Section D: Assessment

These are the standard University academic regulations. Students must also refer to their programme documentation, where any non-standard regulations will be explained.

Contents
Section D: Assessment ................................................................. 1
AST1 Extenuating Circumstances ...................................................... 2
AST2 Late assessment (taught programmes only) .................................. 5
AST2.1 Late Submission of Coursework ............................................. 5
AST2.2 Late arrival at a formal examination ...................................... 6
AST2.3 Late arrival at an assessment on a professional programme .......... 6
AST3 How to pass a Level (undergraduate only) .............................. 6
AST4 How to pass a module (taught programmes) ............................ 7
AST5 Procedure in the event of failure (taught programmes) ................ 9
AST5.1 Compensation ........................................................................ 9
AST5.2 Referral and repeat ............................................................... 10
AST5.3 Exclusion of a Student on the Grounds of Unsatisfactory Progress (either Academic or in Terms of Professional Development) .......... 14
AST6 Subject Assessment Panels and Award Assessment Boards (Taught programmes / modules) .................................................. 15
AST6.1 Subject Assessment Panels .................................................. 16
AST6.2 Award Assessment Boards .................................................. 17
AST7 External Examiners ................................................................ 20
AST8 Progression for research degrees ............................................. 20
AST9 Examination and Outcome of Examination (PGR only) .............. 20
AST10 Examination and Academic Offences (Taught and Research programmes, including Research Misconduct) ................................ 21
AST10.1 Examination Offences – Taught programmes ........................ 21
AST10.2 Academic Offences Regulations ......................................... 26
AST10.3 Research Misconduct (Postgraduate Research degrees only) .... 33
AST11 Appeal Against the Decision of an Assessment Board (Taught students) or Academic Decision (Research students) .................. 34
This section should be read alongside the University assessment policy. Definitions of assessment terms are set out in the glossary.

**AST1 Extenuating Circumstances**

This regulation applies to all students taking taught modules or research degree milestones at University of Plymouth sites of delivery, and in all UK and international partnerships unless a non-standard regulation has been formally approved.

Students subject to immigration control should be aware that there may be additional restrictions on their progression. Information about current Tier 4 requirements is available from the International Student Advisory Service (ISAS).

This regulation should be read alongside the University's Extenuating Circumstances Policy and Procedures, which sets out detailed guidance for students on what may and may not be considered as extenuating circumstances. The document also sets out the procedures that a student must follow when they believe they have extenuating circumstances relating to assessment.

In this section, the word ‘University’ refers to the Faculty (students on taught modules), the partner institution (for students in partner institutions) or the Graduate School (for research degree milestones), as appropriate.

1. **Extenuating circumstances are unexpected circumstances which:**
   - affect a student’s ability to attend or complete an assessment or a number of assessments;
   - are exceptional;
   - are outside a student’s control; and
   - can be supported by independent evidence (unless self-certifiable).

Consideration of extenuating circumstances ensures that a student is not disadvantaged by these circumstances, while also maintaining academic standards.

All claims of extenuating circumstance will be treated carefully and in confidence.

2. **The University operates a ‘fit-to-sit’ policy.** If a student believes that their academic performance will be affected by personal or health circumstances, they must submit an extenuating circumstances form, and must not sit the exam or complete / submit the assessment. If a student sits an exam or completes / submits an assessment, this will be taken as a declaration that they consider themselves fit to do so, and will count as an attempt.
3. If a student believes that their academic performance will be affected by personal or health circumstances, they must submit details to the University on the appropriate form and provide relevant corroborative evidence as soon as possible, and no later than ten working days after the assessment deadline.

Claims submitted outside published deadlines will not normally be approved.

4. All claims, other than those that are self-certified, must be accompanied by independent supporting documentation that shows the nature, timing and evidence of the problem, and the effect the problem has had on the student’s performance. Supporting evidence should not be retrospective.

Information on what may be acceptable supporting evidence is available in the Extenuating circumstances policy and procedures for students on taught programmes.

The University recognises that some illnesses can be short-lived and do not require medical attention, but can be severe in their effects and prevent a student’s engagement with assessment activities. If a student has an illness for which medical advice would not normally be sought, that has a duration of five days or less, but is severe in its effects (e.g. gastroenteritis, severe migraine), preventing their engagement with assessment activity, they may self-certify their circumstances instead of providing independent medical evidence. Self-certification is allowed only once in each academic year.

5. Marks will not be adjusted, even if a student has valid extenuating circumstances. Improvement to marks can only be achieved by reassessment.

Details of how extenuating circumstances may be taken into account are set out in the Extenuating circumstances policy and procedures for students on taught programmes.

The procedure for considering extenuating circumstances claims is set out in the Extenuating circumstances policy and procedures for students on taught programmes.

6. Valid extenuating circumstances claims will not be carried forward automatically to cover future assessments. A student must submit a claim for each assessment affected.

7. Students have the right to appeal the University’s decision whether or not to accept an Extenuating Circumstances claim. These appeals must be submitted
within ten working days of the University informing the student of the outcome of the extenuating circumstances claim.

Appeals against extenuating circumstances decisions can be made only on the following grounds:

a  A material and demonstrable procedural irregularity in the Extenuating Circumstances process.

b  Evidence that the University did not consider all of the information available to it at the time of its consideration of the claim.

Appeals will not be considered on the following grounds:

a  Dissatisfaction with the judgement of the University in its consideration of the Extenuating Circumstances claim,

b.  Late submission of an application for Extenuating Circumstances, where there are no compelling reasons why the application was made late.

c.  Late submission of evidence to support an Extenuating Circumstances claim, where there are no compelling reasons why the evidence was submitted late.

Appeals will be considered through the University’s appeals process, available at https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/student-life/your-studies/essential-information/complaints-appeals-and-conduct.

8. Appeals against an extenuating circumstances decision cannot be made once an Award Assessment Board or examining team has made a progression decision.

Students who want to appeal against a progression decision on the basis of extenuating circumstances should follow the University’s standard appeals procedure.

9. The outcome of any appeal against a University decision in relation to Extenuating Circumstances is final and will not be considered again later as an appeal against the decision of the Award Assessment Board (taught modules) or examining team (PGR milestones).
**AST2**  
**Late assessment (taught programmes only)**

This regulation applies to all students on taught programmes at University of Plymouth sites of delivery, and in all UK and international partnerships unless a non-standard regulation has been formally approved.

Students subject to immigration control should be aware that there may be additional restrictions on their progression. Information about current Tier 4 requirements is available from the [International Student Advisory Service (ISAS)](https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/student-life/student-services/international-student-advisory-service).

**AST2.1**  
**Late Submission of Coursework**

1. Coursework that is assessed with a numerical mark will be capped at the minimum pass mark if it is submitted within the first 24 hours after the deadline date and time.

   Coursework that is assessed with a numerical mark will be awarded a mark of zero if submitted more than 24 hours late.

2. Coursework that is assessed on a pass/fail basis will be awarded a Fail if it is submitted after the deadline date and time.

The 24 hours will apply to the next University working day, irrespective of programme term dates.

Some programmes may not apply the '24 hour' rule because of professional, regulatory or statutory body requirements.

Members of academic staff cannot grant extensions to deadlines for submission of coursework. A student who misses a deadline, or believes that they will miss a deadline, due to circumstances beyond their control should submit extenuating circumstances as set out in Regulation [AST4](#). The student will normally be given a maximum of 10 working days after the original deadline to submit the work. There may be times where, because of the nature of the assessment task, or the time available to provide marks to an assessment panel, a period of more or fewer than 10 days is allowed. Where this is the case, tutors should tell students and the Faculty Office in advance.

