



GCU Assessment Regulations Handbook

Taught Postgraduate Programmes

Academic Session 2016-17

Prepared By	Academic Quality and Development
Approved By	Individual sections have been approved and dates are noted in the version control information
Source Location	GCU Intranet > Registry > Assessment & Exams > Ass Reg Assoc Docs > Policies
Published Location	http://www.gcu.ac.uk/gaq/regulationsandpolicies/
Other documents referenced	
Related documents	University Assessment Regulations and Associated Policies

Version Number	Date issued	Author	Update information
V1.0	12.11.2014 (in hardcopy)	Governance and Quality Enhancement	First Published version
V1.2	27.10.2015	Governance	2015-16 version
V1.3	19.09.2016	Academic Quality and Development	2016-17 version
V1.4	30.11.2016	Academic Quality and Development	Section 3 amended to include extract from Consideration of Mitigating Circumstances v1.2

Contents

Section 1 – Terms of Reference and Standard Operations of Assessment Boards

Section 2 – GCU Assessment Regulations – Taught Postgraduate Programmes 2016-17

Section 3 – Regulations for the Consideration of Mitigating Circumstances (extracted from the document Consideration of Mitigating Circumstances v1.2)



SECTION 1:

Terms of Reference and Standard Operations of Assessment Boards

Prepared By	Registry
Approved By	APC 21 May 2014 Senate 13 June 2014 APC 11 May 2016/Senate 3 June 2016
Source Location	GCU Intranet > Registry > Assessment & Exams > Ass Reg Assoc Docs > Policies
Published Location	http://www.gcu.ac.uk/gaq/regulationsandpolicies/
Other documents referenced	
Related documents	University Assessment Regulations

Version Number	Date issued	Author	Update information
V1.0	05.08.2014	Registry	First Published version
V 2.0	30.09.2015	Registry	Section 9, paragraph 9.3.2 iii referring to extraordinary third attempts allowed under MITs is removed.
V2.1	27.10.2015	Governance	Departmental Titles/Role titles updated
V3.0	15.09.2016	Academic Quality and Development	Section 4.3 and 4.4 added for security of Assessment Board mark sheets and notification of conflict of interest.
			Section 6.4, arrangements for External Examiner attendance, absence and endorsement of marks.
			Departmental Titles/Role titles updated

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Assessment Boards are responsible to the University Senate.
- 1.2. For each named award within the Institution there will exist an Assessment Board at which the performance of students on programmes of study will be considered. However, suites of closely related named awards may come within the jurisdiction of the same Assessment Board.
- 1.3. Where composite boards exist (e.g. a single assessment board overseeing a large number of programmes, not all closely related) *consideration should be given by the School as to the potential impact in terms of the linkages to Programme Boards.*

2. Remit, Responsibilities and Duties

- 2.1. To ensure that the Glasgow Caledonian University Assessment Regulations are applied, including any programme specific regulations.
- 2.2. To take into consideration any mitigating circumstances properly notified to the Board by a School Mitigating Circumstances Board.
- 2.3. To determine candidates' assessment results and to decide, when appropriate, if candidates have satisfied the conditions for progression to the next level of the programme as set out in the regulations.
- 2.4. To determine if candidates have fulfilled the conditions for the attainment of awards (including the award of merit, distinction and the classification of Honours awards) and to make appropriate recommendations for the granting of awards, such recommendations being subject to the approval of External Examiners.
- 2.5. To make recommendations as appropriate on the withdrawal of students.
- 2.6. To consider applications for the award of aegrotat degrees

3. Membership composition and other Attendees

- 3.1. Composition of each Assessment Board shall be as follows:

Chair	Normally an Associate Dean, Head of Department or Assistant HoD. Assistant HoDs will only Chair Boards that are not in their own subject area. The chair cannot also be the chair of a Mitigating Circumstances Board
Programme Leader(s) External Examiners Module Leaders	In the case of the Schools which host the programme, the Chair and the Module Leaders from that School shall determine annually which Module Leaders shall be members of the Board. For other Schools, the Executive Dean and the Module Leader will determine who shall be members.
Registry/Academic Quality and Development/Governance Representative or Head/Assistant Head of School Administration	A nominated member of the staff from Registry/Academic Quality and Development/Governance, Head or Assistant Head of School Administration shall normally be present at the meetings of levels 3, H and postgraduate Assessment Boards where award decisions are being made. This is to ensure that there is consistency across the Institution with regards to the interpretation of Assessment Regulations. They must be independent of the assessment process and have undertaken appropriate training.
Clerk	Normally the associated Programme Administrator or other school administrator nominated by the school Head of Administration

- 3.2. In the case of collaborative programmes, the composition of Assessment Boards will be defined during the approval process.
- 3.3. The Chair of Senate (or nominee from the University Executive) has the right to attend all Assessment Boards.
- 3.4. Schools contributing modules to a programme must be represented at Assessment Boards.
- 3.5. Programme Leaders will be required to advise on the interpretation of Assessment Regulations (general and programme specific) and previous practice.
- 3.6. The Programme Board will normally confirm the membership of its associated Assessment Board at its first meeting of the academic year (such confirmation must be minuted). The confirmed membership will constitute those able to exercise a vote at the Assessment Board. Nominated substitutes of members will be able to exercise a vote.
- 3.7. School Boards will approve the mechanism for confirming the membership of composite boards.
- 3.8. The quoracy of an Assessment Board will be 70% of members.
- 3.9. Where a board fails to be quorate, then the meeting can still proceed if the Chair, Programme Leader for each programme being considered and at least 1 other member is present.
- 3.10. A non-quorate meeting must defer decisions if a fully informed decision cannot be made.
- 3.11. A report on non-quorate assessment board meetings must be submitted to the School's Associate Dean LT&Q, Academic Registrar, Head of Academic Quality. This report should also be submitted to the School Board and the next Assessment Board for information.

4. Confidentiality of Assessment Board Deliberations

- 4.1. The proceedings of Assessment Boards are strictly confidential. Boards' discussions of individual candidates must not be divulged to candidates. Additionally, marks may not be divulged to persons other than the candidate without the express authority of the Board.
- 4.2. Marks will be made available to each candidate as soon as practicable after the Assessment Board has met. Candidates must not be informed of the decisions of Boards prior to their formal publication.
- 4.3. Student profiles or Assessment Board marks sheets **MUST NOT** be retained by members of the Assessment Board following the meeting, with the exception of the Chair, Clerk and Registry Representative.
- 4.4. Any Assessment Board member or attendee with a conflict of interest in respect to any student being considered must declare this to the Chair prior to commencement of the consideration of student results. In such cases, the fact will be noted in the minutes and that individual will not engage in discussion or voting regarding the student(s) concerned.
- 4.5. Paragraphs 4.1 to 4.4 **MUST** be read out at each Assessment Board meeting as per the agenda (see 6.1 ix)

5. Frequency and Timings of Assessment Boards Meetings

- 5.1. Assessment Boards must meet at appropriate progression and award points as necessary, e.g after completion of 120 credit points, PG exit point or after the resit diet.
- 5.2. Programme Leaders are encouraged to meet key staff at the end of a trimester, if no formal Assessment Board is due to meet, to identify students who may require pastoral care as well as additional academic development support
- 5.3. Meetings of Assessment Boards may be arranged at other times as required.
- 5.4. In order to take into account the 7 calendar day timescale outlined in the Mitigating Circumstances Policy, Assessment Boards must not meet less than 8 calendar days from the date of the last day of the examination diet.
- 5.5. Assessment Boards should ensure that a pre meeting is held before all Assessment Board meetings.
- 5.6. Schools are responsible for scheduling their Assessment Boards in good time, as per the Registry Calendar of dates and deadlines.

5.7. Schools are responsible for maintaining details of all scheduled Assessment Boards must be entered on the Registry Assessment Boards schedule, available via Sharepoint.

6. Assessment Board Agenda, Recording & Confirmation of Decisions

6.1. All Assessment Boards must have the following Agenda items:

- i) Apologies
- ii) Confirmation that the Board is quorate and therefore able to take decisions
- iii) Confirmation of the Minutes of the Previous meeting
- iv) Matters Arising from the minutes of the previous meeting
- v) Details of any Chair's Actions taken since last meeting
- vi) Details of any Academic Appeals submitted and their outcome
- vii) *Confirmation that students have taken modules that lead to the qualifications under the jurisdiction of the Assessment Board*
- viii) Confirmation from the External Examiners that the standard of any awards to be made is comparable with that of similar awards elsewhere
- ix) Reminder that discussions and decisions taken at the Assessment Board are confidential (*see section 4 above*)
- x) Presentation of marks and recommendations
- xi) A record, where appropriate, of the principles or criteria upon which individual decisions were made
- xii) Comments from Programme and Module Leaders
- xiii) Comments from External Examiners
- xiv) Any other competent business
- xv) The proposed date and time of the next meeting

6.2. The Clerk is required to record decisions with regard to student achievement and ensure the accurate recording of the minutes of the meeting.

