Academic Quality Framework

Section 7: Academic Regulations

2023-2024

Academic Quality Framework

Section 7: Academic Regulations

This Section of the Academic Quality Framework should be of interest to all members of the UCO and Collaborative Partner staff.

Version number	Dates produced and approved (include committee)	Reason for production/ revision	Author	Location(s)	Proposed next review date and approval required
V1.0	March 2014 Academic Council	To define the procedures for the management of academic quality and standards in teaching and learning at the UCO.	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) Academic Registrar	Master Version: J:\0 Quality Team – AQF Published Version: Intranet	Annually and on an "as required" basis.
V1.0	Sept 2016 Academic Council	Reviewed to update staff role and policy titles and to reflect current practice.	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) Academic Registrar	Master Version: J:\0 Quality Team – AQF Published Version: Intranet	August 2017 and on an "as required" basis.
V3.0	Sept 2017 Academic Council	Annual Review including amendments to reflect the name change of the British School of Osteopathy to the University College of Osteopathy	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) Head of Quality	Master Version: J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQF Published Version: Intranet	Annually and on an "as required" basis.
V4.0	Sept 2018 PRAG Chair	Administrative amendments to update staff role titles and email system.	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) Head of Quality	Master Version: J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQF Published Version: Website	Annually and on an "as required" basis.
V5.0	Sept 2019 PRAG Chair	Administrative amendments to update staff role titles, weblinks & footnotes and to reflect current practice.	Head of Quality Registrar	Master Version: J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQF Published Version: Website	Annually and on an "as required" basis.
V6.0	Aug 2020 PRAG Chair	Administrative amendments to reflect new committee structure.	Head of Quality Registrar	Master Version: J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQF Published Version: Website	Annually and on an "as required" basis.
V7.0	Dec 2020 TQSC & Academic Council	Major Amendments to: Section 7.22 RPL to reflect an increase in the number of	Head of Quality Registrar	Master Version: J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQF	Annually and on an "as required" basis.

		credits permitted for RPL at Level 5 from 60 to 120. *Section 7.40 Computer Based Assessments amended to incorporate the Computer Based Assessment Policy into these regulations.* *Section 7.41 New section added to provide regulations regarding online marking of practical & clinical assessments.*		*Published Version:* *Website*	
V8.0	*Aug 2021 PRAG Chair*	*Administrative Amendments to correct typographical errors, update staff roles and titles, reflect rescinded policies and current course portfolio, update weblinks and associated section forms.*	*Head of Quality*	*Master Version: J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQF* *Published Version:* *Website*	*Annually and on an "as required" basis.*
V9.0	*July 2022 Academic Council*	*Administrative Amendments to correct and update staff role, policy, and committee titles.* *Major Amendment to reflect and include revised Assessment Scrutiny Process.*	*Head of Quality & Partnerships*	*Master Version: J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQF* *Published Version:* *Website*	*Annually and on an "as required" basis.*
V10.0	*June 2023 TQSC*	*Minor Modifications to reflect and clarify current practice and to include reference to Collaborative Partners.*	*Head of Quality & Partnerships & Registrar*	*Master Version: SharePoint - QA* *Published Version:* *Website*	*Annually and on an "as required" basis.*

Equality Impact	
Positive equality impact (i.e. the policy/procedure/guideline significantly reduces inequalities)	
Neutral equality impact (i.e. no significant effect)	X
Negative equality impact (i.e. increasing inequalities)	
If you have any feedback or suggestions for enhancing this document, please email your comments to: quality@uco.ac.uk	

Academic Quality Framework

Section 7: Academic Regulations

Contents

PART A: AWARDS & COURSES

> **This section of the Academic Quality Framework summarises the UCO's regulations regarding awards and courses and provides information on the approved awards delivered by the UCO, award certificates and transcripts, honorary degrees, credits awarded and language of instruction. It should be of interest to all undergraduate and postgraduate taught students and to all staff.**

7.1 INTRODUCTION

7.1.1 The UCO has been recognised as an institution approved to deliver its own academic taught awards. The UCO must therefore ensure that the Degrees, Diplomas, Certificates and other academic awards and distinctions delivered and conferred by it are comparable in standard with awards granted and conferred throughout the university sector in the United Kingdom; all courses approved by the UCO must be of such an academic standard as to fulfil these requirements. Accordingly, the UCO pays due regard to the Office for Students[1] and Quality Code for Higher Education[2] published by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA)[3] in the management of the academic quality and the standards of its courses.

7.1.2 For each Academic Award it establishes, the UCO states a benchmarked definition with reference to The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies (FHEQ)[4], Higher Education Credit Framework for England[5], relevant subject benchmark statements[6] and degree characteristics statements[7] published by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), and Credit Level Descriptors published by SEEC[8] which are the most detailed descriptors for assessing levels of academic learning and are widely used by HE providers across the UK, in addition to standards and competencies published by relevant Professional Statutory and Regulatory Bodies PSRBs), to ensure that all of the courses that lead to an award of the UCO are mapped against nationally recognised academic benchmarks.

7.1.3 The UCO offers programmes of study leading to credits and award qualifications at the following higher education levels:

- Level 3: Access to Higher Education Diplomas and Foundation Years

- Level 4: Certificates of Higher Education

- Level 5: Diplomas of Higher Education and Foundation Degrees

- Level 6: Bachelor's Degrees / Bachelor's Degrees with Honours

- Level 7: Postgraduate Certificates / Integrated Master's Degrees / Taught Master's Degrees

7.1.4 Detailed description of the expectations at Levels 3 to 7 is provided within the qualifications framework (FHEQ) published by the QAA and corresponding level descriptors are provided in the Credit Level Descriptors for Higher Education published by SEEC.

---

[1] https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/
[2] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code
[3] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/home
[4] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/qualifications-frameworks
[5] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/higher-education-credit-framework-for-england
[6] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements
[7] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/characteristics-statements
[8] https://seec.org.uk/

7.1.5 The UCO uses a credit scheme for taught undergraduate and postgraduate courses and qualifications leading to an award of the UCO and uses credits in a system of recognition of prior learning to support student mobility and progression. The number of credits awarded for each qualification is in line with those typical of credit value arrangements in England published by the QAA[9] (see Credits Awarded & Progression of Courses of Study).

7.1.6 Regulations regarding entry with advanced standing, recognition of prior learning and limitations about the re-use of credit are described below (see Recognition of Prior Learning) and further information may be found in the UCO's Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy[10] (or approved Collaborative Partner equivalent).

7.2 APPROVED UCO AWARDS

7.2.1 The UCO delivers both its own approved awards and an Access to Higher Education Diploma (Osteopathic Sciences and Health Care) awarded by LASER Learning Awards. In addition, the UCO works with Collaborative Partners who have been approved by the UCO to deliver courses that lead to an approved UCO award. In each case the standard of the award is that expected of a student who, having met the relevant admissions requirements, has successfully completed the course of study to a defined threshold of knowledge and competence for a defined range of credits.

7.2.2 Approved UCO awards are defined with a formal award description and an abbreviated form the nomenclature of which aligns to that of the nationally recognised Framework for Higher Education Qualifications published by the QAA, e.g.:

Formal Award Description: Integrated Master of Osteopathy

Abbreviated Form: M.Ost

7.2.3 Approved UCO awards give recognition to different standards of student achievement by the award of a classification (see Classification of Awards).

7.2.4 Those achieving undergraduate or postgraduate awards may use the abbreviated form of the award after their name (e.g. Ms. Anne Other, M.Ost.).

7.2.5 Courses of study may be approved leading to any of the UCO's approved awards, and courses may be designated with more than one award outcome as an intermediate or exit award within an approved course.

7.2.6 Approved awards such as Certificate of Higher Education, Diploma of Higher Education, Postgraduate Certificate and Postgraduate Diploma may be considered as intermediate or exit awards.

7.2.7 Approved awards may be discontinued for the purpose of future courses but will be retained on the UCO's records where students have been conferred with such awards.

7.2.8 A summary of the UCO's course portfolio and courses validated by external bodies can be found in AQF Section 2: Overview of Teaching & Learning at the UCO.

7.3 APPROVAL OF ACADEMIC AWARDS AND QUALIFICATIONS

7.3.1 The UCO's Academic Council holds the authority to approve and establish new academic awards and qualifications.

---

[9] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/higher-education-credit-framework-for-england
[10] https://www.uco.ac.uk/courses/how-apply/recognition-prior-learning-rpl

7.3.2 In considering proposals for new academic awards and qualifications, the Academic Council consults widely and reviews the internal and external context, including the FHEQ, noting especially the following:

a) The potential position of the new award within the FHEQ.

b) The characteristics and level that would both distinguish the new award from existing UCO awards and relate it to them and to the qualifications of other higher education or awarding bodies.

c) The potential for new courses and programmes of study under such a new award.

d) The relationship to existing awards and suitability of existing awards for new courses and programme(s) of study.

e) The potential for programme(s) of study capable of leading to this award and likely scale of demand.

f) The new award's potential for recognition by the academic community, other institutions and professions, applicants, students, and employers.

7.3.3 The procedure for submitting a proposal for new awards is considered concurrently when a new course proposing the new award is considered or when the new award is proposed as a modification to an existing award (see AQF Section 4: Course and Unit Approval and Modifications).

7.4 AWARD CERTIFICATES

7.4.1 The UCO produces one award certificate for each student achieving an approved award of the UCO.

7.4.2 The award certificate will normally include the following information:

- The student's full name.

- The title of the award (including whether a student gained the award with Distinction as appropriate).

- The name of the UCO as the awarding institution.

- The name of the Collaborative Partner institution delivering the course (as applicable).

- The language of delivery of the course if this is not English.

- The date of the award which is normally the date of the Board of Examiners at which the award was ratified.

7.4.3 All award certificates should be signed by the Vice-Chancellor of the UCO and the Chair of the UCO's Board of Directors.

7.4.4 For awards validated by LASER Learning Awards, the UCO complies with LASER's regulations regarding award documentation and certification[11].

7.4.5 Students successfully completing the Introduction to Healthcare Sciences or other pre-entry courses do not normally receive a certificate due to these courses being unaccredited and typically serving as a condition of entry onto another degree course.

7.4.6 Graduates with a UCO award requiring replacement or duplicate degree certificates should contact the UCO's Academic Registry (registry@uco.ac.uk). This may incur an administrative fee.

---

[11] https://www.laser-awards.org.uk/

7.4.7   Where an award is approved by another validating institution (for example, the University of Bedfordshire as the UCO's previous validating institution), the award certificate will be issued by that validating institution.

7.5 ACADEMIC TRANSCRIPTS & HIGHER EDUCATION ACHIEVEMENT RECORD

7.5.1   An academic transcript is provided to each student studying on a course that leads to a UCO award at the end of each academic year, which states the grade of each assessment, overall unit grade, and the number and level of credits awarded for each unit and in total for that academic year.

7.5.2   Existing and past students and graduates of the UCO may request an academic transcript directly from the UCO as the awarding institution by contacting the Academic Registry (Registry@uco.ac.uk). This may incur an administrative fee.

7.5.3   In the first instance, where the production of transcripts has been devolved to the Collaborative Partner, existing and past students and graduates of the Collaborative Partners should request an academic transcript directly from the relevant Collaborative Partner. Should a student / graduate of a Collaborative Partner require a transcript from the UCO as the awarding body, the Collaborative Partner should refer the student to the UCO's Academic Registry (Registry@uco.ac.uk). This may incur an administrative fee.

7.5.4   Academic transcripts requested and produced by the UCO must be produced using the approved UCO letterhead template.

7.5.5   Academic transcripts requested and produced by a Collaborative Partner must be produced on the approved transcript template agreed between the UCO and the Collaborative Partner.

7.5.6   Academic transcripts will normally contain the following information:

- The date the transcript was produced.
- The formal full name of the student/graduate.
- The date of birth of the student/graduate.
- The identification/candidate number of the student/graduate.
- The awarding institution(s).
- The title of the relevant award/qualification.
- The title of the relevant course.
- The duration and mode of study.
- The language of instruction and assessment.
- The overall unit grade achieved and in which academic year.
- The number and level of CATS credits achieved and in which academic year.
- The date the award was achieved (if applicable).

7.5.7   Where a student requires a transcript from the awarding institution of their award, they should contact that awarding institution directly.

7.6 HONORARY DEGREES

7.6.1   Honorary degrees are awarded by the UCO to selected persons of distinction in line with the Honorary Degrees, Academic Awards & UCO Titles, or Honorary Awards Criteria & Award Structure (AQF07-01).

7.6.2 Honorary degrees may be awarded to individuals who have made a significant contribution to the work of the UCO, or who have earned distinction at a regional, national, or international level, or in a particular field, especially the development or application of an appropriate subject discipline or work aligned to the UCO's mission.

7.6.3 Those receiving an Honorary Doctorate degree are normally expected to have contributed to nationally significant developments in their field of study.

7.6.4 Honorary degrees are not normally awarded to current directors, current staff, or registered students of the UCO nor those of Collaborative Partners.

7.6.5 The UCO's Academic Council is responsible for determining the procedures for the recommendation of honorary degrees.

7.6.6 The UCO's Honorary Degrees, Academic Awards and Titles Committee will consider nominations in line with its Terms of Reference and will recommend nominations to the Academic Council. The Academic Council will then formally approve the conferment of the honorary degree(s).

7.6.7 Nominations for honorary degrees conferred by the UCO must include the title of the proposed honorary award, a brief biography of the nominated individual and a statement justifying the nomination in line with the stated criteria and award structure.

7.6.8 Circumstances may arise when the basis on which an honorary degree was awarded is called into question. Any decision to rescind an honorary award must be made after due investigation and consideration of the outcome by the Honorary Degrees, Academic Awards and Titles Committee – this is a matter which cannot be delegated via Chair's Action.

7.7 HONORARY AWARDS OR TITLES

7.7.1 Other UCO titles and recognition are given on behalf of the UCO on the authority of the UCO's Board of Directors with the approval of the UCO's Academic Council in line with the UCO's Honorary Degrees, Academic Awards & UCO Titles or Honorary Awards Criteria & Award Structure (AQF07-01).

A) HONORARY UCO FELLOWSHIP

7.7.2 The UCO may confer Honorary UCO Fellowships on individuals who have made a particular contribution to the work or development of the UCO. Nominations will be considered by the Honorary Degrees, Academic Awards and Titles Committee, and decisions on whether to confer an honorary fellowship will be recommended to the Academic Council by this Committee.

7.7.3 Honorary UCO Fellowships are not conferred on current directors, current staff, or registered students of the UCO nor those of Collaborative Partners.

B) ACADEMIC TITLES – PROFESSOR, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, FELLOW

7.7.4 Through its Academic Council, the UCO may, on advice from the Honorary Degrees, Academic Awards and Titles Committee, confer the title of "Professor", "Associate Professor" or "Teaching/Research Fellow/Senior Research Fellow" on those staff who meet the Honorary Degrees, Academic Awards & UCO Titles or Honorary Awards Criteria confirmed by the Academic Council.

7.7.5 The Academic Council may also confer the title of "Visiting Professor", "Visiting Associate Professor" or "Visiting Research Fellow/Visiting Senior Research Fellow" to individuals who meet the Honorary Degrees, Academic Awards & UCO Titles or Honorary Awards Criteria confirmed by the Academic Council.

7.8 COURSES OF STUDY LEADING TO AWARDS OF THE UCO

7.8.1 Courses of study leading to awards of the UCO are developed through UCO academic structures, considered in light of external academic and professional advice, and approved under delegated authority of the Academic Council through its committees.

7.8.2 Arrangements for the approval of new courses that lead to an award of the UCO are defined in AQF Section 4: Course and Unit Approval and Modification, which also applies to those delivered in collaborative partnership with other education institutions.

7.8.3 The current portfolio of courses that lead to an award of the UCO can be found in AQF Section 2: Teaching & Learning at the UCO.

7.8.4 Definitive information about courses is published in information forms; unit information specifications are defined in Unit Information Forms (UIFs) and course information specifications in Course Information Forms (CIFs). They, or extracts from them, serve as the basis for the information about courses provided for students in Course Handbooks and on the Virtual Learning Environment.

7.8.5 The named award to which a course leads reflects the level, nature, and subject focus of the course, is determined at course approval, and is included on the award certificate.

7.8.6 Official award certificates are produced by the UCO as the awarding institution.

7.9 CREDITS AWARDED & PROGRESSION OF COURSES OF STUDY

7.9.1 The normal number of credits awarded for academic awards are shown in Table 7.1 below and are in line with the FHEQ published by the QAA.

TABLE 7.1: THE NORMAL NUMBER OF CREDITS AWARDED FOR ACADEMIC AWARDS

Award	FHEQ Level	Total Number of Credits Required	Minimum Number of Credits at Highest FHEQ Level
Certificate of Higher Education	4	120	90 at FHEQ Level 4
Diploma of Higher Education Foundation Degree	5	240	90 at FHEQ Level 5
Bachelor's Degree	6	300	60 at FHEQ Level 6
Bachelor's Degrees with Honours	6	360	90 at FHEQ Level 6 / 7
Postgraduate Certificates	7	60	40 at FHEQ Level 7
Postgraduate Diplomas	7	120	90 at FHEQ Level 7
Integrated Master's Degrees	7	480	120 at FHEQ Level 7
Taught Master's Degrees	7	180	150 at FHEQ Level 7

A) CREDITS AWARDED & PROGRESSION SPECIFIC TO UNDERGRADUATE COURSES

7.9.2   The number of credits awarded per year of study of undergraduate full-time courses is normally 120.

7.9.3   The period of study of Bachelor's undergraduate degree courses is typically the equivalent of at least three full-time academic years.

7.9.4   Students are expected to complete a Bachelor's undergraduate degree course within the normal period of time as approved at validation, i.e., typically three years full-time and four years part-time.

7.9.5   The maximum time for a student to complete an undergraduate course is the normal period of time as approved at validation plus 2 years.

B) CREDITS AWARDED & PROGRESSION SPECIFIC TO INTEGRATED MASTER'S DEGREES

7.9.6   Integrated Master's degrees normally comprise of 480 credits of which 120 must be at FHEQ Level 7.

7.9.7   The period of study of Integrated Master's degrees is typically the equivalent of at least four full-time academic years.

7.9.8   Students are expected to complete an Integrated Master's course within the normal period of time as approved at validation, i.e., typically four years full-time and five years part-time.

7.9.9   The maximum time for a student to complete an Integrated Master's course is the normal period of time as approved at validation plus 2 years.

C) CREDITS AWARDED & PROGRESSION SPECIFIC TO TAUGHT POSTGRADUATE CERTIFICATES

7.9.10 The number of credits awarded per year of study of Postgraduate Certificate courses is normally 60 at Level 7.

7.9.11 The period of study of Postgraduate Certificate courses is typically the equivalent of at least one-third of a full-time academic year.

7.9.12 Students are expected to complete Postgraduate Certificate course within the normal period of time as approved at validation, i.e., one year.

7.9.13 The maximum time for a student to complete a Postgraduate Certificate course is the normal period of time as approved at validation plus 2 years.

D) CREDITS AWARDED & PROGRESSION SPECIFIC TO TAUGHT MASTER'S DEGREES

7.9.14 The number of credits awarded per year of study of postgraduate full-time Master's courses is normally 180 at Level 7.

7.9.15 The period of study of Taught Master's degrees is typically the equivalent of one year of a full-time academic year.

7.9.16 A Master's course comprises 180 credits at FHEQ Level 7 which normally includes a dissertation or equivalent assignment of independent work of value up to 60 credits at FHEQ Level 7 (normally of 20,000 words). Where the dissertation or equivalent unit is less than 60 credits, the remaining units comprising the dissertation stage shall be agreed at course approval and published in the Course Information Form or Course Handbook.

7.9.17 The maximum time for a student to complete a Master's course is the normal period of time as approved at (re)approval plus 2 years.

E) Credits Awarded & Progression Specific to PSRB Requirements

7.9.18 At course approval, and as a requirement of Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs), the Academic Council of the UCO may agree that it is a prerequisite for progression that:

a) Students pass certain specified units.

b) Students pass a certain number of credits at a particular stage.

c) Failure in certain units or assessment elements cannot be nor condoned.

