

UNIVERSITY OF ESSEX
UNDERGRADUATE RULES OF ASSESSMENT
(Academic Year 2010-2011)

4. Four-Year Honours Degrees

(For Degrees with a Preliminary Stage, see Three-Year Honours Degree rules)

4.1 PROGRESSION

Progression to a Year Abroad (any Stage)

Students must pass the requirements for the current stage of study in order to be able to proceed to the Year Abroad.

4.1.1 In order to progress from Stage One to Stage Two students must:

- a) achieve 120 credits at level 4. [NB where a student has a fail mark below 40 in a maximum of 30 credits' worth of non-core modules it is possible for a student to progress to the next stage of study in the circumstances set out in section 4.1.4]

and

- b) pass core modules and meet any additional course or module specific requirements outlined in the variations to the Rules of Assessment, including professional, statutory and regulatory body requirements;

and

- c) achieve a minimum stage mark of 53 on all courses with a compulsory stage or term abroad

End of Stage Examination Boards may also be used as progression boards for part-time students, and re-submission opportunities considered

In order to be awarded a **Distinction** in Stage One, students must meet at least one of the following criteria:

- Achieve an overall year mark of 69.5%, or;
- Achieve marks of 69.5% in at least 60 credits, with no credits below 59.5%

4.1.2 If a student does not meet the requirements to progress:

- a) where the student has failed a **maximum of 60 credits**, he/she must undertake the necessary reassessment prior to the next academic Stage in order to fulfil the requirement to progress. The module aggregate mark will be capped at 40%.
- b) where the student has failed **more than 60 credits** and has a year mark greater than 20%, he/she must repeat the Stage of study on a full-time basis for uncapped marks or undertake the necessary reassessment the following year without attendance. The module aggregate mark will be capped at 40%.

- c) where the Stage mark is below 20%, or where a student was absent from all examinations with no substantiated extenuating circumstances, he/she must withdraw from the University.
- d) where the student is on a course with a compulsory stage or term abroad and has passed all modules but has not achieved the minimum stage mark, the student may undertake reassessment in one or more modules (up to a maximum of 60 credits) in order to improve the stage mark. Although the marks achieved at the first attempt will remain on the student's record, the 'raw' marks achieved after reassessment (that is, the actual marks obtained) will be used to calculate whether the student has achieved the required stage mark. A student who has passed all modules but who has not achieved the minimum stage mark required for a course with a compulsory year or term abroad may be permitted to transfer to a course which does not include a year or term abroad instead of undertaking reassessment.

4.1.3 When the Board meets after re-sits/resubmissions are completed, the Board will consider the following options (Boards cannot offer more than three opportunities to undertake the assessment for a module). Where appropriate the Board will offer more than one option to the student.

- a) to repeat the Stage of study full-time for uncapped module marks
or
- b) where the student has failed **a maximum of 60 credits**, to repeat the Stage of study part-time, and the module aggregate mark will be capped at 40%¹
or
- c) to undertake the necessary reassessment at the next available opportunity with the module aggregate mark capped at 40%.
or
- d) where the student has not met the requirements to proceed having had three opportunities to undertake the assessment for a module, he/she would be required to withdraw from the University.
or
- e) where the **Stage mark is below 20%**, or where a student was absent from all examinations with no substantiated extenuating circumstances, to withdraw from the University.
or
- f) where the student is on a course with a compulsory year or term abroad and has failed to achieve the 53% stage mark, to consider the student for a transfer to a degree programme without a year or term abroad.

¹ This option is only permissible where the student's UK immigration permission allows part-time study.

4.1.4 Following reassessment, where a student has a fail mark below 40 in a maximum of 30 credits' worth of non-core modules, the Board will treat the fail in the following way:

- a) Where the module aggregate mark is in the range 35%-39% and the mark for the stage is 45% or above, the student will be permitted to proceed to the next stage of study. The credits will be awarded.
- b) Where the module aggregate mark is in the range 20%-34% and the mark for the stage is 40% or above, or the module aggregate mark is in the range 35%-39% and the mark for the stage is in the range 40%-44%, the student will be permitted to proceed to the next stage of study. However, the credits will not be awarded. Where a total of 30 credits have been failed the student will not be permitted to fail any more credits towards their award. Where a total of 15 credits have been failed, the student will only be able to fail 15 non-core credits in the future. Where a student has not had three attempts at the assessment for the Stage, the Board will offer the student the choice of either undertaking reassessment in Stage One or proceeding to Stage Two carrying the fail.
- c) Students will not be permitted to transfer to a course which regards the failed modules as core.

Note: For first year non-core modules it is **not** necessary for students to pass both the coursework and exam elements as long as the student has passed the overall module aggregate.

