

GUIDANCE REGARDING ASSESSMENT BOARDS

The Assessment Board for a programme is constituted and will operate according to the University of Bolton's policies and regulations in force at the time the board meets.

The relevant regulations can be found on the University's website at:

<http://www.bolton.ac.uk/Quality/RP/APPR/Home.aspx>

These show both undergraduate and postgraduate regulations; you should follow the link to the regulations relevant to your programme of study.

Where there are approved variations to the regulations above, these are specified in the relevant Programme Handbook and course regulations.

1 Assessment for students with disabilities

The University is keen to support students who have difficulties in undertaking the normal methods of assessment. A statement to this effect is provided in the Regulations on the Assessment and Examination of Students guide published by the University. The following transcript is taken from this guide:

3.4.3 The Assessment of Students with Disabilities or Affected by Special Circumstances

If a student gives prior notice that he/she cannot be assessed in the normal way because of a disability or special circumstances beyond his/her control, at the discretion of the Academic Group Leader or Chair of the Board of Examiners arrangements may be made to carry out the assessment in whatever way is deemed appropriate.

For students based at Bolton, there are Disability Officers available in the Student Centre to give support and guidance to students with additional needs in the preparation for and during assessment times. Students at partner institutions should ask their programme leaders for details of what arrangements are in place at their institution.

2 Publication of results

Notification of final awards will be published following the relevant Assessment Boards. Results will not be given over the telephone.

Students can access their own module results once they are confirmed by the appropriate Assessment Board by going to the University's website (<http://www.bolton.ac.uk>), selecting "Student Portal", then "My Details".

3 The meanings of "defer", "refer", "retake" and "repeat" in assessment board decisions

Assessment Boards will often use these words to describe the outcome of a student who has not passed a module, but who is not yet being prevented from having further attempts. In outline:

Defer means submit the affected items by a date / time as notified by the relevant board. It involves being given extra time without further penalty, usually because a mitigating circumstances or appeal application has been made and has been accepted. Sometimes longer defer periods are granted, on an individual basis.

Refer means submit only those items that were not passed, which will be capped at 40%, by a fixed date / time as notified at the relevant board. Students do not have to resubmit items that previously passed.

Retake means retake ALL of the module's assessment items including those that had previously been passed, all of which will be capped at 40%, by a fixed date/time as notified at the relevant board. Students have to do everything afresh, including those items previously passed. Students do not have to undertake and attend the module again.

Repeat means attend the module again fully next time it is available, so a student with a repeat decision **MUST NOT** submit any work until it is due for the module when they attend it. The student has to pay the module fees, and is normally capped at 40% for the assessment, all of which they must take afresh.

Refer 2 or **Second Refer** is used where an *undergraduate* student who is subject to a refer does not succeed with their second attempt and the assessment board decides to give a third attempt as a refer (rather than, for example, a retake or a repeat). Postgraduate students do not have third attempts.

4 Appealing against the decision of an Assessment Board

All assessment results have to pass through a rigorous set of procedures to ensure that we are transparent and fair. However, if you are unhappy about any of the assessment results you have achieved, you should in the first instance speak to your module tutor. You can also speak to your personal tutor for guidance. Your module tutor will talk you through your results, and explain how you achieved the marks given. If the tutor has made a mistake this can be corrected (e.g. incorrect totalling of marks), but you can't challenge the tutor's academic judgement about the work – there are systems of internal and external moderation to ensure this is done correctly.

Whilst the majority of students will be happy with such an informal tutorial, there will be some who want to take this a stage further. You have the right to appeal against the decision of an Assessment Board (see below) provided you do so **within 14 days of being notified of the result**. Appeals received after this deadline will not be considered unless there is a compelling reason, backed up by reliable evidence, for the delay to the appeal. Notification will be deemed to have occurred as soon as the results are present on the student records system at:

<http://www.bolton.ac.uk/Students/MyDetails/Home.aspx>

Visit the following web site for information about how to appeal, and a form to use for the appeal:

<http://www.bolton.ac.uk/Students/PoliciesProceduresRegulations/Appeals-Procedure.aspx>

Note that your appeal must be sent to the name and address specified on the form.

You make your appeal in writing by using the form available at this link, and then sending it to the Secretary to the Senate, giving the reasons and wherever possible including supporting evidence, **within fourteen days** of the publication of examination results.

5 Grounds for appealing against the decision of an assessment board

These are presented in brief. Please see the full regulations for details:

<http://www.bolton.ac.uk/Students/PoliciesProceduresRegulations/Appeals-Procedure.aspx>

Valid grounds are:

- 5.1 illness or some other factor which affected performance but which a student was unable to divulge before the Assessment Board made its decision;
- 5.2 a material administrative error; the assessments were not conducted in accordance with the University's regulations; or some other irregularity;
- 5.3 the decision of an Assessment Board about the use of unfair means or the unreasonably severe academic action which followed.

The grounds for review do not include questioning the academic judgement of an assessment board.

Advice and guidance, prior to lodging an appeal, may be obtained from the following:

- (i) Module Tutor
- (ii) Personal Tutor
- (iii) Programme Leader
- (iv) Academic Group Leader
- (v) Student Liaison Officer
- (vi) President of the Students' Union
- (vii) Head of Student Services or Student Information Services Staff
- (viii) Associate Dean, Standards and Enhancement
- (ix) Secretary to Senate.

6 Appealing "mitigating circumstances" decisions, or making such circumstances known later than normally required

Your appeal may be wholly or in part concerned with the rejection of your application for "mitigating circumstances" (a claim that your performance in assessment has been affected by severe medical circumstances, bereavement etc the information and regulations regarding MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES for details and guidance), or perhaps that you needed to but could not apply for mitigating circumstances by the deadline set.

Follow the appeals procedure above carefully, but note that if you include in your appeal evidence of mitigating circumstances that was not submitted using the orange envelope system by the normal deadline, you have two cases to make:

- 6.1 Firstly, about the mitigating circumstances themselves, with evidence as explained in the MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES guidance and regulations;
- 6.2 Secondly, an explanation, with evidence, of why you were prevented from submitting these to the normal timescale.

Because the second requirement is additional to what is required to make a claim by the normal timescale, it is in your interests to make your claim by the normal timescale if you possibly can.