6.3. The Clerk will ensure that the External Examiner Endorsement form (available from the Registry Exams Sharepoint Site) is completed and signed by all necessary parties at the end of the meeting.

6.4. If, in exceptional circumstances, the External Examiner is unable to be present at the Board either in person or via the use of tele/video conference, the following actions must be undertaken:

- The External Examiner must be consulted and agree the decisions of the Assessment Board
- The External Examiner must, in the case of final awards, confirm in writing and complete the External Examiner endorsement of Assessment Board outcomes form
- Results should not be notified to students until the External Examiner has provided confirmation.

6.5. Assessment Board minutes comprise 2 components, a public section which can be requested under FOI and a confidential annex which is exempt from FOI requests.

6.6. No students should be identifiable from the public section of the minutes. "Student A, B...Z" etc should be used when minuting specific student circumstances or decisions. Within the confidential annex an index should be provided which identifies students as necessary.

6.7. The Student Marks/profile reports generated by the Student Management Information System and which are being considered at an Assessment Board form part of the formal confidential minute of the meeting. Therefore minutes are required to be noted only for students where a discussion has taken place, which includes instances where a module mark has been amended by the Assessment Board.

6.8. The confidential annex must contain the following heading:

"Confidential Appendix

The following information refers to the decisions made at the above board and should be read in conjunction with the minutes of that board.

The information provided here claims an absolute exemption from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Scotland Act 2002 by virtue of Section 38 (1)(b)(2)(a)(i) as it would be in breach the Data Protection Act 1998

- 6.9. It is the responsibility of the Clerk and Chair to ensure that all agreed outcomes and any mark/attempt amendments are recorded on the Student Management Information System following the meeting of the Assessment Board, in a timely fashion to ensure the publication of results within the specified timescales.
- 6.10. The Programme Leader presenting the awards will confirm that all other students have passed and are progressing as normal.

7. Mitigating Circumstances

- 7.1. The University has a Mitigating Circumstances Policy and associated procedure which must be followed.
- 7.2. Individual student mitigating circumstances must not be discussed at an Assessment Board.
- 7.3. Assessment Board members will be informed whether a student has been successful in submitting Mitigating Circumstances, normally by way of the student profile. The role of the Assessment Board is then to make appropriate provision for any such student under the Mitigating Circumstances Policy.

8. Deferred Decisions

- 8.1. Assessment Boards should make every attempt to ensure that all students presented are processed with an appropriate decision, which includes ensuring that the appropriate Assessment Board officials consider any complex cases at a Pre-Board meeting in order for additional advice to be provided by Registry or Academic Quality and Development.
- 8.2. It is recognised however that there are some circumstances when an Assessment Board is unable to make a decision and on these occasions a deferred decision should be recorded.
- 8.3. Deferred decisions should only used in the following circumstances:
 - i) The Assessment Board wishes to consult with Registry and/or Academic Quality and Development around a particular situation in order to make an appropriate informed decision.
 - ii) Where the student has been given a short extension to their assignment hand in date and it is expected to be received, marked and processed within the 10 working day limit as per 8.5.
 - iii) Where the Board cannot publish a final decision due to a disciplinary investigation
 - iv) Any other circumstance where the Board needs to seek further advice and/or information before finalising their decision
- 8.4. Where a decision is being deferred then the reason must be fully minuted.
- 8.5. Deferred decisions must be resolved within 10 working days of the date of the Assessment Board. If no decision can be made by that time then an appropriate decision code must be processed based on the available information available at that point.
- 8.6. For Assessment Boards that meet at the end of Trimester B, deferring a students' decision will result in them not being eligible to graduate at the summer ceremonies, even if their final decision is that of an award. In these circumstances they will graduate at the winter ceremonies.
- 8.7. A Chair's Action must be completed to amend a decision previously deferred.

9. Chair's Actions

- 9.1. Chairs Actions exist as a process to allow the processing of an Assessment Board decision outwith a meeting of the board.
- 9.2. There are 2 types of Chairs Action Forms: recording new decisions and amending an existing decision of an Assessment Board.

9.3. New Decision

9.3.1. A Chairs Action form for a New Results is used to facilitate the exceptional recording and publication of a Result for a student where the next scheduled meeting of the Assessment Board is not for 2 – 3 months.

9.3.2. Examples of when this process can be used include:

- i) A student on a programme with State Registration only has one (Re)sit module to complete and this is taken during Trimester A. If he/she passes the module, then the Assessment Board may decide to take a Chairs Action to release the result to the student before its next scheduled meeting, i.e. 2 – 3 months away, to allow them to begin practice. Rather than having to wait until the Board formally meets in May.
- ii) Where programmes have a module delivered in Trimester C and the scheduled re-sit takes place 1 – 3 weeks after the September Assessment board meeting, generating a new mark. This is classed as new work and must generate a New Assessment board Decision code, i.e. we do not class this as an amendment to the original decision of the board which stands in its own right. The Chairs Action (New Result) Pro forma must be used to record that this is a subsequent decision by the Board.

9.4. Amendment to Existing Decision:

9.4.1. Chair Actions to amend a decision should be used to facilitate the recording and publication of an amendment to a decision (i.e. an already published FRP code) previously published to the student by an Assessment Board.

9.4.2. This is used when either an Assessment Board has published a deferred decision (R1) and is now able to make and process an actual decision, or when a decision has been amended following the upholding of an academic appeal or of Retrospective Mitigating Circumstances.

9.5. Chair's Actions MUST NOT be used to circumvent the decision making authority of Assessment Boards.

9.6. Where an Assessment Board has required a student to submit/re-submit a piece of assessment, a Chairs Action Form cannot be used to process a resit mark/decision.

9.7. Chair's Action forms must be fully completed, including a full rationale for its use. Incomplete forms will not be processed.

9.8. Chair Action forms must be signed by the appropriate Assessment Board Chair.

9.9. The accompanying notice board report must be signed by the Clerk and Chair and submitted to the Registry Exams Office. The signature of a Registry & Academic Quality and Development Representative is not required.

9.10. Where the Assessment Board Chair or Programme Leader is not available, then a Head of Academic Department Associate Dean LT&Q or Vice Dean may sign in their place.

9.11. Details of all Chair's Actions must be tabled for information at the next available meeting of the Assessment Board.

9.12. Guidance notes and forms are available on the Assessment & Exams area of the Registry Sharepoint site

10. Post Assessment Board Processing

10.1. Following an Assessment Board, all decisions and any mark amendments must be updated on the University's Student Management Information System.

10.2. A Student Results Notice Board Report should then be printed and checked & signed by the Clerk, Chair and where appropriate, the Registry & Academic Quality and Development Representative.

10.3. Once signed by all necessary parties, the original signed report should be submitted to the Registry Examinations Office, along with the Assessment Board report annotated by the Registry & Academic Quality and Development Representative where appropriate.

10.4. Only when the signed report in 10.3 above has been submitted should Assessment Board results be confirmed and published via the Student Management Information System.

11. Notification of Results to Students

- 11.1. The aim must always be for student results to be published within two working days of the meeting of the Assessment Board with communication to students via GCU email within seven working days of the meeting.
- 11.2. Results may be published on local Departmental notice boards, but is not necessary. Any results published in this manner must be based on the "Publication" report which does not contain student names.
- 11.3. The University will notify all students of their results by email. In all cases the Registry will be responsible for issuing award parchments to students.
- 11.4. School are responsible for issuing transcripts to students who are receiving their final award.

12. Consideration of Assessment Board Minutes

- 12.1. Draft Assessment Board Minutes must be produced within 3 weeks of each meeting.
- 12.2. Assessment Board Minutes must be confirmed and approved at each subsequent meeting of the Assessment Board.
- 12.3. Each Programme Leader will present a report to their Programme Board on the outcome of an Assessment Board, including summary statistics, external comments and any issues raised.
- 12.4. The non-confidential portion of minutes of meetings of Assessment Boards (Confirmed or draft) must be sent to the appropriate Programme Board(s) each year.
- 12.5. The Programme Board will consider these minutes and the Programme Leader report and pass on any issues or concerns to other School Boards or Committees as appropriate.
- 12.6. Following consideration by the Programme Board, relevant comments by the Assessment Board shall be considered by the School Board in December of each year.
- 12.7. The School shall, where appropriate, draw to the attention of the Learning and Teaching Subcommittee any matters arising which require attention at a university wide level.

13. Data Protection

- 13.1. Current Data Protection legislation stipulates that any comments made on examination scripts or (comments made about a student) in the minutes of Assessment Boards may be accessed by the student.

