EXAMINATIONS DOCUMENT

PROCEDURES FOR ASSESSING STUDENT PERFORMANCE

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CONTENTS

The preparation and marking of examination papers .................................................. 3
Moderation boards ..................................................................................................... 8
Mitigating circumstances panels .............................................................................. 9
Preliminary examination boards ............................................................................. 10
Level 1 and 2 examination boards .......................................................................... 11
Level 3 and 4 examination boards .......................................................................... 13
Postgraduate taught examination boards ............................................................ 14
Appeals Panel .......................................................................................................... 16
Viewing examination scripts .................................................................................. 17
Appendix A (Regulations for Undergraduate Awards) ........................................ 18
Appendix B (Regulations for Postgraduate Taught programmes) .......................... 19
The preparation and marking of examination papers

This section applies to internal mathematics examinations, for service courses see the next section.

The setting of examination papers

1 Examiners are required to set papers of an appropriate standard and content and to supply model solutions and marking schemes. The papers have to be refereed by a designated internal referee. A typed copy of the refereed paper, together with the model solutions and marking scheme as well as an electronic version of the paper has to be given to the examinations secretary by the deadline. Papers that contribute to the students’ final degree classification have to be sent to the appropriate external examiner. Each paper will be accompanied by a progress report that shows that the paper has been refereed, and the external examiner’s comments where applicable. Examiners will be asked to check the final version of the paper and to confirm its correctness before it is sent to the University Examinations Office.

2 Examiners should make sure that there is enough easier material for weaker students to achieve the borderlines at 30 and 40, as marks below 30 are non-compensatable in years 1 and 2 and marks below 40 are non-compensatable in the level 1 course units with supervisions. Examiners should also ensure that the papers contain an appropriate amount of more challenging material to differentiate among the stronger students.

3 The rubric, including the length of the examination, question numbering and layout must be as the students have been advised and should use one of the approved wordings on the examination paper progress form. Question papers should be in the University style and the marks for each question should be clearly indicated. The LaTeX style file can be found on the school intranet at https://www.maths.manchester.ac.uk/intranet/it-support/useful-files/.

4 If the examiner allows the students formula books or does not allow calculators, this must be indicated on the front page. For those not using the LaTeX style file, the following should be observed:
   (i) The top of each page should have the examination paper code on the right hand side (e.g. MATH31001).
   (ii) The page number with the total number of pages should be centred at the bottom (e.g. page 2 of 5).
   (iii) Indicate at the end of each question the number of marks awarded to the question.
   (iv) At the end of the paper please add "END OF EXAMINATION PAPER” the bottom of the final page.
   (v) Solutions should be on separate sheets from the questions.

5 It is the setter's responsibility to affix/draw diagrams to/on the typed copy. Solutions should be in full, including bookwork, which should be indicated as such. In the solutions the relationship between problems set and worked examples in lectures and problems on examples sheets should be clearly indicated and the solutions should be annotated with a detailed marking scheme. Examiners should retain a copy of the solutions.
6 The allocated referee should make sure that the examination paper is of appropriate length and difficulty, that there is enough easier material for weaker students to achieve borderlines at 30 or 40 as well as more difficult material for the stronger students, that the paper conforms to the university format and that it is free of mathematical and typographical errors. The referee should sign the examination paper progress form to confirm that he or she has refereed the paper.

7 Level 2 and higher as well as level 1 actuarial mathematics papers are sent to the appropriate external examiner for refereeing. The external examiners will be provided with a copy of the previous year’s paper for comparison and will be asked to check that the examinations are not too predictable.

8 The Teaching Committee recommends that examinations in the first three semesters should contain a compulsory Part A containing straightforward questions on the basic ideas of the whole course and a Part B containing a choice of longer questions including some more testing material. The ratio of the marks for the two parts should be about 1:2. It was suggested that for the 20 and 15 credit course units Part B might require students to attempt three questions out of five (shorter questions for the 15 credit units) and for the 10 credit units they might require two questions from three. The length of the examinations for 10 credit course units is 2 hours, for 15 credit course units 2 ½ hours and for 20 credit course units 3 hours.

**During the examination**

9 Examiners must be contactable during the examinations to deal with any queries arising, or nominate another person to deal with such problems.

