Assessment Regulations for Undergraduate Programmes

(including relevant post-experience and Continuing Professional Development Awards)

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Technical updates of this document are undertaken on an annual basis to reflect changes to the University's organisational and management structures and to incorporate earlier, approved amendments to related policies, procedures and regulations.

This document relates to the current year. If you become aware of any previous versions that are available on-line, please notify SEO@bolton.ac.uk so that action can be taken to remove the document(s)

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Scope and applicability

These regulations apply to:

a) students whose programme of study commenced in 2021/22 or subsequent academic years; and

b) students whose programme of study commenced in previous academic years, but who have experienced an interruption to study or who failed to proceed to their next level of study.

For all students whose programme of study commenced before 2021/22, progression decision made on the previous academic session of 2020/21 shall stand. For all progression decisions made thereafter, these regulations shall be used.

Definitions

The following definitions are used in these regulations:

Academic year: A defined period, normally lasting twelve months, in which the delivery of a level of study, or a portion thereof, is undertaken.

Award: Any formal qualification awarded by the University to an individual student which may be either an end qualification or an exit award

Assessment Board: A committee to agree final student marks, to determine progression and award of an exit award or end qualification as outlined in the Regulations for the Organisation and Conduct of Assessment Boards.

Assessment component: An assessment component is one of the assessment items on a module, from which the final mark/outcome for the module is derived. This process is commonly referred to as summative assessment. Formative assessments are those which do not count towards the formal outcome of the module and are not considered to be assessment components for the purpose of these regulations.

End qualification: The target qualification for which the student is enrolled or registered.

Exit award: The highest level of award which a student achieves who has not successfully completed the end qualification.

Proceed: where an undergraduate student without 120 credits at one academic level is, as a result of the decision of the Assessment Board, allowed to start to study at the next academic level.

Programme of study: A collection of modules grouped under a specific title, the details of which have been approved by Senate as leading to an appropriate end qualification and/or exit awards. A programme can also be known as a course.

Progress: Where an undergraduate student gains 120 credits at an academic level, is deemed to have completed that level of study and may start to study at the next academic level.

PSRB: A Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body. This includes, but is not limited to, accrediting bodies and statutory bodies that deal with legal requirements and immigration.

Senate: Any reference to Senate in these regulations shall be deemed to include a reference to any committee of Senate to which Senate has delegated the relevant authority.

Stage: an amount of academic study and credit that normally corresponds to an academic level as outlined in the Programme Specification.

1. Course Regulations

1.1 There shall be course regulations in a form approved by Senate and incorporated into the programme specification.

1.2 In course regulations, any deviation from, or modification to these Regulations in respect of any programme shall require the approval of Senate.

2. Modules

2.1 Throughout all undergraduate programmes one credit is associated with ten hours of notional learning time. The distribution of the total notional learning time for a module shall be part of the module specification approved at the time of validation.

2.2 Normally, a student will not be permitted to study with attendance for more than 80 credits in one semester, unless this has been approved by the relevant programme leader and Assessment Board. In respect of part-time students, no more than 100 credits may normally be studied in an academic year.

2.3 Where a module is defined, atypically, as a pre-requisite module in the relevant programme specification, students must normally pass such a module before being allowed to proceed to take any linked further module(s). Exceptions may be allowed at the discretion of the Assessment Board, on the advice of the tutor(s) for the linked further module(s).

2.4 Credit-bearing modules shall be designated as one of Level 3 (Foundation) in the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF)[1], or FHEQ Level 4, FHEQ Level 5, FHEQ Level 6 and FHEQ Level 7, as per the Office for Students Sector recognised standards[2].

2.5 Modules may be designated as Core (compulsory) or Optional within a programme.

2.6 A student may normally only withdraw from a module within the first two weeks of the module commencing and with the approval of the Module Tutor and programme leader. A student will normally be required to take an alternate module for the appropriate number of credits and at the appropriate level of study, unless the student has withdrawn from the programme or suspended their studies. Withdrawal without permission and/or beyond this point without good reason will be recorded at an Assessment Board as a failure in the module (including any project or dissertation module).

3. Structure of University Awards

Note that the credit requirements specified for each qualification below are always the minimum and that individual programmes leading to these qualifications may require a greater volume of credit than the specified minimum.

3.1 A programme of study leading to a University Foundation Certificate shall consist of

[1] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/regulated-qualifications-framework-a-postcard

[2] Sector-recognised standards (officeforstudents.org.uk) (https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/53821cbf-5779-4380-bf2a-aa8f5c53ecd4/sector-recognised-standards.pdf)

modules to the value of at least 120 credits, including at least 100 credits at RQF Level 3 or higher. The University Foundation Certificate may be designated as either an end qualification or exit award.

3.2 A programme of study leading to a University Certificate of Higher Education shall consist of modules to the value of at least 120 credits at FHEQ Level 4 or higher or 100 credits at FHEQ Level 4 or higher and 20 credits at RQF Level 3. The University Certificate of Higher Education may be designated as either an end qualification or exit award.

3.3 A programme of study leading to a University Diploma of Higher Education, or a University Foundation Degree shall consist of modules to the value of 240 credits, including the following:

at least 120 credits as in 3.2 above and;
at least 120 credits at FHEQ Level 5 or higher or 100 credits at FHEQ Level 5 or higher and 20 credits at FHEQ Level 4.

The University Diploma of Higher Education may be designated as either an end qualification or exit award. A University Foundation Degree may be designated as an end qualification.