7.9.19 At course approval, the Academic Council may agree a specific attendance policy that applies to a particular course, or one which specifies regular attendance for prescribed parts of the curriculum. Such information is recorded in the relevant Attendance Policy.

7.10 Language of Instruction

7.10.1 English is the language of instruction and assessment on all courses of study.

7.10.2 Exceptions to this regulation may only be approved through the course approval processes detailed in AQF Section 4: Course and Unit Approval and Modification.

7.10.3 Support is provided to students with English as a second language (see AQF Section 10: Student Guidance & Learner Support).

7.11 Learning & Teaching Methods

7.11.1 The following table provides details about the indicative learning and teaching methods used at the UCO:

Learning & Teaching Method	Definition	Description
Lecture	A presentation or talk on a particular topic.	The term 'lecture' covers everything from the traditional model, where a single member of the institution's staff or an affiliate[12] introduces ideas or delivers facts to a group of students, to approaches that might be much more interactive, involve a variety of contributors, make use of a range of media and technologies, and take place virtually as well as in person. Lectures are assumed, in general, to involve larger groups of students than do seminars and tutorials but size will vary depending upon the nature of what is being taught, the size of the overall student cohort, and practical concerns.
Seminar	A discussion or classroom session focusing on a particular topic or project.	Seminars are defined as sessions that provide the opportunity for students to engage in discussion of a particular topic and/or to explore it in more detail than might be covered in a lecture - the extent of interaction will depend on the delivery method. A typical model would involve a guided, tutor-led discussion in a small group. However, the term also

---

[12] i.e., a lecturer, researcher, technician, member of support staff or graduate teaching assistant of the institution or a visiting or external specialist.

		encompasses student or peer-led classes with a staff member or affiliate present. As with lectures, use of technology means seminars may take place virtually. Seminars are assumed in general to involve smaller groups of students than lectures, but size will vary depending upon the nature of what is being taught, the size of the overall student cohort, and practical concerns.
Tutorial	A meeting involving one-to-one or small group supervision, feedback or detailed discussion on a particular topic or project.	Tutorials may be distinguished from seminars for the stronger emphasis that they place on the role of the tutor in giving direction or feedback. Tutorials can happen virtually as well as face-to-face.
Project supervision	A meeting with a supervisor to discuss a particular piece of work.	The term 'project supervision' is used to refer to the meetings that a student or group of students would have with a supervisor, to plan, discuss, and monitor progress on a particular piece of work, such as a dissertation or extended project. Meetings can take place virtually or in person. The size of a project supervision meeting will depend upon the number of students involved in the work concerned and the nature of that work but supervisions will frequently also take place on a one-to-one basis.
Demonstration	A session involving the demonstration of a practical technique or skill.	Examples might include the demonstration of laboratory skills, clinical skills, performance art or fieldwork techniques. Demonstrations can take place virtually or in person. The size of a demonstration is likely to depend upon the number of students involved in the work concerned, as well as the nature of that work, but could also take place on a one-to-one basis
Practical classes and workshops	A session involving the development and practical application of a particular skill or technique.	Examples are wide ranging and could include a laboratory class, recital, artefact handling/identification, language conversation, sports match and so on. Practical classes and workshops might incorporate elements of teaching or guided learning, and they are at least likely to be supervised or observed. These sessions are more likely to take place in person but, depending on the nature of the subject, may also be conducted remotely. The size of a practical class or workshop will depend upon the nature of the activity.

		Workshops are likely to involve at least a small group of students, but practical classes could take place on a one-to-one basis.
Supervised time in studio/workshop	Time in which students work independently but under supervision, in a specialist facility such as a studio or workshop.	Examples might include time spent in an art or design studio, or in a rehearsal space such as a workshop theatre. It could be timetabled or take place on an ad hoc basis. Peers as well as staff or affiliates may be involved. Due to the nature of the activity, it is unlikely to take place virtually. Supervised time in a studio/workshop might involve a group or individual.
Fieldwork	Practical work conducted at an external site.	Examples of fieldwork might include survey work and other forms of data collection, excavations and explorations. The work might be unsupervised or supervised, and supervision could be provided by staff or appointed representatives. Some fieldwork may be conducted virtually. Fieldwork might be conducted in groups of various sizes, or by individuals, depending on the nature of the work involved.
External visits	A visit to a location outside of the usual learning spaces, to experience a particular environment, event, or exhibition relevant to the course of study.	Examples are wide ranging and could include a visit to a business or industrial site, built environment site, museum, or collection, to attendance at a performance or exhibition. These visits might be unsupervised or supervised, and supervisors could include staff or appointed representatives. Site visits may be carried out in groups of varying sizes, or by individuals, depending on the nature of the visit and the location.
Work-based learning	Learning that takes place in the workplace.	The term covers any learning that takes place through an organised work opportunity, rather than in a university or college setting, and includes managed placements. Some supervision or monitoring is likely be involved and may be carried out either by a member of staff or a mentor within the host organisation. Due to the nature of the activity, work-based learning is unlikely to take place virtually. Students might undertake work-based learning individually or in groups, depending on the nature of the workplace and the learning involved.
Clinic Observation / Experience	Learning that takes place in the UCO Clinic.	Pre-registration osteopathic students are required to undertake at least 1000 hours of timetabled osteopathic clinic practice learning in the clinical environment[13]. Learning within the clinic consists of managing and treating patients and clinic tutorials.

---

[13] http://www.qaa.ac.uk/reviewing-higher-education/types-of-review/general-osteopathic-council-review

Independent Study / Directed Study	Autonomous learning with little or no supervision.	Students undertake study on their own to advance and consolidate their learning typically using course materials and other recommended learning resources provided by their tutors.

PART B: ADMISSION & REGISTRATION

This section of the Academic Quality Framework summarises the UCO's regulations regarding student admission and registration and provides information about student admission, entry requirements, registration, attendance, withdrawal, and recognition of prior learning. It should be of interest to all undergraduate and postgraduate taught students and to all staff involved in these areas.

7.12 ADMISSION OF STUDENTS TO THE UCO

7.12.1 Admission is the process through which an individual (the applicant) applies to become a student of the UCO.

7.12.2 Each applicant is considered on their own merit in line with the UCO's Admissions Policy and Procedures[14] (or approved Collaborative Partner equivalent) and the entry requirements specific to each course of study.

7.12.3 The admission of a student to a programme of study is at the UCO's and Collaborative Partners' discretion, and is based on the reasonable expectation that the student is able to:

   a) Show the ability to study at Higher Education (HE) level.

   b) Complete the objectives of the course or programme of study.

   c) Achieve the standard required for the award.

7.12.4 An applicant must fulfil specific entry requirements for the course and subject to be studied prior to entry which normally include specific educational levels and / or qualifications that align with the academic level of the course and subject to be studied, a required level of written and spoken English, and other pre-requisites as agreed at course approval.

7.12.5 Applicants are admitted to programmes of study that lead to a UCO award on condition that they:

   a) Have fulfilled all entry requirements satisfactorily before the start date of the course for which they have applied.

   b) Attended and participated in all required interview events.

   c) Have confirmed their place on the course with the Admissions Department (or Collaborative Partner equivalent).

   d) Have received confirmation of a place on the course for which they have applied from the Admissions Department (or Collaborative Partner equivalent).

   e) Attend and complete all registration, orientation and induction events and procedures.

   f) Agree to comply with the UCO's academic regulations, rules, codes of conduct, policies and other procedures (or Collaborative Partner equivalents) as approved by the UCO's Academic Council, Vice-Chancellor and / or the Board of Directors.

   g) Have paid the required course fees or course fee deposit as appropriate.

7.12.6 If someone is under 18 years old when they expect to register onto a course of study that leads to a UCO award, formal consent is required from those legally responsible for the applicant. This must be through a consent form signed by the parent or legal guardian and by someone

---

[14] https://www.uco.ac.uk/courses/how-apply

who is ordinarily resident in the UK to confirm their approval. The person resident in the UK is responsible for the student concerned until they are over 18 years old. Where the parent or guardian is not ordinarily resident in the UK, evidence that satisfactory arrangements for guardianship of the applicant are in place prior to the registration of the prospective student is required.

7.12.7 All applicants are required to disclose all facts and information that might be relevant to their application for admission.

7.12.8 The UCO and Collaborative Partners reserve the right to withdraw any offer of admission to study a course that leads to a UCO award, or cancel any acceptance of such an offer, where the offer has been made as a result of using false or misleading information, or by the non-disclosure of information that would have affected the decision about the application for admission.

7.12.9 The UCO and Collaborative Partners similarly reserve the right to stop the registration or terminate the studies of an existing student who is subsequently found to have gained admission by providing false or misleading information, or non-disclosure of information in support of the application. Such students will have no right to a refund of their fees, and any credits or awards they have achieved may be withdrawn.

7.12.10 The UCO and Collaborative Partners establish arrangements for students with disabilities to be supported and assessed as appropriate and will make reasonable adjustments as required to enable disabled students to follow the course of study on which they register.

7.12.11 Applicants with a disability are encouraged to declare their disability to the UCO or the relevant Collaborative Partner during the admission process or as soon as possible thereafter to ensure that reasonable adjustments can be considered and agreed as appropriate.

7.13 ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

7.13.1 Detailed information about the qualifications and pre-requisites required for admission to courses leading to an award of the UCO is published on Course Information Forms (or Collaborative Partner equivalents) and on the relevant UCO or Collaborative Partner websites.

7.13.2 Satisfying the indicated entry requirements does not guarantee an applicant a place on the course for which they have applied. Applicants must comply with the selection and admission processes outlined in AQF Section 8: Student Recruitment & Admissions and published Admissions Policy & Procedures.

A) MINIMUM ENTRY QUALIFICATIONS FOR UNDERGRADUATE AWARDS

7.13.3 The minimum entry requirement qualifications for undergraduate awards are shown in Table 7.2 below.

7.13.4 Undergraduate degrees may have specific entry requirements that are agreed at course approval.

TABLE 7.2: MINIMUM ENTRY REQUIREMENT QUALIFICATIONS FOR UNDERGRADUATE AWARDS

Undergraduate Award	Minimum Entry Requirement Qualifications
Foundation Degrees	One A-Level (or equivalent)
Certificate of Higher Education	Two A-Levels (or equivalent)

Diploma of Higher Education	Two A-Levels (or equivalent)
Bachelor's Degrees	Two A-Levels (or equivalent)
Bachelor's Degrees with Honours	Two A-Levels (or equivalent)
Integrated Master's Degrees	Two A-Levels (or equivalent)
Graduate Diplomas	A Bachelor's Degree with Honours from a UK University (or equivalent)

B) MINIMUM ENTRY QUALIFICATIONS FOR POSTGRADUATE AWARDS

7.13.5 The minimum entry requirement qualifications for postgraduate awards are shown in Table 7.3 below.

TABLE 7.3: MINIMUM ENTRY REQUIREMENT QUALIFICATIONS FOR POSTGRADUATE AWARDS

Postgraduate Award	Minimum Entry Requirement Qualifications
Postgraduate Certificates	A Bachelor's Degree with Honours from a UK University (or equivalent)
Postgraduate Diplomas	A Bachelor's Degree with Honours from a UK University (or equivalent)
Taught Master's Degrees	A Bachelor's Degree with Honours from a UK University (or equivalent)

7.13.6 Evidence of previous advanced study, research or professional experience may exceptionally be accepted as an alternative to the minimum entry requirement qualifications shown in Table 7.3.

C) MINIMUM ENGLISH QUALIFICATIONS FOR ALL AWARDS

7.13.7 Applicants with English as a second language or whose previous education has not been delivered in the English language are required to provide evidence of their proficiency in English.

7.13.8 Students requiring a visa to study in the UK will be required to provide evidence of specific English as appropriate to comply with policies published by the UK Home Office (UK Visas & Immigration)[15].

7.13.9 The minimum level of English required will be considered and confirmed at course approval. Typically, the minimum level of English accepted for an undergraduate degree course is a total IELTS score of 6.0 (or equivalent) and for a postgraduate degree a total IELTS score of 7.0 (or equivalent). The level of English identified will be dependent on the type and nature of the course, any PSRB requirements and UKVI requirements and may include specified English language scores in subsets of English Language Course (ELC) (i.e., speaking, reading, writing and listening).

---

[15] https://www.gov.uk/student-visa/knowledge-of-english

7.14 Student Registration

7.14.1 Student Registration is the process whereby new and existing students are formally confirmed as students registered on a course that leads to an award of the UCO.

7.14.2 Students must complete Student Registration when they commence their course of study, and re-register annually as and when required throughout their course of study.

7.14.3 Student Registration includes a binding contractual commitment by a student who has been accepted onto / is currently studying on a course of study that leads to an award of the UCO, providing a declaration acknowledging their obligations to the UCO or the relevant Collaborative Partner, including payment of course fees, and compliance with the UCO's and / or Collaborative Partner's terms and conditions, regulations, policies, and procedures.

7.14.4 This binding contractual commitment takes place when the student signs a Student Registration Form or otherwise indicates an intention to be bound by its terms in a way that is acceptable to the UCO, following provision of personal and academic information electronically and / or in person.

7.14.5 Every student must complete Student Registration (or Re-Registration for continuing students) within the first week of their course start date (or the first day of the academic year for continuing students).

7.14.6 If a continuing student does not re-register within the specified registration period at the start of a programme, they may be presumed 'withdrawn' and have their registration with the UCO cancelled.

7.15 Course Registration

7.15.1 Course Registration takes place as part of Student Registration (see Student Registration) and occurs when the student signs a Student Registration Form electronically and / or in person.

7.15.2 The UCO or a Collaborative Partner may exceptionally permit students to register for two courses of study concurrently.

7.15.3 The establishment, delivery and continuation of courses of study are subject to the availability of viable numbers of students and their continuing attendance.

7.15.4 Where the circumstances are reasonable, the UCO and Collaborative Partners reserve the right to discontinue a course, to divide, discontinue or combine units or classes, to vary the time or place of classes, and to alter courses of study as circumstances may require. This will be processed and approved through the appropriate Course and Unit Modification process contained in the Academic Quality Framework (AQF) Section 4. Prospective students shall be notified of any changes to courses due to course or unit modifications as soon as possible in line with Competition and Market Authority (CMA) guidance.

7.15.5 Course structures are subject to annual review. All units comprising a course of study are listed in the relevant Course Information Form and are offered subject to the constraints of the timetable, the availability of specialist staff, and any restrictions on the number of students who may be taught on a particular unit. Prospective students shall be notified of any changes to availability of units as soon as possible in line with Competition and Market Authority (CMA) guidance,

7.15.6 The establishment, delivery and continuation of units are subject to the availability of viable numbers of students and their continuing attendance, and therefore units comprising a course may not necessarily be offered every year. Prospective students shall be notified of any changes to availability of units as soon as possible in line with Competition and Market Authority (CMA) guidance,

7.15.7 Students are expected to complete their course/s of study within the normal period of time as designated at course approval and as stipulated on the Course Information Form.

7.15.8 Students are considered to have exited their course of study and have concluded their registration once they have been conferred with an award by the appropriate Board of Examiners.

7.15.9 A student may lose the right to continue on a course or study, have their registration with the UCO and a Collaborative Partner terminated, and be withdrawn from the UCO and the relevant Collaborative Partner where:

a) The student's academic performance has been considered by a Board of Examiners and having failed to make sufficient academic progress in their view, there is an academic decision that the student shall not be allowed to continue on their course of study or remain registered as a student.

b) The student has not completed Student Registration by the published date for end of registration for new or continuing students as appropriate.

c) The student is not in good financial standing with the UCO or the relevant Collaborative Partner and has failed to make acceptable arrangements to pay what is owed.

d) The student is absent from their course(s) of study without the agreement of the UCO or the relevant Collaborative Partner on grounds of absence, and therefore assumed withdrawal.

e) The student has demonstrably not engaged with their course(s) of study.

f) The outcome of the investigation of an academic offence, or of the presentation of false or misleading documentation, or the non-disclosure of information, recommends that the student is withdrawn from their course(s) of study, their registration terminated and is withdrawn from the UCO and the relevant Collaborative Partner.

g) The UCO's Vice-Chancellor has accepted a recommendation that the student's registration should be terminated on disciplinary grounds under the terms of the UCO's Student Code of Conduct (or Collaborative Partner equivalent).

7.15.10 A student whose studies are terminated and is withdrawn as a consequence of any of the above must formally apply for re-admission if they wish to return to a course of study leading to an award of the UCO. The circumstances of the student's withdrawal will be taken into account when their application is considered.

7.16 STUDENT INDUCTION

a) NEW STUDENTS

7.16.1 The UCO and Collaborative Partners are aware that the start of a student's experience in higher education is a critical and sensitive period. The UCO and Collaborative Partners therefore provide an induction programme that aims to ease the transition and helps prepare students for their academic and social experiences.

7.16.2 Induction for all new students normally includes a welcome by the Vice-Chancellor (or Collaborative Partner equivalent); introduction to key personnel including the Registrar (or Collaborative Partner equivalent) , course leaders and student support teams, and sessions from course tutors to introduce students to the units of study they are about to embark upon. There are also sessions from the Learning Hub and IT teams (or Collaborative Partner equivalents) to introduce learning resources.

7.16.3 Student induction is normally complemented by social events hosted by the Vice-Chancellor and / or Students' Union (or Collaborative Partner equivalents).

7.16.4 In addition, part-time students, both undergraduate and postgraduate, are likewise invited to induction events. These cover topics such as: returning to study (in recognition that these students have often been out of education for a number of years), an introduction to higher education, and how to study on a part-time programme.

b) CONTINUING STUDENTS

7.16.5 Continuing students are provided with a modified induction programme, which introduces them to the next phase of the course they are undertaking. This covers issues including regulatory, staffing and student services changes as applicable, , how feedback from students provided in the last academic cycle has been responded to

7.17 TIMETABLING OF COURSES

7.17.1 Courses delivered by the UCO are timetabled in line with the UCO's Timetable Policy[16], which provides a framework for academic and support staff involved in the preparation and production of the teaching timetable, and aims to:

    i.   Support the delivery of high-quality learning and teaching in appropriate accommodation.

    ii.   Provide access to timely and accurate timetabling and room booking information.

    iii.   Optimise utilisation of general teaching space.

    iv.   Ensure that a single central system contains a live, up to date record of all learning and teaching activities which use the UCO's resources, which is available on-line 24 hours a day, seven days a week

7.17.2 Collaborative Partners are responsible for timetabling courses that lead to a UCO award and for ensuring that the timetable likewise supports high-quality delivery of learning and teaching, with access to appropriate teaching and study spaces, and for communicating and publishing the timetable to students effectively.

7.18 MONITORING STUDENT PROGRESSION

7.18.1 The UCO and Collaborative Partners acknowledge that monitoring students' academic progress is fundamental for enabling students to fulfil their potential and to succeed in their chosen course of study.

7.18.2 Students' academic progress throughout their studies is monitored using a range of mechanisms, including:

    i.   Formative assessment which enables students to gauge the level of their understanding and progress, and prepare and practice for summative assessments including how they can improve their performance.

    ii.   The review of interim provisional summative assessment results by Course Teams which helps to identify students who may need additional academic support.

    iii.   Progress interviews between students and academic and student support staff to discuss students' general academic progress and to set academic learning goals.

    iv.   The regular monitoring of student attendance and engagement by the Engagement & Monitoring Group (EMG) (or Collaborative Partner equivalent) which enables academic and

---

[16] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy

pastoral support interventions to be implemented for students who may be struggling to attend or engage with their studies.

v.   The use of Progression Criteria which are specific to each course and agreed at course approval to ensure that students achieve the requirements of each phase of their course before being permitted to progress to the next by Boards of Examiners.

7.19 STUDENT TRANSFER

7.19.1   A student who is registered on a course may be permitted to transfer to another course via the UCO's Student Transfer Policy[17] (or approved Collaborative Partner equivalent).

7.19.2   Any student wishing to transfer from one course to another can seek informal advice from and should in the first instance discuss their circumstances with their Course Leader.

7.19.3   Students wishing to transfer to another institution should formally withdraw from their course (see Suspension of Studies & Withdrawal) and apply directly to that institution.

7.20 STUDENT ATTENDANCE

7.20.1   All students registered on a course that leads to a UCO award are expected to maintain their academic progress, registration, and attendance, and have any absence period approved as an agreed interruption to their study on a course.