This extra period will not normally apply to the resit period for which an absolute deadline is already set, nor to any other deadline date for marks to be considered by Subject Assessment Panels/Award Assessment Boards. The final deadline for submitting the coursework will be confirmed in writing by the Faculty Office.
3 Coursework which is submitted after the deadline will be marked but the results will not be published onto the official record until any extenuating circumstances have been considered. Informal feedback may be given on the quality of the work submitted.

If there are valid extenuating circumstances, the actual result achieved will be entered onto the record and submitted to the Subject Assessment Panel and Award Assessment Board, or PGR examining team.

If the circumstances are not considered valid, the normal penalty for submitting late will be applied, as set out in AST2.1 (1) above.

AST2.2 Late arrival at a formal examination

4. If a student arrives late to a formal University examination, they will not be allowed to enter the examination room if the examination has been in progress for more than 30 minutes, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

If a student arrives to an examination late, and is allowed to sit their examination (within 30 minutes of the start), they will not be given extra time at the end of the examination to make up for the time missed at the beginning.

AST2.3 Late arrival at an assessment on a professional programme.

5. Students on programmes leading to professional registration might not be allowed to sit an assessment if they arrive late.

The decision on whether to allow a student on a professional programme to go into an assessment late will take into account factors such as:

- whether the student’s professionalism is being assessed as a competence standard
- the security of the assessment
- the logistics of admitting a student late
- whether allowing a student late admittance will disadvantage any other students.

The relevant Programme or Module Handbooks should state clearly whether or not students will be allowed to take an assessment if they arrive late.

AST3 How to pass a Level (undergraduate only)

This regulation applies to undergraduate students at University of Plymouth sites of delivery, and in all UK and international partnerships unless a non-standard regulation has been formally approved.
Students subject to immigration control should be aware that there may be additional restrictions on their progression. Information about current Tier 4 requirements is available from the International Student Advisory Service (ISAS).

1. A student must pass 120 credits to complete the Level and progress or graduate.

2. A full-time student must complete a Level before being allowed to progress to the next Level, unless an extended referral has been awarded.

An extended referral allows a student to progress to the next Level of study while completing referral work in a maximum of 20 credits. The student will be required to complete that referral work by the November of the next academic year. It prevents a student from having to repeat a whole year of study, just to pass 20 credits. Further information on extended referral is available in AST5.2 (5), below.

An Award Assessment Board will normally meet at the end of the Summer term and in September. The Faculties will make local arrangements to review the provisional marks of the immersive module at the appropriate time in order to identify those students requiring an in-year referral.

A final year student may be given an extended referral opportunity, which will mean that they can complete referral assessment by the November of the next academic year, without having to attend. Final year students can only complete extended referral work in a maximum of 20 credits. The student will then be considered at the next round of assessment Panels and Boards (normally the end of the summer term).

AST4 How to pass a module (taught programmes)

This regulation applies to all students on taught programmes at University of Plymouth sites of delivery, and in all UK and international partnerships unless a non-standard regulation has been formally approved.

Students subject to immigration control should be aware that there may be additional restrictions on their progression. Information about current Tier 4 requirements is available from the International Student Advisory Service (ISAS).

1. Students cannot re-take modules that have already been successfully completed.
2. The pass mark for an undergraduate module (Levels 0 and 4-6) is 40%. Students on HNC/D programmes will, in addition, be awarded grades of Pass (40-59%), Merit (60-69%) or Distinction (70% or over) for all modules.

Where module assessment involves more than one element, a student is also required to achieve a minimum of 30% in each element. A module may be approved with the requirement that a student achieve a higher mark than 30% in each of the elements.

An element might not be one single piece of work, but instead might be the weighted marks achieved for one type of assessment (e.g. the ‘coursework’ element may be made up of more than one essay).

Normally, where a module is approved with the requirement that a student achieve a higher mark than 30% in each of the elements, this will require a pass (40%) in either or both elements of assessment. Non-standard requirements will be approved only where an accrediting professional body requires an alternative minimum achievement.

3. The pass mark for a postgraduate Level 7 module is 50%.

Where module assessment involves more than one element, a student is also required to achieve a minimum of 40% in each element. A Level 7 module may be approved with the requirement that a student achieve a higher mark than 40% in each element.

While Level 7 modules are most commonly found in postgraduate taught awards, undergraduate students should be aware that Integrated Masters programmes will, and Graduate Diplomas might, also include Level 7 modules.

Normally, where a module is approved with the requirement that a student achieve a higher mark than 40% in each of the elements, this will require a pass (50%) in either or both elements of assessment. Non-standard requirements will be approved only where an accrediting professional body requires an alternative minimum achievement.

4. Where a postgraduate programme includes modules approved at Level 6 (undergraduate level), the pass mark for the undergraduate modules will be 40%.
For the purposes of the calculation of awards with Merit or Distinction (see AWD1, below), the marks awarded by the relevant undergraduate module assessment will be used.

**AST5 Procedure in the event of failure (taught programmes)**

This regulation applies to all students on taught programmes at University of Plymouth sites of delivery, and in all UK and international partnerships unless a non-standard regulation has been formally approved.

Students subject to immigration control should be aware that there may be additional restrictions on their progression. Information about current Tier 4 requirements is available from the International Student Advisory Service (ISAS).

**AST5.1 Compensation**

1. Where a student fails one or more taught modules, the Award Assessment Board may compensate for the failure, provided that the module mark(s) is/are within 5 marks (postgraduate taught modules) or 10 marks (undergraduate modules) of the pass mark.

2. The maximum compensation allowed within each award is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>Credits allowed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate awards</td>
<td>20 credits per Level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate Certificate</td>
<td>0 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate Diploma</td>
<td>20 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masters Degree</td>
<td>30 credits</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Compensation will be considered only at the Award Assessment Board when the full module profile is known.

If the original module mark achieved was below the pass mark, the original mark will remain after compensation. If the original module mark was above the pass mark (e.g. where failure is due to failing to meet minimum required standards in one element), the mark will be reduced to the pass mark.

Compensation cannot be applied for any module where assessments are marked on a pass/fail basis, i.e. no marks are awarded.
Compensation cannot be applied to the in-year referral for the immersive module.

Students studying taught modules as part of a postgraduate research degree will not be eligible for compensation.

A part time undergraduate student may be awarded a compensated pass only at the point when the student has attempted 120 credits of a Level.

While there should be no compensation for an individual module taken as accredited CPD, a module taken as accredited Professional Development may be compensated (dependent on the module status) when it contributes to a programme or an award.

**AST5.2 Referral and repeat**

Definitions of assessment terms such as referral and repeat are set out in the glossary.

3. **An undergraduate student who fails any component of the immersive module in the first semester will be required to complete an in-year referral in the failed component by week 15.**

Referred work in the immersive module will be capped at element level, as per regulation **AST5.2 (11),** below.

A student who fails the immersive module in the first semester, and is required to take a referral, is required to refer only those components which they failed.

A student who fails any other module and is required to take a referral will normally be required to refer only the element(s) of the module which s/he failed.

A student who fails and is required to repeat a module will normally be required to repeat all elements unless there is, for example, a substantial laboratory/fieldwork element which has been completed to a good standard where timetabling or other logistical problems may otherwise occur. In such cases the Award Assessment Board will set out what is to be retaken.

4. **Where a student fails one or more taught modules, the Award Assessment Board may:**

   - **award compensation in a maximum number credits, if permitted in AST5.1 above, and make an award based on the aggregate mark achieved.**
   - **allow the student to be referred in the module(s), in whole or in part of each element of assessment, at the next available opportunity;** a
A student who has already been given a referral opportunity, but is unsuccessful in that referral, will normally be required to repeat the module in its entirety.

The Award Assessment Board should make its decision on whether to compensate or refer an undergraduate student at the final stage based on the student's potential to achieve a higher classification on referral.

A student who fails to submit referred assessment or fails to attend a referral examination will be awarded a mark of zero for that element. Students should consider the likelihood of their success in referred assessments. Students may choose to repeat module(s) instead. If a student chooses to repeat the module(s), they must pay the standard fee and repeat all elements of the module.