**After the examination**

10 Scripts will usually be delivered to the School in the afternoon of the day of the examination if the examination is held in the morning or on the following the day if the examination is held in the afternoon, and they can be collected from the examinations secretary.
Marking

11 The scripts are marked by the examiner. For ease of checking, marks should be placed in the left margin of the page, the mark for each part of the question should be written as $x/y$ to indicate $x$ marks out of $y$, the total for each question should be written in the same form and circled. It should be clearly indicated that the examiner has marked every page of the scripts that have been written on, for instance by a long pen line down the outer edge of the page. It is not necessary to mark blank pages. For large level 1 courses postgraduate markers may be used. Examiners for course units at levels 2, 3, 4 and 6 may be allocated members of academic staff as helpers by the examination officer in conjunction with workloads as assigned by the Heads of Groups.

12 If a candidate attempts more than the required number of questions, then the combination of questions satisfying the rubric and giving the highest total mark should be taken into account.

Checking

13 The checker checks the marking. It has to be checked that all questions in each script have been marked, all questions total up correctly and the mark for each question is entered on the cover of the booklet or the cover of the first booklet if more than one, and that all marks are added up correctly on the front cover and the total mark for the exam is clearly indicated on the front cover. For courses with more than 100 scripts this should be done by someone in the Teaching and Learning Office (TLO) and it could be a postgraduate employed by the TLO, while for a course with no more than 100 scripts the checker will normally be the referee. The checker should indicate on each script that it has been checked. The checker does not change any arithmetic but refers any errors back to the examiner who corrects the errors before returning the scripts back to the checker. The checker signs the assessment report form when the examiner has corrected any arithmetic errors. Once the scripts are checked they should be returned to the TLO.

Data entry

14 At this point the scripts will be de-anonymised and alphabetised. The marks will then be inputted by two people, one reading out, one inputting, the inputter will then read back the marks and the reader will check they are correct. One of the inputters will sign the assessment report form.

15 Coursework marks should be handed in to the Teaching and Learning Office before the first week of the examinations for entering into the scaling spreadsheets so these can be prepared and checked prior to the examination marks arriving.
Moderation

16 The moderator is normally the referee of the examination paper. The moderator’s job is to check a sample of scripts to check that they have been marked fairly and consistently with the marking scheme. The TLO will select a sample covering the whole range of marks consisting of about 20% of the scripts, but at least 10 and at most 20, or all of the scripts if there are fewer than 10. If the moderator is also the checker, then he/she can select the sample scripts and moderate them at the checking stage.

Scaling

17 The scaling spreadsheet enables the examiners to specify the marks that will be scaled to 30, 40, 50, 60 and 70, resp.

18 The Assessment Committee will set targets for the number of marks in the 1st class or 2(i) range, in the 2(ii) range and in the 3rd class range as a proportion of students who achieve a pass mark. For level 1, the target is 70% 1st or 2(i), 20% 2(ii) and 10% 3rd. For levels 2 and 3, the Assessment Committee will use the previous year’s and the current year’s average marks and the students’ actual performance in the previous year to determine the expected proportions. The actual percentages achieved by MMath students in the previous year will be used to set target percentages for level 4 course units, but these should only be used as a guide. If a course unit has level 4 and level 6 versions, the same scaling has to be applied to both. (A target mean of 65% will be inserted into the spreadsheet for PGT students as a default but this must not be used to inform scaling decisions.)

19 A designated member of the Assessment Committee will propose a scaling and agree it with the examiner(s).

20 The moderation boards will look at the scaled marks and decide whether any adjustments to the scalings need to be made.

21 If examiners have any questions about scaling they should contact the Director of Assessment or the Director of Studies for undergraduate course units and the Director of Postgraduate Studies for PGT course units.

22 After scaling the marks will be uploaded into Campus Solutions by the TLO who will return the marks to the examiner as they appear in Campus Solutions. The examiner then signs off to confirm that the marks in Campus Solutions agree with those on the scaling spreadsheet.