EXTERNAL ASSESSOR ENDORSEMENT OF ASSESSMENT BOARD OUTCOMES*

SESSION: DIET: FIRST / SECOND (please delete as appropriate)

I endorse the decisions made at the meeting of the Assessment Board for the following awards:

DATE OF MEETING:

Name: Signature:

Name: Signature:

Name: Signature:

Name: Signature:

Signature of Chair of Assessment Board:

* Only External Examiners associated with programmes are required to endorse the outcomes of the assessment(s) they have been appointed to scrutinise.

NB – Once signed, this sheet should be attached to a copy of the Assessment Board minutes and retained by the relevant School.



SECTION 2:
University Assessment Regulations
Taught Postgraduate Programmes
Academic Session 2016-17

Prepared By	Department of Academic Quality and Development
Approved By	APC 21 May 2014/Senate 13 June 2014 APC 17 May 2015 APC 11 May 2016/Senate 3 June 2016
Source Location	GCU Intranet > Registry > Assessment & Exams > Ass Reg Assoc Docs > Assessment Regulations > Assessment Regulations Taught Postgraduate
Published Location	http://www.gcu.ac.uk/gaq/regulationsandpolicies/assessmentregulationsandassociatedpolicies
Other documents referenced	These are listed in section 2 of the document.
Related documents	Undergraduate University Assessment Regulations

Version Number	Date issued	Author	Update information
V1.0	14.07.2014	Governance and Quality Enhancement	First Published version
V1.1	27.10.2014	Governance and Quality Enhancement	Inclusion of statement "included in the calculation at the first attempt" at 18.2.1.
V1.2	7.10.2014	Governance and Quality Enhancement	At 23.6a text changed from "non-General Student visa (student visitor visa)" to "appropriate visa".
V2.0	25.08.2015	Governance	Footnote regarding phasing out of 40% pass mark at SCQF Level 11 removed.
V2.0	25.08.2015	Governance	New regulation added at 15.5 <i>Where a student has failed to satisfactorily complete module requirements and has 30 or more credits outstanding at the PgD exit point, the Assessment Board may exercise its discretion to require the student to complete any or all outstanding credit prior to undertaking the Masters Dissertation (or equivalent module).</i>
V2.0	25.08.2015	Governance	At 2.10 Associated policy retitled <i>Policy and Procedures for Examination Papers</i>
V2.0	1.09.2015	Governance	At 2.5 <i>Regulations Regarding Plagiarism and Cheating</i> changed to <i>Code of Student Conduct</i>
V2.0	15.09.2015	Governance	Clarification clause added at 13.2.3 "and where no more than 20 credits have been failed at that level."
V2.0	30.09.2015	Governance	At 25.6a text changed from ""appropriate visa" to "Short Term Study Visit Visa".
V3.0	15.09.2016	Academic Quality and Development	At Section 11, clarification added to the wording and expectation of double marking and moderation.
			At Section 11.3, revision to text in relation to marking of all questions answered in coursework or examinations.
			At Section 9.5, sub-point (e) added to require module handbooks for exchange/mobility modules to make explicit arrangements for calculation and reporting of marks achieved.
			Section 18.2.1 and 18.2.2 minor amendment to criteria for Merit and Distinction calculations.
			Departmental Titles/Role titles updated
			Page 5, footnote 2, minor amendment to reference to GCU Credit Control and Debt Management Policy.

			At 24.3, the ability to progress on generic degree programmes is removed.
			Section 13, amendments and guidance as to the use of nullification regulations.

University Assessment Regulations

Taught Postgraduate Programmes

1	GENERAL	3
2	SPECIFIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES	4
3	NOTES OF GUIDANCE	5
4	ASSESSMENT AND ACADEMIC JUDGEMENT	5
5	ELIGIBILITY FOR ASSESSMENT	5
6	ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS	6
7	MAXIMUM PERIOD OF REGISTRATION	6
8	WITHDRAWAL OF A STUDENT FROM A PROGRAMME	6
9	SCHEME OF ASSESSMENT	7
10	COURSEWORK - LATE SUBMISSION AND FAILURE TO SUBMIT	8
11	MARKING AND MODERATION	9
12	ENTRY OF MARKS	10
13	AWARDING OF CREDIT FOR MODULES	10
14	MAXIMUM NUMBER OF ATTEMPTS AT A MODULE	13
15	FAILURE AT THE FIRST DIET	13
16	ACCUMULATED CREDIT AND THE REPETITION OF MODULES	13
17	AWARDS	14
18	MERIT OR DISTINCTION	14
19	ORAL ASSESSMENT	14
20	ADDITIONAL ASSESSMENTS	15

21	VALID REASONS FOR POOR PERFORMANCE AT ANY LEVEL	15
22	AEGROTAT AWARDS.....	15
23	STUDENTS NOTIFIED BY THE FINANCE OFFICE AS DEBTORS	16
24	SCHOOL-BASED GENERIC AWARDS – REPLACEMENT OF MODULES	16

1 General

- 1.1 All Programme and Assessment Boards must follow the Assessment Regulations of Glasgow Caledonian University (GCU) unless any exceptions from these regulations have been approved. Programme Boards must state in their programme specification/programme documentation, either:
- i) 'there are no exceptions from the University's Assessment Regulations'; or,
 - ii) 'there are exceptions from the University's Assessment Regulations, and that these are detailed in sections

This statement in the programme documentation, plus the University Assessment Regulations and, in the case of ii), any specified exceptions, constitute the Programme Assessment Regulations¹.

- 1.2 All exceptions from the University Assessment Regulations must receive formal approval by the University. Any proposed exceptions are first submitted to the Department of Academic Quality and Development for consideration and advice. Thereafter they may be submitted to the University Exceptions Subcommittee for consideration. The date and reference of each approved exception from the University Assessment regulations must be included in the programme documentation.
- 1.3 All exceptions from the University Assessment Regulations must be specified in sufficient detail to ensure that consequential exceptions from the University Assessment Regulations are specified.
- 1.4 Staff must ensure that students have available to them the University Assessment Regulations and, in the programme documentation, any exceptions from the regulations that are specific to their programme. Students have a responsibility to be aware of such regulations
- 1.5 The University Assessment Regulations may be subject to over-riding requirements from agencies of relevance to the operation of the University.
- 1.6 The University reserves the right to make reasonable changes to the regulations where in the opinion of the University those changes will assist in the proper delivery of education. The University will normally maintain the Assessment Regulations for students within an academic session. However, the University reserves the right to introduce changes during the academic session when it reasonably considers those changes are: either, for the maintenance of academic standards; or, required to secure the University's good operation and legal or regulatory compliance. Appropriate prior notice of changes will be given.

¹ For the purposes of this document, **Programme Assessment Regulations are defined as:** University Assessment Regulations plus any approved exceptions

2 Specific Policies and Procedures

- 2.1 There are several specific Policies and Procedures forming part of the Assessment Regulations.
- 2.2 Assessment Boards will be constituted and will operate as specified in the *Terms of Reference and Standard Operations of Assessment Boards*.
- 2.3 The appointment and duties of External Examiners is specified in the procedure entitled *Regulations for the Appointment and Responsibilities of External Examiners*.
- 2.4 The procedure for the consideration of mitigating circumstances is specified in the document entitled *Consideration of Mitigating Circumstances*.
- 2.5 Situations involving potential Plagiarism and Cheating will be processed under the *Code of Student Conduct*.
- 2.6 A student who wishes to exercise their right of appeal must do so in line with the *Academic Appeals Policy and Procedures*.
- 2.7 *The Credit Control and Debt Management Policy* contains regulations that are an integral part of the Assessment Regulations.
- 2.8 Written Examinations will be conducted in line with: the *Scheme of Invigilation*; and, *Regulations for the Conduct of Examinations*.
- 2.9 Special Examination Arrangements are detailed in: *Policy for Alternative & Special Examination Requirements*.
- 2.10 The *Policy & Procedures for Examination Papers* specify procedures for written examinations including the procedure for anonymous marking of formal written examinations and the retention of completed assessment material.
- 2.11 The *Graduation and Awards Regulations* specify the regulations and processes of Graduation.
- 2.12 The *Policy on Project and Dissertation Supervision* specify the processes that should be followed. If there are particular reasons for not following the procedures specified, the reasons must be documented in the minutes of the School Board and the exception highlighted in the Module Handbook.
- 2.13 Whilst the *Student Attendance Monitoring Policy*, and the *Policy on Student Performance Feedback* extend beyond the Assessment Regulations, they have a direct impact on student assessment.
- 2.14 Any exceptions from these Assessment Regulations must be approved by the Exceptions Subcommittee of the Academic Policy Committee. Guidance is in *Procedures for applying for an Exception to the University Assessment Regulations*.
- 2.15 Glasgow Caledonian University's Recognition of Prior Learning Policy (RPL) describes how RPL credit may be used to contribute to an award.
- 2.16 Regulations for registration, suspension of studies and withdrawal are detailed in *Taught Student Registration, Suspension of Studies and Withdrawal*.