3.4 A programme of study leading to the award of a University Honours Degree shall consist of modules to the value of at least 360 credits, including the following:

at least 120 credits as in 3.2 above and;
at least 120 credits at FHEQ Level 5 or higher or 100 credits at FHEQ Level 5 or higher and 20 credits at FHEQ Level 4 and;
at least 120 credits at FHEQ Level 6 or higher.

The University Honours Degree may be designated as either an end qualification or exit award, where this is permitted by a PSRB.

3.5 A programme of study leading to the award of a University Integrated Master's Degree shall consist of modules to the value of at least 480 credits, including the following:

at least 120 credits as in 3.2 above and:
at least 120 credits at FHEQ Level 5 or higher or 100 credits at FHEQ Level 5 or higher and 20 credits at FHEQ Level 4 and:
at least 120 credits at FHEQ Level 6 and:
at least 120 credits at FHEQ Level 7.

A University Integrated Master's Degree may be an end qualification.

3.6 A programme of study leading to the award of a University Graduate Certificate shall consist of a minimum of 60 credits at FHEQ Level 6 or higher. A University Graduate Certificate may be an end qualification.

3.7 A programme of study leading to the award of a University Graduate Diploma shall consist of a minimum of 100 credits at FHEQ Level 6 or higher. A University Graduate Diploma may be an end qualification.

3.8 A programme of study leading to the award of a University Certificate in Education shall consist of at least 120 credits at FHEQ Level 5. A University Certificate in Education may be an end qualification.

4. Structure of other undergraduate awards

4.1 A programme of study leading to a Higher National Certificate (HNC) shall consist of modules to the value of at least 120 credits, including:

at least 100 credits at FHEQ Level 4 or higher and;
a maximum of 20 credits at RQF Level 3.

A Higher National Certificate may be designated as an end qualification.

4.2 A programme of study leading to a Higher National Diploma (HND) shall consist of modules to the value of at least 240 credits, including:

at least 120 credits at FHEQ Level 5 or higher and;
at least 100 credits at FHEQ Level 4 or higher and a maximum of 20 credits at RQF Level 3.

A Higher National Diploma may be designated as an end qualification.

4.3 A programme of study leading to the award of a University Certificate (of Continuing Professional Development) shall consist of modules taken at FHEQ Level 4 or higher to the volume approved for particular awards at validation. A University Certificate (of Continuing Professional Development) may be an end qualification.

4.4 A programme of study leading to the award of a University Diploma (of Continuing Professional Development) shall consist of modules taken at FHEQ Level 5 or higher to the volume approved for particular awards at validation. A University Diploma (of Continuing Professional Development) may be an end qualification.

4.5 A programme of study leading to the award of a University Advanced Diploma (of Continuing Professional Development) shall consist of modules taken at FHEQ Level 6 to the volume(s) approved for particular awards at validation. A University Advanced Diploma (of Continuing Professional Development) may be an end qualification.

5. Programmes of Study

5.1 Students may substitute studies undertaken at other institutions of higher education for Bolton-based modules where such studies constitute part of an exchange scheme or formal credit transfer or recognition agreement, the terms and conditions of which have been approved by Senate.

5.2 No student may undertake modules outside of his/her approved programme of study without the prior approval of the Academic Registrar.

6. Duration of study

6.1 The normal planned duration of the following programmes of study shall each be one year of full-time study (or its part-time equivalent):

University Foundation Certificate
University Certificate of Higher Education
Higher National Certificate (HNC)
Certificate in Education

6.2 The normal planned duration of the following programmes of study shall each be two years of

full-time study (or its part-time equivalent):

University Foundation Degree
University Diploma of Higher Education
Higher National Diploma (HND)

6.3 The normal planned duration of a University Degree/Degree with Honours shall be three years of full-time study (or its part-time equivalent). The normal duration of a University Degree/ Degree with Honours may be extended by one year by the incorporation of a level 3 Foundation Year into approved variants of a programme. This is extended by one year for sandwich programmes, where a full time Industrial Year Placement lasting 44 weeks is included between FHEQ levels 5 and 6.

6.4 The normal planned duration of an Integrated Master's Degree shall be four years of full-time study (or its part-time equivalent).

6.5 The normal planned duration of Continuing Professional Development programmes shall be related to the volume of credit making up the award and will be approved at the time of validation.

6.6 The normal planned duration of the Graduate Certificate programme shall be one semester of full-time study (or its part-time equivalent).

6.7 The normal planned duration of the Graduate Diploma programme shall be two semesters of full-time study (or its part-time equivalent).

6.8 The maximum period of registration is normally approximately twice the normal planned duration. The maximum period of registration will normally include any sabbatical periods taken out by a student. The Academic Registrar, may, having regard for the standard of the award and the course objectives and regulations, and on the advice of the Chair of the Assessment Board, use discretion to extend a student's registration period.

6.9 Where a PSRB requires that the maximum period of registration shall be different to that defined in these regulations, the requirement of the PSRB shall apply. Students shall be informed where the maximum period of registration is shorter than that outlined in 6.9.

7. Assessment

7.1 All modules shall be assessed in accordance with the University's agreed marking criteria, either by:

7.1.1 in-course assessment conducted during the semester(s) in which the module(s) is/are completed; or
7.1.2 examination during an examination period; or
7.1.3 a combination of both 7.1.1 and 7.1.2.

7.2 The method of assessment for each module, including the weighting for each element of the assessment, shall be notified to students.