7.20.2   All students are also expected to attend regularly and engage with all formal learning opportunities, scheduled classes, and other supervised studies of their course/s, undertake independent and other studies as required, and complete all assessment requirements, as confirmed through the course approval process and in line with the UCO's Student Attendance Policy[18] (or approved Collaborative Partner equivalent) and course and unit specific attendance requirements as stipulated on Course and Unit Information Forms.

7.20.3   Student attendance at formal learning opportunities is monitored through the use of attendance registers, which are produced and maintained by the UCO's Academic Registry for students studying on courses delivered by the UCO and by Collaborative Partner staff for students studying at partner institutions.

7.20.4   Students are responsible for registering their attendance for the classes they attend. Students must not register attendance for any other student and will be subject to disciplinary procedures should they do so.

7.20.5   Tutors are responsible for monitoring the student attendance of their class/es and should raise any issues concerning the attendance of students to the relevant Unit or Course Leader.

7.20.6   For students studying at the UCO, the Engagement & Monitoring Group (EMG) regularly meets to monitor student attendance and their engagement with learning activities and will notify relevant support, academic and clinical staff in cases of concern. Non-attendance is also used as a measure of engagement and as an indicator of students experiencing difficulties with their studies or personal life. Identifying students with a low level of attendance enables the UCO to implement appropriate support measures and solutions to address issues that may be affecting a student's attendance, and thereby increase the student's likelihood of success.

7.20.7   Where a student is unable to attend or will knowingly be absent from a formal teaching session, they should follow the procedure set out in the relevant Student Attendance Policy (or approved Collaborative Partner equivalent).

---

[17] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy
[18] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy

7.20.8 A student who fails to attend, without good cause or due notice, the course on which they are registered for a period of 15 working days, can be considered to have disengaged from the course or programme of studies, and the UCO and Collaborative Partner has the right to terminate that student's studies and registration and withdraw the student from their course.

7.20.9 Students must also observe the reporting requirements of their funding bodies or sponsors as appropriate.

7.21 SUSPENSION OF STUDIES & STUDENT WITHDRAWAL

7.21.1 Students may elect to suspend and return to their studies at a later date (normally due to exceptional circumstances), or withdraw from their course, at any point during their studies.

7.21.2 A student who is considering suspending their studies or withdrawing from their course should follow the Suspension of Studies & Student Withdrawal Policy and Procedure[19] (or approved Collaborative Partner equivalent) to ensure that they receive the appropriate support and complete the required suspension of studies/withdrawal procedures as necessary.

7.21.3 Students who suspend their studies surrender eligibility to apply for and participate in student schemes or discounts, including Council Tax exemptions and student travel or photo card schemes, for the duration of the suspension of their studies. Eligibility is restored following their return to study upon receipt of a completed Student Registration Form.

7.21.4 A student who is intending to withdraw from their course must inform relevant Finance Department staff using the procedures published in the Course Fee Policy[20] (or approved Collaborative Partner equivalent).

7.21.5 Students who withdraw from the course must return (as appropriate) their:

i. Student card.

ii. Locker key.

iii. Borrowed library books / resources.

7.21.6 Where a student has been unable to fulfil the specific regulations of their course of study but has fulfilled the UCO's Academic Regulations (or approved Collaborative Partner equivalent) and criteria for progression, the UCO, on the recommendation of the Board of Examiners, may withdraw the student from the course of study for which they were originally registered, and transfer them to an alternative course.

7.21.7 Where a student withdraws or has been withdrawn from a course leading to an award of the UCO, the relevant Board of Examiners will consider the student's performance and the credits they have achieved to date and confer the highest award for which the student is eligible. A student receiving an award in this way may be subsequently considered for re-admission under arrangements for Recognition of Prior Learning.

7.22 RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL)

7.22.1 The UCO's Recognition of Prior Learning Policy[21] (and approved Collaborative Partner equivalents) demonstrates our commitment to support widening participation, and to acknowledge and recognise appropriately students' previous academic achievements and experience.

---

[19] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy
[20] https://www.uco.ac.uk/courses/course-fees/course-fee-policy
[21] https://www.uco.ac.uk/courses/how-apply/recognition-prior-learning-rpl

7.22.2 The UCO and our Collaborative Partners aim to operate a transparent and responsive system for the recognition of prior learning, which considers all students equally (full-time, part-time, home and international) where possible.

7.22.3 Recognition of Prior Learning policies and procedures enable students to demonstrate and provide evidence for their prior learning and to join courses at an appropriate stage commensurate to their prior academic achievements. They also enable the UCO and Collaborative Partners to prepare the student for subsequent parts of the course appropriately.

7.22.4 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) may comprise of the accreditation of prior certificated learning (APCL) and / or the accreditation of prior experiential or otherwise un-assessed learning (APEL).

7.22.5 Procedures for considering RPL applications for each specific course are contained within Course Information Forms or course specific RPL handbooks, which are approved by the UCO's Academic Council, and which provide applicants with additional guidance and information on RPL applications.

7.22.6 Approval of prior learning credit must be completed as part of the admissions process, and prior to registration on a course or programme of study.

7.22.7 A tariff of fees for the consideration of RPL applications are contained within RPL handbooks where these apply.

7.22.8 For all courses, credit for prior learning (whether certificated or experiential) may count towards the requirements of a named or unnamed award, up to a specified limit as shown in Table 7.4 below, unless a variation to this is agreed at course approval.

TABLE 7.4: THE MAXIMUM NUMBER OF CREDITS NORMALLY CONSIDERED THROUGH RPL APPLICATIONS

Award	Maximum Number of Credits Normally Considered through RPL	FHEQ Level	% RPL Considered for Award
Certificate of Higher Education	60	4	50%
Foundation Degree	120	4	50%
Diploma of Higher Education	120	4	50%
Diploma in Professional Studies/Professional Practice	60	4	50%
Bachelor's Degrees	120 120	4 5	75%
Bachelor's Degrees with Honours	120 120	4 5	75%

Postgraduate Certificate	30	7	50%
Postgraduate Diploma	60	7	50%
Integrated Master's Degree	120 120	4 5	50%
Master's Degree	90	7	50%

7.23 ACADEMIC APPEALS

7.23.1 Although rigorous procedures are followed to ensure that all student assessments and examinations are conducted and marked fairly and appropriately (see Part C: Assessment Regulations for Taught Degrees), students may appeal against a decision made by the Board of Examiners. Further information regarding Academic Appeals see Academic Appeals Against Decisions of Boards of Examiners.

7.24 ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

7.24.1 Academic misconduct offences include:

   i. Collusion.

   ii. Fabrication.

   iii. Cheating.

   iv. Impersonation.

   v. Plagiarism.

7.24.2 This above list is not exhaustive. Further information regarding academic misconduct and academic offences and their prosecution, along with guidance on good academic practices, is described in detail in the UCO's Academic Discipline Policy[22] (or the approved Collaborative Partner equivalent).

7.25 STUDENT FITNESS TO STUDY

7.25.1 The UCO and our Collaborative Partners have a duty of care and are committed to promoting positive attitudes towards students with physical or mental ill health and aim to respond appropriately and sensitively to situations where visible signs of ill health (including mental health difficulties, psychological, personality, or emotional disorders) may have an impact on the functioning of individual students, and the wellbeing of others around them. Students who present with difficulties should, wherever possible, be considered from a supportive perspective.

7.25.2 The UCO's Managed Support Plan[23] (or approved Collaborative Partner equivalent) outlines the procedures and the support available where a student's health and wellbeing deteriorates to the point where they may not be fit to study, including where they may be at risk of harm to themselves and/or others and is designed to ensure a consistent and sensitive approach to managing situations.

---

[23] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy

7.25.3   Tutors and Course Leaders are the staff members most likely to identify fitness to study issues and are therefore provided with guidance and advice from their respective Student Support staff to enable them to manage situations where students' fitness to study is of concern.

7.25.4   The UCO and our Collaborative Partners are committed to supporting students with physical and mental ill health to enable them to fulfil their potential and complete their chosen course of study.

7.26   STUDENT FITNESS TO PRACTICE

7.26.1   Students registered on courses that lead to a professional qualification are made aware of their responsibilities regarding the standard of professional behaviour expected of them as detailed in the relevant Student Fitness to Practice Policy for their course, which is produced in line with the relevant PSRB practice standards.

7.26.2   This acknowledges the responsibility the UCO and our Collaborative Partners have towards our students, and their interactions with the public, regarding professional behaviour, responsibility, and safety.

7.27   CONDUCT

7.27.1   The UCO is a community that expects its students and staff to behave professionally and respectfully to each other, its patients, the public, and UCO property at all times. This is similarly shared by our Collaborative Partners.

7.27.2   Codes of Conduct are expected to be followed by students and staff to ensure that a pleasant and supportive environment for study and work is provided for all. Should these be contravened, disciplinary procedures as contained in the relevant Codes of Conduct will be initiated as appropriate.

7.27.3   The following policies[24] (or approved Collaborative Partner equivalents) are in place should any misconduct need to be reported:

    i.   Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Policy for Students.

    ii.   Code of Conduct for Staff.

    iii. Dignity at UCO Policy.

    iv. Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblowing) Policy.

    v.   Relationships between Students & Staff Policy.

7.28   COMPLAINTS & GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

7.28.1   All students and staff at both the UCO and Collaborative Partners are encouraged to resolve academic and non-academic issues of concern on an informal level at the earliest opportunity where possible. However, if this is not possible, established complaints and grievance procedures are available to report and seek redress for both academic and non-academic issues.

7.28.2   Support for students and staff (as specified in policy documents) is provided where required in cases of conduct, complaint, or discipline.

---

[24] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy

PART C: ASSESSMENT REGULATIONS FOR TAUGHT DEGREES

This section of the Academic Quality Framework summarises the UCO's assessment and examination policies and practices and provides information on graduation and transcripts. It should be of interest to all undergraduate and postgraduate taught students and to all UCO and Collaborative Partner staff involved with assessments and examinations.

7.29 INTRODUCTION

7.29.1 This section provides information on the regulations, policies, and procedures relating to assessment, along with guidance on the design and use of assessment methods and tools.

7.29.2 The UCO recognises that assessment practice and processes irrespective of where they are implemented must be robust and conform to internal and national expectations, ensuring confidence in the reliability, validity and authenticity of grading.

7.29.3 The UCO identifies the purposes of assessment as follows:

- To objectively measure students' achievements against the intended learning outcomes of the unit and course (summative assessment).

- To assist student learning by providing appropriate feedback on performance (formative assessment).

- To provide a reliable and consistent basis for Boards of Examiners to determine the progression of, and conferment of awards to students.

7.29.4 Assessment is an integral part of our approach to facilitating student learning. It prepares students for life after study and is part of a progressive process by which students learn to develop their criticality and their ability to analyse and take responsibility for their own work.

7.29.5 The UCO's approach to assessment is designed to align to the QAA's Quality Code of Higher Education regarding Assessment[25].

7.30 ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES

7.30.1 When assessing learning, we are primarily concerned with supporting and assessing the achievement of the course learning outcomes and progress towards those outcomes. Unit outcomes should clearly contribute to the achievement of those at the course level.

7.30.2 Assessment strategies should:

- Be coherent and developmental across the course, supporting learner development and enabling students to achieve their potential.

- Strike a balance between low-risk formative assessment and higher risk summative assessment.

- Enable students to experience a wide range of increasingly complex assessment activities designed to support the development of their wider attributes and skills.

---

[25] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/assessment

---

7.31 ASSESSMENT STANDARDS

7.31.1 Assessment practices and processes must be robust and conform to internal and national expectations and standards, thereby ensuring confidence in the reliability, validity, and authenticity of grading.

7.31.2 Assessment criteria should be clearly specified, aligned to the level of the unit, and used as the basis for marking and grading.

7.32 ASSESSMENT TASKS

7.32.1 Assessment tasks should relate to the learning outcomes of the unit and support the overarching assessment strategy. Assessment practices should be inclusive and equitable; the methods, tasks and processes should not advantage or disadvantage any group or individual, and assessment task design should support academic integrity and minimise opportunities for plagiarism.

7.33 ENGAGING STUDENTS IN THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

7.33.1 Students should be supported in developing an understanding of expectations through detailed assessment briefs and active engagement with the assessment process and criteria.

7.33.2 Assessment tasks should enable student self-regulation and reflection, giving students the confidence and skills to use the variety of feedback available to them to monitor and regulate their performance.

7.33.3 Realistic and balanced assessment workloads should spread the assessment loading and ensure adequate time for the associated learning.

7.34 REVIEWING AND EVALUATING ASSESSMENT

7.34.1 Assessment is a collegiate activity, which necessitates Course Teams discussing and agreeing assessment expectations and sharing experiences.

7.34.2 Assessment practice should be continuously reviewed and refined to ensure that it effectively supports students and their learning and meets stakeholder requirements.

7.35 TYPES OF ASSESSMENT

7.35.1 In general, the courses that lead to a UCO award should follow a mixed method of assessment appropriate to the nature of individual courses.

7.35.2 Assessment of courses that lead to a UCO is divided into two categories: formative assessment and summative assessment.

a) FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

7.35.3 All courses are required to have effective mechanisms in place to ensure that students receive feedback that enables them to continuously improve their academic performance (i.e. formative assessment).

7.35.4 The value of early formative assessment to promote both the development of skills and engagement with course material is emphasised.

7.35.5 Formative assessment should be designed to:

a) Enable students to gauge their progress appropriately.

b) Provide students with an opportunity to practice and become familiar with the format subsequent summative assessment task, particularly if this is a practical assessment.

c) Be scheduled sufficiently to provide students with adequate time to apply feedback received to improve their performance in the subsequent summative assessment.

7.35.6 Student participation in formative assessment is not normally a requirement for progression.

b) SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT

7.35.7 The purpose of summative assessment is to enable students to demonstrate that they have fulfilled the learning outcomes of their course, and the units therein, to the standard required for the award for which they are registered.

7.35.8 Learning outcomes are specified on Course Information Forms (CIFs) and Unit Information Forms (UIFs) at the time of approval of courses and units, or through subsequent modification through the UCO's agreed processes (see AQF Section 4: Course and Unit Approval and Modification).

7.36 SETTING AND ARRANGING ASSESSMENTS

a) ASSESSMENT ELEMENTS, METHODS, AND TASKS FOR TAUGHT COURSES

7.36.1 The method of assessment and relative weighting of assessments is determined at the time of course approval or revision of a unit and are specified on Unit Information Forms (UIFs).

7.36.2 The number of credits per unit may vary but should align to the Higher Education Credit Framework for England published by the QAA[26] where the volume of credit will typically indicate the amount of student achievement and workload of students (in hours where 1 credit = 10 notional learning hours). In all cases, the number of assessment elements should typically be proportionate to the number of credits of the relevant unit. As a general guide:

a) Each 30-credit unit, based on 300 notional learning hours, should normally have a minimum of two, and a maximum of three, assessment elements.

b) Each 15-credit unit, based on 150 notional learning hours, should normally have a maximum of two assessment elements.

7.36.3 Assessment elements represent the reporting point for Boards of Examiners.

7.36.4 Each assessment element may be made up of one or more assessment components (i.e. individual tasks) combined together for reporting purposes. Where multiple assessment components contribute to an assessment element, the means of determining the overall grade should be indicated on the UIF (for example, whether students need to complete all of the tasks successfully or only a set number of them).

7.36.5 The methods of assessments and their weighting should be the same for all students taking a unit, regardless of their mode of study, unless an alternative method has been agreed to respond to the needs of a particular student (for example, a student with a disability, or where learning outcomes are to be demonstrated through work-related assessment).

7.36.6 In designing the core and optional assessment components within a subject area, Course Teams must ensure that the students' experience encompasses a balance of assessment methods, and that these are appropriate to the objectives of the course. Assessment methods should be varied in order to enable different aspects of students' aptitudes and skills to be developed and tested, and in order to provide sufficient evidence to verify the authenticity of individual students' work.

---

[26] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/the-quality-code/higher-education-credit-framework-for-england

7.36.7 An indicative list of the variety of assessment methods available is provided in Table 7.5 (this list is not exhaustive and additional assessment methods may be developed by Course Team). Assessment methods for units and courses are approved through Course Approval, Periodic Course Review and Modification processes.

TABLE 7.5 INDICATIVE LIST OF ASSESSMENT METHODS

Assessment Type	Definition	Description
Written Exam	A question or set of questions relating to a particular area of study.	Written exams usually occur at the end of a period of learning and assess whether students have achieved the intended learning outcomes. They may be 'seen', where the student is aware in advance of the question(s) they are expected to answer, or 'unseen', where the questions are only revealed 'on the day'. In an 'open-book' exam, a student is allowed to use a selection of reference materials during the assessment. 'Open-book' exams should be designed to maintain academic integrity in line with the UCO's Open Book Assessment Regulations. The questions asked as part of a written exam may be essay, short answer, problem or multiple-choice. Written exams usually (but not always) take place under timed conditions.
Written Assignment (including Essay)	An exercise completed in writing.	Written exercises that typically have deadlines attached but which are not carried out under timed conditions. A well-known example is the essay, where students are required to write about a particular topic or answer a question in depth. Other examples include written briefings on particular topics.
Report	A description, summary or other account of an experience or activity.	There are many different kinds of report - often students are required to produce a report after participating in a practical activity such as fieldwork, laboratory work, work experience or placement. Reports typically have a prescribed format.
Dissertation	An extended piece of written work, often the write-up of a final-year project.	A dissertation is a substantial piece of writing deriving from research that a student has undertaken. Dissertations are the result of a student's independent work, carried out under the guidance of a supervisor. Different subject areas may follow different conventions in relation to the production of dissertations. (Note that other outputs from projects are listed separately.)

Portfolio	A collection of work that relates to a given topic or theme, which has been produced over a period of time.	Typically, a portfolio contains a number of pieces of work, usually connected by a topic or theme. Students are usually required to organise the collection of examples and the portfolio often includes some reflective accounts (diaries/logs). Examples include, in education, that students may collect in a portfolio, essays around particular teaching methods, lesson plans, teaching materials that they have developed and a report about the teaching experience itself.
Project output (other than dissertation)	Output from project work, often of a practical nature, other than a dissertation or written report.	Students are assessed on the output of a period of project work (other than in the form of a dissertation or written report). Examples are diverse and include the staging of a play or other performance, a piece of artwork, a new product or a poster.
Oral assessment and presentation	A conversation or oral presentation on a given topic, including an individual contribution to a seminar.	Examples of oral assessments and presentations might include conversations, discussions, debates, presentations, and individual contributions to seminars. This category would also include the viva voce exam which is typically used by institutions in specific circumstances such as clarifying assessment decisions reached via other means.
Practical skills assessment	Assessment of a student's practical skills or competence.	Practical skills assessment focuses on whether, and/or how well, a student performs a specific practical skill or technique (or competency). Examples include clinical skills, laboratory techniques, identification of or commentary on artwork, surveying skills, language translation or listening comprehension, and so on.
Set exercises	Questions or tasks designed to assess the application of knowledge, analytical, problem-solving or evaluative skills.	Examples might include data interpretation and data analysis exercises and problem-based or problem-solving exercises.

b) TIMINGS OF ASSESSMENT FOR TAUGHT COURSES

7.36.8 The timings of assessments are specified on UIFs, with the weeks of assessment being clearly noted to aid student planning of work.

7.36.9 The period for which a unit runs must be clearly specified on the UIF so that it concludes with the final assessment. Exceptions will rarely be permitted. Where units depend heavily on field work or work-based learning outside the normal academic year, the period allowed for this must be defined and specified on the UIF.

7.36.10 Course Leaders should ensure that there is an appropriate spread of examination and assessment submission dates across the academic year.

7.36.11 The Registrar (or Collaborative Partner equivalent) will provide a definitive schedule of examinations and assessment submission dates in liaison with Course Teams which should be published to students well in advance of the examination period.

c) ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK & WORKLOAD FOR TAUGHT COURSES

7.36.12 A broad assessment framework is used to enable assessment workload for taught courses to be considered by Course Teams. Course Teams are expected to have a clearly articulated assessment strategy that is benchmarked against the framework, with variances to the framework considered and justified as part of the course approval and review process.