3 Notes of Guidance

- 3.1 Notes of Guidance set out examples of good practice, approved by Senate. Whilst they are not viewed as necessarily part of the assessment regulations, all staff must consider such Guidance.
- 3.2 Relevant Guidance is contained in *Assessment Preparation Guidance for Academic Staff* as follows:
 - Notes of Guidance to Academic Staff on Information to be provided to Students to assist their preparation for Unseen Assessments.
 - Guidance Notes on Assessment Loading.

4 Assessment and Academic Judgement

- 4.1 The purpose of assessment is to enable students to demonstrate that they have fulfilled the objectives of the programmes of study and have achieved the standard required for the award they seek. Assessment Boards are responsible to Senate, and Senate requires all programmes of study to be subject to assessment regulations. It is within these Programme Assessment Regulations that Assessment Boards make their judgement on student performance. Failure to adhere to the regulations may: i) put the University at unacceptable risk; ii) threaten the standards of its awards; iii) run counter to principles of natural justice; iv) be in breach of external legislation; v) be in breach of requirements imposed by external agencies; and, vi) jeopardise the quality of the student experience.
- 4.2 Within the constraints imposed by the Senate requirements of paragraph 4.1 above, Assessment Boards have academic discretion in reaching decisions on the awards to be recommended for individual students. Regulations cannot be expected to legislate for every eventuality. The Assessment Boards are responsible for interpreting sensibly the assessment regulations for a programme if any difficulties arise. Academic judgements, which are properly justified and fully recorded in the minutes, may override strict regulatory interpretation. However academic judgement cannot be used as a justification to downgrade any credit, mark or degree classification achieved by all normal regulatory calculations or used to prevent progression or compensation permissible under the Programme Assessment Regulations².
- 4.3 Students have the right of Appeal regarding an Assessment Board decision. The conditions and process of Appeal are detailed in the *Academic Appeal Policy and Procedures*.

5 Eligibility for Assessment

- 5.1 Students eligible for assessment are those who have complied in all respects with the conditions for admission and registration to the programme and/or all relevant modules within the programme. Such conditions include the payment of relevant fees³ and compliance with such other requirements as may be prescribed from time to time. No person whose registration has lapsed, or who has failed to register for the appropriate programme and associated modules, is

² Assessment Boards may obtain guidance on the interpretation of the regulations from the Assistant Academic Registrar (Assessment and Exams) and the Department of Academic Quality and Development.

³ The GCU Credit Control and Debt Management Policy lists sanctions which may be applied to students with overdue debt.

eligible as a candidate for assessment. Assessment Boards will withhold the marks of an assessment of any person who appears ineligible pending an investigation and may ultimately disregard the attempt.

- 5.2 All eligible registered students shall be entitled to enter the first diet of assessments on completion of the normal programme of study without a special entry procedure and without payment of an additional fee. Absence from any assessment without good cause and supporting evidence shall be deemed to be an attempt.

6 Attendance requirements

- 6.1 Where a student has failed to meet the minimum attendance requirement (as detailed in module descriptors, programme regulations and student handbooks) the Assessment Board may decide that the student be required to re-enter the module with attendance or, on the basis of the individual's overall performance, that an alternative form of action may be more appropriate within the framework of the University Assessment Regulations.

7 Maximum Period of Registration

- 7.1 The maximum period of study is:
- in the case of an award for which the period of study is specified as 2 years or less, the period can be extended by a maximum of 1 year; and,
 - in the case of awards for which the period of study is specified as 3 years or more, the period can be extended by a maximum of 2 years.
- 7.2 Regulation 7.1 applies to both full-time and part-time programmes. In the case of part-time programmes the specified duration of part-time study should be used as the basis for determining the maximum extension.

8 Withdrawal of a student from a programme

- 8.1 An Assessment Board may require a postgraduate student to withdraw from their programme provided that:
- i) there is evidence that the student has failed to engage with the programme;
 - ii) and/or the Board is fully satisfied, both on the basis of assessment evidence and of tutors' reports, that the student concerned would be unable to benefit from the programme.
 - iii) and/or the length of study has reached the maximum period of registration.

The Assessment Board minutes must show which of the above criteria has/have been applied.

- 8.2 An Assessment Board may, exceptionally, require a candidate to withdraw from a programme after a first diet. There must be clear grounds based on the criteria in 8.1 and the Assessment Board minutes must show which criteria has/have been applied.
- 8.3 In all instances where a candidate has been withdrawn from a programme, the student must be offered guidance, advice and support as to their future options. Such guidance, advice and support will normally be provided by the student's Academic Advisor or, where this is not possible, by another appropriate member of academic staff who is an officer of the programme concerned.
- 8.4 In line with regulation 4.3, a student has the right of Appeal a decision of an Assessment Board regarding Withdrawal from a programme.

9 Scheme of Assessment

- 9.1 During each Academic Session (September-June) there will be a first and second diet assessment for all modules at SCQF level 11.
- 9.2 Modules will be assessed during the trimester(s) in which they have been completed.
- 9.3 Resit assessments for modules delivered in Trimesters A and/or B will be held prior to the start of the next Academic Session.
- 9.4 Entry to a second diet of assessments, shall be subject to such procedures as the Senate may approve from time to time and to such additional fees as the University Court may from time to time determine.
- 9.5 Programme and module handbooks shall specify for the programme/module:
 - (a) the modules to be assessed;
 - (b) where applicable, the percentage marks awarded to each discrete element of the assessment for each module;
 - (c) the conditions necessary to satisfy the Examiners in any one module;
 - (d) the number and level of the credit points earned for each module when the assessment criteria are satisfied;
 - (e) that, for modules undertaken for the purposes of mobility/exchange a handbook is issued to students. This handbook should also be issued to exchange/mobility co-ordinators. It is required that explicit arrangements for the calculation and reporting of the mark achieved (i.e. the equivalency to be applied at GCU for reporting to Assessment Boards for the purpose of progression and/or final award decision), are contained within the handbook.
- 9.6 Where appropriate, Assessment Boards may modify the form of assessment for individual students.
- 9.7 The Programme Board must be satisfied that, for each module, the coursework/laboratory schedule is made available to students at the beginning of each trimester and that students are informed of the submission dates for that module. Under normal circumstances, it is expected that the Module Leader will perform this duty, using the guidance contained within *Notes of Guidance to Academic Staff on the Information to be Provided to Students to Assist their Preparation for Unseen Examinations*, as a template. In addition, Programme Boards must ensure that students are informed of the regulations, which specify the penalties that may result from failure to meet the submission dates for coursework, at the beginning of the session. It is the responsibility of the Module Leader to ensure that adequate arrangements are in place for the recording of the receipt of coursework from students.
- 9.8 Where there are sound academic and Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body reasons, Programme Boards may seek approval from the School Board for a minimum attendance requirement in respect of specific modules or for all, or parts of, a particular programme. The relevant Programme Boards must liaise to ensure that module, programme and student handbooks clearly identify where this regulation is to be applied and the penalty for failure to meet the minimum attendance requirement. In addition, Programme Boards must ensure that students are informed of any regulations, which specify penalties that may result from failure to

meet the submission dates for coursework, at the beginning of the session. It is the responsibility of the Module Leader to ensure that adequate arrangements are in place for the recording of the receipt of coursework from students.

- 9.9 In cases where attendance at specific classes is essential, generally to satisfy Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body requirements, the module handbook shall specify these classes. The Module Leader must ensure that all students are informed via the module handbook.
- 9.10 Students must not attempt to use the same substantive piece of coursework to meet the assessment requirements of another item of coursework, dissertation or project. In a situation where an Assessment Board believes there is evidence that a student has attempted to use the same substantive piece of work for more than one item of coursework, the matter will be dealt with as Plagiarism and pursued in line with the *Code of Student Conduct*. Both module tutors and students must be aware of this regulation and it is the responsibility of module tutors to ensure that assessment topics do not overlap significantly.

The following statement should be incorporated into any piece of coursework submitted by a student:

"This piece of coursework is my own original work and has not been submitted elsewhere in fulfilment of the requirement of this or any other award."