7.3 In exceptional circumstances, with the approval of the Chair of the relevant Assessment Board, an alternate form of assessment to that outlined in the approved programme documentation, which covers the same Learning Outcomes, may be approved for students with individual needs, where this is supported by appropriate evidence and where such adjustments are deemed to be reasonable and can be made without

endangering the safety of the award or unduly providing any student with an advantage or disadvantage.

7.4 The minimum mark for a pass in each module shall be 40%. Where a student satisfies the examiners in a module, s/he shall be awarded the appropriate credits at the specified level. This shall normally be calculated through a simple weighted mean of the assessment components, so long as an attempt has been made in each component. Where a PSRB requires a pass mark in each component, this shall be recorded in the relevant module specification and notified to students.

7.5 A student who passes a module in which he/she has previously failed, shall be credited with the minimum mark for a pass at module level unless capping at the component level enables a better overall outcome for the student. This will not be the case where the assessment regulations for the programme explicitly specify otherwise.

7.6 A student shall normally be permitted one attempt to redeem unsatisfactory performance in a module. At the discretion of the Assessment Board, one further final attempt may be made to redeem unsatisfactory performance.

7.7 Normally, only University of Bolton modules may be used to calculate the classification of an award. Where a student has previously obtained a University (of Bolton) exit award or end qualification, the marks for modules from that previous qualification cannot be used to calculate the classification of a further University [award] (of Bolton) end qualification, unless the student agrees to surrender their previous qualification to avoid double counting of module marks.

7.8 Where a programme of study includes one or more periods of industrial/professional training or periods of study/work experience either in the UK or abroad, the student's performance may also be assessed in these periods and may contribute to the final assessment. Such periods shall be detailed in the relevant programme specification.

7.9 A student who has been awarded credit in a module shall not be permitted to be reassessed in that module with a view to improving his/her mark.

7.10 If students (by reason of absence, non-submission of work, or poor performance) do not satisfy an Assessment Board in assessment components for any module(s) and it is established to the satisfaction of the Assessment Board via the University's Mitigating Circumstances Regulations and Procedures that this was due to proven illness or other circumstances found valid on production of evidence, then the Board shall use its discretion to ensure that the students are not disadvantaged or advantaged as a result.

<u>Extensions</u>

7.11 In cases of illness or other extenuating circumstances, programme leaders (or equivalent) may allow assessments to be submitted late without penalty, following the submission of a completed extension form and relevant evidence. Such cases shall then be monitored by the Head of School or equivalent. The maximum extension to be granted under these circumstances is fourteen calendar days except for extensions for individual projects and artifacts which, at the discretion of the Programme Leader, may be longer than 14 days. Any request for an extension to a submission deadline must normally be made by the student, to the Module Tutor before the original submission date.

7.12 Requests for extensions for periods longer than 14 calendar days must be made using the University's Mitigating Circumstances Regulations and Procedures.

7.13 A Student who fails to submit assessment components by the prescribed date or the revised date as outlined in 7.11 and 7.12 shall be subject to the following penalties.

- Up to 7 calendar days late= 10 marks subtracted but if the assignment would normally gain a pass mark, then the final mark to be no lower than the pass mark for the assignment.

- More than 7 calendar days late = will be counted as non-submission and no marks will be recorded.

7.14 All assessed work should be submitted as specified in the Module Guide or equivalent. Coursework not submitted will be recorded as unsatisfactory and a mark of zero will be recorded.

7.15 Except where required by a PSRB, assessment items that are graded Pass/Fail only will not be accepted beyond the prescribed date or by the revised date as outlined in 7.11 and 7.12 and will be recorded as a Fail.

Word limits

7.16 Any relevant word limit for an assessment component shall be specified in the assessment brief. Students shall be informed in the programme handbook of any penalties to be applied if they exceed the specified word limit in a written assessment. This limit shall not include rubric associated with tables, figures, diagrams or appendices and reference lists at the end of the assessment but will include any direct quotations.

7.17 Where a word limit is specified for a written assessment, students shall include the number of words at the end of the assessment.

7.18 Students who exceed a specified word limit for a written assessment shall be subject to the following penalty system.

- Up to 10% over the specified **word length** = no penalty

- 10 – 20% over the specified indicative word length = 5 marks subtracted but if the assessment would normally gain a pass mark, then the final mark to be no lower than the pass mark for the assessment.

- More than 20% over the indicative word length = if the assessment would normally gain a pass mark, then the final mark to be the pass mark for the assessment.

8. Engagement

8.1 Students shall normally attend the scheduled learning and teaching events for each module. In respect of students pursuing a programme of study that includes online learning, this shall include scheduled activities and interactions.

8.2 Students shall be required to submit and/or attend each assessment component at the dates and times prescribed. Failure to submit in an assessment component without good reason shall result in the student being deemed unsatisfactory in the particular assessment component and a mark of 0 will be recorded.

8.3 Attendance shall be recorded for all elements of a programme of study. Students with poor attendance shall be reported to the relevant personal tutor for action who will

explore this in line with University and/or PSRB policy. An Assessment Board shall normally consider the quality of a student's engagement with their studies when considering whether to allow an additional final attempt to redeem unsatisfactory performance i.e. using engagement to determine whether to make repeat or refer and third attempts for undergraduate modules.

8.4 Students who fail to give formal notice in writing of their intention to withdraw from their programme or its elements and who do not complete assessments will normally be deemed to have failed the programme or its specific elements.

8.5 Students must formally request permission from their Head of School/ Centre Operational Lead in writing if they wish temporarily to suspend their studies.