7.36.13 The assessment framework is designed to enable Course Teams to:

- Design effective assessment strategies.

- Reduce the potential for over-assessment which can lead to a 'surface' approach to learning.

- Ensure that students are informed about the amount of time typically required to complete any given assessment task to an acceptable standard.

- Enable students to plan their workload.

7.36.14 The framework uses notional learning hours as the measure for comparability, since measuring assessments in terms of word length focuses students on outputs and may encourage a 'copy and paste' approach, where students see the number as a target and are not concerned about the quality of the work they are producing. Furthermore, it recognises that it may take more student time to produce quality work within a low word limit than within a high word limit.

7.36.15 This information can be useful for students in gaining a better understanding of the effort required, and thus the planning of their studies. It is therefore the total time (i.e., the projected time taken for the preparation and compilation of framework components combined) that should be used in estimating the workload associated with a particular assessment.

7.36.16 In some subjects it is recognised that it is hard to differentiate assessment from teaching and learning activities. In such cases, and where activities can be variable in terms of assessment time depending on their nature and scope, Course Teams should use the framework as a reference point when seeking to estimate the notional learning hours associated with each task.

7.36.17 In defining assessment strategies for units and courses, Course Teams should ensure that the percentage of the notional learning hours associated with assessment is between 20% and 30% of the total notional learning hours for a unit. Higher and lower values are permissible depending on subject, level and purpose, but should be justified as part of the approval process (see AQF Section 4: Course and Unit Approval and Modification).

7.36.18 It is recognised that, where appropriate, there will also need to be clear specification of word lengths, intended as 'guardrails' so that students understand the volume of work they are expected to produce, and to prevent staff from having to read and grade voluminous assessments. As a general rule:

a) The total word-count associated with assessment for a 30-credit unit should not normally exceed 10,000 words.

b) The total word-count associated with assessment for a 15-credit unit should not normally exceed 5,000 words.

7.36.19 The Assessment Framework referred to above is used as guidance that informs assessment strategy design to ensure that assessment methods are effective, appropriate, clear, and comprehensive to students.

d) CHANGING ASSESSMENTS AND ASSESSMENT WEIGHTINGS FOR TAUGHT COURSES

7.36.20 The assessment strategy for a unit will normally be agreed when the unit is approved and may only be varied subsequently through the appropriate quality assurance process (see AQF Section 4: Course and Unit Approval and Modification and AQF Section 6: Periodic Review).

e) DESIGN OF ASSESSMENT TASKS FOR TAUGHT COURSES

7.36.21 Unit Leaders are responsible for preparing assessments in consultation with those involved with the delivery of a course, and in line with the approved UIF. While assessment tasks and questions should relate to the course delivered, they may include reference to material not actually taught if students have been told explicitly (e.g., in the course documentation and assessment brief) that a particular subject would form part of the course aims and learning outcomes, and that students would be expected to undertake self-directed learning on such material.

7.36.22 In designing assessments Course and Unit Leaders must ensure that tutors prepare students sufficiently for assessment, and should ensure that assessments:

a) Vary as appropriate from year to year.

b) Are developmental from level to level.

c) Are distinctive and require the demonstration of higher order skills and application of knowledge, not just the knowledge itself, especially at FHEQ Levels 6 and 7.

d) For highly weighted elements, such as projects and dissertations, contain mechanisms to monitor progress and the development of the final submission.

e) Are unit specific.

f) Are set in relation to any practical skills that may be required

7.36.23 If an assessment is structured and / or is in several parts, the assessment brief / exam paper should indicate the weighting that will be apportioned to each component; this will assist candidates in allocating an appropriate proportion of the examination time to answer a particular question.

7.36.24 Course Leaders should ensure that full details of their course assessments, including a course assessment timetable, are submitted to the Academic Registry (or Collaborative Partner equivalent) by an agreed deadline to ensure that all assessments are considered through the Assessment Scrutiny Process in enough time to enable students to undertake the assessment effectively.

7.36.25 The UCO and Collaborative Partners provide guidance on designing assessments, and different assessment methods, to their respective faculty as and when required.

7.37 ASSESSMENT SCRUTINY PROCESS

7.37.1 The Assessment Scrutiny Process (Diagram 7.1) assures that assessments are designed in line with the approved course summative assessment strategies, and that assessment briefs, exam papers, marking criteria and any additional supporting guidance align and reflect the appropriate level of learning. It also assures external input of the scrutiny process by appropriate External Examiners.

7.37.2 In all cases, re-sit assessments should be set and scrutinised at the same time as initial assessments and undergo the same level of scrutiny and approval as set out in Diagram 7.1.

7.37.3 Assessment Scrutiny Process templates (AQF07-02, AQF07-03, AQF07-04 and AQF07-05) should be followed and used to ensure that scrutiny of assessments, assignment briefs, exam papers, marking criteria and assessment guidance documentation requirements are complete and consistent across all courses.

7.37.4 The Scrutiny Board (or Collaborative Partner equivalent) must approve all assessment briefs, examination papers, marking criteria and associated assessment guidance prior to their publication to students in line with the Scrutiny Board Terms of Reference (or Collaborative Partner equivalent).

7.37.5 Course Teams are responsible and accountable for the Assessment Scrutiny Process of all levels of Assessments in line with the Course Team Terms of Reference (or Collaborative Partner equivalent).

7.37.6 The Registrar (or Collaborative Partner equivalent) is responsible for overseeing the Assessment Scrutiny Process in liaison with Course Teams in line with the relevant Scrutiny Board Terms of Reference.

7.37.7 The Course Leader is responsible for liaising with Unit Leaders to produce and scrutinise Assessment Briefs, Exam Questions, Marking Criteria, and any additional guidelines to support the assessment in line with this process and within agreed timelines to assure that they are published to enable students to undertake the assessment effectively.

7.37.8 Unit Leaders are responsible for liaising with their teaching teams and for drafting Assessment Briefs, Exam Papers, Marking Criteria, and any additional guidelines to support the assessment using the required templates (see Paragraph 7.36.30), and any additional guidelines to support the assessment.

7.37.9 Unit Leaders are responsible for organising a Peer Review of their draft Assessment Briefs, Exam Papers, Marking Criteria, and any additional guidelines to support the assessment with another Unit Leader.

7.37.10 Unit Leaders responsible for peer-reviewing Assessment Briefs, Exam Papers, Marking Criteria, and any additional guidelines to support the assessment should liaise with the responsible Unit Leader regarding any recommended amendments, and should not sign off any Assessment Brief, Exam Questions, Marking Criteria, or any additional guidelines to support the assessment until they are satisfied that they meet the required criteria listed in the Assessment Scrutiny Checklist (AQF07-05).

7.37.11 Unit Leaders responsible for the assessment are responsible for forwarding peer-reviewed Assessment Briefs, Exam Papers, Marking Criteria, and any additional guidelines to support the assessment and the External Examiner Scrutiny Verification Form (AQF07-06) to the relevant External Examiner.

7.37.12 For non-awarding level assessments (i.e., those that do not contribute to a degree classification calculation), External Examiner approval is not normally required (unless a PSRB requires this) and are invited to comment on these assessments and should complete the Assessment Scrutiny Checklist accordingly.

7.37.13 For awarding level assessments (i.e., those that do contribute to a degree classification calculation) External Examiner approval is required and should complete the Assessment Scrutiny Checklist accordingly.

7.37.14 The Unit Leader is responsible for liaising with the relevant External Examiner and for implementing any recommendations made by the External Examiner. Where a Unit Leader does not act on all changes required by the External Examiner, or makes additional substantive changes to the paper, it must be returned to the External Examiner for their approval.

7.37.15 External Examiners should not sign off any Assessment Brief, Exam Questions, Marking Criteria, or additional guidelines to support the assessment until they are satisfied that they meet their approval (AQF07-06).

7.37.16 The Course Leader is responsible for assuring that Assessment Briefs, Exam Papers, Marking Criteria, any additional guidelines to support the assessment and Assessment Scrutiny Checklists have been completed by the Unit Leader responsible, Peer Reviewer Unit Leader and the External Examiner in the timelines agreed, and should complete and sign-off the Assessment Scrutiny Checklists, and collate approved Assessment Briefs, Exam Papers, Marking Criteria, any additional guidelines to support the assessment, Assessment Scrutiny Checklists and the External Examiner Scrutiny Verification Form.

7.37.17 Unit Leaders are then responsible for forwarding Assessment Briefs, Exam Papers, Marking Criteria, any additional guidelines to support the assessment, and completed Assessment Scrutiny Checklists and External Examiner Scrutiny Verification Forms to the Registrar for consideration and final approval by the Scrutiny Board within the required timeframe.

7.37.18 The Registrar (or Collaborative Partner equivalent) is thereafter responsible for keeping a central record of all approved Assessment Briefs, Exam Papers, Marking Criteria, additional guidelines to support the assessment, completed Assessment Scrutiny Checklists and External Examiner Scrutiny Verification Forms for each cohort of students, and for publishing the approved Assessment Briefs, Marking Criteria, and any guidelines to support the assessment to students in the agreed timelines to enable students to complete the assessment.

7.37.19 The Academic Registry (or Collaborative Partner equivalent) is responsible for printing approved Exam Papers / Questions in advance of any written or practical assessments as appropriate and for administrating these assessments, liaising with the Unit Leader responsible as appropriate.

7.37.20 The Course Leader is responsible for following up on the scrutiny of any outstanding assessments with relevant Unit Leaders and for assuring that Unit Leaders fulfil their responsibilities.

7.37.21 The Registrar (or Collaborative Partner equivalent) is responsible for providing the UCO's TQSC and Academic Council with an annual report of the Assessment Scrutiny Process to provide assurance that all levels of assessment have been scrutinised in line with this Assessment Scrutiny Process, identifying any issues or good practice, and bringing to the attention to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) any matters of concern immediately.

7.37.22 Collaborative Partners may operate to a schedule of variance regarding Assessment Scrutiny which is approved at Partner Approval. Where this is the case, Collaborative Partners will be required to report on the approved Assessment Scrutiny Process as part of the UCO's evaluation, monitoring and reporting process (see AQF Section 5; Evaluation, Reporting and Monitoring).

DIAGRAM 7.1: ASSESSMENT SCRUTINY PROCESS

```
┌─────────────────────────┐     ┌─────────────────────────┐     ┌─────────────────────────┐
│ Course Teams set         │     │                          │     │ Unit Leader responsible  │
│ assessment dates and     │     │ Unit Leaders draft       │     │ signs off Assessment     │
│ timelines for Assessment │ ──> │ initial and resit in     │ ──> │ Scrutiny Checklist and   │
│ Scrituny Process in      │     │ liaison with teaching    │     │ provides draft           │
│ liaison with the         │     │ teams.                   │     │ assessments to another   │
│ Registrar (or            │     │                          │     │ Unit Leader for peer     │
│ Collaborative Partner    │     │                          │     │ review.                  │
│ equivalent).             │     │                          │     │                          │
└─────────────────────────┘     └─────────────────────────┘     └─────────────────────────┘
                                                                             │
┌─────────────────────────┐     ┌─────────────────────────┐     ┌─────────────────────────┐
│ Peer-Review of draft     │     │ Unit Leader responsible  │     │ External Examiner        │
│ assessments by another   │     │ forwards peer-reviewed   │     │ comments on non-awarding │
│ Unit Leader who          │     │ assessments and          │     │ level assessments and    │
│ completes the Assessment │ <── │ Assessment Scrutiny      │ <── │ approves all awarding    │
│ Scrutiny Checklist once  │     │ Checklist to relevant    │     │ level assessments        │
│ satisfied all criteria   │     │ External Examiner(s).    │     │ liaising with Unit       │
│ have been met.           │     │                          │     │ Leader responsible as    │
│                          │     │                          │     │ appropriate.             │
└─────────────────────────┘     └─────────────────────────┘     └─────────────────────────┘
          │
┌─────────────────────────┐     ┌─────────────────────────┐     ┌─────────────────────────┐
│                          │     │ Unit Leader submits      │     │                          │
│ External Examiner        │     │ reviewed assessments to  │     │ Scrutiny Board approves  │
│ completes the Scrutiny   │ ──> │ Registrar (or            │ ──> │ all assesssments for     │
│ Verficiation Form.       │     │ Collaborative Partner    │     │ publication to students. │
│                          │     │ equivalent) for          │     │                          │
│                          │     │ consideration at a       │     │                          │
│                          │     │ Scrutiny Board meeting.  │     │                          │
└─────────────────────────┘     └─────────────────────────┘     └─────────────────────────┘
          │
┌─────────────────────────┐
│ Registrar (or            │
│ Collaborative Partner    │
│ equivalent) publishes    │
│ approved assessments to  │
│ students.                │
└─────────────────────────┘
```

7.38 STUDENT SELF-ASSESSMENT

7.38.1 Students are provided with clear Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria for each unit that they study, which is contained within each UIF.

7.38.2 Students are also provided with detailed assessment briefs.

7.38.3 When submitting assignments, students should be encouraged to engage in self-assessment by using the aforementioned information.

7.39 ASSESSMENT OF GROUP WORK

7.39.1 Group and team working skills are important abilities and are features of most curricula. The importance of group working skills to students' employability (the ability to listen, question, persuade, participate and, where necessary, lead) means that group work should feature in assessment practices. However, for the purpose of summative assessment students' grades at all levels must reflect their individual abilities rather than those of the group of which they are part. Therefore, no collective group grades are normally permissible.

7.39.2 Unit Leaders must have in place processes to ensure that individual grades can be ascribed. This may include a range of activities including supervisory meetings, observation, journals,

individualised activities within a group project, personalised reflection, etc. It may not use a process in which students ascribe grades to other students' contributions, although such practices can be used for formative feedback.

7.39.3 In some subject areas the production of collective output can be fundamental to the learning outcomes of the unit. In such circumstances group grades may be permissible. However, they are:

a) Only allowed at FHEQ Levels 4 and 5 (because of the increased significance of grades to distinction calculations at FHEQ Levels 6 and 7).

b) Restricted to a maximum of 20% of the overall assessment weighting of a unit.

c) Permitted only once at any academic level.

7.39.4 Claims for exemption must be explicitly identified on the appropriate UIF and agreed through the course approval, modification and review process by justification to academic peers in the context of the course and its intended outcomes.

7.40 WRITTEN EXAMINATION PAPERS

7.40.1 Written examinations have an important role to play in assessment strategies and help to authenticate the level of attainment of the student.

7.40.2 In designing written examinations, the following should apply:

a) Written examinations must test the higher order skills appropriate to the academic level of study.

b) Written examinations must vary appropriately from year to year.

c) Written examinations should not normally be of more than three hours' duration.

d) FHEQ Level 4 examinations should not normally be of more than two hours' duration.

e) Alternative forms of written examination may be shorter; for example, multiple-choice and computer-based examinations may be of one-hour duration.

f) Since written examination papers are available to students, examiners are advised that questions should not generally be repeated within a period of three years.

g) Where a written examination is of the open book kind, in which students are permitted access to texts and other materials during examinations, the nature of the questions must not be such that students are dependent on one or more specific texts to which not all may have access. If students require access to specific material, such as a case study, or a professional standard, or a statute, copies should be provided for any student who has not brought a copy to the examination room. Open book exams may also be designed to take place online where students may have access to other resources including the internet. In all cases, the UCO's Open Book Exam Regulations should be applied, and Open Book Exam Guidance for Students (AQF07-07) be provided as appropriate.

7.41 OPEN-BOOK EXAMINATION REGULATIONS

a) OPEN BOOK ASSESSMENTS

7.41.1 An Open Book Assessment is where:

a) Students are permitted to refer to any material that they wish to consult while carrying out the assessment.

b) Students are permitted to refer to only specified texts while carrying out the assessment (i.e. a "limited" Open Book Assessment).

7.41.2 Open Book Assessments can take place either in a formal examination setting (e.g. within an examination room under controlled examination conditions) or in a less formal setting (e.g. online within a limited timeframe).

7.41.3 Open Book Assessments enable students to use the information at their disposal to solve problems, carry out tasks, etc, without relying on rote learning or memory of fact. They can therefore be designed to encourage students to answer questions in more critical and analytical way and therefore encourage high-order thinking skills in students.

7.41.4 To ensure that Open Book Assessments are effective, clear guidance must be given to students about the expectations of the assessment, what materials may or may not be permitted within the examination room in advance of the assessment. Ideally students should be informed in writing, preferably within the Unit Information Form or Assessment Brief produced for the assessment.

7.41.5 The timing of Online Open Book Assessments must be such that students are able to refer to the permissible materials and answer the assessment questions effectively and fairly.

7.41.6 An online open-book timed exam may better reflect many natural situations, where professionals may have access to reference sources. While there is no firm consensus, many studies have shown that students' long-term knowledge retention is improved from open-book exams, which also reduce anxiety. However, much depends on the approach to teaching, learning and preparation by students and staff. The focus of an open-book exam may shift to more application and analysis than testing of knowledge.

7.41.7 Students should be provided with the UCO's Open-Book Exams Guidance for Students (AQF-07-XX) document to help prepare students for such an assessment.

b) OPEN BOOK ASSESSMENTS WITHIN AN EXAMINATION ROOM

7.41.8 For Open Book Assessments that take place in an examination room, students are normally only permitted to bring in hard paper copies of permissible materials into the examination room, which may be marked with written notes or highlighting. Electronic equipment (laptops, iPads, tablets, etc) containing the permissible materials will not normally be allowed unless this is an agreed reasonable adjustment in which case the electronic equipment will be provided by the UCO to ensure that access to any materials not permitted or the internet is disabled.

7.41.9 Space required for the Open Book Assessment must be considered and cater for size of desk or space between desks for the permissible materials.

7.41.10 Assessors / Invigilators are responsible for ensuring that students do not bring any unauthorised materials into the examination room or that any highlighting or tabs in texts/notes brought into the hall meet any criteria specified prior to the assessment.

c) LIMITED OPEN BOOK ASSESSMENTS

7.41.11 Where an Open Book Assessment is classified as 'limited' students are only permitted to bring specified texts into the examination in which case students should be informed which texts are permitted by the Unit Leader and in Assessment Briefs and they will also be stated on the front of the exam paper. The specified texts must NOT have any written notes within them or any other paper/notes stapled or added to them. However, key words or phrases can be highlighted or underlined and small tabs may be used (however nothing must be written on the tabs but

they can be different colours). Assessors and / or Invigilators will check for any additional notes / papers not permitted during the assessment and any texts containing markings outside of the rules will be confiscated at the end of the exam and an academic concern will be reported in line with the UCO's Academic Disciplinary Policy (or Collaborative Partner equivalent).

d) ONLINE OPEN BOOK ASSESSMENTS

7.41.12 An Online Open-Book Assessment is an effective alternative assessment method to a traditional written exam undertaken within an examination room, which can be undertaken should students be unable to undertake a traditional face-to-face assessment, for example to enable the continuation of assessment due to unforeseen circumstances, such as closures of the location of delivery, travel strikes, etc.

7.41.13 Online Open Book Assessments will allow students access to notes and online resources while they take the exam, including the internet, however the timed nature of the exam means that students will still need to have an essential knowledge base of the assessment matter in order to complete the assessment effectively and within the time available.

7.41.14 Online Open Book Assessments must be time limited, the time provided being appropriate for the level of learning and the learning outcomes being assessed.

7.41.15 Online Open Book Assessments must be undertaken through the UCO's VLE or an approved secure virtual environment where the assessment can be:

a)   Released to students at a specified time and therefore at the same time.

b)   Closed at a specified time in line with the time limit of the assessment and therefore at the same time for all students.

7.41.16 Students should be provided with a formative attempt of an Online Open Book Assessment to enable them to experience the assessment as they would for the summative attempt. Feedback should of the formative attempt should also be provided prior to the summative attempt so that students can understand how the assessment will be marked and what the assessor/s will be looking for.

7.41.17 As students may be taking Online Open Book Assessments at a distance (e.g., in their own homes) they are not moderated or overseen by an invigilator. Whilst this may raise concerns regarding an increased risk of plagiarism and other academic offences the time limited nature of such assessment provides some mitigation as does careful exam question design. Therefore:

7.41.18 The time limit set for Open Book Assessments should be such that students are able to demonstrate their knowledge to answer assessment questions / tasks using permissible materials for reference.