The form of the referred assessment does not have to be the same as the form of assessment which was originally failed. It is the responsibility of the Award Assessment Board to specify the form of the reassessment. However, if the form of the reassessment is different (including cases where the nature of the examination or coursework has changed) students should be told in writing, via the student transcript and accompanying letter. A student may only be referred in a Co-Curriculum Module (e.g. Learning Through Volunteering/Student Ambassador Modules) if their overall level of failure is within the limits found appropriate by the Award Assessment Board and described at AST 5.2 (4) above. If not, a student may be required to re-take any failed Co-Curriculum Module(s) during the next academic year.

If a student has extenuating circumstances that will prevent them from completing the award during the normal period of registration, or has prevented them from making academic
progress in the previous session, the Board decision will be subject to a case conference
being held in line with the Fitness to Study Policy.

The decision to withdraw a student should be an exceptional decision, taken only when it is
clearly in the student’s best interests, and usually after the opportunity to repeat the failed
modules has been applied (unless there are associated Fitness to Practise issues for those
students on programmes leading to professional registration). Section AST3 refers.

5. Where an undergraduate student has failed a referred assessment in up to 20
credits (or has failed referred assessment in one 30 credit module), the Board
may exceptionally allow the student to progress and offer a further referral
opportunity (an extended referral) during the next session, based on a
judgement of the student’s overall performance and potential.

A final year undergraduate student may be given an extended referral opportunity, which will
mean that they can complete referral assessment by the November of the next academic
year, without having to attend. Final year students can only complete extended referral work
in a maximum of 20 credits. The student will then be considered at the next round of
assessment Panels and Boards (normally the end of the summer term).

The Award Assessment Board may determine the form of the reassessment. Where the
referral takes the form of coursework, the submission deadline should normally be set for the
end of November and, while marks are provisional, feedback should be given to students by
the end of the Autumn Term (with academic staff consulting with External Examiners over
any borderline marks). This would enable the University to advise students who had failed at
their final attempt of their options and, in particular, to give students the opportunity to
withdraw by the end of the first week of the following term, thereby avoiding liability for the
full year’s fees. Referred examinations/fieldwork will normally be taken on the next occasion
on which the examination/fieldwork is scheduled.

6. Where a student fails the dissertation/major project module, the Award
Assessment Board may at its discretion, based on a judgement of the
student’s overall performance and potential:

- allow the student to resubmit the work under its original title. The deadline
  for submission should be no more than sixteen weeks from the date of
  publication of results; or

- require the student to submit a new dissertation/project, by a date to be
determined by the Board; or

- require the student to withdraw from the programme; or

- require a student whose extenuating circumstances will prevent the
completion of the award during the normal period of registration, or has prevented them from making academic progress in the previous session, to suspend or withdraw from the programme.

If a programme team does not want dissertation credit to contribute to a Postgraduate Certificate / Diploma, they should request approval of a non-standard regulation.

7. **Where a student on an undergraduate award is required to take a reassessment,** the original rule for passing the module will apply, unless the Award Assessment Board has specified a single module assessment in substitution for both elements, in which case the student must achieve 40% in that assessment.

   A student on a postgraduate taught award who is being reassessed in an element of assessment must achieve a pass mark in that element. The student will fail the reassessment if s/he does not pass the reassessed elements even if s/he achieves a module mark of 50% (for a level 7 module) or 40% (for a Level 6 undergraduate module). The original rule for passing the module will apply for a student being reassessed in or retaking more than one element of assessment.

   A student who fails the referral or repeat because they have not achieved the required mark in the reassessed element (even if they achieve the overall aggregate module pass mark) will still be eligible for compensation, as set out in AST5.1, above.

8. **Where there are valid extenuating circumstances,** the Board may allow a student to take referrals in the appropriate assessments at the next available opportunity even if they have failed more credits than can normally be referred. To be eligible for such a referral, students should have shown enough academic progress during the year to suggest that they have the potential to achieve all the credits in which they have been referred.

   If the summer Award Assessment Board requires a final stage student to repeat failed modules under Regulation AST5.2 (4), that student can ask for referrals only in the number of credits required to achieve an Ordinary Degree (rather than an honours degree).

   If the student wants to return to the University to “top up” to Honours, they will have to re-apply for admission, normally no less than two years after the award of the Degree. The University’s decision on re-admission will be final.
9. An undergraduate student will be allowed a maximum of three attempts at a module. A failed module may not be referred or repeated on more than two occasions.

An undergraduate student on a Level 0 programme will be allowed a maximum of two attempts at a module. A failed module may not be referred or repeated on more than one occasion.

A postgraduate taught student will be allowed a maximum of two attempts at a module. A failed module may not normally be referred or repeated on more than one occasion.

Where a student has valid extenuating circumstances, a referral or repeat will be offered as a same attempt and will not, therefore, count as an additional attempt towards the maximum number of attempts allowed.

10. If a student studies a different module instead of the failed module, the number of attempts at the original module will count towards the maximum number of attempts at the new module.

11. Where a failed module is successfully referred or repeated, the mark for the referred/repeated element(s) will be capped at the pass mark, and the capped mark(s) will be used when calculating the overall module mark.

If a student has repeated the module, with or without attendance, all elements will be capped at the pass mark.

Marks will not be capped if the referral or repeat is taken as a first attempt.

Where students are transferring to a new programme and/or subject area, and taking a large number of new modules (perhaps 60 credits), Award Assessment Boards may allow students to be given whatever mark is achieved at the second or final attempt. The reasons for such an exception must be discussed with the External Examiner and recorded in the minutes.

AST5.3 Exclusion of a Student on the Grounds of Unsatisfactory Progress (either Academic or in Terms of Professional Development)

This regulation applies to all taught students at University of Plymouth sites of delivery, and in all UK and international partnerships unless a non-standard regulation has been formally approved.
1. A student who the Chair of an Award Assessment Board, in consultation with the Programme Leader, considers to be making unsatisfactory progress (either academic or in terms of professional development), or whose conduct is unethical or unprofessional or dangerous, may be required to withdraw from a programme of study.

The Board will not normally require a student to withdraw from a programme of study unless:

- the University can demonstrate it communicated with the student to monitor academic or professional engagement; and
- the student has not demonstrated that they have addressed the issues raised in that communication.

If a student continues to demonstrate unsatisfactory academic or professional engagement, a written formal warning will be issued by the Faculty Registrar (or nominee) or HE Co-ordinator (Partner Institutions) after consultation with the Programme Leader, setting out the reasons for the warning. If the problem is not resolved, the Award Assessment Board may require the student to withdraw.

**AST6 Subject Assessment Panels and Award Assessment Boards**

This regulation applies to all taught students at University of Plymouth sites of delivery, and in all UK and international partnerships unless a non-standard regulation has been formally approved.

1. The main purpose of Subject Assessment Panels and Award Assessment Boards is to make sure that the underlying principles of assessment at the University have been upheld:

   - To provide a fair and reliable measure of students' performance, knowledge and skills against the learning outcomes and discipline pedagogy.
   - To give University stakeholders confidence that a student has achieved the necessary level of achievement, giving a reliable and consistent basis for their award.

2. Subject Assessment Panels (with Subject External Examiners in attendance) are set up to confirm or modify module marks, to review the standard of assessment in the 'subject' and to decide on recommendations on the form of
referral for individual modules.

The confirmed marks and recommendations are then considered by the Award Assessment Board (with the Award External Examiner in attendance) which makes decisions on the final result for each student on a particular award or group of awards.

3. For postgraduate programmes, an interim Award Assessment Board must be held at the end of taught modules, with the final Board meeting at the end of the programme, to make decisions on final awards.

Operational instructions for Subject Assessment Panels and Award Assessment Boards are available here.