If the student fails the overall aggregate in June then s/he must undertake reassessment in the failed elements.

If the student passes the overall module aggregate for the non-core module in June but fails either the coursework or exam elements, the Exam Board should award the credit rather than requiring reassessment.

4.1.5 Students who, after reassessment, still fail to achieve sufficient marks in an optional module to progress may choose an alternative optional module during their repeat Stage.

Progression from Stage Two

4.1.6 In order to progress from Stage Two to Stage Three and from Stage Three to the Final Stage students must:

- a) achieve 120 credits at level 5 or above [NB where a student has a fail mark below 40 in a maximum of 30 credits' worth of non-core modules it will be possible for a student to progress to the next stage of study following reassessment in the circumstances set out in 4.1.9]:
 - where only 90 credits have been passed at Stage One, 120 credits must be passed in Stage Two, Stage 3 and the final year.
 - where 120 credits have been passed at Stage One, a minimum of 90 credits must be passed in Stage Two. [NB if only 90 credits are passed at Stage 2, then 120 credits must be passed in Stage Three and the final year]
- and**
- b) pass core modules and meet any additional course or module specific requirements outlined in the variations to the Rules of Assessment, including professional, statutory and regulatory body requirements.

Distinctions for Placement Year Marks

On some courses it will be possible to gain a Distinction for the Placement Stage. Where these are offered, students must fulfil the course requirements as outlined in Appendix A of the Rules of Assessment.

4.1.7 If a student does not meet the requirements to progress:

- a) where the student has failed a **maximum of 60 credits**, he/she must undertake the necessary reassessment, prior to the next academic Stage, in order to fulfil the requirement to progress. The module aggregate mark will be capped at 40%. [NB where failure has occurred on a period of study abroad, resits/reassessment will be subject to availability.]
- b) where the student has failed **more than 60 credits** and has a year mark greater than 20%, he/she must repeat the Stage of study on a full-time basis for uncapped marks **or** undertake the necessary reassessment the following year without attendance with the module aggregate mark capped at 40%. [NB where failure has occurred on a period of study abroad, resits / reassessment and/or a repeat stage / term will be subject to availability.]
- c) where the **stage mark is below 20%**, or where a student was absent from all examinations with no substantiated extenuating circumstances, he/she must withdraw from the University.
- d) if 120 credits at level 4 or above have been passed, the student will be considered for the award of a Certificate of Higher Education.
- e) if 240 credits (including a minimum of 120 at level 5) have been attempted and 225 have been passed, the student will be considered for the award of a Diploma of Higher Education.

4.1.8 When the Board meets after re-sits/resubmissions are completed, the Board will consider the following options (Boards cannot offer more than three opportunities to undertake the assessment for a module). Where appropriate the Board will offer more than one option to the student.

- a) to repeat the Stage of study full-time for uncapped module marks.
[NB where failure has occurred on a period of study abroad, resits / reassessment and /or a repeat stage / term may not be available.]
- or**
- b) where the student has failed **a maximum of 60 credits**, to repeat the Stage of study part-time, with module aggregate marks capped at 40% ² [NB this option is not available where students have failed credits during a period abroad.]
- or**
- c) to undertake the necessary reassessment at the next available opportunity where the mark recorded will be capped at 40%. [NB where failure has occurred on a period of study abroad, resits / reassessment may not be available.]
- or**
- d) where the **stage mark is below 20%**, or where a student was absent from all examinations with no substantiated extenuating circumstances, to withdraw from the University. If 120 credits at level 4 or above have been passed, the student will be considered for the award of a Certificate of Higher Education
- or**
- e) where the student has not met the requirements to proceed having had three opportunities to undertake the assessment for a module, he/she would be required to withdraw from the University.
- or**
- f) if 240 credits (including a minimum of 120 at level 5) have been attempted and 225 have been passed, the student will be considered for the award of a Diploma of Higher Education.

4.1.9 Following reassessment, where a student has a fail mark below 40 in a maximum of 30 credits' worth of non-core modules and has passed 120 credits at Stage One, or has a fail mark below 40 in a maximum of 15 credits' worth of non-core modules and has passed 105 credits at Stage One, the Board will treat the fail in the following way:

- a) where a student has not had three attempts at the assessment for the failed module the Board will offer the student the choice of either undertaking reassessment in Stage Two or proceeding to Stage Three carrying the fail. [NB where failure has occurred on a period of study abroad, resits / reassessment and / or a repeat stage / term may not be available.]
- b) Where a student has already had three attempts at the assessment for the failed module the Board will permit the student to proceed to Stage Three carrying the fail.

² This option is only permissible where the student's UK immigration permission allows part-time study.