7.41.19 Assessment questions / tasks should not have only one correct answer; questions that require students to catalogue, critique, plan, defend, reflect on their own learning, justify or rank rather than to explain or describe should be used.

7.41.20 Assessment answers can be submitted to the Turnitin text-comparison system to help identify plagiarism. See Turnitin for more information.

7.41.21 Online Open Book Assessments may be undertaken either by:

a)   Releasing exam questions or subject areas for the assessment a week (or other appropriate time period) in advance of the online timed period during which students will then complete an online exam paper.

b) Releasing the exam paper or assessment questions at the beginning of the timed period and students are required to answer questions online or within an appropriate document format which they can then upload by the end of the time limited period.

7.41.22 The following requirements for Online Open Book Assessments must be considered especially if these are being undertaken at a distance:

a) The assessment tasks / questions should demonstrate constructively alignment, i.e. the assessment clearly links to the delivered content, the intended learning outcomes, and the teaching and learning methods used to deliver the content.

b) The assessment criteria of the Online Open Book Assessment must be clear for students and constructively align to the intended learning outcomes and the assessment.

c) The assessment questions / tasks must be clear and straightforward to ensure that students will not misinterpret what is being asked of them.

d) Students should be provided with a formative attempt to ensure that they are familiar with the assessment method prior to experiencing a summative attempt.

e) Students must be provided with clear guidance about the assessment including preparation instructions, the time limit, logging in to the assessment, completing the assessment, who they can contact for ICT Support, implications for plagiarism or other academic offences.

f) Students must have access to a computer for the duration of the time limited period.

g) Students must have access to a reliable internet connection and the UCO's VLE for the duration of the time limited period.

h) Open Book Assessments must be undertaken when UCO ICT Support is available.

i) Students granted extra time as a reasonable adjustment for assessments must be provided with the required extra time.

7.42 COMPUTER-BASED EXAMINATIONS

7.42.1 A Computer Based Examination is defined as any assessment which is delivered electronically, e.g., on a PC through a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) system.

7.42.2 Computer-Based Examinations (CBEs) are subject to the same regulations as any other examination, and are normally undertaken only using server-based, centrally supported system(s) scheduled through the Academic Registry Department (or Collaborative Partner equivalent).

7.42.3 CBEs may be set at any level of study up to and including FHEQ Level 7, provided that the assessment approach and question design are appropriate.

7.42.4 Unit Leaders wishing to deliver a summative CBE are required to inform the Registrar (or Collaborative Partner equivalent who will then inform and liaise with all relevant departments, including IT and AV.

7.42.5 Students must be familiar with the CBE system to be used before they undertake a summative exam. This may be in the form of a formative exam or the creation of example exams on a VLE.

7.42.6 Any member of academic staff responsible for a CBE, or their representative must be present at the assessment to brief students / staff on the assessment.

7.42.7 A member of IT staff must be made available for the hour preceding and the duration of the CBE.

7.42.8 A paper copy of each CBE must be available in the Academic Registry Department (or Collaborative Partner equivalent) for duplication if the electronic delivery of the CBE cannot be accomplished.

7.42.9 In the event of technical problems or system failures, the Academic Registry Department may either:

a) Extend the examination time to allow for disruption.

b) Restart the exam using paper copies of the examination.

7.42.10 An increased number of invigilators should be used for CBEs to eliminate the risk of online cheating.

7.42.11 At the beginning of the assessment, a register of attendees will be taken. This will be checked against the number of assessment submissions

7.42.12 The procedure for converting the percentile outcome of a CBE to the relevant Grading Scale should be agreed in advance.

7.43 COMPUTER-BASED MARKING OF PRACTICAL / CLINICAL ASSESSMENTS

7.43.1 Computer-Based Marking is where an assessor uses an electronic device to record and mark student performance normally during a practical or clinical exam.

7.43.2 Computer-based marking is subject to the same marking regulations as described in this framework including those related to the use of Marking Schemes, Grading Schemes, Assessment Moderation Processes and Agreeing Grades.

7.43.3 Computer-based marking must be undertaken through the UCO's VLE (or Collaborative Partner equivalent) in line with marking of coursework and to assure the security marked work.

7.43.4 In all cases paper copies of mark sheets must be immediately available to all assessors should an electronic device fail during the assessment.

7.43.5 It is the Unit Leader's responsibility to:

a) Liaise with the relevant IT Department and assessors in good time to organise the set up and availability of electronic devices for marking purposes this includes the number of devices required, ensuring that they are fully charged and that chargers for the devices are available.

b) Ensure that marking sheets are set up on the VLE for each student.

c) Ensure that all assessors are fully briefed on how to use the electronic device, access the marksheet and marking scheme and know where paper copies may be sourced should the device fail during the assessment.

d) Ensure that each device and any chargers are returned to the relevant IT Department to the Unit Leader (or other delegated staff member) at the end of the assessment.

7.43.6 It is the responsibility of each assessor to comply with the Unit Leader's instructions and to ensure that the electronic device they are provided with remains with them at all times and adhere to data protection and confidentiality of the assessment.

7.44 RE-SIT ASSESSMENTS

7.44.1 Re-sit assessments should be set at the same time as initial assessments and undergo the same level of scrutiny and approval.

7.44.2 The type and format of the re-sit assessment should, as far as is practical, be similar to those of the assessments of the initial presentation.

7.44.3 Re-sit written examination papers should differ from those set in the initial assessment but be of a similar format.

7.44.4 In determining the nature of the re-sit task for assessments other than written examinations, Unit Leaders should consider how students can demonstrate the learning outcomes whilst maintaining the integrity of the assessment system. The academic level and nature of the assessment task will be a key factor. For example, assessments based on project work may require re-submission whilst those based on essay topics may require a new topic to be set to prevent plagiarism.

7.44.5 Re-sit tasks will be completed to a specified deadline ensuring that students have adequate time to complete the task set.

7.44.6 Re-sit examinations will be held at specified time periods, unless otherwise confirmed through academic appeal or Special Circumstances.

7.44.7 Re-sit assessments or re-submission of failed work will be awarded a maximum (capped) grade of D- (or % equivalent). However, students will be provided with the grade that the work would have received prior to being capped.

a) RE-SIT REQUIREMENTS

7.44.8 Students will be notified of the nature and timing of re-sit examinations and assessments.

7.44.9 Students are responsible for observing information about re-sit requirements, including details of the re-sit assessment and dates and times of re-sit examinations.

b) RE-SIT ATTEMPTS

7.44.10 Normally students are only allowed to re-sit an assessment once, and only within the re-sit assessment period scheduled at the beginning of each academic year.

7.44.11 If the student fails to pass the assessment at the re-sit attempt, the Board of Examiners may offer the student the opportunity to retake the Unit, including all of its assessment components, in the next academic year, in line with the progression criteria for the course of study.

7.45 PROVIDING INFORMATION TO STUDENTS REGARDING ASSESSMENTS

7.45.1 Unit Information Forms must inform students about the form and likely timings of examinations and assignments. In addition, students must be informed about how they may access regulations specific to their course of study, including regulations for progression (progression criteria), eligibility for awards, and appealing against academic decisions.

7.45.2 The Registrar (or Collaborative Partner equivalent) will provide a definitive schedule of examinations and assessment submission dates which will be published to students, normally via the relevant VLE, well in advance of the examination period.

7.45.3 All academic staff must be made aware of the following information concerning assessments and communication with students:

a) That great caution must be exercised when informing students about the content (as opposed to the structure) of an assessment and should be sufficiently broad so as not to give students an unfair advantage in completing the assessment.

b) That the structure and / or content of an assessment should be provided in writing and made available to all students (preferably in the Unit Information Form).

c) That the actual examination paper must be consistent with the information provided to students.

d) That all assessments must relate to the learning outcomes for a course and should be indicated in the Course Information Form given to all students at the start of a course.

7.45.4 Information for students regarding assessments, including the deadlines for submission of in-course assignments and the consequences and penalties for late or non-submission of material for assessment, should be provided to all students at the beginning of each academic year.

7.46 ASSESSMENT BRIEFS

7.46.1 For each assessment, students should be provided with clear details of the nature of the assessment task, the associated assessment criteria and other relevant information in the form of an assessment brief.

7.46.2 Typically, an assessment brief will be produced in line with the Scrutiny Process Assessment Brief Template (AQF07-02) (or approved Collaborative Partner equivalent) and will include the following elements:

a) Title of the assignment.

b) The task clearly articulated.

c) Contribution of the assignment to the unit overall grade (as a % weighting, or, where multiple assessments contribute to the final grade point, the nature of the contribution from this assessment).

d) The relationship of the task to the unit through details of the learning outcomes being assessed.

e) Information on how the task can be completed successfully through guidance and / or the provision of the associated assessment criteria, and any additional appropriate guidance.

f) Details / entitlement of any support available during the period up to submission, including any opportunities for the developmental review of progress.

g) Any word-limit / time-limit specifications.

h) Any expectations about the presentation of work (for example the file format accepted: PDF, MSWord, etc.).

i) Opportunities for reflection on the task, including self-assessment opportunities.

j) The procedures for submitting the work, making the presentation, etc.

k) The projected date for the return of assessed work where appropriate (students should receive feedback on in-course assessments within 6 weeks of submission).

l) Details of how the feedback will be provided.

7.46.3 Collaborative Partners may operate to a schedule of variance regarding Assessment Brief templates which are approved at Partner Approval.

7.47 ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

7.47.1 Assessment criteria set out what is expected of students and should relate to the learning outcomes set for the unit.

7.47.2 The broad criteria for assessment are set out in the UCO's Common Assessment Grading Scheme (CAGS) (See Section 7.58).

7.47.3 Assessment criteria should be shared with students in advance of the completion of assessments via UIFs or assessments briefs where applicable.

7.48 MARKING SCHEMES

7.48.1 Marking schemes are aids used by examiners to assist in the marking of student assessments. They vary with the nature of assessments and should be considered as a much more detailed version of assessment criteria, since individual marks may be attached to identifiable components of the assessment.

7.48.2 While assessment criteria are made known to students via UIFs and assessment briefs to assist them in preparing their assessments with the necessary content and to the necessary standards, marking schemes are normally withheld from students as they contain details of acceptable answers or solutions to questions. They may be disclosed to students as part of the feedback process.

7.48.3 Marking schemes should be prepared at the same time as when the assessment is designed and should be submitted for scrutiny in the same way as assessment questions. Comparisons between what the students have been requested to do for the assessment and the associated marking scheme may highlight areas of ambiguity in the question or the task.

7.48.4 Marking schemes must be sent to the External Examiner along with draft examination papers and assessment briefs, for their approval prior to being implemented.

7.48.5 An agreed marking scheme is essential in cases where there is more than one first marker, and to support consistency across work that is double or second marked.

7.48.6 Where appropriate, it is good practice to modify the marking scheme after reviewing a sample of student work to ensure that common misinterpretations of the questions or unforeseen alternative answers can be accommodated within the marking scheme.

7.48.7 Tutors are provided with sample marking schemes to assist them in preparing their own. Ultimately, tutors are expected to exercise autonomous academic judgement concerning the extent to which learning outcomes have been demonstrated by students.

7.49 FEEDBACK ON DRAFT ASSESSMENTS

7.49.1 Feedback on draft assessments is not prohibited. However, any such practices must adhere to the policy and guidance provided in the Draft Assessment & Proof-Reading Policy and Guidance for Students and Staff[27] (or Collaborative Partner equivalent), and should be noted on specific Assessment Briefs.

7.49.2 Tutors should not provide feedback on drafts that individual students submit to them for comment other than that specified on assessment briefs, since this may unintentionally favour those students.

7.49.3 All tutors must consistently use the agreed approach to the provision of feedback on draft work.

---

[27] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy

7.49.4 Only one instance of feedback per assessment is normally permissible (i.e., students cannot submit, amend, and then re-submit for additional formative feedback) before the final submission, unless this has been agreed as part of the approval process as in some subject areas. Where such feedback is provided, it should be within a set timeframe, which enables students to receive the feedback from the tutor at least two weeks before the final submission date to allow students to respond to any issues raised.

7.49.5 Feedback on draft assessments may be constrained by a specific word limit (e.g., a rough draft of not more than 1000 words or an outline structure).

7.49.6 Feedback on draft assessments should give guidance on general areas of improvement but must not include re-writing of text or other forms of direct tutor amendment of the student's work.

7.49.7 Assessment briefs should give an indication of the scope of the feedback that will be provided. For example, in some instances, tutors may agree only to briefly scan a submission and provide feedback on style and presentation, whilst in others they may decide to provide more detailed general comments.

7.49.8 There is no grading of formative work and students should be informed that any feedback provided for a formative assessment is not indicative of the final grade that summative work will receive.

7.50 EXAMINING AND ASSESSMENT WHERE A MEMBER OF STAFF HAS A PERSONAL INTEREST, INVOLVEMENT OR RELATIONSHIP WITH A STUDENT

7.50.1 Whist it is actively discouraged for staff and students to pursue any form of relationship other than that of student and tutor, it is acknowledged that in exceptional circumstances a relationship between a member of staff and a student that extends beyond this professional boundary may develop or exist. This includes friendship as well as any romantic relationship.

7.50.2 The UCO has therefore established a policy aimed at ensuring the integrity of the teaching, learning, and examining environment regarding relationships between students and staff.

7.50.3 The Policy Concerning Relationships Between Students & Staff[28] (or Collaborative Partner equivalent) provides important safeguards for staff and students where a personal relationship exists or may be perceived to exist or develop, with the objectives of protecting the welfare of students and ensuring that the progression of the student is managed entirely on a professional basis and protecting staff from potential allegations of favouritism and unfairness.

7.50.4 In line with this policy, members of staff are required to declare any personal interest, involvement, or relationship with a student to their Line Manager.

7.50.5 The member of staff shall not have advance sight of questions which are to be answered under examination conditions across all units in the course of study in the year in which the student is enrolled.

7.50.6 It is mandatory that a member of staff does not undertake assessment of the student's work, and examination papers should be prepared independently of the member of staff.

7.50.7 Where a relationship between a staff member and student has been declared, the student's assessed and examined work (in the particular year of study) shall be double marked and forwarded to the relevant External Examiner(s) for approval as appropriate.

7.50.8 The member of staff shall temporarily withdraw from any meetings, including Boards of Examiners, when the student's specific case is being discussed.

---

[28] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy

7.50.9 The duties of the member of staff shall be reorganised to ensure that they are not teaching, supervising, tutoring, mentoring, assessing, examining, providing welfare/pastoral support, or participating in administration or management of any activities in which the student is involved.

7.51 EXAMINATION AND ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES

7.51.1 There are specific rules and regulations regarding the conduct of examinations. These are detailed in the Examination and In-Course Assessment Regulations[29] and in the Examination Invigilators' Procedures & Guidelines[30] (or within Collaborative Partner equivalents).

7.52 COMPLETING ASSESSMENTS ON TIME

7.52.1 It is the responsibility of students to make themselves aware of and available to attend examinations at the specified time and place, properly equipped and prepared, and to submit assessments as required in line with the UCO's Examination and In-Course Assessment Regulations (or Collaborative Partner equivalent).

7.52.2 Tutors may not approve extensions to deadlines for assessments. Only an authorised member of the Student Support Team (or Collaborative Partner equivalent) may approve extensions to deadlines for assessments.

7.53 SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

7.53.1 Students must provide StudentSupport@uco.ac.uk (or Collaborative Partner equivalent) with any relevant information regarding personal circumstances that may have affected their on-going performance or a specific assessment, which they wish to be considered. This information should be provided as soon as is reasonably possible, using the Special Circumstances Policy & Procedure[31] (or Collaborative Partner equivalent).

7.53.2 All claims for Special Circumstances should be considered in line with the approved process detailed in this policy.

7.54 STANDARDS OF ACADEMIC PRACTICE

7.54.1 A guide to good academic practice is included in the UCO's Academic Discipline Policy and Procedures[32] (or Collaborative Partner equivalent).

7.54.2 If a student is found to have cheated or has attempted to gain an unfair advantage in an assessment, academic disciplinary procedures will be implemented.

7.54.3 The Academic Conduct Panel (or Collaborative Partner equivalent) has the authority to deem the student to have failed part or all the assessment and may determine whether the student shall be allowed to be reassessed.

7.55 USE OF CHATGPT & OTHER OPEN AI WRITING TOOLS

7.55.1 UCO recognises that ChatGPT and other open AI writing tools can be valuable tools for learning. AI authorship tools such as these can assist students in their background reading and in coursework by answering specific questions, and can provide support in, for example, structuring essays and composing effective written communication. However, it is important to maintain academic standards and ensure that these tools do not replace students' own work.

---

[29] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy
[30] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy
[31] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy
[32] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy

7.55.2 The following guidance should therefore be followed by all UCO students and staff (or equivalent guidance issued by Collaborative Partners as applicable):

    a) ChatGPT is a tool and not a substitute for critical thinking and independent learning.

    b) Students may use ChatGPT (or other AI tool) to research questions or to find additional resources to help with their studies.

    c) Students may use ChatGPT (or other AI tool) as a self-directed learning tool to independently revise, clarify and consolidate concepts or ideas they encounter whilst studying, but are reminded to also make use of the usual support channels such as the UCO's Learning Hub (or Collaborative Partner equivalent), educational staff, course material and peers.

    d) Students should be aware that ChatGPT (or other AI tool) may not always provide accurate or complete answers and should use careful judgment when evaluating the responses as they would with all other sources.

    e) Students should use ChatGPT (or other AI tool) ethically and must avoid using it to gain credit for ideas that are not their own. If students do use the tool to assist in the construction of any written part of a written summative assessment the following statement must be included in the heading of the document: "This work has utilised ChatGPT (or name of alternate AI Writing tool if used) to support some writing and sentence structure/to assisted in elements of supportive research*. (*delete as appropriate). This will apply to any work submitted after 2nd May 2023.

7.55.3 Due to the availability of ChatGPT and other AI writing tools, course teams will audit up to 20% of work submitted as part of the moderation process and may invite students to meet and discuss their coursework submission so that they can demonstrate a suitable understanding of the arguments presented. This will be carried out in accordance with Category 2 Vivas detailed in the UCO's Guidance on the Conduct of Viva Voce and Oral Examinations (AQF-07-08). Work will be graded prior to these meetings. If it is evident that plagiarism may have occurred then this will be responded to in line with the UCO's Academic Misconduct Policy (or Collaborative Partner equivalent).

7.56 Accessing Feedback and Grades

7.56.1 Assessment feedback is normally provided electronically, in line with the UCO's Assessment Feedback Policy (or Collaborative Partner equivalent).

7.56.2 Provisional assessment grades are also made available to students electronically.

7.56.3 Students are responsible for collecting, accessing and engaging with any assessment feedback provided.

7.57 Submission of Work

7.57.1 Written assignments must be submitted by students in accordance with the procedures in the Examination & In-Course Assessment Regulations (or Collaborative Partner equivalent), and by the deadlines specified in assessment briefs.

7.57.2 Proof of submission will be provided and must be retained by the student as evidence that the work has been submitted.

7.57.3 Other forms of in-course assessments, such as oral presentations, must be acknowledged by written confirmation given to the student that the assessment task has been carried out.

7.57.4 When submitting work for assessment, students are expected to comply with all instructions issued in the assessment brief.

7.57.5 All text-based assignments are normally submitted through the Turnitin Similarity Detection Service (or Collaborative Partner equivalent).

7.57.6 Where the assessment brief specifies that both on-line and hard copy submission is required, then failure to submit either element counts as a failure and will receive a fail grade (Grade F or 0%).

7.57.7 Students are responsible for submitting the correct piece of work and version, and for any work submitted on their behalf and at their request by another.

7.57.8 Written work presented for assessment must be word processed (unless stated otherwise), legible and comprehensible.

7.57.9 Examiners may reject work which does not meet reasonable standards of presentation or proficiency in the English language (or the language of instruction confirmed at course approval), and this may result in a fail grade being awarded.

7.57.10 All written work must be presented in English, or the language of study confirmed at course approval.

7.58 ASSIGNMENT DEADLINES

7.58.1 The week in which assignments are due for submission is stated in the UIF.

7.58.2 The date and time by which submission is required is determined by the Unit Leader and will be included on the assessment brief.