**AST6.1 Subject Assessment Panels**

4. The membership of the Panel will be:
   - Chair (the subject leader or equivalent),
   - Internal Examiners for all subject (or group of subjects) modules,
   - the Subject External Examiner(s), and
   - the Faculty Business Manager (or HE Administrator in a partner institution) or nominee acting as Secretary to the Panel (non-voting member).

   The membership for a Panel in a partner institution will also include a representative from Academic Partnerships, normally a Faculty Partnership Manager (FPM).

All Internal Examiners must be present at the Panel. If, due to unforeseen circumstances, an Internal Examiner is prevented from attending a Panel, they must make sure that they give the Panel written comments on the marks and the standard of assessment in the module(s).

Subject External Examiners are required to be involved with the standards of assessment in all modules which contribute to a final award, and must attend the relevant Panel meetings.

5. The Subject Assessment Panel will consider the results of all modules in the subject, regardless of the programme or award on which the students are registered.

   The responsibilities of the Panel are to:

   a) review the standard of assessment in the subject, and to make sure that
appropriate academic standards are maintained at subject level in modules and across centres, as appropriate, including discussion of the data provided on marks distribution for modules,

b) confirm or modify module marks. An Award Assessment Board cannot alter marks once they have been confirmed by a Panel, unless an error is discovered,

c) discuss any problems with assessment (not about individual students),

d) make recommendations on the form of referral assessment for individual modules, which will be forwarded to the Award Assessment Board by the Chair of the Panel or nominee,

e) receive information from the Panels/Committees of Investigation on substantiated examination and academic offences, which must be fully recorded in the notes of the Panel,

f) receive the report from the Subject External Examiner(s) for the previous academic year, and any written response/action plan, to ensure that all issues that were raised have been addressed.

The Panel does not receive details of extenuating circumstances relating to individual students, and does not consider the overall performance of individual students.

Issues raised in the annual reports of the Subject External Examiner(s) will be discussed by the staff involved in the Subject Assessment Panel. Discussion may take place at a special meeting of the Subject Assessment Panel or an alternative forum if more appropriate. A written response will then be agreed. If appropriate, the Chair of the Award Assessment Board (or the Head of School) could co-ordinate the responses from Panels to the External Examiner(s)).

6 All discussions of the Subject Assessment Panel must be recorded formally in the minutes.

AST6.2 Award Assessment Boards

7. The membership of the Award Assessment Board will be:
   • Chair (the Head of School or nominee, or a representative of Academic Partnerships, for partner institutions),
   • the Chair of each contributing Subject Assessment Panel or nominee,
- the Programme Manager(s) or equivalent,
- the Award External Examiner(s) (for stages where marks contribute to the final award classification),
- the Faculty Business Manager or HE Administrator in a Partner Institution (or Nominee) as secretary to the Board (non-voting member).

The Faculty Business Manager or nominee will normally attend to make sure that the University's Regulations are followed, and that decisions are clear and unambiguous.

Where the Panel and Board are joined into one meeting, the Subject External Examiners must be present for the Panel business, but cannot participate in the Award Assessment Board discussions.

The membership of the Award Assessment Board may be extended to include Subject External Examiners and other Internal Examiners where this is a requirement for professional accreditation. In such cases the membership of the Award Assessment Board must be clearly set out in the current Award definitive document.

The Award External Examiner must be present at the Board. If an Award External Examiner is unable to attend an Assessment Board, a replacement appointment will be made by the relevant Dean after appropriate consultation from amongst the other Subject or Award External Examiners.

8. The responsibilities of the Award Assessment Board are:

   a) To make decisions on progression, if appropriate, and awards for all students registered for the named award(s) for which the Board is responsible.

   b) To ensure that decisions are made fairly and democratically, and that justice is done to the individual student, in line with the appropriate University Academic Assessment Regulations (and any approved modifications for the particular award stated in the programme documentation),

   c) To make sure that academic standards of student performance are being maintained at award level, based on the reports received from each of the constituent Subject Assessment Panel chairs on the standard of assessment in subjects/modules, and are comparable with similar awards in other UK institutions, in the expert opinion of the Award External Examiner.

   d) To make sure that all valid extenuating circumstances relating to individual students have been fully taken into account before a decision is reached.
e) To report and discuss, where appropriate, any examination or assessment offences and take appropriate action. The Award Assessment Board will accept the recommended penalty unless the wider assessment profile means that the penalty is no longer appropriate (if, for example, a student has committed multiple offences across a programme, the penalty may be increased).

f) To receive formally the Award External Examiner's report for the previous academic year, and any written response/action plan, to make sure that all issues that were raised have been discussed.

9. The Award Assessment Board may not alter the marks agreed at a Subject Assessment Panel except where there has been an error.

10. All discussions of the Award Assessment Board must be formally recorded in the minutes.

All decisions relating to students with extenuating circumstances, any discussion of cases of examination and assessment offences, and any other instances where a Board has used its discretion, should be recorded in the minutes very carefully.

11. An Award Assessment Board runs under delegated authority from Senate. The Award Assessment Board chair cannot agree standards and, therefore, the phrase ‘Chair’s Action’ should not be used.

The action which can be taken by Chairs between meetings of the Award Assessment Board should be set out clearly. The Summer Board should, if possible, make decisions for students with outstanding assessments that if ‘X’ is achieved then ‘Y’ degree/award will be conferred; such decisions should be clearly recorded in the minutes. Results for such students can then be released if they satisfy the requirements. If ‘X’ is not achieved there would have to be a meeting of the Award Assessment Board (as a Referred Board), with a membership agreed by the Summer Board.

12. The Referred Board will confirm marks, and make decisions on progression and awards.
The Referred Board is an Award Assessment Board convened to consider the assessment profiles of students who have completed referred assessments.

**AST7  External Examiners**

1. **External Examiners must be appointed for all programmes leading to a University award, whether delivered within the University or at one of its partner institutions.**

2. **External Examiners must meet the University’s published criteria for appointment.**

Criteria for the selection and appointment of a subject or award external examiner for a taught award can be found [here](#).

Criteria for the selection and appointment of an external examiner for a postgraduate research award can be found [here](#).

3. **The University has clearly defined the roles, powers and responsibilities assigned to its external examiners.**

Roles and responsibilities for external examiners for taught awards can be found [here](#).

Roles and responsibilities for external examiners for postgraduate research awards can be found [here](#).

**AST8  Progression for research degrees**

Please see the [Research Degrees Handbook](#) for further information.

**AST9  Examination and Outcome of Examination (PGR only)**

Please see the [Research Degrees Handbook](#) for further information.
AST10 Examination and Academic Offences (Taught and Research programmes, including Research Misconduct)

This regulation applies to all students at University of Plymouth sites of delivery, and in all UK and international partnerships unless a non-standard regulation has been formally approved. Partner institutions based overseas should note that, while the principles set out in these regulations will be adhered to at all times, there may be some operational differences in the implementation of the examination and academic offences procedures in these institutions due to logistical constraints.

Students subject to immigration control should be aware that there may be additional restrictions on their progression. Information about current Tier 4 requirements is available from the International Student Advisory Service (ISAS).

The University reserves the right to apply these regulations in cases where an examination or academic offence is identified after a student has left the University (i.e. to individuals who are not currently enrolled). This may lead to a decision by the University to revoke the award made to the former student.

AST10.1 Examination Offences – Taught programmes

This regulation should be read alongside the procedure for considering examination offences.

This regulation applies to examination offences occurring in formal University examinations (including postgraduate taught course examinations) and in-class tests.

Students enrolled on a University of Plymouth research degree who are undertaking taught modules as part of their programme of study will also be subject to this regulation for assessment undertaken on these taught modules. Offences involving the thesis or viva voce examination will be dealt with under AST9.2, below.