9. Determination of results and action to be taken

9.1 The relevant Assessment Board shall determine for RQF Level 3, FHEQ Level 4 and FHEQ Level 5:

i. the student's mark for each module; and that
ii. the student has achieved a minimum of 80 credits and is therefore permitted to proceed to the next academic stage of the programme, or
iii. the student has achieved 120 credits at the relevant FHEQ Level and is therefore permitted to progress to the next academic stage of the programme, or
iv. the student be awarded the end qualification and with what classification, if any; or
v. the student not be permitted to proceed or progress to the next academic stage of the programme; or
vi. the student not be awarded the end qualification; and/or
vii. the student be awarded an exit award and be deemed to have completed their studies; or
viii. the student not be awarded a qualification and be deemed to have completed their studies.

9.2 The relevant Assessment Board shall determine for FHEQ Level 6;

i. the student's marks for each module; and that
ii. the student has achieved 120 credits at FHEQ Level 6 and is therefore permitted to progress to the next academic stage of the programme; or
iii. the student be awarded the end qualification and with what classification, if any; or
iv. the student not be awarded the end qualification; and/or
v. the student be awarded an exit award and be deemed to have completed their studies; or
vi. the student not be awarded a qualification and be deemed to have completed their studies.

9.3 The relevant Assessment Board shall determine for FHEQ Level 7 (for Integrated Master's degrees only):

i. the student's mark for each module; and that
ii. the student be awarded the end qualification and with what classification, if any; or the student not be awarded the end qualification; and/or
iii. the student be awarded an exit qualification and be deemed to have completed their studies; or
iv. the student not be awarded the end qualification and be deemed to have completed their studies.

9.4 A student shall only be permitted to continue to pursue a programme of study provided that it remains possible for him/her to complete the programme within the approved time-limit. In addition:

i. a student who has failed one or more core modules within a programme on two occasions may be offered a third, final attempt at the discretion of the Assessment Board. If the student fails to satisfy the examiners then the student shall be deemed to have failed and finished the programme;
ii. to ensure that no student has an unmanageable workload, no student may proceed to FHEQ Level 6 who has not gained 120 credits at FHEQ Level 4 and at least 80 credits at FHEQ Level 5;
iii. to ensure that no student has an unmanageable workload, no student may proceed to FHEQ Level 7 who has not gained 120 credits at FHEQ Level 5 and 120 credits at FHEQ Level 6;
iv. in a sandwich programme a student must pass the Industrial Year Placement Module as a requirement for enrolment in FHEQ level 6 and as a requirement for completion of the sandwich programme of study. A student who has satisfactorily completed FHEQ level 5 but who has failed to pass the Industrial Year Placement Module and who wishes to progress to level 6 must transfer to the alternative **non-sandwich** version of the programme at level 6.
v. A student who has achieved 120 credits at FHEQ Level 4 and a minimum of 80 credits at RQF Level 3, is permitted to progress to the next academic stage of the programme, provided the student has attempted all assessments at RQF Level 3, and the learning outcomes have been achieved at FHEQ level 4.

9.5 The relevant Assessment Board shall determine whether a student who:

i. has not been permitted to progress or proceed; or
ii. has not been recommended for the award of the end qualification and is not deemed to have completed their studies;
iii. be required either to: repeat the year with part time attendance, or reassessment only, in which case the student will retain the credits for each passed module and retrieve each failed module by undertaking one of the following:
    a. re-assessment in the failed module(s) with attendance on the module(s) during the following session (a 'repeat' decision).
    b. re-assessment in the failed module(s) without attendance at the next opportunity (a 'refer' decision); or
    c. re-assessment in the failed module(s) without attendance on the module(s) during the following session (a 'refer' decision);

9.6 An Assessment Board may decide that a student's profile of module results may be amended by the following process:

Compensation:

To decide that satisfactory overall performance can be used to compensate for unsatisfactory performance in a module with an aggregate mark normally no lower than 35 percent, the following shall apply. The mark is not adjusted and a pass is recorded and credit awarded, with a note that the instance of unsatisfactory performance has been compensated. This is at the discretion of the Assessment Board and will not be utilised where PSRB requirements deem that this may not be used. Compensation can apply to a maximum of modules worth, normally, one quarter of the total credits constituting a particular Stage of a student's programme of study.

10. Structure and content of re-assessments

10.1 Where a student is required to be re-assessed in one or more assessment components, the re-assessment shall be of the same structure as the assessment at the time of the initial failure, unless:

i. an alternate form of re-assessment has been approved for the purpose in which case this shall be stated in the relevant module specification and/or Module Guide; or
ii. the relevant Assessment Board decides that this is not practical.

Re-assessments shall be based upon the same syllabus as the original assessment.

10.2 Where a student is permitted to be re-assessed in one or more failed modules without attendance on the module(s), the following arrangements shall normally apply:

i. for re-assessment within one year of the initial failure, the re-assessment shall be of the same structure and be based upon the same syllabus as the assessment at the time of the initial failure unless;
    a. an alternate form of re-assessment has been approved for the purpose, in which case this shall be stated in the relevant module specification; or
    b. the relevant Assessment Board decides that this is not practical;
ii. for re-assessment beyond one year of the initial failure, where the structure of the assessment is different from that at the time of the initial failure and/or the re-assessment is to be based upon a different syllabus, the Head of School concerned shall make arrangements for the student to be:
    a. informed of changes in the structure of the assessment and the syllabus content; and
    b. offered, for an appropriate fee, the opportunity of attending relevant classes.

11. Award

11.1 Students will only be eligible for any particular end qualification or exit award defined below if it is defined as available within the programme specification for the programme of study; each end qualification or exit award will only be issued under the circumstances defined in the Regulations and Procedures for the Conferment of University awards.