7.58.3 Submission, whether by electronic or other means, is normally by 3pm (15.00) on the designated date (or Collaborative Partner equivalent).

7.59 ANONYMITY

7.59.1 All written examination scripts and assignment submissions must be anonymous, meaning students should only be identified by candidate number to markers.

7.59.2 Wherever feasible, in-course assessments should be submitted and graded anonymously. The following exemptions apply:

a) Assessments in which the identification of candidates is central to the process (e.g., practical assessments, presentations, vivas, the observation of professional practice, etc.).

b) Assessments in which the production of the work has been closely supervised by the assessor (e.g., projects, dissertations, some form of portfolio etc.).

c) Assessments for which anonymous grading would be in contravention of a code of practice of a professional accredited course.

d) Assessments which have a significant formative purpose (e.g., assessments early in the first stage) and which account for 20% or less of the grading for the unit.

e) Other circumstances which may be identified by Course Teams in accordance with the above principles.

7.59.3 Where students' assessments have been graded anonymously, the student's identity may be established as soon as internal grading and moderation is complete.

7.59.4 The staff who enter assessment grades and compile lists for Boards of Examiners should list students by name and not by number. Feedback to students may refer to students by name.

7.59.5 Exceptionally, in the student's interests, the "anonymity" rule may be waived and the circumstances relating to an individual candidate brought to examiners' attention by prior approval of the student and Registrar in liaison with the Student Support Team as appropriate (or Collaborative Partner equivalents) (for example students with disabilities).

7.60 WORK LOST AFTER SUBMISSION OR EXAMINATION

7.60.1 In the exceptional event of the grade for an assessment (recorded or receipted as completed) not being available due to unforeseen circumstances, students will be asked for a duplicate copy of the lost assessment where appropriate. If students are unable to provide a duplicate copy and there is clear evidence of a submission, then the Board of Examiners will derive an appropriate grade based on the overall performance by the student.

7.60.2 If work or grading sheets are lost by an examiner, the Unit Leader with the Course Leader and the External Examiner will review the situation and make a recommendation to the Chair of the Board of Examiners on students' performance. This may be based upon class performance or other sections of the assessment completed.

7.61 MARKING AND GRADING

a) COMMON ASSESSMENT GRADING SCHEME (CAGS)

7.61.1 The UCO uses a Common Assessment Grading Scheme (CAGS) (shown in Table 7.6) that is used to grade all taught courses leading to an award of the UCO. This ensures that a consistent and transparent approach to the way in which student assessment is marked and reported on across all taught courses is used. It also enables comparable levels of student achievement to be recognised (in line with the QAA's Quality Code for Higher Education regarding Assessment[33]).

7.61.2 The CAGS uses a 16-point grading scale which equates to an alphabetical grade providing a measure of achievement.

7.61.3 Students' work should be graded using the alphabetical grade; the corresponding 16-point grading scale numbers are used to calculate average unit grades from individual pieces of work.

TABLE 7.6: COMMON ASSESSMENT GRADING SCHEME (CAGS)

PASS GRADES		
Grade	Equivalent Point on the Sixteen Point Grading System	Signifies
A +	16	Excellent work. Fully achieves the Learning Outcomes in accordance with the Level Descriptors.
A	15	
A -	14	
B +	13	Generally good work but with some minor defects. Ably achieves the Learning Outcomes in accordance with the Level Descriptors.
B	12	
B -	11	
C +	10	Generally sound work, but with a small number of errors or omissions. Satisfactorily achieves the Learning Outcomes in accordance with the Level Descriptors.
C	9	
C -	8	
D +	7	Adequate work but with a number of significant errors or omissions. Marginally achieves the Learning Outcomes in accordance with the Level Descriptors.
D	6	
D -	5	

---

[33] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/assessment

FAIL GRADES		
Grade	**Equivalent Point on the Sixteen Point Grading System**	**Signifies**
E +	4	Unsatisfactory work with a significant number of serious errors and omissions. Marginally fails to achieve the Learning Outcomes according to the Level Descriptors.
E -	3	
F	2	Work of a very poor standard containing little of discernible merit. Clearly fails to achieve the Learning Outcomes according to the Level Descriptors.
F – N/S	0	No submission of course work.
G	0	Work contains cause for concern on issues of safety.

b) % GRADING SCHEME VARIANCE

7.61.4 The % Grading Scheme in Table 7.7 has been developed as a variance to the CAGS and shall normally be applied to taught degree courses where awards are classified (i.e. Bachelor's degrees) where a Collaborative Partner uses a % grading scheme, or where a % grading scheme is implemented to meet specific course or PSRB requirements.

7.61.5 The % Grading Scheme Variance aligns to the CAGS grade bands to provide a consistent, fair and transparent approach to grading for all course assessments that contribute to a UCO award irrespective of where the course may be delivered.

7.61.6   Implementation of the % Grading Scheme Variance must be agreed at course approval. In such cases a Schedule of Variance will be confirmed at course approval noting the modified grading scheme and will be communicated to relevant students through their Course Handbook and Course Information Form.

7.61.7 In some cases, a variance to the % Grading Scheme may be approved, for example where an established grading scheme implemented by a Collaborative Partner. In such cases, the variance will be confirmed at Partner or Course Approval, Review or Modification processes.

TABLE 7.7 % GRADING SCHEME VARIANCE

% Grading Scheme	
PASS MARKS	
Grade	**Mark Descriptor**
70% - 100%	Excellent work. Fully achieves the Learning Outcomes in accordance with the Level Descriptors.
60% - 69%	Generally good work but with some minor defects. Ably achieves the Learning Outcomes in accordance with the Level Descriptors.
50% - 59%	Generally sound work, but with a small number of errors or omissions. Satisfactorily achieves the Learning Outcomes in accordance with the Level Descriptors.
40% - 49%	Adequate work but with a number of significant errors or omissions. Marginally achieves the Learning Outcomes in accordance with the Level Descriptors.
FAIL MARKS	
35% - 39%	Unsatisfactory work with a significant number of serious errors and omissions. Marginally fails to achieve the Learning Outcomes according to the Level Descriptors. A mark that may be condoned by the Board of Examiners in line with Course Progression Criteria.

21% - 34%	Unsatisfactory work with a significant number of serious errors and omissions.
	Marginally fails to achieve the Learning Outcomes according to the Level Descriptors.
	A mark that may not be condoned by the Board of Examiners in line with Course Progression Criteria.
1% - 20%	Work of a very poor standard containing little of discernible merit. Clearly fails to achieve the Learning Outcomes according to the Level Descriptors.
0%	No submission of course work.
	Work contains cause for concern on issues of safety.

c) USING GRADING SCHEMES

7.61.8 Internal examiners should use the full range of grades available to them in the process of confirming the mark for a composite assessment task, in line with the relevant Grading Scheme (see Table 7.6 and Table 7.7).

7.61.9 Grades awarded by assessors are subject to review through moderation processes (see Sections 7.73, 7.74 and 7.80), External Examining (see AQF Section 11: External Examining) and are approval and ratified through the Boards of Examiners process (see AQF Section 12: Boards of Examiners).

7.62 AWARDING OF ACADEMIC CREDIT

7.62.1 Academic credit is a means of quantifying and recognising learning whenever and wherever it is achieved.

7.62.2 Students may gain academic credit for a UCO award by:

a) Being awarded a pass grade for a unit in which case the credit given is specific credit.

b) Being credited with a unit on the basis of the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) in which case the credit given may be specific credit for an individual in line with the UCO's RPL Policy (or Collaborative Partner equivalent).

7.63 THRESHOLD STANDARDS AND EXTERNAL BENCHMARKS

7.63.1 In establishing the threshold standards for awards, units, individual assessment tasks, and the way assessments are conducted, academic staff must make use of appropriate external reference points. These include:

a) The QAA's Quality Code for Higher Education[34]. This external reference point helps establish the standards of awards by providing expectations about the use of:

    i. Qualification Frameworks including the Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies (FHEQ)[35] which applies to degrees, diplomas, certificates, and other academic awards (other than honorary degrees and higher doctorates) granted by a higher education provider in the exercise of its degree awarding powers.

    ii. Characteristic Statements[36] that describe the distinctive features of qualifications at a particular level within the Qualifications Frameworks.

    iii. Credit Frameworks[37] as a means of quantifying and recognising learning whenever and wherever it is achieved.

---

[34] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code
[35] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/qualifications-frameworks
[36] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/characteristics-statements
[37] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/higher-education-credit-framework-for-england

iv. Subject Benchmark Statements[38] that help to establish the standards set by different subjects at undergraduate level, and in some areas at Master's level, by providing expectations about the subject and qualification level of programmes of study.

v. The Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) which is mapped to the UK Quality Code by the QAA for courses that may be delivered in Europe[39].

b) Credit level descriptors produced by SEEC, which help establish the academic level in a range of settings[40].

c) Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) standards or proficiencies, e.g., the Osteopathic Practice Standards[41] produced by the GOsC, which play a central role in the requirements for osteopathic training.

d) Relevant international benchmarks for provision delivered as transnational education.

7.63.2 Each course that leads to a UCO award is required to be mapped to the above external benchmarks as a minimum as appropriate to the course under consideration.

7.64 CONSTRUCTIVE ALIGNMENT

7.64.1 The constructive alignment of learning outcomes, teaching, and assessment must be evident in the design of all courses and units and in the associated assessment tasks.

7.64.2 Assessment tasks are designed to test the attainment of stated learning outcomes at the appropriate level of learning; teaching activities and the learning opportunities provided should be designed to help and support this process.

7.65 WORK MEETING THE THRESHOLD STANDARD (PASS GRADES)

7.65.1 The established pass grade of all summative assessments leading to an award of the UCO is a Grade D- (or approved % equivalent).

7.65.2 The established unit pass grade is also a Grade D- (or approved % equivalent).

7.65.3 The unit pass grade is calculated by aggregating the grades awarded for each summative assessment in line with their respective unit weightings.

7.65.4 The amount of academic credit ascribed to the unit may only be awarded if the overall unit grade is equal to or exceeds the unit pass grade.

7.66 WORK NOT MEETING THE THRESHOLD STANDARD (FAIL GRADES)

a) CONDONEMENT

7.66.1 If a summative assessment does not meet the threshold standard (i.e., the established pass mark), assessors will be asked to make an academic judgement as to whether it can be condoned by good performance and demonstration of the relevant learning outcome(s) elsewhere in the unit. If assessors judge that it is condonable this is reported to the Board of

---

[38] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements
[39] A Map of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area to the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (qaa.ac.uk)
[40] http://www.seec.org.uk/resources/
[41] https://standards.osteopathy.org.uk/

Examiners. The Board of Examiners may then award a Condoned Pass for that assessment in line with the approved Progression Criteria for that course.

7.66.2 Normally Grades of E+ (or approved % equivalents) only are considered to be in the condonable range provided the Unit has been passed with a Grade D- (or approved % equivalent) overall.

7.66.3 No more than one assessment may be condoned in any one year. Any variance to this regulation must be approved through the established Course Approval, Review and Modification processes.

7.66.4 Some units or assessment elements may not be eligible for condonement due to professionally relevant or practical elements. These units and assessment elements shall be identified as Progression Criteria contained within Course Handbooks and / or Course Information Forms or in a policy as appropriate.

b) LATE SUBMISSIONS

7.66.5 Students may submit assessments up to a week after the deadline date. These will be identified as a late submission.

7.66.6 Where an assessment is submitted up to a week after the deadline date, it will be marked. Grades for late submissions will be capped at the pass grade of a Grade D- (or approved % equivalent), however the student will also receive notification of the grade achieved had the assessment not been submitted late.

c) NON-SUBMISSIONS

7.66.7 Assessments submitted over a week late or are not submitted (and the student has no approved Special Circumstances) are identified as a non-submission. The student will be deemed to have failed that element of assessment and will receive a fail grade of a Grade F (or 0%). Non-submissions are considered as first attempts and students will normally only be provided with one further resit attempt. All resit attempts are capped at the pass grade of a Grade D- (or approved % equivalent).

d) FAIL GRADES

7.66.8 If a student has failed to meet the threshold standard (and has receives a Fail Grade, they will normally be offered one resit attempt within the agreed resit period.

7.66.9 Internal examiners should use the full range of grades available to them in the process of confirming the mark for a composite assessment task, in line with the relevant Grading Scheme (see Table 7.6 and Table 7.7).

e) SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

7.66.10 If a student is experiencing circumstances that they believe are / will have an adverse impact on their performance, they should submit Special Circumstances prior to the assessment deadline / examination date in line with the Special Circumstances Policy & Procedure (or Collaborative Partner equivalent). The Special Circumstances can then be taken into consideration by the Board of Examiners to inform their decision-making.

7.66.11 Special Circumstances applications received after the assessment deadline / date will not normally be considered, although exceptional circumstances for a delay in submitting an application can be considered. After this time, students will need to appeal their grade using the Academic Appeals Policy.

7.67 GRADING ON A PASS/FAIL BASIS

7.67.1 Grading on a pass/fail basis is not permitted except for zero weighted assessments. All other assessments leading to the award of academic credit must be graded in line with the approved Grading Scheme.

7.68 ASSESSMENTS EXCEEDING THE STIPULATED WORD LENGTH AND FORMAT OF ASSIGNMENTS

7.68.1 If written assessments exceed the stipulated number of words by a margin of more than 10%, normally the first part of the text up to the assignment limit only should be graded.

7.69 ASSESSMENTS SUBMITTED IN THE INCORRECT FORMAT

7.69.1 If assessments are not submitted in the specific format required, the work may be downgraded, or the Board of Examiners may resolve that it should not be graded.

7.70 VIVA VOCE EXAMINATIONS

7.70.1 Examiners may exceptionally choose to examine any student using a viva voce examination in addition to the assessment/s specified on the UIF.

7.70.2 This form of assessment should be applied only sparingly, but may properly be used:

a) As part of the validated assessment for a unit; typically, vivas are used for extended pieces of work such as dissertations or projects, and it is important that the assessment process is open to the same security as other forms of assessment, including provision for the External Examiner to review the outcomes.

b) Where a recognised disability means that a viva is an appropriate and approved form of assessment replacing the normal assessment task.

c) Where, whatever the initial assessment task, there are concerns about the authenticity of the student's work; in these circumstances vivas must not be used to grade work.

7.70.3 The UCO does not viva students in borderline distinction classifications.

7.70.4 Students must attend viva voce examinations as required. Students should normally be given at least five working days written notice of a potential viva. Where students do not attend, tutors will make judgements on the basis of the information available to them, and students will have no right to request another viva opportunity.

7.70.5 Further information is provided in the [Guidance on the Conduct of Viva Examinations](#) (AQF07-08).

7.71 CLASSIFICATION OF AWARDS

a) MASTER OF OSTEOPATHY & MSC OSTEOPATHY (PRE-REGISTRATION)

7.71.1 The UCO awards distinction for its M.Ost award according to the following calculation:

i. For for those units studied at FHEQ Level 6 and Level 7, students' overall unit grades are allocated scores as follows:

A = 6
B = 5
C = 4
D = 0

ii. Students will typically study level 6 and 7 units in the final two years of the full-time M.Ost course and years 3-5 of the part-time course. All units of the MSc are at level 7 and count towards the calculation. The Course Information Form will specify the FHEQ level of each unit. Any units that are credited through Recognition of Prior Learning will not contribute to the calculation.

iii. These scores are totalled and an average score is calculated in relations to the total number of level 6 and level 7 units taken.

iv. Students who achieve an average score of 5 or more across all level 6 and 7 units taken are eligible to be awarded an M.Ost or MSc with Distinction.

7.71.2 Boards of Examiners do not have the discretion to round the average score or to award an M.Ost with Distinction where the average score is below 5.

b) BSc (Hons) in Osteopathic Studies (Full-time) Exit Award

7.71.3 Students who satisfy the requirements for a BSc (Hons) in Osteopathy (Full-Time) as an exit award may be awarded one of the following levels of classification:

- First
- Upper Second
- Lower Second
- Third

7.71.4 A formula, based on overall unit grades at FHEQ Level 5 and FHEQ Level 6, shall be used to calculate the level of classification. Any Level 7 credits are counted as Level 6 for the purpose of classification calculation.

7.71.5 Points are allotted for the unit total grade for each unit completed at Level 5 and Level 6 as follows:

- A = 4 points
- B = 3 points
- C = 2 points
- D = 1 point

7.71.6 Students are required to successfully complete all units at Level 5 and Level 6.

7.71.7 Any units that have been credited through Recognition of Prior Learning will not contribute to the calculation.

7.71.8 There are five units at Level 5 and five units at Level 6. Each overall unit grade is given a value that is weighted in relation to the number of credits the unit carries. Level 6 units are also counted at twice the value of Level 5. The total score for each student is calculated as follows:

Number of Points of Level 5 Units (Level 5 Credit Value x Grade Point Equivalent)

+

Number of Points of Level 6 Units (Level 6 Credit Value x (Grade Point Equivalent x2))

= Total Number of Points Awarded

7.71.9 The range of scores for which a classification may be awarded is between 1440 and 360. Classifications are awarded within 4 bands within this range:

- First: 1171-1440
- Upper Second: 901-1170
- Lower Second: 631-900
- Third: 360-630

c) BSc (Hons) in Osteopathic Studies (Part-time) Exit Award

7.71.10 Students who satisfy the requirements for a BSc (Hons) in Osteopathy (Part-Time) as an exit award may be awarded one of the following levels of classification:

- First

- Upper Second

- Lower Second

- Third

7.71.11 A formula, based on overall unit grades at FHEQ Level 5 and FHEQ Level 6, shall be used to calculate the level of classification. Any Level 7 credits are counted as Level 6 for the purpose of classification calculation.

7.71.12 Points are allotted for the unit total grade for each unit completed at Level 5 and Level 6 as follows:

- A = 4 points

- B = 3 points

- C = 2 points

- D= 1 point

7.71.13 Students are required to successfully complete all units at Level 5 and Level 6.

7.71.14 Any units that have been credited through Recognition of Prior Learning will not contribute to the calculation.

7.71.15 There are seven units at Level 5 and six units at Level 6. Each overall unit grade is given a value that is weighted in relation to the number of credits the unit carries. Level 6 units are also counted at twice the value of level 5. The total score for each student is calculated as follows:

Number of Points of Level 5 Units (Level 5 Credit Value x Grade Point Equivalent)

+

Number of Points of Level 6 Units (Level 6 Credit Value x (Grade Point Equivalent x2))

= Total Number of Points Awarded

7.71.16 The range of scores for which a classification may be awarded is between 1440 and 360. Classifications are awarded within 4 bands within this range:

- First: 1171-1440

- Upper Second: 901-1170

- Lower Second: 631-900

- Third: 360-630

7.71.17 If a student successfully completes the Research and Enquiry credits at level 7 in year 4, for the purpose of this calculation, these credits may be considered equivalent to level 6 credits if the student fails to achieve 20 credits at level 6 in either The Functioning Human or Patient Care. If their grade for Research and Enquiry in year 4, Level 7 is higher than either of Functioning Human or Patient Care in year 4, level 6 it will contribute to their honours classification calculation and will replace the lower grade in either of the other two 20 credit units in year 4.

d) % Grading Scale BSc / BA Classification Calculation

7.71.18 For BSc or BA Courses that use the % Grading Scheme described in Table 7.7 the following calculation is used to determine the classification of the award.

7.71.19 Students who satisfy the requirements may be awarded one of the following levels of classification:

• First (70% - 100%)

• Upper Second (60% - 69%)

• Lower Second (50% - 59%)

• Third (40% - 49%)

7.71.20 A formula, based on overall unit grades at FHEQ Level 5 and FHEQ Level 6, shall be used to calculate the level of classification.

7.71.21 Students are required to successfully complete all units at Level 5 and Level 6.

7.71.22 Any units that have been credited through Recognition of Prior Learning will not contribute to the calculation.

7.71.23 Each overall unit percentage is given a value that is weighted in relation to the number of credits the unit carries. Level 6 units are also counted at twice the value of Level 5. The total score for each student is calculated as follows:

Total Number of Points of Level 5 Units (Level 5 Credit Value x Overall Unit Mark (%))

+

Total Number of Points of Level 6 Units (Level 6 Credit Value x Overall Unit Mark (%) x2))

= Total Number of Points Awarded

7.71.24 The maximum number of points available is 36000. This theoretical maximum is calculated on each unit mark being 100% and then multiplied by the credit value.