This regulation, and associated procedures, applies only to those examinations and tests which contribute towards the award of credit or the satisfactory completion of CPD activity (i.e. summative and not formative assessments). On programmes leading to professional registration, alleged offences in formative assessment may also be referred through the full examination offences process and / or Fitness to Practise proceedings.

Where offences are identified in a formative assessment on all other programmes, these should be drawn to the student’s attention by the module leader and the student advised of the consequences of committing an offence in a summative assessment. Where a Tutor notices that a student has received such advice on a number of occasions, this may trigger a further discussion.

1. The University recognises the following, including any attempt to carry out
the actions described, as examination offences, regardless of intent:

a. Possessing or using in an examination or test any crib sheet, revision or other notes, books, paper, mobile phone, smart watch or electronic device of any kind other than those specifically permitted in the rubric of the examination paper. The offence lies in the possession of the material and does not depend on whether there was any intention to use the material.

b. Obtaining access to an unseen examination or test material prior to the start of the examination/test.

c. Failing to comply with the legitimate instructions of an invigilator or examiner, or with the instructions for candidates (for example signage, written instructions, on-line information).

d. Removing from an examination or test any script, paper, working notes or other official stationery, whether or not completed, or any electronic records provided as part of the examination unless specifically authorised by an invigilator or examiner.

e. Being party to personation, which is any arrangement where a person fraudulently represents, or intends to represent, a candidate in an examination or test.

f. Communicating with another student or with any third party, other than an invigilator or examiner, whilst in the examination/test room.

g. Copying the work of another student, whether by overlooking their work, asking them for information, or by any other means, or knowingly allowing their own work to be copied.

h. Making false declarations in an attempt to obtain either modified assessment provisions or special consideration (e.g. of extenuating circumstances).

i. Attempting to persuade another member of the University (student, staff, or invigilator) to participate in any actions which would be in breach of these regulations.

j. Being party to any arrangement which would constitute a breach of these regulations.

k. Undertaking any other activity which could confer an unfair advantage to any candidate(s) taking an examination or test.
2. The University reserves the right to refer any case direct to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Teaching, Learning and Student Experience to decide whether immediate suspension or referral to the Fitness to Study procedure is required, while the suspected exam offence is considered.

The decision on whether to refer the case to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor or Pro Vice-Chancellors Teaching and Learning/ Student Experience will take into account matters including, but not limited to, the severity of the alleged offence or any potential risk to the student’s health or welfare.

Where a student is suspected of having committed an offence in a formal University examination, the invigilators will follow the agreed process (see https://intranet.plymouth.ac.uk/invig/intranet.htm) to report the incident.

Where a student is suspected of having committed an offence in an in-class test the invigilators will complete the incident report form, (https://intranet.plymouth.ac.uk/invig/intranet.htm), copying it to the Examinations Office and Faculty Office and, if appropriate, the Academic Partnerships Office, within 5 working days of the date of the test.

The process for considering any alleged examination offence is set out here.

3. All cases of alleged examination offence will be considered by a University Examination Offences Panel.

The composition of the University Examination Offences Panel will be as follows:

- Chair or Vice-Chair (nominated by the Pro Vice-Chancellor for Teaching and Learning, and approved by the Vice-Chancellor. For UK Partner Institution cases, the Chair should be a Faculty Partnership Manager or the Head of UK Partnerships);
- Two academic members (drawn from a pool of 12 academic staff, nominated by Deans of Faculty. For UK Partner Institution cases, the academic members of the Panel should be drawn from a Partner Institution(s) other than the College in which the student under investigation is studying). If a member of the Partner Institution is not available, the academic members of the Panel should be drawn from Academic Partnerships);
- Complaints and Appeals Manager or nominee (in attendance in an advisory capacity and to take notes).
The Panel will be considered quorate provided that one academic staff member is present, in addition to the Panel Chair and Complaints and Appeals Manager or nominee.

All members of the Panel will have equal voting rights. A decision will be taken based on the majority vote wherever possible. When required, the Chair shall have the deciding vote.

The Examinations Office and the Complaints and Appeals Office will provide administrative support for the operation of the Panel.

A Panel member may not consider the case of a student from their own School or Partner institution, or a student they know. Any conflict of interests must be declared to the Complaints and Appeals Office.

4. The Panel will consider all of the evidence put before it and will ask questions of both the student and any witnesses relating to the alleged offence in order to establish the facts of the case. The student (or their representative) will have the opportunity to ask questions of any witnesses. If the student chooses not to appear before the Panel then their written statement will be considered by the Panel.

5. The Examination Offences Panel will decide either:
   a) That the allegation is not substantiated and that no further action is required; or
   b) That the allegation is substantiated and that one of the penalties in 6, below, will be applied. At this stage, the Panel will be made aware of any previous substantiated offences committed by the student.

If the allegation is not substantiated, the Complaints and Appeals Office, in liaison with the Faculty Registrar (or Partnerships Operations Manager in Academic Partnerships), will ensure that all records relating to the allegation are removed from the student's permanent record at the University (and partner institution if appropriate).

If the allegation is substantiated, the offence should be recorded on the student's permanent record.
6. The penalties that can be imposed are as follows:

   a) No mark penalty will be applied but the offence be recorded on the student's permanent record and the student be required to undertake appropriate remediation.

   b) A mark of zero will be recorded for the assessment in question.

   c) A mark of zero will be recorded for the element in question.

   d) A mark of zero will be recorded for the module of which the assessment formed a part.

   e) The final aggregate mark for the programme will be reduced by 10%.

   f) The student is required to resubmit the assessment or repeat the module, with the award of credit only, with zero marks on successful completion.

   g) A mark of zero be recorded for the module of which the assessment formed a part; the student is barred from taking the module again and must withdraw from the programme.

A student on a programme leading to registration with a professional body is likely to be required to declare any substantiated offence with that professional body upon registration. The University may also inform the professional body.

Exceptionally, the Panel may conclude that an offence is so serious that it should be referred to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor or Pro Vice-Chancellors Teaching and Learning/Student Experience with the recommendation that the student is excluded from the University and/or partner institution. Where such a referral is made for a student on a University of Plymouth programme at a partner institution, the Principal of the partner institution will also be consulted.

---

7. The penalty awarded by the Panel in accordance with the tariff shall be binding upon the Award Assessment Board unless the wider assessment profile means that the penalty is no longer appropriate (if, for example, a student has committed multiple offences across a module, the penalty may be increased).

The Secretary to the Panel will report the Panel’s decision to the student, Dean of Faculty or Academic Partnerships, Faculty Registrar (or Partnerships Operations Manager in Academic
Partnerships) and Graduate School (where appropriate) in writing within 5 working days of the date of the Panel's decision. Where a student is enrolled on a University of Plymouth programme in a partner institution, the Partnerships Operations Manager is responsible for informing the partner institution of the Panel’s decision.

8. **Substantiated offences will be reported to the Subject Assessment Panel and Award Assessment Board.**

9. **A student may appeal against the decision or penalty imposed by the Examination Offences Panel on the following grounds:**

   a) **Evidence of procedural irregularity which casts doubt on the conclusion of the Panel that an offence has occurred or on the fairness of the penalty imposed;**

   b) **Where there is new evidence which could not reasonably have been made available to the Examinations Offences Panel at the time it made its decision;**

   c) **Where there is evidence that the Examination Offences Panel acted unfairly or failed to take into account matters which it should have done in reaching its decision.**

   **Appeals must be submitted in writing to the Complaints and Appeals Office within 10 working days of the date of the letter notifying the student of the outcome of the Panel hearing.**

Appeals against an Exam Offences Panel outcome should be submitted in line with the University’s Academic Appeals Procedure available at [https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/student-life/your-studies/essential-information/complaints-appeals-and-conduct](https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/student-life/your-studies/essential-information/complaints-appeals-and-conduct).