11.2 To qualify for an end qualification or exit award, a candidate must:

i. have enrolled with the University before proceeding to the prescribed programme of study; and
ii. have paid all prescribed fees and charges; and
iii. in accordance with 11.3, 11.4, 11.5 and 11.6 below have satisfactorily completed a full-time or part-time programme of study, within the maximum period of time defined above.

11.3 A student who has satisfied the examiners in at least 120 credits at RQF Level 3 or higher, in accordance with 3.1 above, and in any other requirements as defined in the validated programme documentation, shall be eligible for the award of a University Foundation Certificate which is an unclassified award.

11.4 A student who has satisfied the examiners in at least 120 credits at FHEQ Level 4 or higher, in accordance with 3.2 above, and in any other requirements as defined in the validated programme documentation, shall be eligible for the award of a University Certificate of Higher Education which is an unclassified award or, where applicable, a Higher National Certificate as per 4.1 above, which is a classified award and uses the classification outlined in 12.4 below.

11.5 A student who has satisfied the examiners in at least 240 credits including a minimum of 120 credits at FHEQ Level 4 or higher and a minimum of 120 credits at FHEQ Level 5 or higher in accordance with 3.3 above, and in any other requirements as defined in the validated programme documentation, shall be eligible for the award of a University Diploma of Higher Education which is an unclassified award or, where applicable, a University Foundation Degree, or a Higher National Diploma as per 4.2 above, which are both classified awards and use the classification outlined in 12.4 below.

11.6 A student who has pursued a programme of study consisting of at least 360 credits in accordance with 3.4 above and who has satisfied the examiners in: a minimum of 120 credits at FHEQ Level 4 or higher; and a minimum of 120 credits at FHEQ Level 5 or higher; and a minimum of 120 credits at FHEQ Level 6, and in any other requirements as defined in the validated programme documentation, shall, where s/he satisfies the requirements of the classification scheme as approved by Senate (cf. 12.5 - 12.7 below), be recommended to Senate for the award of a University Honours Degree. A student who has satisfied the examiners in at least 300 credits in accordance with 3.4 above and who has a minimum of 60 credits at FHEQ Level 6 may be awarded an Ordinary Degree, which is an unclassified award.

11.7 A student who has satisfied the examiners in at least 480 credits at the FHEQ Levels specified in 3.5 above, and in any other requirements as defined in the validated programme documentation, shall be eligible for the award of an Integrated Master's Degree, classified according to the scheme described in 12.4 below.

11.8 A student who has satisfied the examiners in at least 120 credits at FHEQ Level 5 and in any other requirements as defined in the validated programme documentation shall be eligible for the award of a Certificate in Education, classified according to the scheme described in 12.4 below.

11.9 A student who has satisfied the examiners in at least the specified credits at FHEQ Level 4, 5, or 6 and in any other requirements as defined in the validated programme documentation shall be eligible for the award of a University Certificate, Diploma, or Advanced Diploma of Continuing Professional Development.

11.10 A student who has satisfied the examiners in at least 60 credits at FHEQ Level 6 and in any other requirements as defined in the validated programme documentation shall be eligible for the award of a University Graduate Certificate.

11.11 A student who has satisfied the examiners in at least 100 credits at FHEQ Level 6 and in any other requirements as defined in the validated programme documentation shall be eligible for the award of a University Graduate Diploma.

11.12 Students who register for certain end qualifications may be required by the course regulations to satisfy the Assessment Board in all those modules identified as requirements for the purposes of professional exemption.

11.13 Unless otherwise agreed by Senate in respect of specific courses, no student may receive more than one award for study on a course.

12. Classification

12.1 Higher National Certificates shall be accorded an overall grade based on the average mark for modules worth 120 credits at FHEQ Levels 4 and 5, which represent the best marks achieved by a student at those Levels, using the scheme in 12.4 below.

12.2 Higher National Diplomas and Foundation Degrees shall be accorded an overall grade based on the average mark for all modules at FHEQ Level 5, using the scheme in 12.4 below.

12.3 Integrated Master's Degrees shall be accorded an overall grade based on the average mark for all modules at FHEQ Level 7, using the scheme in 12.4 below.

12.4 The following scheme shall be used for the classification of Higher National Certificate, Higher National Diploma, Foundation Degree, Integrated Master's Degree, and Certificate in Education:

Grade	**Mark**
Distinction	70%-100%
Merit	60-69%
Pass	40-59%

Where the average falls into one of the following bands: 58.00 – 59.49 or 68.00 – 69.49; and a student has achieved marks clearly in a classification category higher than their average for modules worth at least 80 credits at the final programme level, then the student shall be awarded a qualification in the classification category one higher than that indicated by their average.

Where the average falls into one of the following bands: 59.50 – 59.99 and 69.50 – 69.99 then a student shall automatically be awarded an honours degree in the classification category one higher than that indicated by their average.

12.5 Honours degree students awarded **BEFORE** April 2024 shall be awarded the honours classification resulting from the application of one of the following algorithms:

Rule ACM20 (NB: this does not apply to Top-Up qualifications)
A weighted average of the marks from modules worth a total of 180 credits at FHEQ Levels 5 and 6 combined, including the marks from modules normally worth 60 credits at FHEQ Level 5 (weighted 30 percent) and marks from modules worth at least 120 credits at FHEQ Level 6 (weighted 70 percent), which represent the best marks achieved by a student at those Levels. Where the average falls unequivocally into one of the following bands: 48.00 - 49.49, 58.00 - 59.49, 68.00 - 69.49; and a student has achieved marks clearly in an honours classification category higher than their average for modules worth at least 120 credits, drawn from FHEQ Levels 5 and/or 6, then a student shall be awarded an honours degree in the classification category one higher than that indicated by their average.

