check the students signature against the Examination folder for verification ~~please ask the student to sign the reverse of the pink attendance slip and check the Examination folder for verification.~~ If the student's details are not listed, bring the student to Examinations Office after the exam for identification purposes.*
- Section 26, regarding the provision of dictionaries, has been updated to reflect Exams Office procedure for the 2018-19 academic year:
 - *Erasmus and exchange students who wish to use a foreign language dictionary in examinations that allow the use of a foreign language dictionary, should indicate this on MAP (My Aston Portal) by the end of the third week of their enrolment. In no circumstances is a candidate allowed to use a dictionary which they have brought into the examination room. Unless*

specified on the rubric, all students will have access to a copy of the Oxford English Dictionary to refer to.

POLICY ON GIVING EFFECTIVE FEEDBACK ON ASSESSED WORK

- Section 9, regarding Examination feedback, now requires the provision of a Generic Feedback Report as a minimum level of feedback to students following all examination assessments.

REGULATIONS ON STUDENT DISCIPLINE

- A minor addition to Regulation B5.9 has been made, clarifying that in addition to exclusion, expulsion may also be imposed prior to the 10 day period for appeal has passed.
- Section C2, regarding the Procedure for Hearing Alleged Academic Offences, and the Role and Powers of the Academic Offences Officer, has been overhauled, replacing the previous two hearing Academic Offences hearing process with a single, two phase hearing process. Please read [Section C2](#) of the regulations for further information.
- Regulation D1.5 has been amended based on changes to the University's Tariff of Penalties for Academic Offences, now specifying that all Academic Offences of less than Severity Level 4 should be dealt with via the Tariff.

TARIFF OF PENALTIES FOR ACADEMIC OFFENCES

- A new Severity Level of Penalty for Academic Offences has been added to the Tariff, as a result of splitting the previous Severity 1 Penalty into two separate elements. Both Severity Levels of Penalties now also reference how they should be applied to Pass/Fail assessments:
 - Severity 1 Penalty: Up to 25% penalty to awarded mark obtained for the element of assessment.* For Pass/Fail assessments where no final mark is awarded, there will be no penalty to assessment result, but the offence will be added to the student's academic record.
 - Severity 2 Penalty: Up to 50% penalty to awarded mark obtained for the element of assessment.* For Pass/Fail assessments where no final mark is awarded, the element of assessment will be awarded a fail mark and a resit opportunity granted if applicable.

DISCIPLINARY BOARD PROCEDURES

- The Membership of the Disciplinary Board has been amended in Regulations 1.1 and 1.7 as follows:
 - *1.1: The membership of the Disciplinary Board shall be:*
 - a) *the Chair, appointed by the Senate*
 - b) *one ~~two~~ members of the Academic Staff, nominated by the Senate*
 - c) *one ~~two~~ members of the Academic Assembly, nominated by its Standing Committee*
 - d) *two students of the University, nominated by the President (or nominee) of the Students' Union. Sabbatical Officers of the University's Students' Union may also fulfil this role.*
 - *1.7: The quorum for the Board shall be the Chair, plus at least two ~~four~~ members, one of whom must be a student member and one of whom must be a staff member. If a quorum of members is not present at the Board, it shall be reconvened normally not more than fourteen days later.*

REGULATIONS ON FITNESS TO PRACTISE

- The Regulations on Fitness to Practise, particularly the process for FtP hearings, have been largely overhauled:
 - The list of programmes covered by FtP regulations has been rationalised, now showing a simple list of affected programmes and the date the list was last updated.
 - Minor clarifications to the Key Definitions of Appeals, Boards of Examiners, Expulsion, and Student Records & References.
 - Regulation B2.1 now clarifies that the Fitness to Practise Officer for each School will be a member of the academic staff registered with one of the health professions represented within the School.
- Regulations on Precautionary Exclusion have been significantly amended to mirror the University's Disciplinary Regulations, please read [Section B4](#) of the regulations for further information.
- A new Regulation, E4.2, has been added to clarify that the Fitness to Practise Committee may continue to deal with FtP cases even where a student has voluntarily withdrawn from the University, as long as the referral to the FtP Officer occurred whilst the student was registered with the University.
- The Fitness to Practise hearing process has been entirely overhauled, now comprising a three Stage hearing process:
 - Stage 1 – Establishment of Facts

- Stage 2 – Impairment of Fitness to Practise
- Stage 3 – Sanction

Please read Sections [E5.9 – E5.11](#) of the regulations for further information.

- A new Regulation, E5.14, has been added to clarify the process when a future review of a student's Fitness to Practise is required:
 - *For sanctions imposed under E5.13c and E5.13d above the Committee should state what the process is for reviewing the student's fitness to practise in the future. This includes the possibility of a reconvened Fitness to Practise Committee to review progress before any sanctions are removed.*
- A new Regulation, E7, has been added, clarifying the process for cases being heard by the FtP Committee for a subsequent time:
 - *Where cases are being considered by the Fitness to Practise Committee for a subsequent time (a review committee), the procedures for the Fitness to Practise Committee in [Section E5](#) will be applied accordingly.*
- An amendment has been made to Regulation G15, regarding appeals to the FtP Committee:
 - *The Committee shall have the power to make the following decisions:*
 - a) to accept or reject the appeal in whole or in part;*
 - b) to confirm or set aside the Warning given;*
 - c) ~~to agree an alternative outcome or outcomes as set out at E5.10~~
refer the matter to a differently constituted Fitness to Practise Committee.*

NEW REGULATORY DOCUMENTS

- University Approach to Award Calculation Algorithms
- Proforma for Timed and Permanent Programme Exemptions to 15/30 Credit Module Structure