23 The examiner(s) shall prepare an Assessment Report for each unit of assessment set. This should include the scaling, mention any problems with specific questions or students. The examiner(s) must address the reason if the proportion of marks in 1st class and 2(i) range is below the bound recommended by the Scaling Panel. The completed forms should be given to the examinations secretary.
Service courses

1 Paragraphs 1–6, 9–14 and 16 above apply to service courses. Normally only foundation year papers are sent to an external examiner (paragraph 7). Paragraph 8 does not apply to service courses. The arrangements for the submission of coursework marks (paragraph 15) are different, details can be obtained from the Director of Service Teaching. Paragraphs 17-23 do not apply to service courses.
Moderation boards

1 After the end of each semester’s examinations and after the resit examinations, there will be moderation boards for Level 1, for Level 2 and jointly for Levels 3, 4 & 6. The members of the moderation board are Director of Assessment (chair), the Examinations Officer, the Director of Undergraduate Studies, the Director of PGT Studies for the Levels 3, 4 & 6 board, the relevant examiners and a Student Support Administrator. Examiners who cannot attend the meeting should nominate someone to represent them. The meeting will consider the assessment reports, identify any problems, approve the marks or request the examiner to consider a different scaling.
Mitigating Circumstances Panels

1 There are mitigating circumstances panels for undergraduate Years 1 and 2, for Years 3 and 4 and for postgraduate taught students. The members of the undergraduate mitigating circumstances panels are the Director of Undergraduate Studies (chair), the Senior Advisor, the relevant Year Tutors, a designated member of the relevant Examination Board, two Student Support Administrators, one of whom acts as secretary. The members of the postgraduate taught mitigating circumstances panel are the Director of Postgraduate Studies (chair), the PGT programme directors and a Student Support Administrator (secretary).

2 The Mitigating Circumstances Panels are sub-groups of the appropriate Boards of Examiners.

3 The panels will meet after the first and second semester exam periods and after the resit examination period.

4 The panels consider the cases of students for whom circumstances or events beyond their control may have adversely affected their ability to perform in an assessment to their full potential or to complete an assignment by the set deadline.

5 The student’s identity will normally need to be disclosed at meetings of the panel, but the marks achieved will not be available to the panel.

6 Students will normally have completed a Mitigating Circumstances Form and this, along with associated evidence will be considered by the panel. The panel may request clarification and further evidence, for instance from academic advisors, if required.

7 The Mitigating Circumstances Panel will first determine whether there is substantiated evidence of circumstances eligible for mitigation.

8 The Mitigating Circumstances Panel will then decide whether the circumstances will have had an adverse effect on the student’s performance, and if so it will judge how significant the effect was likely to have been.

9 The panels make decisions about how to deal with mitigating circumstances affecting coursework (including excusing missed coursework) but otherwise determines recommendations to the examination boards.

10 The meeting of the panels will be minuted. The decisions and recommendations of the panel will be communicated by the minutes of the panel to the preliminary boards to implement the decisions and will also be forwarded to the examination boards with names of students removed.

11 Students have no right of appeal against the decision of a Mitigating Circumstances Panel, although they can appeal under Regulation XIX, if appropriate.
Preliminary Examination Boards

1. There will be preliminary examination board meetings for undergraduate Years 1 and 2 and for undergraduate Years 3 and 4 before the full examination boards.

2. The members of the preliminary examination board are the Director of Assessment, the Director of Undergraduate Studies, the Examinations Secretary and a Student Support Administrator (secretary).

3. The preliminary examination board will have the examination grids and scaling spreadsheets available to it. It will implement the decisions of the mitigating circumstances panels and consider any special cases which do not come under mitigating circumstances.
1st and 2nd year Examination Boards

1 The 1st and 2nd year Examination Boards will normally be chaired by the Director of Assessment. Other core members are the Director of Undergraduate Studies and the Examinations Officer, all relevant members of academic staff are ordinary members.

2 The Boards will have available to them a single list containing the candidates by student ID number in order of average marks and the full array of marks obtained by them in each unit of assessment, as well as the overall mark for the year computed for each student as a credit-weighted mean of the marks recorded along with a provisional decision.

3 All members of the Board will be given the opportunity to make any general comments concerning the examination process or any of the particular units of assessment. Such comments should not involve discussion of individual students at this stage.

4 The Board will consider each candidate in list order. The Board will take into account the recommendations made by the Mitigating Circumstances Panel.

5 The School of Mathematics follows the University’s progression rules with compensation, which are attached in Appendix A, with the following exceptions: the level 1 course units supported by supervision, i.e., MATH10101, MATH10111, MATH10121, MATH10131, MATH10202, MATH10212, MATH10222 and MATH10232 are not compensatable and cannot be carried. The minimum mark for progression from the 2nd to the 3rd year of the MMath is normally 55.