OR

Rule ACM6
A simple average of the equally weighted marks from modules worth 120 credits at FHEQ Level 6 which represent the best marks achieved by a student at that Level. Where the average falls into one of the following bands: 48.00 - 49.49, 58.00 - 59.49, 68.00 - 69.49; and a student has achieved marks clearly in an honours classification category higher than their average for modules normally worth 60 credits, then a student shall be awarded an honours degree in the classification category one higher than that indicated by their average.

12.6 Honours degree students awarded **DURING OR AFTER** April 2024, shall be awarded the honours classification resulting from the application of one of the following algorithms:

12.6.1 Rule ACM20 shall apply to students who enrol on a bachelor's degree at levels 3, FHEQ level 4 and FHEQ level 5

Rule ACM20 (NB: this does NOT apply to Top-Up qualifications)

A weighted average of the marks from modules worth a total of 180 credits at FHEQ Levels 5 and 6 combined, including the marks from modules normally worth 60 credits at FHEQ Level 5 (weighted 33 percent) and marks from modules worth at least 120 credits at FHEQ Level 6 (weighted 67 percent), which represent the best marks achieved by a student at those Levels.

Where the average falls unequivocally into one of the following bands: 48.00 - 49.49, 58.00 - 59.49, 68.00 - 69.49; and a student has achieved marks clearly in an honours classification category higher than their average for modules worth at least 120 credits, drawn from FHEQ Levels 5 and/or 6, then a student shall be awarded an honours degree in the classification category one higher than that indicated by their average.

12.6.2 Rule ACM6 shall apply to students who enrolled on a 1-year Top Up programme of study at FHEQ level 6

Rule ACM6

A simple average of the equally weighted marks from modules worth 120 credits at FHEQ Level 6 which represent the best marks achieved by a student at that Level.

Where the average falls into one of the following bands: 48.00 - 49.49, 58.00 - 59.49, 68.00 - 69.49; and a student has achieved marks clearly in an honours classification category higher than their average for modules normally worth 60 credits, then a student shall be awarded an honours degree in the classification category one higher than that indicated by their average.

12.7 Students who have attained the required standard according to the classification scheme shall be awarded the degree with honours classification as follows:

Honours degree students shall be awarded the honours classification resulting from the application of the following algorithms:

First Class	70-100%
Second Class Division I	60-69%
Second Class Division II	50-59%
Third Class	40-49%

Where the average falls into one of the following bands: 49.50 – 49.99, 59.50 – 59.99, and 69.50 – 69.99 then a student shall be awarded an honours degree in the classification category one higher than that indicated by their average.

13. Equality Impact Assessment

"The University of Bolton is committed to the promotion of equality, diversity and a supportive environment for all members of our community. Our commitment to equality and diversity means that this policy has been screened in relation to the

use of plain English, the promotion of the positive duty in relation to race, gender and disability and avoidance of discrimination to other equality groups related to age, sexual orientation, religion or belief or gender reassignment."

14. Other Related Policies

14.1 Other relevant regulations/policies are given on the Student Policy Zone

15. Monitoring and Review

15.1 These regulations will be monitored by the Standards and Enhancement Office.

15.2 The regulations will be reviewed every three years.

16. Dissemination and Access

16.1 These regulations will be available on the University's website (Student Policy Zone).

ANNEX A Qualifications Descriptors[3]

1. Qualification descriptors set out the generic outcomes and attributes expected for the award of a particular type of qualification (for example a bachelors' degree with honours). They describe the minimum acceptable level of achievement that a student has to demonstrate to be eligible for an award. They are 'generic' because they describe the outcomes and attributes expected from any subject of study, rather than from any particular subject, and so are applicable across subjects and modes of study.

2. The qualification descriptors set out below describe the threshold academic standard for those qualification types in terms of the levels of knowledge and understanding and the types of abilities that holders of the relevant qualification are expected to have.

3. The qualification descriptors are in two parts. The first part is a statement of outcomes, achievement of which is assessed and which a student should be able to demonstrate for the award of the qualification. This is a statement of the threshold academic standard for the qualification. This part is of particular relevance to providers in designing, approving, assessing and reviewing academic programmes. The second part of the descriptor is a statement of the wider abilities that a typical student would be expected to have developed. It assists providers to understand the general capabilities expected of holders of the qualification.

4. Each qualification descriptor sets out the outcomes for the typical or main qualification type at each level. At most levels there is more than one type of qualification that may be achieved (for example postgraduate diplomas and certificates in addition to master's degrees at Level 7). Within each level, the various types of qualifications involve different volumes of learning (for example master's degrees entail more learning than postgraduate certificates). As a consequence, there are differences in the range and nature of outcomes and attributes expected of students. Not all of the qualification types at each level therefore meet all of the expectations of the qualification descriptor. Where a qualification type has a smaller volume of learning than the main qualification type, the qualification descriptor for the degree is used as a reference point and the sub-degree qualification is expected to meet the descriptor in part. This is also the approach taken for individual modules, where credit is awarded for completion of a smaller volume of learning than the main qualification type.

Descriptor for a higher education qualification at Level 4: Certificate of Higher Education

5. The descriptor provided for this level is for any Certificate of Higher Education, which should meet the descriptor in full. This qualification descriptor should also be used as a reference point for other qualifications aligned with Level 4.