4.2 ELIGIBILITY FOR AN AWARD (Final Stage of Four-Year Degree)

4.2.1 For the award of a Four-Year Honours degree, 480 credits must be attempted over the duration of the course, of which 450 credits must be passed. However, Boards of Examiners will offer one voluntary reassessment attempt in all failed final year modules no later than the start of the next academic year, provided the student has not already had three attempts at the assessment for the module.

4.2.2 To be eligible for an Honours degree, students must³:

- a) attempt 120 credits in the final stage and pass at least 90 credits at level 6:
 - where a maximum of 30 credits have been failed across Stage One, Stage Two and Stage Three, 120 credits must be passed in the final year.
 - where 120 credits have been passed at both Stage One, Stage Two and Stage Three, a minimum of 90 credits at level 6 must be passed in the final year.

and

- c) pass core modules and meet any additional course-specific requirements outlined in the variations to the Rules of Assessment, including professional, statutory and regulatory body, and placement-year requirements.

4.2.3 If a student does not meet the requirements for an Honours degree³:

- a) where the student has failed a **maximum of 60 credits**, or has failed a maximum of 90 credits but the Board determines that he/she can only be required to undertake compulsory reassessment in a maximum of 60 credits, he/she must undertake the necessary reassessment or repeat the Stage of study part-time. The module aggregate mark will be capped at 40%. [NB where failure has occurred on a period of study abroad, resits / reassessment and / or a repeat stage / term may not be available.]
- b) where the student has failed **more than 60 credits** and the Board determines that the student must undertake compulsory reassessment in more than 60 credits and the student has a year mark greater than 20%, he/she must repeat the Stage of study on a full-time basis for uncapped marks **or** undertake the necessary reassessment the following year without attendance with the module aggregate mark capped at 40%. [NB where failure has occurred on a period of study abroad, resits / reassessment and / or a repeat stage / term may not be available.]
- c) where the **stage mark is below 20%**, or where a student was absent from all examinations with no substantiated extenuating circumstances, he/she must withdraw from the University.
- d) if 240 credits (including a minimum of 120 at level 5 or above) have been attempted and 225 have been passed, the student will be considered for the award of a Diploma of Higher Education.

³ Boards of Examiners will offer a voluntary reassessment opportunity to final year students who have met the requirements to graduate with an honours degree but have failed final year modules(s), provided the students have not already had three attempts at the assessment for the module. In cases where students have not met the requirements to graduate the Board of Examiners will specify the minimum volume of compulsory reassessment that is required, and will offer a voluntary reassessment opportunity in the other failed final year modules. However, students will not be permitted reassessment across the summer in more than 60 credits' worth of modules.

4.2.4 When the Board meets after re-sits/resubmissions are completed, the Board will consider the following options (Boards cannot offer more than three opportunities to undertake the assessment for a module, and no more than one opportunity to take exams without attendance). Where appropriate the Board will offer more than one option to the student⁴:

- a) to repeat the Stage of study full-time for uncapped module marks
- b) where the student has failed **a maximum of 60 credits**, to repeat the Stage of study part-time, with the module aggregate mark capped at 40% ⁵ [NB this option is not available where students have failed credits during a period abroad.]
- c) to undertake the necessary reassessment at the next available opportunity where the module aggregate mark recorded will be capped at 40%. This option cannot be offered where a student has already resat the exams without attendance. [NB where failure has occurred on a period of study abroad, resits / reassessment and / or a repeat stage / term may not be available.]
- d) where the **Stage mark is below 20%**, or where a student was absent from all examinations with no substantiated extenuating circumstances, to withdraw from the University.
- e) where the student has not met the requirements for the award having had three opportunities to undertake the assessment for a module (Boards cannot offer more than one opportunity to take exams without attendance), he/she would be required to withdraw from the University.
- f) if 240 credits (including a minimum of 120 at level 5) have been attempted and 225 have been passed, the student will be considered for the award of a Diploma of Higher Education.

⁴ Students cannot be offered further voluntary reassessment so Boards of Examiners will only offer reassessment to final year students who have not met the minimum criteria for the award on which they are studying. Furthermore, Boards will only offer reassessment in a sufficient number of modules to enable students to meet the minimum criteria for the award. For example, if a student has failed 60 credits' worth of non-core modules in the final year, s/he will only be offered reassessment in 30 credits.

⁵ This option is only permissible where the student's UK immigration permission allows part-time study.

4.3 AWARD CLASSIFICATION FOR FOUR-YEAR HONOURS DEGREES

(Students on Degrees with a preliminary Stage need to refer to the Three-Year Honours Degree rules. Students on Five-Year Degrees should follow Model 1 in the table below).