6 The board will make one of the following decisions for each candidate according to the progression rules: pass, fail with no possibility of reassessment, fail but allowed reassessment.

7 Candidates who failed to progress in June but were allowed reassessment will be reassessed in August. Candidates will be required to resit all units of assessment in which they have achieved a mark of less than 30 and all non-compensatable units in which they have achieved a mark of less than 40. Students who still have more than 40 credits in the compensatable fail zone will be asked to resit course units worth sufficient credits to enable them to proceed.

8 The reassessment will use unseen papers of the same standard as the original examination papers.

9 Students on the Actuarial Science and Mathematics degree programme may resit examinations in course units contributing to the actuarial exemptions if they received a mark of less than 40 for the course unit even if they passed overall. In such cases the resit mark, capped at 40, will only be used for the purposes of calculating exemptions from actuarial professional examinations.
The resit examination board will convene in September to consider the results of the re-assessment and the candidates who failed in June. The committee will then consider each student by the original progression criteria, in particular the candidates have to achieve at least a compensatable fail mark on each re-assessed paper or the pass mark in a non-compensatable course unit. Academic advisors may be asked to provide information on their advisees if necessary.

If the original mark on a unit of assessment was less than 30, it will be raised to 30 after a successful resit, otherwise the original mark will be retained, except in the cases of students for whom the Board agreed to consider the August resit as the first attempt (deferral) due to mitigating circumstances.
**3rd and 4th Year Examination Boards**

1. The Examination Boards for years 3 and 4 will normally be chaired by the Head of School. Other core members are the. The Board will have available to it separate lists of the candidates for the BSc degree, candidates for the MMath degree and 3rd year MMath students. Each list will contain the candidates by student ID number in order of average marks and the full array of marks obtained by them in each unit of assessment, as well as the overall mark for the year computed for each student as a credit-weighted mean of the marks recorded. The lists of the degree candidates will include the candidates’ overall average for the programme which is the weighted average of the level 2 and level 3 averages with weights 0.33:0.67 for the BSc degree programmes and the weighted average of the level 2, 3 and 4 averages with weights 1:2:2 for the MMath degree programmes. All lists will also include a provisional decision for each candidate.

2. The Examinations Officer identifies the candidates in the boundary zones who do not qualify automatically for the higher degree class and provides their scripts to the external examiners before the meeting of the Board.

3. Boundary zone candidates achieving at least 80 credits (75 credits for MMath) at the level of the higher degree classification will automatically receive the higher degree class, others will be considered for mark review by the external examiners, but no viva voce examinations will be held.

4. All members of the Board will be given the opportunity to make any general comments concerning the examination process or any of the particular units of assessment. Such comments should not involve discussion of individual students at this stage.

5. The Board will consider each list of candidates separately. The Board will consider each candidate in list order. The Board will take into account the recommendations made by the mitigating circumstances meeting.

6. The Board will pass or fail each 3rd year MMath candidate according to the progression rules. The minimum mark for progression from the 3rd to the 4th year of the MMath is normally 55%. The candidates who fail to progress to the final year will be transferred to the appropriate BSc degree course and will be considered for the BSc degree together with the other candidates.

7. The Board will award a degree to or fail each single honours candidate according to the University’s Regulations for Undergraduate Awards (Appendix A). The confirmed mathematics marks of joints honours candidates will be transmitted to the joint boards.
The Postgraduate Taught Examination Boards

1 The Examination Board for taught postgraduate students will normally be chaired by the Director of Postgraduate Studies. The Board will have available to it a single list of the candidates for all postgraduate taught programmes. The list will contain the candidates by student ID number in order of average marks and the full array of marks obtained by them in each unit of assessment. Marks which are below the pass mark at MSc level will be highlighted.

2 The Examination Board meets in June/July (to consider the progression of students from the taught component of the MSc programmes to the dissertation component, and to award exit awards for students transferred to the Postgraduate Diploma or Postgraduate Certificate programmes), August (to consider the progression of students who were required to be referred or deferred in some course units) and October/November (to award MScs).

3 For the June/July examination board, the Director of Postgraduate Studies, in consultation with the Programme Directors, identifies the candidates in the boundary zones and provides their scripts to the external examiners before the meeting of the Board.