Following completion of the University's internal appeals procedures, a Completion of Procedures letter will be issued. A student who remains dissatisfied with the outcome may make a complaint to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education.

**AST10.2 Academic Offences Regulations**

This regulation should be read alongside the [procedure for considering academic offences](https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/student-life/your-studies/essential-information/complaints-appeals-and-conduct).
This regulation applies to offences occurring in formal University assessments (excluding formal examinations and in-class tests, which are dealt with under the Examination Offences procedures, set out in section AST10.1, above).

This regulation applies to:

- assessments which contribute towards the award of credit for taught modules,
- the satisfactory completion of CPD activity (i.e. summative and not formative assessments), or
- the Confirmation of Route process for research degrees.

On programmes leading to professional registration, alleged offences in formative assessment may also be referred through the full academic offences process and / or Fitness to Practise proceedings.

Where offences are identified in a formative assessment on all other programmes, or to any written document prepared by a postgraduate research degree student before the final thesis is submitted for final examination, these should be drawn to the student’s attention by the module leader or supervisory team, as appropriate, and the student advised of the consequences of committing an offence in a summative assessment. Where a tutor or supervisor notices that a student has received such advice on a number of occasions, this may trigger a further discussion.

Academic offence allegations made against students registered on University of Plymouth research degree awards shall be investigated under these procedures, where the allegations relate to research undertaken for the purposes of that award. All allegations concerning misconduct in research undertaken for purposes other than the award for which a student is registered shall be investigated under procedures set out in University of Plymouth’s Research Ethics Policy.

http://www1.plymouth.ac.uk/research/ourresearch/Documents/Plymouth%20University%20Research%20Ethics%20Policy.pdf

10. Academic offences occur when activity is undertaken which could confer an unfair advantage to any candidate(s) in assessment. The University recognises the following (including any attempt to carry out the actions described) as academic offences, regardless of intent:

   a. Copying or paraphrasing of other people’s work or ideas into a submitted assessment without full acknowledgement (plagiarism).

   b. Unauthorised collaboration of students (or others) in a piece of work (collusion).

   c. Making false declarations in an attempt to obtain either modified assessment provisions or special consideration (e.g. of extenuating circumstances).

   d. Persuading another member of the University or partner institution (student,
staff, or other) to participate in any way in actions which would be in breach of these regulations.

e. Misrepresenting research outcomes and results.

f. Being party to any arrangement which would constitute a breach of these regulations.

g. The inclusion in a piece of assessed work (other than an examination or test) of material which is identical or substantially similar to material which has already been submitted for any other assessment within the University.

h. Any other activity which could confer an unfair advantage to any candidate(s).

11. The University reserves the right to refer any case direct to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, the Pro Vice-Chancellor Teaching and Learning (taught modules) or the most appropriate senior manager (research degrees) to decide whether immediate suspension or referral to the Fitness to Study procedure is required.

The process for considering any alleged academic offence is set out here.

12. All allegations of academic offences against research degree students concerning the Confirmation of Route or the final thesis will be considered by a full Academic Offences Panel.

Only contested allegations of academic offences in a taught module will be considered by a full Academic Offences Panel.

13. All cases of alleged academic offence will be considered by a University Academic Offences Panel.

The composition of the Academic Offences Panel will be as follows:

- Chair or Vice-Chair (a member of Faculty for taught modules, or Head of Graduate School for research degrees. For partner institution cases, the Chair should be a Faculty Partnership Manager or the Head of UK Partnerships)
- Two academic members (drawn from a pool of 12 academic staff, nominated by Deans of Faculty, for taught modules, or from the DTC
Directors, nominated by the Head of the Graduate School, for research degrees. One of these should be the DTC Director from the student's DTC. For UK Partner Institution cases, the academic members of the Panel should be drawn from a Partner Institution(s) other than the College in which the student under investigation is studying. If a member of the Partner Institution is not available, the academic members of the Panel should be drawn from Academic Partnerships.

- Faculty Registrar or nominee / Graduate School Manager or nominee (in attendance in an advisory capacity and to take notes).

The Panel will be considered quorate provided that one academic staff member is present, in addition to the Panel Chair and Faculty Registrar or nominee / Graduate School Manager or nominee.

All members of the Panel will have equal voting rights. A decision will be taken based on the majority vote wherever possible. When required, the Chair shall have the deciding vote.

The Faculty / Academic Partnerships / Graduate School will provide administrative support for the operation of the Panel.

14. The Panel will consider all of the evidence put before it and will ask questions of both the student and any witnesses relating to the alleged offence in order to establish the facts of the case. The student (or their representative) will have the opportunity to ask questions of any witnesses. If the student chooses not to appear before the Panel then their written statement will be considered by the Panel.

The Module Leader should be available at the time of the Panel meeting, should the Panel require clarification on any points of fact.

15. The Academic Offences Panel will decide as follows:

a) That the allegation is not substantiated and that no further action is required; or

b) That the allegation is substantiated and that one of the following penalties in 16, below, will be applied. At this stage, the Panel will be made aware of any previous offences committed by the student.

Where an allegation is not substantiated, the Faculty Registrar (or Partnerships Operations
Manager in Academic Partnerships) will ensure that all records relating to the allegation are removed from the student's record at the University (and partner institution if appropriate).

16. The penalties that can be imposed for offences in taught modules are as follows:

a) No mark penalty will be applied but the offence be recorded on the student's permanent record and the student be required to undertake appropriate remediation.

b) A mark of zero will be recorded for the assessment in question.

c) A mark of zero will be recorded for the element.

d) A mark of zero will be recorded for the module of which the assessment formed a part.

e) The final aggregate mark for the programme will be reduced by 10%.

f) The student is required to resubmit the assessment or repeat the module, with the award of credit only, with zero marks on successful completion.'

g) A mark of zero be recorded for the module of which the assessment formed a part, the student is barred from taking the module again and must withdraw from the programme.

A student on a programme leading to registration with a professional body is likely to be required to declare any substantiated offence with that professional body upon registration. The University may also inform the professional body about the offence.

Exceptionally, the Panel may conclude that an offence is so serious that it should be referred to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor or Pro Vice-Chancellors Teaching and Learning/ Student Experience with the recommendation that the student is excluded from the University and/or partner institution. Where such a referral is made for a student on a University of Plymouth programme at a partner institution, the Principal of the partner institution will also be consulted.

17. The penalties that can be imposed for offences in research degrees are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Doctoral degrees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

University of Plymouth academic regulations 2016-17 / Section D: Assessment v5
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>During the degree</strong> (i.e. academic offence relating to research reports / other written work and research undertaken to date).</th>
<th><strong>At final examination stage</strong> (i.e. academic offence relating to the final submitted thesis / viva voce examination).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A formal warning which is recorded on the student’s record. The student must correct and resubmit the work to the Supervisory Team, e.g. handing in a corrected version of a literature report or similar (if the supervisory team has had cause to give words of advice to the student previously).</td>
<td>Referral (PhD/MD/Prof Docs) – student allowed to submit a revised thesis within one year for re-examination for a doctoral degree and, where appropriate, attend an oral examination e.g. major referencing problems which were not deliberate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referral in the transfer assessment, to be resubmitted within three months.</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requirement to undertake a piece of work and/or training, not necessarily connected to the student’s academic programme but related to the offence committed.</td>
<td>Referral (MPhil/ResM/MS) – student allowed to submit a revised thesis within one year for re-examination for a master degree and, where appropriate, attend an oral examination. The maximum award that may be given is MPhil or ResM.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdrawal from the degree – student not being allowed to progress e.g. as 1 above but at a more serious level such as directly copying another student’s transfer report.</td>
<td>Rejection of thesis – student not considered for any award and not permitted a resubmission attempt.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Master degrees (MPhil/ResM/MS)**

| During the degree (i.e. academic offence relating to research reports / other written work and research undertaken to date). | At final examination stage (i.e. academic offence relating to the final submitted thesis / viva voce examination). |
1. **A formal warning** which is recorded on the student's record. The student must correct and resubmit the work to the Supervisory Team.