10 Coursework - Late submission and failure to submit

- 10.1 In each of the following eventualities, it is the Module Leader who has the responsibility for determining a new submission date. It is the responsibility of all Module Leaders who grant dispensation to liaise with the Programme Leader in cases of a significant extension (greater than 5 working days). No extensions may be granted that extend beyond the date students are due to receive feedback on their assessment. Late submissions that are beyond this date will be dealt with under the *Consideration of Mitigating Circumstances*.
- 10.2 Failure by a student to meet any given submission deadline without good cause will result in a mark of zero for the coursework element concerned.
- 10.3 Where a student has good cause, supported by documentary evidence where appropriate, for a late submission and intimates this in advance of the submission deadline, a later submission date should be negotiated with the Module Leader, or, if unavailable, the Programme Leader. In the circumstances outlined in this paragraph, no penalty for late submission will be applied. It is expected that this regulation would apply in cases such as the following: serious domestic or personal problems or attendance at the doctor, dentist, hospital, court of law or funeral.
- 10.4 Where a student has, in circumstances that could not reasonably be foreseen (supported by documentary evidence where appropriate) good cause for late submission which they have not intimated in advance, they must notify the Module Leader, (or, if unavailable, the Programme Leader) as soon as possible. Provided there are valid reasons for the late notification, a later submission date should be negotiated with the Module Leader (or, if unavailable, the Programme Leader). However it is acknowledged that if the notification is too close to the Assessment Board, a late submission date may not be possible. In the circumstances outlined in this paragraph, no penalty for late submission will be applied. It is expected that this regulation would apply in cases where the circumstances could not reasonably have been foreseen, such as the following: serious domestic or personal problems or attendance at the doctor, dentist, hospital, or funeral.

- 10.5 Where the coursework assessment requires attendance at a specialised teaching session, either at the University (e.g. a laboratory, seminar, or clinic) or elsewhere (e.g. an industrial or clinical placement, field exercise, or laboratory visit), and, where a student has good cause for non-attendance, in line with 10.3 and 10.4, a revised submission date should be negotiated. It is acknowledged that an alternative visit or laboratory exercise may not be possible, in which case Module Leaders have discretion to provide, for example, data from another source, or similar.
- 10.6 If in the cases of 10.3, 10.4 and 10.5 above it has not been possible to arrange a late submission date thereby not enabling a mark to be awarded, the case must be processed in line with the *Consideration of Mitigating Circumstances*, and the student must submit the required form.
- 10.7 Where it has been impossible to make alternative arrangements, and the case for the non-submission has been accepted under 10.6, Assessment Boards have discretion to allow an average mark for a similar exercise(s) to be used in calculating the final mark for that module. Clearly in clinically-based/workshop-based/laboratory-based modules there is a limit to the number of assessments that can be missed and the student still deemed to have reached a satisfactory standard. Where such criteria need to be satisfied, these criteria should be included specified in the programme / module documentation and approved at Programme Approval or Review and/or by the Exceptions Subcommittee.

11 Marking and Moderation

- 11.1 All SCQF Level 11 Projects and Dissertations will be marked by two independent examiners, neither of whom is aware of the views of, or the marks being awarded by, the other examiner⁴. In cases where the two markers are unable to produce an agreed mark, it shall be the responsibility of the Dissertation/Project Coordinator to organise further assessment of the dissertation/project by a third appropriately experienced marker in order that a mark can be determined. In such cases, the third marker will determine the final mark to be awarded.
- 11.2 Scripts and coursework relating to assessments will be moderated⁵; this will include borderline assessments, all fails and representative samples⁶. In cases where the marker and the moderator are unable to produce an agreed mark, it shall be the responsibility of the Module Leader to organise further assessment of the script by a third appropriately experienced marker in order that a mark can be determined. In such cases, the third marker will determine the final mark to be awarded. All individuals involved with marking or moderating scripts and determining a mark will initial the assessment script. Module Leaders will negotiate with External Examiners to ensure that they are given sufficient time to scrutinise scripts for the assessments for which they have responsibility. The provisions of this paragraph shall apply to both assessment diets.
- 11.3 Where a student has answered more than the required number of questions in any coursework or examination paper and has not indicated which answers are to be excluded from marking, the Module Leader must ensure that only the first questions are marked. For example, if a paper requires five questions to be answered and the student has attempted seven, where the student

⁴ This is often referred to as blind double marking

⁵ In this context **moderation** is taken to mean an assessment of the mark by a second marker who is aware of marks and comments made by the first marker.

⁶ In this context, a representative sample will be 10% across all bands.

has not clearly indicated which answers should be fully excluded, only the first five questions answered will be marked and used to calculate the overall mark for the paper. In cases where the examination paper or coursework has more than one section, the same procedure as described above will apply to each section.

- 11.4 Module marks can only be considered as provisional prior to the meeting of the Assessment Board.
- 11.5 Where the provision of paragraphs 11.1 and 11.2 are not followed in their entirety, the Assessment Board must be provided with a full explanation for any exception in process and that explanation be recorded in the Minutes of the Meeting.
- 11.6 Where it is considered that an irregularity in the module assessment has occurred, guidance will be sought from the Department of Academic Quality and Development.

12 Entry of marks.

- 12.1 Marks are entered into the University Management Information System as a percentage. The various data cells required for each module will have been specified in accordance with the module descriptor, including the weightings of assessment components and elements, and the calculation of the aggregate module mark will be performed automatically. The automatic calculation will produce a rounded aggregate mark for the module, based on the following rules: aggregate mark \geq xx.5 round up; aggregate mark $<$ xx.5 round down.
- 12.2 The module marks calculated by the University Management Information System will be used in the calculation of overall credit-weighted averages for the determination of: distinction and merit; and, compensation. The rules regarding rounding as those that apply in 12.1.
- 12.3 The mark to be recorded at second diet shall be the actual mark achieved by the student. The actual mark obtained at resit should be used in calculations to determine the candidate's eligibility to benefit from Compensation.
- 12.4 Assessment Boards will have access to records which indicate whether the candidates have previously entered a module and with what result(s) (including compensation);

13 Awarding of credit for modules

- 13.1 Module pass criteria In order to satisfy the examiners in any module, candidates must obtain an aggregate mark of 50% or greater.
 - 13.1.1 For modules assessed by a combination of a coursework component and an examination component, in addition to achieving an aggregate mark of 50% or greater, candidates must obtain a mark of 45% or greater in each of the coursework and the examination components.
 - 13.1.2 If the coursework component is formed from two or more coursework elements, unless 13.1.3 applies, the coursework component mark used is the aggregated mark of the constituent elements.
 - 13.1.3 In cases where certain elements of the coursework component are deemed essential, normally due to Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body requirements, the module descriptor shall specify these elements and that a minimum mark of 45% is required for each element specified. The Module Leader must ensure that all students are informed of

any such specific requirements via the module handbook. All such cases must be approved by the Exceptions Subcommittee.

13.1.4 In line with 1.3, any approved exceptions from the pass mark of 50% must detail the consequential effects, such as the minimum marks to be used in 13.1.1 and 13.1.3. Normally, such minimum marks in components and elements will be 5 percentage points below the approved modified pass mark.

13.1.5 In some instances, normally where Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body requirements must be met in professional and clinical modules, the exception from the pass mark of 50% is considerable, such as for example, 80%. Whilst the criteria for passing the module will be detailed in the programme documentation having been approved as an exception, the module marks used in assessing overall performance, such as in Compensation, Merit and Distinction are likely to distort the calculations. In such cases Normalisation of the module mark must be used. The process, including the formula to be used in the Normalisation process, must be specified and approved as an exception.

13.2 Compensation

13.2.1 Compensation is to make provision for allowing, within specified limits, the overall performance of a student to compensate for failure in up to and including 20 credit points of module(s) of the programme.

13.2.2 Compensation is not intended to accommodate situations where mitigating circumstances have been submitted and approved. In these cases Assessment Boards must act in accordance with the procedures set out in the *Consideration of Mitigating Circumstances*.

13.2.3 Compensation may only be awarded following delivery and assessment of all of the modules up to the PgD exit award point (i.e. prior to the dissertation/project phase) and where no more than 20 credits have been failed at that level.

13.2.4 Compensation will not be applied in respect of a postgraduate project or dissertation

13.2.5 The actual marks attained by the student will be used in all calculations for compensation. The purpose of this regulation is to emphasise the need to use the most recently attained resit mark for the module which is to be considered, together with the actual marks attained for all other modules, to determine eligibility for compensation.

13.2.6 It is acknowledged that some Programme Assessment Regulations, may be approved, with the regulation that compensation may not be exercised in respect of specified modules, for example where Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Bodies insist on a pass in a named module(s).

13.2.7 Assessment Boards will apply compensation when the following conditions are satisfied:

- i) A student obtains an overall module mark of 45% or greater.
- ii) The student has achieved an overall aggregate mark across all modules of the programme of at least 55%.
- iii) In modules where there is more than one component contributing to the overall mark, each component must be equal to or greater than 40%.
- iv) In modules where certain elements of the coursework component have been approved by the Exceptions Subcommittee as requiring a minimum mark of 45%, the student must have attained a mark of 40% or greater in each of these specified elements of the coursework component.