7.71.25 The range of scores for which a classification may be awarded therefore is between 36000 and 14400. Classifications are awarded within 4 bands within this range:

• First (70% +): 25200 - 36000

• Upper Second (60% - 69%): 21600 - 25199

• Lower Second (50% - 59%): 18000 - 21599

• Third (40% - 49%): 14400 – 17999

7.71.26 The overall percentage achieved by an individual student can be calculated as follows:

Total Number of Points Awarded / 36000 x 100

7.71.27 Where the number of level 5 and 6 units may change the threshold calculations will be adjusted pro-rata basis.

e) POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA AWARDS

7.71.28 Students who satisfy the requirements for a Postgraduate Diploma as an exit award may be awarded a Postgraduate Diploma with Distinction in line with the MSc Osteopathy (Pre-Registration) award calculation above.

7.72 FACTORS AFFECTING ASSESSMENT AND BOARDS OF EXAMINERS

7.72.1 This section provides information specifically on marking and other factors affecting assessment and its relationship to the Board of Examiners. Full details about the function of Boards of Examiners are provided in AQF Section 12: Boards of Examiners.

7.72.2 Where a member of the academic staff believes that one or more students have been impacted by UCO (or Collaborative Partner) action, or by circumstances other than personal circumstances processed through Special Circumstances procedures (an example being unexpected disturbance of an examination, or an assessment profile that does not appear to have operated effectively etc.), this must be raised in advance of the Board of Examiners with the relevant Course Leader, thus allowing them to consider any actions that might be recommended to the Board of Examiners.

7.72.3 Such factors affecting assessment must be considered by the relevant Course Team and Pre-Board of Examiners.

7.72.4 Similarly, where the performance profile of a unit is at variance with the general performance of the cohort or reflects a continuing problem in the operation of the unit such that the grades may reasonably be held not to reflect satisfactory assessment of a unit, this should be identified by the relevant Course Leader to the relevant Course Team for consideration in advance of the Board of Examiners.

7.72.5 In all of the above cases:

a) The relevant Course Team and Pre-Board of Examiners must have considered the issues in advance of the Board of Examiners.

b) Course Teams must consider the circumstances and their impact to determine whether there was material impact on a students' performance (e.g., in respect of their performance in other similar assessments and units).

c) External Examiners must be part of the process of consideration of any alteration to be made to the expected outcome (e.g., an additional attempt allowed).

d) The decision and the reasons must be minuted in detail to ensure that the basis for any changes made is clear.

7.72.6 Students have the right to appeal against decisions made by the Board of Examiners through the relevant Academic Appeals process and the criteria for any academic appeal against a Board of Examiner's decision are detailed therein.

7.73 SANCTIONED STUDENTS

7.73.1 Students who are not in good financial standing or who are under investigation for academic misconduct but submit work for assessment will have their work assessed alongside that of other students for consistency but may not have their grades processed by the Board of Examiners.

7.74 PROVIDING FEEDBACK AFTER ASSESSMENT

7.74.1 The provision of timely and high-quality assessment feedback to students following assessment is considered to be of particular importance. It contributes to students' learning and enables

them to identify areas in which they have performed well and areas in which they need to improve.

7.74.2 The UCO has an institutional policy regarding the provision of feedback to students (see Assessment Feedback Policy), offers staff guidance on providing effective feedback to students and provides students with guidance on how to use the feedback they receive to effectively improve their performance.

7.74.3 Course tutors should emphasise to students the importance of using feedback to improve their performance.

7.75 ASSESSMENT FEEDBACK POLICY

a) FEEDBACK ON ASSIGNMENTS

7.75.1 Work which is assessed during the course or unit, including project work and written assignments, must be returned as quickly as possible if it is to have a formative value for students (normally within six weeks of the submission date).

7.75.2 Exceptionally, where this is not achievable (for example due to staff absence), students must be notified as soon as is reasonably possible of the revised date and the reason behind the change.

7.75.3 All in-unit summative assignments must provide post-marking feedback via the approved UCO process as a minimum unless otherwise agreed as part of the approval of the unit concerned.

7.75.4 Students may have other opportunities to receive formative feedback, for example through in-class activities, practical classes and clinic. Where this is an additional part of the curriculum, Unit Leaders are free to amend such processes without further UCO approval, provided that all students within the cohort are treated equitably.

b) FEEDBACK ON EXAMINATIONS

7.75.5 Students may be provided with generic or specific feedback on their individual performance in final assessments (including examinations) on request.

7.75.6 The Unit Leader or the tutor responsible for that assessment will, by appointment, review the paper with a student. Students will not be given their examination scripts to take away.

7.75.7 In addition, students normally receive generic examination feedback that considers their performance as a cohort.

7.76 ACCESS TO MATERIAL AFTER ASSESSMENT

a) ACCESS TO MARKED ASSIGNMENTS & EXAMINATION SCRIPTS

7.76.1 Students studying at the UCO are able to access marked assignments via the UCO's Virtual Learning Environment throughout their studies. Where an assignment is produced in hard copy, the marked assignment is normally returned to the student, who should keep this copy safe until the end of their studies.

7.76.2 Students studying at the UCO are able to access a marked examination script by requesting an appointment to review their script with a tutor. The tutor will be provided with access to the script by Academic Registry staff and will return it following their meeting with the student. The student will not be permitted to take their examination script away.

7.76.3 Students studying at a Collaborative Partner may access marked assignments and examination scripts through the approved processes in place at the Collaborative Partner.

b) Access to Past & Specimen Examination Papers

7.76.4 The Academic Registry (or Collaborative Partner equivalent) releases past examination papers to students two years after the original assessment was taken.

7.76.5 The Academic Registry (or Collaborative Partner equivalent) is also responsible for publishing past examination papers and associated marking criteria on the Virtual Learning Environment for reference by students; exceptions may be determined at the request of the Unit Leader with the approval of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) (or Collaborative Partner equivalent).

7.76.6 Papers not normally released are multiple choice papers, computer-based examination papers, and those based on case studies which may be in part individual to particular students.

7.76.7 Specimen papers, however, for all types of assessment may be made available to students.

7.77 Administration of Assessments

7.77.1 The UCO and Collaborative Partners have in place a range of assessment processes to ensure that standards are set at an appropriate level and are consistently applied. These involve assignment setting, moderation, external examining, and collective decision making at Boards of Examiners.

a) Drafting Examination Papers & Assignments

7.77.2 Course Teams are responsible for drafting and producing examination papers and assignments for assessment in line with the Assessment Scrutiny Process (or approved Collaborative Partner equivalent) set out in Section 7.37.

7.77.3 Cover sheets are required be prepared for every examination paper in accordance with the Exam Paper Template (AQF-07-03). The cover sheet should provide details of the title, the duration of the examination, any special conditions that may apply, any materials that should be supplied to candidates, and direction to candidates about the choice of questions.

7.77.4 The Academic Registry (or Collaborative Partner equivalent) is responsible for inserting the date and start time of the examination onto the cover sheet in line with the Assessment Schedule for the course of study.

7.77.5 Unit Leaders are responsible for the distribution of examination papers to External Examiners for comment, and will liaise with External Examiners and Course Leaders to ensure that standards are achieved, and that there are appropriate audit trails regarding the drafting and production of examination papers and assignment questions for Quality Assurance purposes.

b) Assessment Moderation Processes

7.77.6 In seeking to achieve equity, validity, and reliability in the assessment of student work, a range of moderation processes are employed at the UCO and at Collaborative Partners.

7.77.7 Course Leaders are responsible for agreeing at Course Team level the appropriate moderation process for each assessment. This may involve the moderation of an initial sample prior to full grading, or moderation after the initial assessment of all the work by the principal marker. Alternatively, Course Leaders may identify designated "moderation days" when all markers are present to engage in the moderation process.

c) Moderation of Practical & Oral Assessments

7.77.8 In the case of practical assessments, such as Objective Structured Practical Examinations (OSPEs), or oral assessments where there is a team of assessors involved a moderator should normally be present at and oversees the assessment, to ensure that all examiners are assessing at the appropriate level and in a similar style.

7.77.9 Practical and oral assessments may also be video recorded and likewise reviewed by the moderator and marking team to ensure consistency of assessing and marking.

d) MODERATION OF WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS & EXAMINATION PAPERS

7.77.10 In the case of written assignments and examinations, the Registrar (or Collaborative Partner equivalent) ensures that all are marked in line with the UCO's Double and Second Marking Policy (or approved Collaborative Partner equivalent).

7.77.11 The Course Team should ensure that clear records of double and second marking are marking for audit purposes and made available to the Registry to provide to External Examiners on request.

e) EXTERNAL EXAMINING

7.77.12 External Examiners are given the opportunity to moderate draft examination papers and assessment briefs where the work contributes to an award.

7.77.13 Where computer-based examination are used, guidance on the moderation of such papers should also be given to External Examiners.

7.77.14 It is the responsibility of External Examiners and Course Teams to agree the extent to which draft assessments are considered. Such moderation is not normally applied to draft examinations and assessment details at FHEQ Level 4, however the UCO considers it good practice to provide all assessments at all FHEQ levels to External Examiners for review.

7.77.15 External Examiners are also provided with samples of marked work to review and moderate in line with AQF Section 11: External Examining.

f) BOARDS OF EXAMINERS

7.77.16 Boards of Examiners (or Collaborative Partner equivalents) consider all grades awarded and make the collective decision on final judgements and decisions on academic credit and qualifications that lead to a UCO award.

7.77.17 Boards of Examiners also consider unit level assessment statistics and will consider and make informed decisions about anomalous grade ranges.

7.78 DOUBLE & SECOND MARKING POLICY

a) DOUBLE & SECOND MARKING PROCESSES

7.78.1 Double and second marking are moderation processes put in place to help ensure fairness and objectivity in the assessment process.

7.78.2 In "double marking" a second assessor reviews a representative sample of students' scripts unaware of the grade or comments awarded by the principal marker.

7.78.3 In "second marking" a second assessor reviews a representative sample of students' scripts with full knowledge of the grade and comments made by the first marker. This process is normally used at FHEQ Levels 4 and 5 where its purpose is to help ensure fairness and objectivity.

7.78.4 Second marking is also used to assist assessors less familiar with assessment at HE level and/or the UCO's standards. In this case the second marker will be an experienced member of staff and should provide feedback to the principal marker on both the level and the nature of the feedback provided.

7.78.5 The double and second marking processes employed in relation to the range of the UCO's provision are shown in [Table 7. 9](#) below.

7.78.6 Collaborative Partners may implement a variance to the UCO's double and second marking processes which are approved at Partner Approval, Review or through the UCO's Modification processes.

TABLE 7.9: DOUBLE & SECOND MARKING PROCESSES

Context	Process
FHEQ Levels 4 and 5	Sample second marking: 20% of the cohort, all A's (or % equivalent) and fail grades.
FHEQ Levels 6 and 7 (with the exception of projects and dissertations)	Sample second marking: 20% of the cohort (a minimum of 2 from each pass grade band), all A's (or % equivalent) and fail grades; if concerns or questions regarding marking/performance arises a broader sample should be reviewed.
FHEQ Levels 6 and 7 Projects and Dissertations	Complete double marking.
G Grade (safety issues)	Complete double marking. In the cases of practical assessments, review by the Course Leader of all of the markers' comments and rationale for the award of the G Grade.

b) DOUBLE & SECOND MARKING SAMPLE SIZE AND SELECTION

7.78.7 The sample size for double and second marking should typically represent 20% of the cohort with a minimum of eight and a maximum of 35.

7.78.8 Sampling should pay particular attention to students awarded grades A, E, and F (or their % equivalents).

7.78.9 Where scripts for an assignment are divided between several principal markers the sample must include scripts marked by each principal marker.

c) DOUBLE MARKING OF ORAL PRESENTATIONS

7.78.10 Although presentations should be moderated in the same way as other assessments (that is by an appropriate sample), it is regarded as good practice for two members of lecturing staff to be present during the assessment of oral presentations.

7.78.11 Double marking or second marking must take place on a sample basis.

7.78.12 Where operational considerations make the attendance of two members of staff impractical, some other means of recording and reviewing the event (such as video) must be utilised.

7.78.13 Sample presentations at FHEQ Levels 5, 6 and 7 must be available for scrutiny by External Examiners.

g) DOUBLE MARKING OF COMPUTER BASED ASSESSMENTS

7.78.14 Computer marked work is not double marked, but the system of checking results must be secure enough to obviate the necessity for additional scrutiny.

7.79 ASSESSMENT SAMPLES SENT TO EXTERNAL EXAMINERS

7.79.1 External Examiners receive samples of examination scripts and other assessed work in good time before Boards of Examiners meetings for moderation.

7.79.2 The minimum basis for sampling is outlined above (see Double & Second Marking Sample Size and Selection) but may be extended through agreement with External Examiners in advance.

7.79.3 Boards of Examiners should only be held after External Examiners have had the opportunity to scrutinise and moderate scripts for any or all the assessments in a unit, especially the end of unit assessments.

7.79.4 A clear schedule must be set and maintained for the dispatch and return of work for scrutiny. If the schedule is not adhered to, the Board of Examiners should be provided with a report for the internal and external examiners regarding the reasons for the deviation from the schedule.

7.80 EXTERNAL ASSESSORS

7.80.1 External Assessors may be appointed in line with the External Assessors' Policy[42] (or approved Collaborative Partner equivalent).

7.80.2 Where external assessors are involved in the assessment of students, Unit Leaders are responsible for ensuring that the grading of the external assessor is included in the moderation process, and that appropriate additional steps are taken depending on their experience of the UCO and its standards.

7.81 AGREEING GRADES

7.81.1 Further to the established Assessment Moderation Processes set out above, first and second markers should seek to reach a consensus about the grade to be awarded for an assessment. In reaching agreement, markers should consider a range of factors such as level of experience, detailed subject knowledge, and differing levels of scrutiny by first and second markers.

7.81.2 Where consensus is not possible, and where the first assessor is an inexperienced member of staff, then for 'second marking' the entire set of scripts should be reviewed, and the grades awarded by the second marker applied after moderation by another experienced member of staff.

7.81.3 Where consensus is not possible, and where the first assessor is an experienced member of staff, then for 'second marking' and all 'double marking':

    i.   Where there is close agreement (typically within a grade band, i.e., two grade points difference or less) between the first and second markers, the grade awarded will be the average of the two grades.

    ii.   In the event of a serious disagreement on a piece of work between markers after discussion (typically more than a grade band, i.e., three grade point difference or more) a third marker may be assigned internally.

    iii.   Exceptionally, if agreement proves impossible the work may be submitted to the External Examiner for final adjudication.

7.81.4 Where scripts are double or second marked both grades should be recorded but only the final agreed grade should be notified to the student.

---

[42] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy

7.82 Rounding Up and Rounding Down

7.82.1 The UCO does not round up or down the grades for individual assessment points as recorded on its database. However, where multiple assessments contribute to one reporting point (e.g. multiple practical assessments contributing to one coursework mark) then the average grade for the assessments is determined to provide the final overall grade to be recorded on the UCO's database.

7.83 Annotation of Examination Scripts

7.83.1 Students should receive clear and consistent feedback in line with the UCO's [Assessment Feedback Policy](#) (or approved Collaborative Partner equivalent).

7.83.2 There is no requirement to show on students' work that second or double marking has taken place. However, a clear record of the nature and extent of second and double marking should be kept by the Registrar (or Collaborative Partner equivalent) and provided to the External Examiner.

7.83.3 Principal markers must mark all examination scripts, adding an indication where necessary of the reason(s) for the chosen grade.

7.84 Moderation of Late Submissions

7.84.1 Late submissions (i.e., after the moderation of the standard submission set), including any late submissions accepted based on Special Circumstances or academic appeal, must be subjected to moderation, regardless of whether the moderation process has been completed in full within the standard submission set.

7.85 Internal Monitoring of Assessment Processes

7.85.1 Great emphasis is placed on reviewing and improving assessment and examination processes to maintain academic standards and quality of UCO awards.

7.85.2 The administrative processes associated with assessment are under constant internal scrutiny; grade entry and Boards of Examiners' processing are subject to a number of mechanisms to ensure that data is accurate and that outcomes are monitored continuously.

7.85.3 In addition, assessment moderation and external examining processes are constantly reviewed, to ensure that standards are of the highest quality.

7.85.4 The Academic Registry (or Collaborative Partner equivalent) confirms assessment submission by students through a series of reports and logging methods, ensuring that records are auditable.

7.85.5 Unit information regarding assessment deadline dates and submission type is collated each academic year and is audited for accuracy by its comparison to Unit Information Forms.

7.85.6 Registers of attendance to examinations are maintained throughout examination periods. Non-attendance at examinations is monitored and reported to relevant Course Teams and the Engagement & Monitoring Group (EMG) (or Collaborative Partner equivalent).

7.85.7 Registers also enable the accuracy of unit registration to be monitored, and any inaccuracies to be noted to the Academic Registry (or Collaborative Partner equivalent).

7.86 THE CONDUCT OF EXAMINATIONS

7.86.1 For students studying at the UCO, the Academic Council has approved Rules for the Conduct of Prescribed Assessments and Written Examinations for Degrees or Diplomas[43], which state that:

    i. The Academic Registry will centrally co-ordinate formal invigilated examinations as noted in the UCO's academic cycle. These may be a mix of main examination and referral examination sessions.

    ii. The Academic Registry will communicate with internal staff and students as the main source of information regarding examination timings, locations, timetables, guidance, instructions for candidates, and a variety of other necessary information.

    iii. The UCO will deliver examinations in several locations, details of which are made available to students; it is the student's responsibility to ensure that they are in attendance at the specified location in a timely manner.

    iv. The timetable for each period of examination will be prepared as soon as practically possible after students are successfully registered for their units or for referral assessments, and as soon as Boards of Examiners have completed their deliberations. Normally the Academic Registry will aim to deliver exam timetables six weeks after the start of the course. However, these may be subject to change, and timetables should be checked regularly on the Virtual Learning Environment, where the most up to date copies are held.

7.86.2 If it is necessary to deliver examinations in consecutive sittings, for example OSPE's, the Academic Registry will notify candidates of their individual time, date and venue for the examination.

7.86.3 Changeovers between consecutive examination sessions will be controlled to ensure that student groups are kept separate.

7.86.4 In the case of some practical assessments where students complete their assessment before the last session of assessment has started, students will be allocated to a 'holding room' to ensure that they do not meet students yet to take their assessments. Once the last examination session has started, students will be permitted to leave the 'holding room'.

7.86.5 Mobile phones or other electronic devices that can connect to the Internet are not allowed into examination rooms or 'holding rooms'.

7.86.6 For students studying at Collaborative Partners equivalent rules for the conduct of assessments and examinations are approved at Partner Approval.

7.87 EXAMINATION RESULTS

a) RECORDING AND NOTIFICATION OF RESULTS

7.87.1 The Registrar (or Collaborative Partner equivalent) is responsible for ensuring that robust and reliable systems are in place for the collation, computation, checking, and recording of assessment grades and decisions, and for providing relevant information in time for the final meetings of Boards of Examiners.

7.87.2 Assessors should indicate instances where students have not submitted an assignment, or have not attended an examination, on the relevant candidate list. The Registrar (or Collaborative Partner equivalent) will then cross-check that this correlates to submissions received by the

---

[43] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy

Academic Registry (or Collaborative Partner equivalent) and examination registers, to ensure that all scripts / assignments have been provided to the assessor.

7.87.3 Assessment grades are normally collated within the UCO's VLE for written submissions and on paper or electronically for practical / oral assessments. Unit Leaders (or Collaborative Partner equivalents) are responsible for ensuring that agreed grades are accurately recorded in all instances and are provided to the Academic Registry in good time.

7.87.4 Assessment data is centrally stored electronically within the UCO's Student Database, and on secure systems where access is limited to Academic Registry staff. Collaborative Partners are responsible for storing assessment data securely on their own systems as approved at Partner Approval.

7.87.5 The UCO's Academic Registry are responsible for collating and inputting all grades into the UCO's student database, including those received from Collaborative Partner students, following their ratification by the relevant Board of Examiners.