6. Certificates of Higher Education are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

   - knowledge of the underlying concepts and principles associated with their area(s) of study, and an ability to evaluate and interpret these within the context of that area of study
   - an ability to present, evaluate and interpret qualitative and quantitative data, in order to develop lines of argument and make sound judgements in accordance with basic theories and concepts of their subject(s) of study.

[3] The content of Annex A is drawn from 'Sector-recognised standards', effective from 1 May 2022. See Sector-recognised standards (officeforstudents.org.uk) (https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/53821cbf-5779-4380-bf2a-aa8f5c53ecd4/sector-recognised-standards.pdf)

7. Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

    - evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems related to their area(s) of study and/or work
    - communicate the results of their study/work accurately and reliably, and with structured and coherent arguments
    - undertake further training and develop new skills within a structured and managed environment.

8. And holders will have:

    - the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of some personal responsibility.

9. Holders of a Certificate of Higher Education will have a sound knowledge of the basic concepts of a subject, and will have learned how to take different approaches to solving problems. They will be able to communicate accurately and will have the qualities needed for employment requiring the exercise of some personal responsibility. The Certificate of Higher Education may be a first step towards obtaining higher level qualifications.

Descriptor for a higher education qualification at Level 5: Foundation degree

10. The descriptor provided for this level is for any foundation degree which should meet the descriptor in full. This qualification descriptor should also be used as a reference point for other qualifications at Level 5, including Diplomas of Higher Education and Higher National Diplomas.

11. Foundation degrees are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

    - knowledge and critical understanding of the well-established principles of their area(s) of study, and of the way in which those principles have developed

    - ability to apply underlying concepts and principles outside the context in which they were first studied, including, where appropriate, the application of those principles in an employment context

    - knowledge of the main methods of enquiry in the subject(s) relevant to the named award, and ability to evaluate critically the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems in the field of study

    - an understanding of the limits of their knowledge, and how this influences analyses and interpretations based on that knowledge.

12. Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

    - use a range of established techniques to initiate and undertake critical analysis of information, and to propose solutions to problems arising from that analysis

    - effectively communicate information, arguments and analysis in a variety of forms to specialist and non-specialist audiences and deploy key techniques of the discipline effectively 7

    - undertake further training, develop existing skills and acquire new competences that will enable them to assume significant responsibility within organisations.

13. And holders will have:

    - the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making.

14. The foundation degree is an example of a qualification that meets, in full, the expectations of the qualification descriptor.

15. Holders of qualifications at this level will have developed a sound understanding of the principles in their field of study, and will have learned to apply those principles more widely. Through this, they will have learned to evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems. Their studies may well have had a vocational orientation, for example HNDs, enabling them to perform effectively in their chosen field. Holders of qualifications at this level will have the qualities necessary for employment in situations requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making.

Descriptor for a higher education qualification at Level 6: Bachelors' degree with honours

16. The descriptor provided for this level is for any bachelors' degree with honours which should meet the descriptor in full. This qualification descriptor should also be used as a reference point for other qualifications at Level 6, including bachelors' degrees, and graduate diplomas.

17. Bachelors' degrees with honours are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

    - a systematic understanding of key aspects of their field of study, including acquisition of coherent and detailed knowledge, at least some of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of defined aspects of a discipline

    - an ability to deploy accurately established techniques of analysis and enquiry within a discipline

    - conceptual understanding that enables the student:

    - to devise and sustain arguments, and/or to solve problems, using ideas and techniques, some of which are at the forefront of a discipline

    - to describe and comment upon particular aspects of current research, or equivalent advanced scholarship, in the discipline

    - an appreciation of the uncertainty, ambiguity and limits of knowledge

    - the ability to manage their own learning, and to make use of scholarly reviews and primary sources (for example, refereed research articles and/or original materials appropriate to the discipline).

18. Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

    - apply the methods and techniques that they have learned to review, consolidate, extend and apply their knowledge and understanding, and to initiate and carry out projects

    - critically evaluate arguments, assumptions, abstract concepts and data (that may be incomplete), to make judgements, and to frame appropriate questions to achieve a solution – or identify a range of solutions – to a problem

    - communicate information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialist and non-specialist audiences.

19. And holders will have:

    - the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:

        - the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility

- decision-making in complex and unpredictable contexts

- the learning ability needed to undertake appropriate further training of a professional or equivalent nature.

20. Holders of a bachelor's degree with honours will have developed an understanding of a complex body of knowledge, some of it at the current boundaries of an academic discipline. Through this, the holder will have developed analytical techniques and problem-solving skills that can be applied in many types of employment. The holder of such a qualification will be able to evaluate evidence, arguments and assumptions, to reach sound judgements and to communicate them effectively.

21. Holders of a bachelor's degree with honours should have the qualities needed for employment in situations requiring the exercise of personal responsibility, and decision-making in complex and unpredictable circumstances.