**Referral** – student being allowed to submit a revised thesis within one year for re-examination for an MPhil/ResM/MS degree and, where appropriate, attend an oral examination e.g. major referencing problems which were not deliberate.

2. **Requirement to undertake a piece of work and/or training** not necessarily connected to the student’s academic programme but related to the offence committed.

3. **Withdrawal from the degree** – student not being allowed to progress.

**Rejection of thesis** – student not being allowed consideration for any award and not permitted resubmission.

A student who is also registered with a professional body is likely to be required to declare any substantiated offence to that professional body. The University may also inform the professional body about the offence.

In deciding which penalty should be imposed, consideration should be given to whether the student was at pre- or post-submission stage.

The Faculty Registrar (or Partnerships Operations Manager in Academic Partnerships) / Graduate School Manager will report the Panel’s decision to the student, the School (and the partner institution or Graduate School if appropriate) in writing within 5 working days of the date of the Panel's decision.

18. **A student may appeal against the decision or penalty imposed by the Academic Offences Panel on the following grounds;**

   a) Evidence of administrative error or procedural irregularity which casts doubt on the conclusion of the Panel that an offence has occurred or on the fairness of the penalty imposed;

   b) Where there is new evidence which for good reason was not available to the Academic Offences Panel at the time it made its decision;

   c) Where there is evidence that the Academic Offences Panel acted unfairly or failed to take into account matters which it should have done in reaching its decision.

Appeals must be submitted in writing to the Complaints and Appeals Office (taught modules) within 10 working days of the date of the letter notifying the
Appeals must be submitted in line with the University's Academic Appeals Procedure available at: [https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/student-life/your-studies/essential-information/complaints-appeals-and-conduct](https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/student-life/your-studies/essential-information/complaints-appeals-and-conduct).

Following completion of the University's internal appeals procedure, a Completion of Procedures letter will be issued. A student who remains dissatisfied with the outcome may make a complaint to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education.

**AST10.3 Research Misconduct (Postgraduate Research degrees only)**

19. Research misconduct includes the following, whether deliberate, reckless or negligent:

   a. Failure to obtain appropriate permission to conduct research;

   b. Deception in relation to research proposals;

   c. Unethical behaviour in the conduct of research (the University’s policy in Ethical Principles for Research Involving Human Participants applies, but other ethical issues may also be involved);

   d. Unauthorised use of information which was acquired confidentially;

   e. Deviation from good research practice, where this results in unreasonable risk of harm to humans, other animals or the environment;

   f. Distortion of research outcomes, by distortion or omission of data that do not fit expected results;

   g. Dishonest misinterpretation of results;

   h. Publication of data known or believed to be false or misleading;

   i. Misquotation or misrepresentation of other authors;

   j. Inappropriate attribution of authorship;

   k. Fraud or other misuse of research funds or research equipment;

   l. Attempting, planning or conspiring to be involved in research misconduct;
m. Inciting others to be involved in research misconduct;

n. Collusion in or concealment of research misconduct by others, and

o. Failure to comply with relevant legislation, including that relating to health and safety, data protection, intellectual property, human rights and animal experimentation.

Research misconduct does not include honest error or honest differences in the design, execution, interpretation or judgment in evaluating research methods or results or misconduct unrelated to the research process. Similarly it does not include poor research unless this encompasses the intention to deceive.

The above list is not exhaustive and other misconduct specifically related to research activity may be dealt with under this procedure.

Where a postgraduate research student is suspected of research misconduct, the Doctoral Training Centre (DTC) Director or equivalent or nominee will investigate the alleged offence in consultation with the Graduate School Manager. The Graduate School should also inform the Faculty Registrar that the investigation is taking place.

If the DTC Director or equivalent or nominee completes the investigation and concludes that there is no evidence of an offence being committed, all records of the allegation will be removed from the student's University record. A copy will be kept in the Graduate School for audit purposes.

If the DTC Director or equivalent or nominee completes the investigation and concludes that there is evidence to suggest research misconduct has occurred, the case will be considered under the University’s Ethical Policy
http://www1.plymouth.ac.uk/research/ourresearch/Documents/Plymouth%20University%20Research%20Ethics%20Policy.pdf

**AST11 Appeal Against the Decision of an Assessment Board (Taught students) or Academic Decision (Research students)**

This regulation applies to students at University of Plymouth sites of delivery and in all UK and international partnerships unless a non-standard regulation has been formally approved.

This regulation should be read alongside the Academic Appeals procedure.
1. Students will not be disadvantaged if they make an appeal in good faith.

2. A student on a taught programme (or taught module as part of a research degree) may submit an appeal against a decision of an Award Assessment Board which affects his/her academic progress, or right to an award.

3. A research degree student has the right to appeal against academic decisions affecting his or her progression. Such academic decisions include, but are not restricted to:
   a. The decision to withdraw a student from the research degree due to lack of academic progress (including during the probationary period).
   b. The decision to withdraw a student from the research degree due to lack of contact with the University (including during the probationary period).
   c. The decision to withdraw a student from the research degree following the Confirmation of Route process.
   d. The decision to require a student to remain on the MPhil path following the Confirmation of Route process.
   e. The decision, as a result of a recommendation of the examiners, not to award a student the degree for which s/he was registered, and not to permit the student to submit a revised thesis for the same degree.

4. The University will only accept an appeal where the student can produce evidence that:
   * Assessments were not conducted in accordance with the current Assessment Regulations; or
   * Some other demonstrable material irregularity related to assessment has occurred

   Extenuating circumstances (whether relating to University issues, personal or medical problems or any other issue) which are not submitted to the Faculty or School/Department (taught modules) or Graduate School (research degrees) by the due date may be considered as grounds for appeal only in the most exceptional circumstances (for instance where the student was unable to
disclose the circumstances in advance because of a medical condition). Since the University permits the submission of extenuating circumstances under confidential cover, the fact that a student did not wish to disclose personal information will not be considered as an exceptional circumstance.

5. An appeal cannot be made against the academic or professional judgement of the examiners (that is, the marks allocated, or the result in itself).

Students may not challenge the validity of their results other than in the case of an alleged transcription error, or on the basis of evidence of material irregularity related to assessment.

Students who suspect that an error has occurred in relation to the transcription of marks (e.g. the wrong mark for a module has been entered on to the transcript), should raise the matter directly and in writing with their Faculty Office. Such enquiries will not be treated as formal appeals.

Where a student, having been informed in writing that there has been no error, wishes to appeal, s/he must make a formal appeal to the Secretary to the Complaints and Appeals Board in the normal way, after marks have been ratified by the Award Assessment Board. If the advice to the student that there was no error is given after the deadline for submission of appeals, the deadline will be extended until two weeks (ten working days) after the date of that advice.

6. The appeal procedure is concerned only with formal progression or award decisions and the assessment processes which give rise to these. It is not appropriate to deal with problems experienced with programme delivery or availability of facilities (for example) via the appeal procedure.

Students should raise such problems by the appropriate means when they arise e.g. via the University complaints procedure).

7. No appeal will be considered if it raises for the first time issues concerning the supervision or teaching of a student.

Such matters will only be considered if they have been raised by the student promptly, at the time they first arose and pursued under the Student Complaints Procedure.
8. If, within an appeal, the student identifies issues which, in the view of the Complaints and Appeals Manager (or nominee) would be more appropriately dealt with via the Student Complaints Procedure, the student will be directed to that procedure. If the Complaints and Appeals Manager (or nominee) believes that the outcome of the complaint may be a factor in determining the appeal, the student will be advised accordingly and the appeal procedure suspended in relation to those issues until:

- the complaint is resolved, or
- the student indicates that they do not wish to progress further with the University Complaints Procedure or
- the University Complaints Procedure has been exhausted.