7.87.6 The UCO's IT Department runs regular back-ups of data to ensure that records are saved securely. Collaborative Partners are responsible for ensuring that data is backed up regularly and stored securely as approved at Partner Approval.

7.87.7 Staff involved in the marking, recording, and collating of assessments should regard electronic and hard copies of assessment results and decisions as confidential documents and should store and dispose of them appropriately.

7.87.8 Provisional assessment grades for should be agreed by the relevant Course Team prior to their publication to students, and, if there are disparities with the results, these should be discussed immediately and action points decided.

7.87.9 During the Board of Examiners meeting, progression and conferment lists should be annotated and signed by External Examiners and the Chair of the Board of Examiners convened.

7.87.10 Students are then notified of their ratified results by the Academic Registry (or Collaborative Partner equivalent), and consideration is given to the implications for student progression / graduation as appropriate.

7.87.11 Access to assessment results and information regarding assessment judgements about individual students is restricted to Academic Registry staff (or Collaborative Partner equivalent) and may be viewed by course teaching and support staff by request only.

7.87.12 Results are recorded using the following conventions:

    i. A grade per assessment is indicated using the relevant Common Assessment Grading Scheme (see Table 7.6 & 7.7).

    ii. An overall grade for each unit is indicated which has been calculated using the appropriate weightings of each assessment of that unit.

    iii. Non-submission of coursework, or non-attendance at a written or practical assessment or presentation, is awarded an F - N/S Grade (or % equivalent).

    iv. Any candidates who have experienced Special Circumstances affecting their continuous or exam performance have this information brought to the attention of the Board of Examiners, as indicated on the results spreadsheet. Particulars of Special Circumstances (following agreement with the student in question) are considered by Pre-Boards of Examiners, who make any relevant recommendations to the Board of Examiners itself without compromising the confidentiality of the circumstances themselves.

7.87.13 Course results are processed as quickly as possible following confirmation by the Board of Examiners.

7.87.14 Students are normally informed in advance of the date of the release of results through their Assessment Schedule.

7.87.15 Results of assessments taken during the academic year are normally released to students' personal UCO email inbox by the Academic Registry (or Collaborative Partner equivalent).

7.87.16 End of year progression results will normally be emailed at 13.00 on the date published on the Assessment Schedule. Information about who students can contact should they require clarification of their results or advice about their results will be included. Students will normally be notified through UCO email (or Collaborative Partner equivalent) when results will be sent.

7.87.17 No results should be divulged to candidates until after the results, duly confirmed by the Board of Examiners and signed by External Examiner(s) and Chair of the Board of Examiners, have been submitted to, and published by, the Academic Registry (or Collaborative Partner equivalent). This regulation may be varied if it is deemed in the best interest of a student to notify them of their examination results early, e.g., due to exceptional circumstances or ill health. The decision to release examination results to students early must be made in consultation with and approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) (or Collaborative Partner equivalent). A file note shall be produced and retained in the student's file to record that their results were released to them early.

7.87.18 Results should only be given to students in person or by phone if steps have been taken to confirm the student's identity: they should NOT be disclosed to third parties (including parents) without a student's explicit consent. In view of the above, it is recommended that staff do not release any marks or results to candidates, but instead refer students to their UCO (or Collaborative Partner equivalent) email accounts.

b) AMENDED RESULTS

7.87.19 Where examiners, including External Examiner(s), agree that a candidate's marks and / or course result should be amended as a consequence of an academic appeal being upheld, the Academic Registry (or Collaborative Partner equivalent) will inform the student of the examiners' decision in writing, on receipt of confirmation of the amended mark or result.

7.88 DISPOSAL AND RETENTION OF WORK THAT CONTRIBUTES TO A DEGREE ASSESSMENT

a) RETENTION OF EXAMINATION SCRIPTS

7.88.1 Examination scripts which contribute to a final award are to be retained for a period of 5 years after the course end date of each cohort of students.

b) RETENTION OF COURSEWORK

7.88.2 Submitted coursework is the physical property of the UCO.

7.88.3 Students retain the copyright and intellectual property of the coursework submitted for any form of assessment.

7.88.4 In accordance with UCO regulations, coursework may be returned to students (see Providing Feedback after Assessment).

7.88.5 If coursework contributes to the final award, it should be retained for a period of 5 years after the course end date of each cohort of students.

7.88.6 Students should keep copies of any coursework submitted for assessment, and maintain portfolios of their work, for scrutiny by External Examiners, tutors or regulatory bodies if required.

7.89 ASSESSMENT OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES OR HEALTH CONDITIONS

a) GENERAL PROVISIONS

7.89.1 If a student is unable, through a diagnosed disability or health condition, to be assessed by the normal methods prescribed for the course, appropriate student support staff will liaise with the Course Leader in order to determine a 'reasonable adjustment' to the method of assessment (bearing in mind the objectives of the course and the need to assess the student on equal terms with other students). This may involve the Occupational Health Committee (OHC) (or Collaborative Partner equivalent).

7.89.2 The onus is on the student to ensure that the UCO or relevant Collaborative Partner is made aware of their disability and to apply for consideration of variation in assessment conditions commensurate with the disability or health condition; written evidence must be provided in the form of a medical or diagnostic report provided by a doctor or other appropriately qualified professional.

7.89.3 Students with a disability or health condition must be assessed in such a way that they are neither systematically penalised nor systematically advantaged compared with other students. To make judgments as to the nature and extent of the variation in assessment methods appropriate to any particular candidate, appropriate student support staff / OHC (or Collaborative Partner equivalent) must make use of all the information available, including taking advice from within and outside the UCO / Collaborative Partner where appropriate.

7.89.4 Students wishing to be considered for special assessment conditions must do so in good time for the first assessment. It may not be possible to accept applications received close to assessments, although the UCO and Collaborative Partners will always attempt to deal with genuine cases of unforeseen need.

7.89.5 If students have a disability or health condition, temporary or permanent, which are demonstrated to the satisfaction of the student support staff but cannot be dealt with in the form of special conditions for assessment, the student will normally be expected to carry out the assessment under normal conditions, and the Board of Examiners will make whatever adjustments it considers appropriate when reviewing students' achievement and progression.

b) SPECIFIC ALLOWANCES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES OR HEALTH CONDITIONS

7.89.6 Upon the recommendation of student support staff or the OHC (or Collaborative Partner equivalent), students with evidence of a specific learning disability or health condition are identified on examination papers by a system of coloured adhesive labels, which must be inscribed with the student ID number.

7.89.7 Students whose disability or health condition permits them extra time in written and practical assessments allows the student to attempt the same content / number of questions as their cohort. The adhesive labels allow markers to compensate for presentational weaknesses, which no amount of extra time could put right. In such cases students are normally permitted 25% extra time.

7.89.8 Additional examples for consideration of specific allowances are given below:

   i. Students with mobility impairment may be granted several breaks during an examination or similar task, to ease or exercise joints or muscles. This applies also to those with long term or short term (e.g., broken limb) disabilities. Some students in this category may have no need of such breaks.

   ii. Students with impaired manual dexterity may need to dictate answers and therefore be separate from fellow students. Alternatively, a tape recorder may be used. If the student

can write, but more slowly than most students, time may be allowed for this during the period of the examination, but this would normally be balanced by the student being required to undertake a lesser load under examination requirements and within the stipulated time period. Some limited extra time may be appropriate when an amanuensis is used.

iii. Students with a visual impairment, up to and including total blindness, may be provided with an amanuensis for written exams, who will read the question paper and write answers at the student's dictation. Consideration may be given to the use of appropriate technology for the production of answers by the candidate. In examinations, extra time may be needed for reading and re-reading of the questions, but this would normally be accommodated within the stipulated time period.

iv. Students with a mental health or stress-related disorder, or with physical conditions which cause excessive fatigue may, at the discretion of student support staff, and only where medical evidence is available to support the claim, be permitted additional time and / or be allowed to take an examination alone, with provision for breaks at suitable intervals if required. In severe cases, an alternative form of assessment may be used, such as a viva voce, but care must be taken that the standard of the assessment is safeguarded. Clear evidence of need must be provided in the form of a medical report from a GP or specialist.

v. Students with chronic conditions causing excessive fatigue may be permitted to sit an examination in a separate room and have access to assistive technology, with provision for breaks at suitable intervals if required. In severe cases, a reduced load in the examination or an alternative assessment may be used, such as a viva voce, but care must be taken that the standard of the assessment is safeguarded. Evidence of need must be provided in the form of a medical report from a GP or specialist.

vi. Students with specific learning disabilities (e.g., dyslexia) and related problems will normally be permitted extra time beyond the normal duration for the reading of the examination paper and for the writing of their answers. Such students may be permitted additional time for examinations and / or the use of an amanuensis, reader, or appropriate assistive technology. Question papers may be provided in alternative formats.

7.89.9 Students whose first language is not English will not normally be regarded as requiring special consideration in the sense of this section (British Sign Language is formally recognised as a language) and will be required to provide answers to questions in English.

7.89.10 Students are not normally permitted the use of any reference tools such as dictionaries in examinations as a specific allowance for a disability or health condition.

7.90 REVIEWING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ACADEMIC STANDARDS OF ASSESSMENT

7.90.1 As part of the UCO's quality assurance and enhancement procedures, a review of the effectiveness of the assessments used to measure student learning is undertaken at assessment and unit level. This is considered by Course Teams and also by Boards of Examiners in their meetings. In addition, External Examiners are required, as part of their annual report, to comment upon the effectiveness of assessment procedures and how academic standards have been maintained.

7.91 DISCLOSURE OF EXAMINATION GRADES

7.91.1 It must be made clear to students that where grades have not yet been considered by External Examiners or a formal Board of Examiners, these grades are provisional, pending endorsement by the appropriate Board of Examiners and may be subject to change.

7.92 ACADEMIC APPEALS AGAINST DECISIONS OF BOARDS OF EXAMINERS

7.92.1 Academic appeals are the route by which students may seek reconsideration of Boards of Examiners' decision. They are the only basis on which changes, other than the correction of administrative errors, may be made. The criteria for appealing against a decision of the Board of Examiners are detailed in the UCO's Academic Appeals Policy[44] (or the approved Collaborative Partner equivalent).

7.92.2 Academic appeals will not be considered based solely on a student's disagreement with the examiners' academic judgement. Academic appeals will be considered only in matters of procedure, competency and / or prejudice. Further details are provided in the UCO's Academic Appeals Policy (or the approved Collaborative Partner equivalent).

7.92.3 Complaints upheld in respect of Board of Examiners' decisions already made are transferred to the UCO's Academic Appeals [45] (or the approved Collaborative Partner equivalent) process for action.

7.92.4 Where a student lodges an academic appeal that is upheld after the relevant Board of Examiners and is found, after submission, to be a valid academic appeal, notification of the outcome of the complaint should be sent to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) (or the Collaborative Partner equivalent), who will initiate a review by the Board of Examiners as an outcome of an appeal.

---

[44] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy
[45] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy

PART D: CONFERMENT

> **This section of the Academic Quality Framework summarises the UCO's regulations regarding the conferment of awards and provides information on conditions of receiving and rescinding awards, award certification and graduation ceremony procedures. It should be of interest to all undergraduate and postgraduate taught students and to all UCO and Collaborative Partner staff.**

7.93 CONFERMENT OF AN AWARD

7.93.1 The UCOs Academic Council establishes Board of Examiners (or partner equivalents) to make recommendations for the conferment of approved awards on students who, having been registered as a student of the UCO, have followed an approved course or programme of study that leads to a UCO award.

7.93.2 An award of the UCO is deemed to be conferred on a student at the time of a UCO's Board of Examiners' (or partner's equivalent) decision. This conferment is through authority delegated by the UCO's Vice-Chancellor as the chair of the Academic Council to the designated Chair of the Boards of Examiners. Such conferment includes action taken by the chair of the respective Board of Examiners subsequently on its behalf.

7.93.3 Conferment is not made in absentia but face to face with the individual so honoured and in exceptional circumstances, as approved by the Academic Council, the award will be made through a ceremony specifically arranged for this purpose.

7.93.4 An honorary academic degree of the UCO is conferred on an individual at the UCO Graduation Ceremony in person by the chair of the Academic Council or designated senior member of the Academic Council acting in that capacity.

7.93.5 Students are considered to have exited their course of study and completed their registration with the UCO once the appropriate Board of Examiners has conferred them with an award.

7.93.6 Conferment of a UCO award is evidenced by the UCO through:

    i. A formal degree award document which is provided to the student as certification that the academic award has been achieved and (i.e., the Award Certificate).

    ii. A transcript or similar record document setting out in greater detail the course or programme of study followed, the units taken, the credits awarded, and the grades received from the UCO.

7.94 CONDITIONS FOR RECEIPT OF AN ACADEMIC AWARD

7.94.1 An award of the UCO will be conferred when the following conditions are satisfied:

    i. The individual was a registered student of the UCO at the time of their assessment for an award and was in good financial standing with the UCO and the respective Collaborative Partner.

    ii. The details of that individual's legal full name, date of birth, gender, course, or programme of study followed, and award to be conferred have been registered by the UCO.

    iii. The award to be conferred is one approved by the Academic Council under its taught degree awarding powers.

iv. It has been confirmed that the individual as a student of the UCO has completed a course or programme of study approved by the Academic Council as leading to the award being recommended.

v. The conferment of the award has been recommended by the Board of Examiners convened, constituted, and acting under regulations approved by the Academic Council under its taught degree awarding powers.

vi. The recommendation of the award has been signed by the Chair of the Board of Examiners and by the chair of the Academic Council or their appointed representative, confirming that the assessments have been carried out in accordance with the UCO's requirements and that the recommendations have received the consent of the External Examiners.

7.94.2 Once an academic outcome has been achieved, and an award conferred, that qualification is not withdrawn if a higher qualification is subsequently achieved.

7.94.3 In cases where students do not complete the course of study for which they are registered through lack of academic progress, withdrawal or premature termination of their studies and cancellation of their registration, the appropriate Board of Examiners may propose conferment of a lower-level qualification to recognise the level and extent of achievement provided the conditions indicated above are met.

7.95 Conferment of an Aegrotat Award

7.95.1 An award may be conferred as an aegrotat award where the following conditions are satisfied in addition to those in Conditions for Receipt of an Academic Award:

i. The individual was a registered student of the UCO but had been unable to complete all the requirements for the award they sought, because they could not complete the course of study due to illness or similar valid cause for which evidence is provided at the time of consideration by the Board of Examiners.

ii. The appropriate Board of Examiners has sufficient evidence to judge that the student would have reached the required threshold standard for the qualification and, where feasible, secures additional evidence to make a judgement on the award of a distinction or similar.

7.95.2 A candidate may choose to decline an aegrotat award and continue to complete the course of study. However, the candidate cannot then claim the aegrotat award in the event of subsequent failure.

7.95.3 The term "aegrotat" will not be recorded on the Award Certificate or transcript unless the appropriate Board of Examiners decides it has insufficient evidence to make a judgement on the award of a distinction or similar.

7.96 Conferment of an Award Posthumously

7.96.1 An award may be conferred posthumously and accepted on the deceased student's behalf by a parent, spouse, or other appropriate individual.

7.96.2 The following conditions must be satisfied in addition to those in Conditions for Receipt of an Academic Award above:

i. The individual was a registered student of the UCO but had been unable to complete all the requirements for the award they sought, at the time of their death.

ii. The appropriate Board of Examiners has sufficient evidence to judge that the student would have reached the required threshold standard for the qualification and, where feasible, secures additional evidence to make a judgement on the award of a distinction or similar.

7.96.3 At the discretion of the Vice-Chancellor financial good standing conditions may be waived in the case of a posthumous award.

7.97 RESCINDING AN AWARD

7.97.1 In exceptional circumstances (e.g., as a consequence of the investigation of an academic offence or an academic appeal) the Academic Council may rescind an award that has been conferred on a student.

7.97.2 Where an honorary award is to be rescinded, the decision cannot be delegated but must be formally considered by the Academic Council with the agreement of a majority of members.

7.97.3 Granting of an honorary award includes the decision to bring the award holder into the scholarly community of the UCO, and behaviour, actions, or the support of actions that run counter to the UCO's mission or damage its work will be considered in such cases.

7.97.4 Where an award is to be rescinded as a consequence of the investigation of an academic offence or an academic appeal, the decision to rescind may be taken on behalf of the Academic Council for UCO awards via Chair's action.

7.98 AWARD DOCUMENTATION AND CERTIFICATION

7.98.1 The UCO issues documents as formal award certificates to provide formal and legal evidence of the fact that an academic award has been made to an individual under the UCO's taught degree awarding powers.

7.98.2 The name of the individual appearing on award certification is the name held on the student's registration record at the time the award is conferred.

7.98.3 The printed format for the name normally follows the UK convention, but if the student's identity documents present the names in a different order from the norm in the UK, or evidence of an alternative international naming convention (as approved by the Registrar (or Collaborative Partner equivalent)) is presented, names may appear in a different order.

7.98.4 Once issued, there is normally no change permitted to the wording on an award certificate, unless a specific inaccuracy is proved (e.g., a misspelling). However, a replacement certificate may be issued in the case of gender reassignment or legal name change, on production of documentary evidence of the change.

7.98.5 The document provided as a certificate of an award conferred by the UCO shall record:

i. The name of the UCO together with, if appropriate, the name of any other institution collaborating in the provision of the course of study leading to the award.

ii. The student's full and legal name as recorded on the UCO's registration record.

iii. The name and designation of the award as appropriate.

iv. The title of the award as agreed through the approval process for the course of study by the Academic Council, for the purposes of the certification.

v. The award of distinction or similar achieved by the student within the award, where appropriate.

vi. An approved endorsement or clarification, where appropriate (e.g., that the course was delivered through the medium of English, was by distance learning, etc.).

vii. The date on which the award was conferred which shall normally be the final date of the month in which the award was approved by the Board of Examiners.

7.98.6 The formal academic award document shall bear the signature of the chair of the Academic Council and the Chair of the Board of Directors and have suitable security marking.

7.99 ACADEMIC TRANSCRIPTS (STATEMENT OF CREDIT)

7.99.1 The UCO or delegated Collaborative Partner currently issues a statement of credit or academic transcript to a student who has successfully completed approved units of study or a stage of a taught course leading to an approved award.

7.99.2 The transcript shall record:

i.   The student's full and legal name as recorded on the UCO's registration record.

ii.   The units and elements of study successfully completed, with details of their length and level, grade achieved (where appropriate) and dates of registration and completion.

iii. The details of any periods of supervised work experience or placement in the UK or abroad with grades where appropriate and dates.

iv.   The details of exposure to transferable skills if appropriate.

7.100 GRADUATION CEREMONY

7.100.1 All students who have been conferred an award from the UCO are entitled to attend the UCO Graduation Ceremony or the Graduation Ceremony of the Collaborative Partner at which they studied as confirmed at Partner Approval.

7.100.2 Those attending the graduation ceremony as participants are required to wear the appropriate academic dress for which they are eligible, to comply with the UCO's regulations on professional behaviour and dress code, and to conform to graduation ceremonial procedures.

a) ACADEMIC DRESS

7.100.3 Ede and Ravenscroft Ltd is the graduation gown maker appointed by the UCO. They aid with the specification of the academic dress, and make the robes associated with the different awards.

7.100.4 All graduates and academic staff attending the graduation ceremony are required to ensure that they wear the correct gown, hat and hood when in full academic dress.

7.100.5 It is an academic offence to wear the gown associated with an award for which an individual is not eligible.

7.100.6 Gowns, hats, or hoods for awards of the UCO may not be replicated without the express authorisation of Ede and Ravenscroft Ltd and the UCO's Vice-Chancellor.

AQF07 APPENDICES

Appendix Reference Number	Appendix Title
AQF07-01	UCO's Honorary Degrees, Academic Awards & UCO Titles or Honorary Awards Criteria & Award Structure
AQF07-02	Assessment Brief Template
AQF07-03	Exam Paper Template
AQF07-04	Marking Criteria Template
AQF07-05	Assessment Scrutiny Checklist
AQF07-06	External Examiner Scrutiny Verification Form
AQF07-07	Open Book Exam Guidance for Students
AQF07-08	Guidance on the Conduct of Viva Voce & Oral Examinations