- 13.2.8 Assessment Boards have discretion to raise a mark by 1 percentage point in order to achieve compensation. This may be applied, either, to the aggregate module mark; or, to one of the Component marks; or, in the case of an approved minimum mark for a coursework element, to a coursework element.
- 13.2.9 In line with 1.3, any approved exceptions from the pass mark of 50% must accommodate consequential effects in the statement, such as the marks to be used in 13.2.7. Normally such marks will maintain the same percentage points' difference between the pass mark of 50% and the pass mark as specified in the approved exception.
- 13.1 Nullification of the results of an assessment of a single module at SCFQ 11. Nullification applies to all candidates undertaking the module in question.
- 13.1.1 In exceptional circumstances at SCQF Level 11, with the exception of modules specified as essential in response to Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body requirements, where in the view of the Assessment Board, (fully supported by the External Examiner(s), circumstances prevail whereby the overall performance of a majority of candidates in one module is clearly and obviously out of line with the overall performance of the students throughout the Programme, the Assessment Board may consider nullification. In such instances, the Chair of the Assessment Board will refer any proposal to nullify the results of that module to the DVC (Academic) and the Department of Academic Quality and Development for advice and authorisation. This action will take place in advance of the meeting of the Assessment Board, with a full rationale provided in support of the proposal. In such circumstances, where a request to nullify is fully authorised, a final pass will be recorded on the student record and the students will be credited with the credit points to be accrued from that module for final award purposes. Such actions must be fully recorded, with a clear rationale for the action included within the minute. The Chair of the Assessment Board and the External Examiners will also be required to sign an assent form which clearly indicates that they fully concur with this action. The minute and the assent form will be drawn to the attention of the next meeting of the Learning and Teaching Subcommittee which will require to satisfy itself as to the circumstances underlying this action, to take such follow up action as is deemed appropriate and report the matter to Senate accordingly through the Academic Policy Committee.
- 13.1.2 For the purposes of the determination of distinction or merit, the average mark of the remaining modules should be substituted for the mark of the nulled module in all calculations.
- 13.2 Special Circumstances outwith the Control of the Students
- 13.2.1 In exceptional cases where it is decided by the Assessment Board that an irregularity in the module assessment has occurred, the Board may either: i) re-assess the module, either in full or in part, without adding to the number of attempts; or, ii) consider nullification of the module assessment in line with 13.3.
- 13.2.2 Actions taken must be fully recorded, with a clear rationale for the action included within the minute. The Chair of the Assessment Board and the External Examiners will also be required to sign an assent form which clearly indicates that they fully concur with this action. The minute and the assent form will be drawn to the attention of the next meeting of the Learning and Teaching Subcommittee which will require to satisfy itself as to the circumstances underlying this action, to take such follow up action as is deemed appropriate and report the matter to Senate accordingly through the Academic Policy Committee.

13.4.3 Where it is considered that an irregularity in the module assessment has occurred, guidance will be sought from the Department of Academic Quality and Development in advance of the meeting of the Assessment Board (see 11.6).

14 Maximum number of attempts at a module.

14.1 Subject to the Assessment Board's discretion to act in accordance with Regulation 8.2 (withdrawal from a Programme), a candidate is permitted up to and including two attempts.

15 Failure at the first diet.

15.1 Candidates who fail to satisfy the Assessment Board at a first diet, will, subject to regulation 8.2 (withdrawal from a Programme), be required to re-enter the relevant modules at the re-assessment diet offered within the same session.

15.2 The Assessment Board may, however, if there is substantive evidence that the student has failed to engage with the module, require a candidate to undertake a further formal programme of study, which may include repeating the work of the individual module, either with or, exceptionally, without a requirement to attend.

15.3 Where a candidate fails to satisfy the Assessment Board in any assessable element of a module, the Examiners may amend the form of assessment to be re-entered, provided adequate notice is given to the candidate of the amended form of assessment to be set.

15.4 Where a candidate was unable to enter an assessment for good cause, the Assessment Board will act in accordance with the procedures set out in the *Consideration of Mitigating Circumstances*.

15.5 Where a student has failed to satisfactorily complete module requirements and has 30 or more credits outstanding at the PgD exit point, the Assessment Board may exercise its discretion to require the student to complete any or all outstanding credit prior to undertaking the Masters Dissertation (or equivalent module).

16 Accumulated Credit and the Repetition of Modules

16.1 A student cannot re-enter a module that has already been passed in order to improve his/her marks for that module. Consequently, a student who has been required to repeat a level will only be required to re-enter those modules for which they have failed to record a pass mark. The Assessment Board shall have the discretion to determine the components/elements of each module which should be re-assessed.

16.2 In certain circumstances, for example where a student has taken a significant amount of time out from their programme and there have been significant changes to the content of a module or programme, an Assessment Board may require a student (or a student may request) to re-take a module and/or its assessment prior to progression to a higher level.

16.3 A registered student may attend classes in order to improve their knowledge of a module that has already been passed. Such attendance will not involve any assessment or extra payment over and above that which has already been paid. The student must seek advice from their Academic Advisor or, where this is not possible, by another appropriate member of academic staff who is an officer of the programme concerned. The student must confirm in writing that they have received advice and that attendance at such classes is not detrimental to other modules which they may be taking.

17 Awards

- 17.1 The Definitive Programme Document and Programme Handbook, will specify the modules and their assessment components in which a candidate must satisfy the Examiners in order to be recommended for an award. The programme will have been approved/re-approved, including confirmation that it conforms to the University Qualifications Framework.
- 17.2 University awards will only be conferred on students who are exiting the University with an appropriate number of credit points or who have successfully completed their programme of study.
- 17.3 The issuing of University awards shall be subject to such procedures as the Senate may approve from time to time and to the payment of such fees as the University Court may from time to time determine. These are detailed in the University's *Graduation and Awards Regulations*.

18 Merit or Distinction

- 18.1 When the Assessment Board is satisfied that a candidate has shown special performance in assessment, it may recommend that the award be granted 'with Merit' or 'with Distinction'.
- 18.2 The criteria for the award of 'with Merit' or 'with Distinction' are as follows:
- 18.2.1 Merit: i) overall credit-weighted average of the modules used in the calculation, as specified in 18.2.3, within the range 65% to 69%, and ii) passed all modules undertaken at the level of the award at the first attempt, and iii) passed all modules included in the calculation at the first attempt.
- 18.2.2 Distinction: i) overall credit-weighted average of the modules used in the calculation, as specified in 18.2.3, equal to 70% or greater and ii) passed all modules undertaken at the level of the award at the first attempt, and iii) passed all modules in the calculation at the first attempt with a mark of 55% or greater and iv) where the award has a project/dissertation module (or equivalent), the mark for that module is no less than 70%.
- 18.2.3 Modules to be used in the calculation of merit and distinction are as follows:

Award	Level	Credit points	Calculation
Postgraduate Certificate	SCQF 11	60	A minimum of 40 credits at SCQF 11
Postgraduate Diploma	SCQF 11	120	A minimum of 90 credits at SCQF 11
Masters	SCQF 11	180	A minimum of 150 credits at SCQF 11
CPD awards	various	20	All 20 credit points

19 Oral Assessment

- 19.1 In particular cases where a student's performance is close to a merit or distinction boundary, oral assessments may be arranged. In such cases it is recommended that an informal meeting of the relevant Module Leaders prepare a list of borderline and other students to be assessed orally by

the External Examiners, who must be consulted before the final list is agreed. Oral assessments of students may be beneficial to External Examiners in assisting them to make recommendations as to whether an upgrading of classification is appropriate and therefore must be arranged in sufficient time to allow the External Examiners to provide a considered assessment at the formal meeting of the Assessment Board.

20 Additional Assessments

20.1 In special circumstances or where a candidate is unable to satisfy the relevant Assessment Board in course work, laboratory work, formal exams or other work assessed during a module, the Assessment Board may require a student to present him/herself for oral, practical or other additional assessments at any stage of the programme. In situations where a formal examination has been declared invalid, for whatever reason, an Assessment Board may require a candidate or candidates to present themselves for an alternative assessment. The results of such assessments may be used by Assessment Boards to supplement assessed course work and other formal assessments.

21 Valid Reasons for Poor Performance at any level

21.1 In the case of individual students, if it is established to the satisfaction of the Mitigating Circumstances Board that a student's absence, failure to submit work or poor performance in all or part of the assessment was due to illness/personal difficulties or other cause found valid, the Assessment Board shall act in accordance with the provisions set out in the procedures for the *Consideration of Mitigating Circumstances*.

22 Aegrotat Awards

22.1 In the case of individual students, where there is insufficient evidence to determine the recommendation for an award under the procedures for the *Consideration of Mitigating Circumstances*, if the Assessment Board is satisfied that the student would have qualified for the award for which they were a candidate had it not been for illness/personal difficulties or other cause, an aegrotat award may be recommended, e.g.:

- Aegrotat Postgraduate Certificate
- Aegrotat Postgraduate Diploma
- Aegrotat Masters Degree

22.2 Such an award should be recommended only exceptionally and normally in circumstances where reassessment within an acceptable timescale would not be possible for the candidate concerned.