4.3.1 Results for Honours degrees are calculated by two methods, known as ‘Dominant Quality’ and ‘Arithmetic Average’. Students will receive the more favourable degree class of the two. The results of both methods are published on the grid presented to Boards of Examiners. Class is based upon Stage Two, Stage Three and Stage Four marks.

The marks from the student abroad year in Four Year Degree should only be able to improve a student’s degree classification. Calculation of degree classification at the Final Year Board of Examiners should therefore be undertaken both with and without the study abroad year and the highest classification result should be the one awarded.⁶

4.3.2 Arithmetic Average

There are five different types of four-year degree course, each with its own requirements.

Year marks from the second, third, and final years are weighted according to the weightings indicated in the right hand column of Table 2, and combined to give a **degree mark**. The degree mark is used to calculate a degree class as follows:

Degree mark	Class
70% and over	Class 1
60%-69%	Class 2.1
50%-59%	Class 2.2
40%-49%	Class 3
under 40%	Fail

⁶ This ruling will stand until such time that any new rules relating to the weighting of the year abroad are approved for introduction, as approved by Senate in April 2012. In cases where the degree classification is based on the courses studied at Essex and exclude the year abroad marks, the student would still remain on the 4 year programme and the transcript of records for the year abroad and the year abroad marks would remain on the transcript for the student.

TABLE 2: shows the volume of credit allocated to the placement and associated weighting of the placement year, which differentiates the five models

MODEL	VOLUME OF CREDIT ALLOCATED TO THE PLACEMENT, MARKED AS PASS/FAIL	MODULES WHICH RECEIVE A MARK	WEIGHTING OF YEARS (2-3-4)
(1) Work-experience or placement year⁷	120	0 modules	40%-0%-60%
(2) Year abroad (Normally as part of a language-related degree)	30	3 modules of 30 marked credits in addition to the placement	30%-20%-50%
(3) Year abroad (Normally on a degree which is not language-related)	60	2 modules of 30 marked credits in addition to the placement	30%-20%-50%
(4) Four years studied at Essex	0	The number of 30-credit or 15-credit modules that the course has in conformity with the Rules of Assessment	30%-30%-40%
(5) Placement spread across two years	120 (30 in Stage Three, 90 in Stage Four)	4 modules of 30 marked credits each in addition to the 120 placement credits over 2 Stages/years	40% - 45% - 15%

⁷ See variation for LLB English and French Laws

4.3.3 Dominant Quality

The number of modules in each class in the second, third, and final Stage is assessed in order to determine the dominant quality of the student's work⁸:

TABLE 3

	MODEL	1	2	3	4	5
Class 1	Min number of credits at Class 1	120 (none below 2.2)	150 (none below 2.2)	150 (none below 2.2)	180 (none below 2.2)	120 (none below 2.2)
Class 2.1	Min number of credits at 2.1 or above	150 (max 90 credits at 3 rd permitted, none below)	180 (max 90 credits at 3 rd permitted, none below)	180 (max 90 credits at 3 rd permitted, none below)	210 (max 120 credits at 3 rd permitted, none below)	150 (max 90 credits at 3 rd permitted, none below)
Class 2.2	Min number of credits at 2.2 or above	150 (max 30 failed credits permitted)	180 (max 30 failed credits permitted)	180 (max 30 failed credits permitted)	210 (max 30 failed credits permitted)	150 (max 30 failed credits permitted)
Class 3	Maximum number of FAILED credits	30	30	30	30	30

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⁸ When determining the class of degree, where this will benefit a particular student, the Board of Examiners should apply the Rules of Assessment which have been approved for students entering the Preliminary or First Stage from the start of 2012/13 academic year, i.e. in addition to the rules given in 4.3.2 and 4.3.3:

Model 1

First Class Honours should be awarded to a candidate who has 120 credits at 70 or more and a Degree Mark of at least 68.

Upper Second Class Honours should be awarded to a candidate who has 120 credits at 60 or more and a Degree Mark of at least 58.

Lower Second Class Honours should be awarded to a candidate who has 120 credits at 50 or more and a Degree Mark of at least 48.

Models 2 and 3 First Class Honours should be awarded to a candidate who has 150 credits at 70 or more and a Degree Mark of at least 68.

Upper Second Class Honours should be awarded to a candidate who has 150 credits at 60 or more and a Degree Mark of at least 58.

Lower Second Class Honours should be awarded to a candidate who has 150 credits at 50 or more and a Degree Mark of at least 48.

Model 4

First Class Honours should be awarded to a candidate who has 180 credits at 70 or more and a Degree Mark of at least 68.

Upper Second Class Honours should be awarded to a candidate who has 180 credits at 60 or more and a Degree Mark of at least 58.

Lower Second Class Honours should be awarded to a candidate who has 180 credits at 50 or more and a Degree Mark of at least 48.