4 For the October/November examination board, the Director of Postgraduate Studies, in consultation with the Programme Directors, identifies dissertations in the boundary zones, together with a representative sample of other dissertations, and provides these to the external examiners before the meeting of the Board.

5 Candidates in the boundary zone have their classification of degree determined by the Regulations: Postgraduate Taught Degrees (Appendix B) with H33 implemented.

6 All members of the Board will be given the opportunity to make any general comments concerning the examination process or any particular units of assessment. Such comments should not involve discussion of individual students at this stage.

7 The Board will consider each candidate in list order. The Board will take into account the recommendations made by the Postgraduate Taught Mitigating Circumstances Panel.

8 The June/July Board and the August Board will consider each candidate in list order and determine if they have met the criteria for progression onto the dissertation component of the MSc, including determining if any referrals or deferrals are required. Students who do not meet the criteria to progress to the dissertation component will be considered for the award of Postgraduate Diploma. Students who do not meet the criteria for the award of Postgraduate Diploma will be considered for the award of Postgraduate Certificate. Awards will be made according to the Regulations: Postgraduate Taught Degrees (Appendix B).
9 Examiners will be required to prepare an unseen paper of the same standard for any course unit for which deferrals are required. Examiners may use the original examination for referrals, subject to approval by the programme external examiner(s), but must otherwise prepare an unseen paper of the same standard.

10 The November Board will consider each candidate in list order and determine if they have met the criteria for the award of MSc. Students who do not meet the criteria to progress to the dissertation component will be considered for the award of Postgraduate Diploma. Students who do not meet the criteria for the award of Postgraduate Diploma will be considered for the award of Postgraduate Certificate. Awards will be made according to the Regulations: Postgraduate Taught Degrees (Appendix B).

11 In exceptional circumstances, students who were granted interruptions or extensions to their dissertation and who were unable to be considered at the November Exam Board will be considered either at the February progression review meeting or by chair's action, in either case with consultation with the programme external examiner(s).
Appeals Panel

1 The members of the Appeals Panel are the Head of School, Director of Studies, Senior Advisor, Director of Teaching, Director of Assessment, Examinations Officer, Year Tutors and a Student Support Administrator (secretary). The Director of Postgraduate Studies will be co-opted onto the Appeals Panel for cases that involve Postgraduate Taught students.

2 The Panel will be chaired by the Head of School, or by the Director of Assessment in cases not involving graduating students if the Head of School is not available.

3 The Panel considers the appeals of students against the decisions of the Boards of Examiners.

4 Students may only appeal under University Regulations XIX and on the grounds therein.

5 Students appeal to the Faculty when, in the first instance, it will be sent to the School to be considered by this panel.

6 The Panel will decide whether the case satisfies the grounds for appeal as detailed in University Regulations XIX.

7 If it is decided that the student's appeal has merit then the panel will recommend to faculty any changes that need to be made to the decision of the Board of Examiners. In the case of a graduating student the panel will seek the approval of the External Examiners.

8 The meetings of the Panel will be minuted.

9 It is the faculty who make the final decision on appeals, taking into account the recommendations of the Appeals Panel.
Viewing examination scripts

1 In accordance with University policy, the School allows students to see examination scripts and coursework without charge, although students will not be permitted to take the scripts away with them.

2 The script viewing exercise is a form of feedback providing students with an opportunity to view their scripts which, when accompanied by the exam paper, may provide useful insight as to why the student got the mark they did.

3 The script viewing is **not** an opportunity for students to view their scripts and then ask for that script to be re-marked. The School does not remark scripts. After viewing, students can however ask for their scripts to be checked, this means that their script will be checked to make sure that all content within the script has been marked and that the final marks for each section of the paper have been added up correctly.

4 For January examinations of course units given by the School of Mathematics students will be invited to view their scripts in week 9 of Semester 2. Returning students will be able to view their scripts in Welcome Week, unless they have resits, in which case they will have an opportunity to see the appropriate scripts before the resits. Students not returning can request that their final semester scripts are checked by contacting the Director of Teaching.
Appendix A

Regulations for Undergraduate Awards for students registered on an undergraduate programme on or after 1 September 2012

http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=13147
Appendix B

Regulations for Postgraduate Taught programmes

http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=13148