

Guidance to Exam Board on approach to Fair Assessment in 2020-21

Covid-19 - Fair Assessment

For Undergraduate Programmes of Study, [a College wide Safety-Net Policy](#) was agreed for 2019-20. The safety net augmented, where possible and appropriate, practices already approved for special situations in our regulations. These will still apply in 2020-21 under the approach to Fair Assessment

Boards of Examiners will need to satisfy themselves that the following practices have been adhered to:

- The processes and methods for marking assessments have been conducted in the normal way.
- That students have satisfied the usual requirements for progression or award, i.e. a student must pass modules as specified for their programme for the safety net to be considered.
- Students who do not meet these requirements will retain the right to resit opportunities, as set out in the regulations.

Under the 2020-21 Approach to Fair Assessment, the following applies:

- **Treatment of Year One**
 - On classification, calculate with and without year 1 as in 2019/20
 - The final degree classification will be determined by the better outcome of: zero weighting or 7.5 percent weighting of year 1 (with exception for MBBS and iBScs, which are to be managed locally).
- **Resits**
 - In-year resits for all years and levels (UG and PGT), with option for students to resit either in-year or during the following year.
 - No fees for in-year resits.
- **Cohort analysis**

In the College's 2021 commitment to the maintenance of fair assessment the following statement has been made:

The College will ensure your cohort's overall performance is not impacted in comparison to previous years. We will implement a process of cohort analysis to ensure that overall year (or element) weighted averages are consistent with the performance of equivalent cohorts in the past. Our normal marking and moderation processes will continue to be applied at module and/or assessment level by each Board of Examiners. This is no different to any other year.

In addition, for this academic year, if the proportion of students in a cohort achieving 70% or more for their year (or element) weighted average is less than the proportion in the past then Boards of Examiners will make specific adjustments to ensure that the proportion achieving 70% or more this year is at least equal to the historic proportion.

Our normal comparisons will be to the performance of equivalent cohorts in immediate pre-pandemic academic years. The additional process which looks at the proportion of students achieving 70% or more this year applies to all taught students for the 2020/21 academic year except: 1st year undergraduates, MBBS students, and students studying programmes where either the current cohort is small or limited historic data to compare to is available. Normal marking and moderation process will still apply to this group.

This note is a non-technical summary of the more detailed guidance for Boards of Examiners. In summary: where the appropriate historical data exists, Boards of Examiners should make appropriate adjustments to ensure that the proportion of students achieving 70% or more in

2020/21 should not be less than the mean proportion achieving 70% or more for the three cohorts 2018/19, 2017/18 and 2016/17.

The six steps outlined in the detailed guidance can be summarised as:

1. The normal marking and moderation processes are applied at module or assessment level as per the standard arrangements for the programme/department.
2. The normal initial year/element weighted averages for each student who has passed the year of study are calculated. If a student has failed modules/assessments such that they cannot pass the year of study then they should be considered through the normal processes for such cases – the cohort analysis process only applies to students who have passed the year.
3. A decision must be made as to what programme(s) and/or years of study will be used for comparison (e.g. UG year 2, separating the BSc from MSci cohort, or group of MSc programmes).
4. Identify if the proportion of students achieving 70% or more in the 2020/21 cohort is less than the mean proportion of the equivalent cohort achieving 70% or more for the three academic years 2018/19, 2017/18 and 2016/17. [If yes, go to step 5; if no go to step 6]
5. If the results of the cohort for 2020/21 are below the mean proportion of the equivalent cohort for the three academic years 2018/19, 2017/18 and 2016/17, the Board of Examiners must make adjustments to ensure they are not. Mark adjustments and/or scaling should be applied at either assessment or module level. The exact process for mark adjustment or scaling is to be determined by the relevant Boards of Examiners.
6. The normal processes should then continue. The Board of Examiners must make classification decisions for graduating students (including consideration of students at the borderline). Module and year marks, progression outcomes and classification decisions must be reported to the Registry. All decisions/actions taken must be recorded in the minutes of the Board of Examiners meetings, to aid in the handling of any complaints and appeals