22.3 Before a recommendation of the Assessment Board is confirmed under 22.1, the student concerned must have signified that he/she is willing to accept the aegrotat award.

23 Students notified by the Finance Office as Debtors

23.1 In cases where a School has received notification that a student owes outstanding debt to the University, the Credit Control and Debt Management Policy will apply.

24 School-based Generic Awards – Replacement of Modules

- 24.1 Students, with the exception of international students currently registered at GCU on a General Student visa (see 24.6 below), who require up to and including 40 credits for the completion of an exit award may transfer from their programme of study to the appropriate School-based Generic Award.
- 24.2 It shall be a matter for the Assessment Board to decide at which point during any given student's ongoing attempts at completing a module that the student should be advised or required to transfer to a School-based Generic Award.
- 24.3 Notwithstanding the provisions elsewhere in these assessment regulations, students who transfer to school-based generic awards and undertake replacement modules will be permitted the number of attempts specified in Section 14 of the Regulations. Students who fail to complete a replacement module within the permitted number of attempts will not be permitted to undertake any further modules as a replacement for the module not completed and will be required to exit, as appropriate, with such credit and awards as have been achieved.
- 24.4 The normal regulations governing compensation shall be applied within school-based generic awards
- 24.5 Students undertaking school-based generic awards shall be subject to the same regulations governing distinction and merit as all other students. Replacement modules passed as a first attempt shall not be subject to capping and may count towards distinction and merit.
- 24.6 International students currently registered at GCU on a General Student visa who have failed on their named programme of study, with a maximum of 40 credits outstanding, and who wish to exit with an award of the University, should be appropriately advised of their options. These are:
- a. Returning to their home country to apply for a Short Term Study Visit Visa that will allow them entry to the UK for a short period of time to undertake up to a maximum of 40 credits for the award of an appropriate school-based generic degree;
 - b. The possibility, if the provision exists, that they may be able to access a module/s in a distance learning mode from their home country.

SECTION 3:

Regulations for the Consideration of Mitigating Circumstances

(Extract of the document *Consideration of Mitigating Circumstances v1.2*)

A Mitigating Circumstances Form (MCF) must not be used by students to request an extension or to provide an explanation for the late submission of an assessment. Requests for an extension or explanations for the late submission of an assessment must be made via direct contact with the module leader. In these circumstances, the procedure for Academic Appeals must be adhered to.

1.1 School Mitigating Circumstances Board

A Mitigating Circumstances Board will operate in each School for the consideration, on behalf of individual Assessment Boards, of the validity of mitigating circumstances submitted by students in mitigation of their performance in assessments which contribute to their progression and for final award. The Graduate School, GCU Lead and other programme areas will ensure appropriate arrangements are in place for their areas.

Each School will have a minimum of one combined UG/PG Mitigating Circumstances Board meeting per Trimester plus an autumn meeting to consider submissions for those students completing their dissertations. Each Board will have a minimum of 8 members and the quorum for the Board will be 75%. The Head of Administration in each School will be responsible for co-ordinating the School Mitigating Circumstances Board meeting schedule for the Academic Session.

It is important to note that Mitigating Circumstances Boards are not intended to be representational but rather an objective Board of appropriate members of senior School academic staff who can provide a consistency of decision making.

The membership, including interschool representation, of each Mitigating Circumstances Board shall be as follows:

Membership

3 x Departmental LTQ reps/champions, with Chair rotating

3 x Departmental Academic Disability Co-ordinators

One Departmental LTQ rep from another School

At least one subject lead per dept. by rotation/agreement

In Attendance

Administrative Support

Inter School Representation and Chairing of the Mitigating Circumstances Boards by Departmental LTQ leads.

School	Department	Jan	May	Aug	Sept/Oct
		Combined	Combined	Combined	MSc Award
GSBS	LEAR	Chair		SHLS	SHLS
	BM	SHLS	Chair		
	SSMJ		SEBE	Chair	Chair
SHLS	HCS	Chair		SEBE	SEBE
	PAHS	SEBE	Chair		
	LS		GSBS	Chair	Chair
SEBE	C&S	Chair		GSBS	GSBS
	MEEE	GSBS	Chair		
	CCIS		SHLS	Chair	Chair

1.2 Pre-Screening of Mitigating Circumstances forms

The Chair of the Mitigating Circumstances Board (plus one other member of the board) to have delegated authority to screen all MC forms prior to MC Board Meetings and approve applications that clearly meet the eligibility criteria, see para 1.12. All other applications must be submitted to the full Board for consideration.

Note: Where the Chair of the Board has an in depth knowledge of an applicant, the Chair should be passed to another member of the Board for consideration of the application.

- 1.3** Each student wishing the University to take into account mitigating circumstances **must** complete the "Mitigating Circumstances Form" (MCF).

Students must provide supporting evidence with the MCF and it must clearly relate to the specific dates during which the mitigating circumstances were applicable. If the mitigating circumstance relates to a medical problem, a medical certificate (or letter from a medical practitioner) must be attached - ***a self-certificate form is not acceptable evidence.***

The form must be submitted **no later than 5 working days after last date of the examination diet in each trimester**, as set out in the standard Trimester Calendar. This applies to all assessments which take place within each trimester. **Where the submission date for an assessment is outwith a normal exam diet (e.g. an MSc dissertation), the MCF must be submitted no later than 5 working days after the submission/assessment date.** Forms received after the deadlines will be rejected and late submissions will only be accepted in

exceptional circumstances. The form (MCF) and “Help Notes for Students” on its completion will be available from Departmental and School Offices and Student Administration Services.

Schools will ensure that there is process to confirm that the period of the mitigating circumstances cited concur with the assessment dates.

1.4 Schools will ensure that Mitigating Circumstances forms (MCF) are collated and submitted timeously to the School Mitigating Circumstances Board. The information on the form will be made available to all members of the Mitigating Circumstances Board. The information contained within the MCFs must be treated as strictly confidential and not discussed or divulged outwith the Board.

1.5 For each individual “Mitigating Circumstances Form” (MCF), the School Mitigating Circumstances Board will normally, make one of the following decisions.

In the case of Retrospective Consideration of Mitigating Circumstances (RCMCF), the Chair of the Mitigating Circumstances Board plus one member of the MCF Board have delegated authority to make one of the following decisions.

During its deliberations, the Board must take cognizance of the specified list of circumstances considered to be legitimate grounds for acceptance of a form, listed in paras 1.12 & 1.13.

1.5.1 That the notification contained within the MCF/ RCMCF be accepted and the Assessment Board proceed immediately to take a decision on the basis of the directions set out in Paragraphs 1.7 to 1.10 below.

1.5.2 That the notification contained within the MCF RCMCF be not accepted and the submission be discounted in the Assessment Boards deliberations.

1.5.3 That, very exceptionally, the Mitigating Circumstances Board may wish to consult with the Assessment Board Chair where an informed decision cannot be reached by the Mitigating Circumstances Board.

Note: Mitigating Circumstances Boards will not uphold mitigating circumstances where corroborative evidence is not provided.

1.6 The Mitigating Circumstances Board shall maintain a record of decisions and their rationale and provide this information to the Assessment Board with respect to each Mitigating Circumstances Form/Retrospective Mitigating Circumstances Form considered. In the case of a student with multiple Mitigating Circumstances Forms submitted, the outcome of these deliberations may be consolidated into a single decision, as appropriate.

Decisions of the Schools Mitigating Circumstances Boards cannot be overturned.

In exceptional circumstances, the Assessment Board may choose to present a case to the School Mitigating Circumstances Board seeking a reconsideration of its decision. This may include a submission by the Assessment Board to the School Mitigating Circumstances Board under Item 8 of the Mitigating Circumstances Guidelines for Staff. In these circumstances, the decision for the individual student concerned should be recorded as deferred

Please note: It is the role of the School Mitigating Circumstances Board to make decisions regarding whether or not the mitigation contained within a MCF/RCMCF should or should not be accepted. This is designed to ensure consistency of decision making.

In addition to recording a decision for each student, the decision and rationale behind it must also be recorded on the MCF which should be kept with the student's record. (Note: The MCF must be kept until at least six months after the date of completion of the programme by the student, or six months after their withdrawal)

Students must be notified of the outcome of their MCF/RCMCF submission by use of the standard university MCF/RCMCF feedback form.

- 1.7** It is not the role of the School Mitigating Circumstances Board to make academic judgements on behalf of the Assessment Board.

The Chair of the Assessment Board will report the decision of the Mitigating Circumstances Board to the Assessment Board. Where the mitigating circumstances have been accepted by the Mitigating Circumstances Board, the Assessment Board will make a judgement about the most appropriate decision, taking into account the need to maintain academic standards and to act in the best interests of the student concerned.