Where an appeal encompasses a range of issues, those which are not factors likely to be material to the determination of the appeal will be investigated via the complaints procedure and the outcome notified to the student in advance of consideration of the appeal. Students will be advised that whilst the University will take steps to ensure that their case is dealt with expeditiously, it may not be possible to conclude a complaint (and hence appeal) prior to any resit assessments, thesis resubmission deadlines, or by the Assessment Board at which the student’s profile will next be considered, or by the commencement of the next stage of their course.

Where a student submits a formal (written) complaint to the Complaints and Appeals Office which raises issues which may have impacted on assessment, or a progression or award decision, the Complaints and Appeals Manager (or nominee) will advise the student that the issues being complained of will be investigated via the complaints procedure. If the complaint is upheld, the case will be referred to an Appeal Panel to determine whether the outcome might form the basis for an appeal. The appeal procedure as described in the current appeal regulations will then be followed.

9. The original progression or award decision of an examining body stands until such time as it may be changed by that body, following an upheld appeal.

In some instances, a Graduation Ceremony may be held within the two week deadline period for the submission of appeals. In such cases, students will be permitted to attend the Ceremony, without prejudicing any appeal they may later submit, providing the appeal is submitted within the deadline.

Students whose appeals are undergoing consideration at the time of a Graduation Ceremony may also attend the Ceremony without prejudicing the outcome of the appeal process. Such students will not receive an award certificate until the appeal is concluded.

10. Academic appeals must be made by the student him/herself and all subsequent
correspondence from the University will be addressed to the student.

In line with the provisions of the Data Protection Act, the University has a policy on the confidentiality of information held about individual students, including their assessment results, such that information may not be released to any third party other than when required by law or at the written request of the student.

11. **Appeals must be made in writing to the Complaints and Appeals Manager.**

Appeals submitted to the Faculty Office, the Graduate School, the supervisory team, the Chair of Award Assessment Board, etc, will not be processed.

Students are required to complete and submit an Appeal Pro-forma, which is available to download from the Student Portal and copies are also available from Faculty Offices, Graduate School and partner institutions.

12. **For programmes operating within the standard undergraduate structure, a specific date will be identified annually as the deadline by which appeals must be received by the Secretary to the Complaints and Appeals Board. This deadline will be 10 working days after the deadline for publication of results lists (not the date of issue of the student’s transcript), as specified in the University Academic and Administrative Timetable.**

For 2016/17 the deadline for summer appeals for standard programmes will be 28 July 2017.

For 2016/17 the deadline for referral appeals for standard programmes will be 27 September 2017.

For non-standard undergraduate programmes and for postgraduate programmes, a deadline of ten working days after the actual date of publication of the official results list (not the date of issue of the student's transcript), will be set and notified to students in writing.

Research degree students must appeal within ten working days of the formal notification of the academic decision.

Students on a University of Plymouth programme at an associated Partner Institution must submit an appeal by the date specified in the results letter, which will be no later than ten working days after the date on the results letter.
Students are encouraged to submit appeals as soon as is practicable. The University will take steps to expedite consideration of appeals, but there can be no guarantees that they will be resolved prior to resit examinations/assessments deadlines.

13. Appeals submitted after the University’s published deadlines will be out of time and will not normally be considered under the appeals procedures. However, the University recognises that sometimes events occur outside a student’s control which prevents them from engaging with the University’s Appeals Procedure at the relevant time.

If a student submits an appeal out of time they will need to demonstrate that exceptional circumstances existed that prevented them from submitting their appeal at the appropriate time.

Students will need to provide corroborative evidence such as a medical certificate to support the fact that they were prevented from submitting their appeal by the University’s published deadlines. This is in addition to any evidence submitted as part of the appeal against the academic decision.

The decision on whether or not to accept an appeal submitted out of time will be taken by the Complaints and Appeals Office and is the final decision of the University, against which there is no further right of appeal.

14. All appeals will be considered in line with the published University academic appeals procedure.

15. All academic appeals that are made in line with the grounds set out above will be considered by an Appeal Panel.

The Appeal Panel considering cases for students on a taught award (or taught module as part of a research degree) will comprise three members, of whom at least one will be a member of the Students’ Union. None of the Panel will be from the Faculty in which the appellant is registered.

The Appeal Panel considering cases for students on research degree awards will be constituted of persons (such as the Directors of the DTCs, plus the Head of the Graduate School or equivalent) having experience of supervising and examining research degrees and who have had no previous involvement in the case. No student or research degree candidate may be a member of an Appeal Board considering a postgraduate research appeal. None of the Panel
will be from the Faculty / DTC in which the appellant is registered.

The Complaints and Appeals Manager (or nominee) will ensure an appropriate gender balance in determining Panel membership.

16. For appeals about taught programmes or modules, the Panel will decide that:

- the appeal is rejected since there are no grounds under the Regulations; or
- the appeal is upheld and the case referred back to the Faculty for review, through the Award Assessment Board.

For appeals about research degrees, the Panel will decide that:

- the appeal is rejected since there are no grounds under the Regulations; or
- the appeal is upheld, and the most appropriate action recommended, taking into account the grounds of the appeal.

Where the recommendation to uphold and allow the Appeal to proceed is made, this course of action will be implemented providing the majority of Panel members consulted agree to it.

Where the recommendation to reject the appeal is made, this course of action will only be implemented provided all Panel members consulted agree to it.

If there is disagreement amongst the Panel members consulted as to whether an appeal should be rejected, the case will be considered by two other nominees drawn from across the Faculties / DTC and the Students’ Union (taught awards only), neither of whom will be from the Faculty / DTC in which the appellant is registered. The Complaints and Appeals Manager (or nominee) will continue to ensure an appropriate gender balance in Panel membership when determining the additional members to be consulted. The final decision on the appeal will be that indicated by the majority of Panel members.

17. The Complaints and Appeals Manager (or nominee) will process all appeal cases as soon as is practicable.

It is anticipated that all cases arising from the Summer Award Assessment Boards (taught awards only) will normally be concluded by the last working day in August.
18. All appellants will be advised of the Appeal Panel’s decision in writing.

Students will be issued with an Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) ‘Completion of Procedures’ letter when they have completed the university’s internal academic appeals procedure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Version number</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Owned by:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2016/17 v5.0</td>
<td>Final</td>
<td>Academic Regulations Co-ordinator</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Summary of any amendments:**
Original rules for passing a reassessment restored to 5.2 (7), after error identified in revised wording.

**Document objectives:**
To describe the University’s assessment-related academic regulations, effective for the academic year 2016/17

**Intended Recipients:** Students and staff

**Approving Body and Date Approved**
Senate, July 2016

**Date of Issue**
This version – May 2017

**Review Date:**
Summer 2017

**Contact for review:**
Job title:
Academic Regulations Co-ordinator

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Version</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Replaces</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2016-17</td>
<td>September 2016</td>
<td>Kate Ellis</td>
<td></td>
<td>New document, following the ARSC review of academic regulations during the 2015-16 academic year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v1.0</td>
<td>November 2016</td>
<td>Kate Ellis</td>
<td>2016-17 v1.0</td>
<td>Broken links in AST7 and AST10 fixed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v2.0</td>
<td>February 2017</td>
<td>Kate Ellis</td>
<td>2016-17 v2.0</td>
<td>PGT referral limit increased to 60 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v3.0</td>
<td>March 2017</td>
<td>Kate Ellis</td>
<td>2016-17 v3.0</td>
<td>Minor amendment to 5.1 (1), approved by TLQC, March ‘17 Broken links fixed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v4.0</td>
<td>May 2017</td>
<td>Kate Ellis</td>
<td>2016-17 v4.0</td>
<td>Original rules for passing a reassessment restored to 5.2 (7), after error identified in</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
revised wording.