ANNEX B Honours Degree Classification Criteria[4]

The University's *General Assessment Guidelines*, published separately, are used by staff when marking students' written work. Those detailed and comprehensive Guidelines are incorporated within the University's Module Guide Template and Assessment Feedback Proforma, as appropriate to the Level of the module concerned. Students' assessed work (except for Pass/Fail assessments and modules) is given a numerical mark which reflects the extent to which it meets the relevant assessment criteria. Module marks are then calculated by combining the marks for individual pieces of assessed work, as defined in the assessment pattern from the module specification. The honours degree classification rules from Section 12 above then determine how a student's individual module marks are combined to arrive at an average mark, which in turn determines the final honours degree classification. As a result of the foregoing, a graduate with the marks indicated below will be expected to have demonstrated the generic skills and attributes attached to their respective classification, as set out in the following:

Below 40 percent **Not successful**	**40-49 percent** **Third-class honours**	**50-59 percent** **Lower second- class honours**	**60-69 percent** **Upper second- class honours**	**70-100 percent** **First-class honours**
The student did not achieve the required course learning outcomes and:	**The student achieved all their required course learning outcomes and:**	**The student achieved all their required course learning outcomes and:**	**The student achieved all their required course learning outcomes and:**	**The student achieved all their required course learning outcomes and:**
did not consistently demonstrate sufficient knowledge and understanding, cognitive, practical and transferable skills	demonstrated knowledge and understanding, cognitive, practical and transferable skills	demonstrated strong knowledge and understanding, cognitive, practical and transferable skills	demonstrated thorough knowledge and understanding, cognitive, practical and transferable skills	consistently demonstrated advanced knowledge and understanding, cognitive, practical and transferable skills

[4] The content of Annex B is drawn from 'Sector-recognised standards', effective from 1 May 2022. See Sector-recognised standards (officeforstudents.org.uk) (https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/53821cbf-5779-4380-bf2a-aa8f5c53ecd4/sector-recognised-standards.pdf)

did not consistently demonstrate adequate initiative and personal responsibility	demonstrated initiative and exercised personal responsibility	demonstrated initiative and personal responsibility	demonstrated good initiative and personal responsibility	consistently demonstrated exceptional initiative and personal responsibility
did not consistently demonstrate ability to reflect on their work	demonstrated some ability to reflect on their work	demonstrated an ability to reflect on their work	demonstrated an ability to reflect critically on their work	consistently demonstrated ability to reflect critically and independently on their work
did not consistently demonstrate problem-solving skills	demonstrated problem-solving skills	demonstrated strong problem- solving skills	demonstrated thorough problem- solving skills	consistently demonstrated exceptional problem-solving skills

ANNEX C: Rules For The Use Of Combined Studies Award Titles

1. Combined Studies award titles may be used to appropriately recognise successful completion of a programme of study in a particular subject area or areas when a student negotiates an individualised programme of study in one or more subjects (sometimes with transfer of credit for prior learning), or when a student has otherwise not completed a route leading to the usual award title. The latter occurs, for instance, when students do not complete one or more of the core modules prescribed for a programme but do nevertheless complete the required number of modules from the group to justify a named award.

2. Whether the negotiation of an alternative programme of study arises from necessity or desire, both the student and the relevant programme authority should be satisfied that the learning outcomes to be achieved through completion of the alternative programme are appropriate for the title and level of the proposed award. This will require a process of academic counselling to take place, with subsequent, written approval of the alternative programme at the level of the School Assessment Board before registration is confirmed or amended.

3. In all cases, of course, students must have obtained the required number of credits at the appropriate levels to qualify for the award in question, as specified in the Assessment Regulations for Undergraduate Programmes.

Rules

Single subject
Combined Studies *in Subject A*

Joint subjects
Subject A and Combined Studies *in Subject B*
Combined Studies *in Subject A* and Subject B

Major/minor
Subject A with Combined Studies *in Subject B*
Combined Studies *in Subject A* with Subject B

Minor/minor/minor
Combined Studies *in Subject A* with Subject B with Subject C

The phrase '*in Subject x*' can be omitted in those cases so marked above to account for other possibilities, e.g. where there is insufficient subject identity to (that part of) the programme to warrant a subject title at all. Generic award titles (e.g. Humanities, Science, and Technology) will need to be proposed by Schools if they wish to use them. They might then be used in place of '*Subject x*' should the student's programme warrant it.

ASSESSMENT REGULATIONS FOR UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES	
Policy ref: SEO/1	
Version number	09
Version date	August 2021, updated May 2022, October 2022
Developer/Reviewer	Academic Registrar/SPPA
Policy Owner (Group/Centre/Unit)	SEO
Person responsible for implementation (post-holder)	Assessment Board Chairs, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic Strategy), Assistant vice Chancellor (Academic Operations), Deans, Heads of School/ Centre, Operational Leads, SEO
Approving committee/board	Senate
Date approved	June 2014, revised July 2018 with further revisions October 2018, June 2019, February 2021, August 2021, December 2022
Effective from	2022-23
Dissemination method e.g. website	Website
Review frequency	Every three years
Reviewing committee	Senate
Consultation history (individuals/group consulted and dates)	Drafts of the original regulations have been considered by: Education Committee Senate Academic Coordinators SEO
Document history (e.g. rationale for and dates of previous amendments)	The 2015 version incorporates a clarification related to Foundation Years, approved at Senate in March 2015, changes in departmental nomenclature and in qualification titles (approved through the validation process in line with PSRB requirements). Changes to extensions added December 2015. The 2018 version incorporates clarification of language, updating of role titles and arrangements for condonement. The 2019 version clarifies some of the nomenclature relating to Level 3. The 2019 version updates the regulations regarding compensation. The February 2021 version updates the credit volumes used in Rules ACM 20 and ACM 6 (paragraph 12.5) to align with the credit volume of modules. In May 2022 minor rephrasing and no substantive changes to meaning or content. October 2022 amendments to better reflect the Office for Students' Sector-recognised Standards, primarily via adjustments to some qualification credit profiles, and adding a new Annex A and Annex B.