The Chair of the Assessment Board shall ensure the following:

- i) MCFs submitted directly to the Assessment Board (i.e. not via a Mitigating Circumstances Board) are not considered.**
- ii) That there is no discussion of mitigating circumstances relating to any student where these circumstances have not been notified to the Board, via a Mitigating Circumstances Board, by means of a MCF.**
- iii) Where a student has cited mitigating circumstances for a particular module assessment, these circumstances will not be considered in relation to any other module assessments undertaken by the student on the basis of supplementary information notified to the Assessment Board by oral (or other) statement(s).**

Where a candidate has given, to the satisfaction of the Mitigating Circumstances Board, due notice of mitigating circumstances (in accordance with paragraph 1.3 above) and has been absent from or has failed an assessment, the Assessment Board will consider:

- the work which the candidate has submitted at the assessment(s), if any, for the module concerned

- records of the candidate's performance during the entire programme
- academic evaluation provided by the candidate's tutors
- the results of any other form of assessment (e.g., oral) which may be set for the candidate concerned

1.8 Where a candidate has given, to the satisfaction of the Mitigating Circumstances Board, due notice of mitigating circumstances (in accordance with paragraph 1.3 above) and has been absent from or has failed an assessment, the Assessment Board may, for example, decide:

- i) that the student has passed and is eligible for progression or award with the original marks and the mitigating circumstances are not considered to have impinged on the student's performance. However, the submission of a MCF will be recorded in the student's assessment record and the Mitigating Circumstances database for potential future reference.
- ii) that, on the level of overall performance in a particular year and performance in previous years, the student would have passed had he/she not been affected by circumstances outwith his/her control. In situations where the Assessment Board decision is to take cognisance of mitigating circumstances and award a pass in a particular module, no mark should be recorded but a symbol i.e. 'P' representing a Pass from the Assessment Board based on the mitigating circumstances will be recorded in the student's record and transcript.
- iii) that, in the light of the mitigating circumstances, the attempt at a particular diet be declared void and that the student take the next diet as a first, second, or third attempt as appropriate.
- iv) that, on the basis of overall performance in a particular year and, if appropriate, in previous years, that the student would **not** have passed, notwithstanding the fact that he/she had been affected by circumstances outwith his/her control

1.9 Assessment Boards may modify the form of assessment in accordance with the University Assessment Regulations (see section 10 of undergraduate and/or taught postgraduate assessment regulations).

1.10 On the basis of the information available to it, the Assessment Board may, if appropriate, permit the candidate to proceed, or recommend the granting of a University award, an award with Distinction, a degree, a degree with Distinction, a degree with Honours, etc.

1.11 Submission of Mitigating Circumstances after results have been published (Retrospective Mitigating Circumstances)

A student who wishes to notify the University of Mitigating Circumstances which were not made available to an Assessment Board **before** it took its decision must provide a written explanation as to why they did not provide this information in advance of the Assessment Board meeting.

Retrospective Consideration of Mitigating Circumstances forms will only be accepted in exceptional circumstances

Each student wishing the University to take into account retrospective mitigating circumstances **must** complete the "Retrospective Consideration of Mitigating Circumstances Form (RCMCF). The form must be received by the appropriate School **within two calendar weeks of publication of the Assessment Board's decision.**

The RCMCF must include full details of the circumstances which prevented the submission of a Mitigating Circumstances Form (MCF) by the appropriate Trimester deadline, i.e. in advance of the Assessment Board meeting.

All claims must include medical certificates or other documentation which support the retrospective submission of the claim, i.e. the good reason for why the MCF form could not have been submitted before the Assessment Board met.

The Chair of the Mitigating Circumstances Board and one other Board member have delegated authority to screen all retrospective MCF forms and approve applications which clearly meet the eligibility criteria to go forward for consideration under paragraphs 1.5.

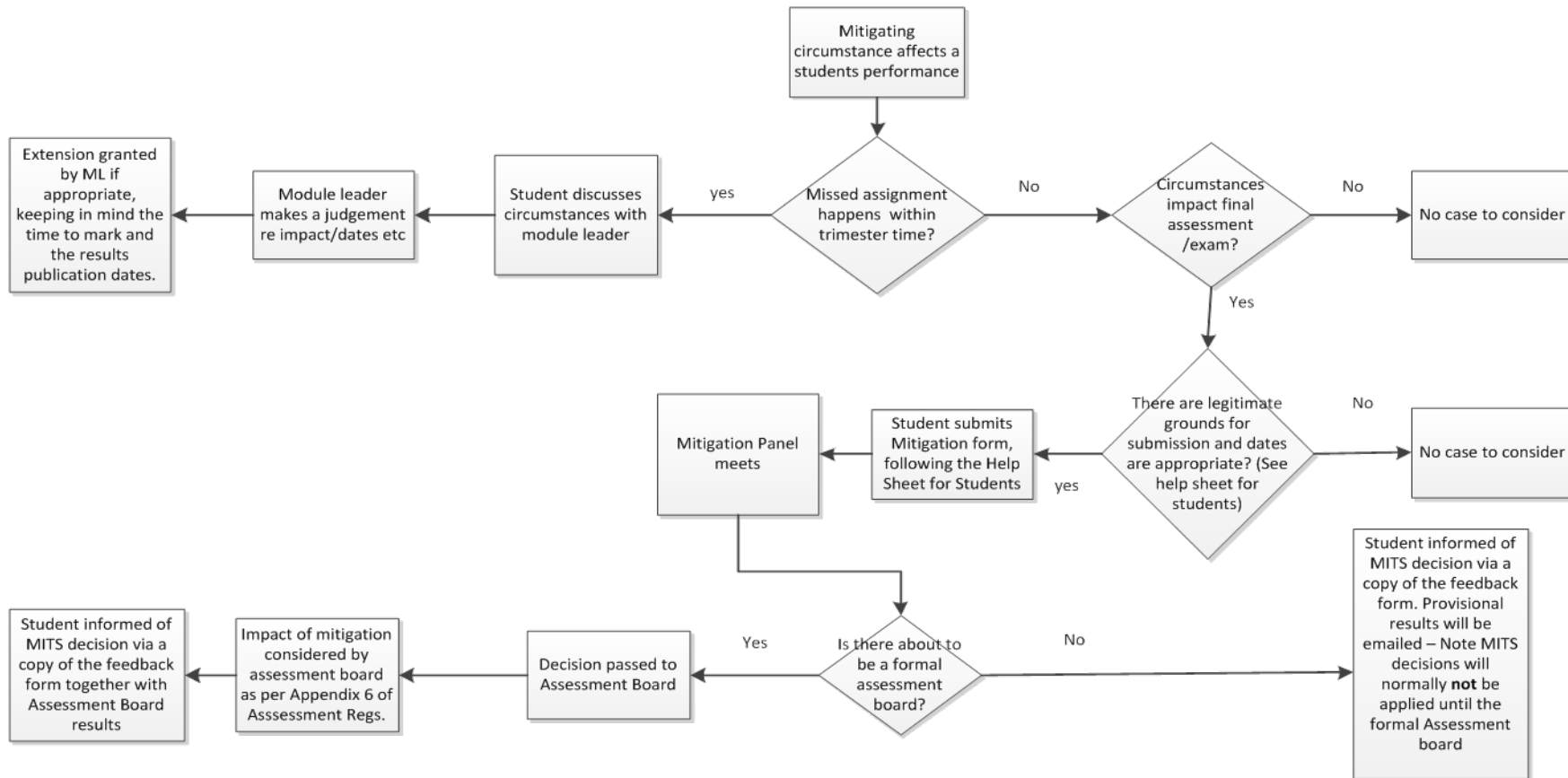
During deliberations, cognizance must be taken of the specified list of circumstances considered to be legitimate grounds for acceptance of a RCMC form, listed in paragraphs 1.14 & 1.15.

For applications approved for further consideration, the Chair of the Mitigating Circumstances Board plus one member of the MCF Board have delegated authority to act in accordance with paragraph 1.5 and 1.1. Thereafter, the regulations governing the submission of an MCF apply.

Students will be notified of the outcome of their submission via the standard university RCMCF feedback form no later than four weeks after the submission of their form.

Note: Where students wish to request further consideration of an Assessment Board Decision on the basis of **Procedural** or **other academic** grounds, this must be submitted under the University's Academic Appeal Regulation, using the Academic Appeal Form. Procedural or academic grounds for an Academic Appeal are defined as Material administrative error, Regulatory irregularity and other material irregularity. Examples: that the assessments were not conducted in accordance with regulations for the programme; that the Assessment Board Decision does not conform to University Mitigating Circumstances Policy.

Overview of the Mitigation Process



Overview of the Retrospective Mitigation Process

