

ASSESSMENT, PROGRESSION AND AWARDING: TAUGHT PROGRAMMES HANDBOOK

11. Consequence of failure in assessment

11.1 Introduction

11.1.1 Failure in up to a quarter of the total credit that may be awarded for the stage must be condoned in order to permit progression or award. Students failing more than the maximum credits that **may** be condoned are deemed to be failing the programme. The responsibility for making decisions about the consequences of failure for individual students who have failed more than the maximum credit that **may** be condoned for the programme (i.e., referral, deferral, or repeat study) lies with the Faculty Assessment, Progression and Awarding Committee. This formulation reflects a legal judgment which requires that processes of academic assessment **should** be clearly separated from those concerning the consequences of failure. Recommendations to withdraw a student must be referred to the Dean for Taught Students for consideration.

11.1.2 Decisions on the consequence of failure **must** support the following principles:

- a. Equity and fairness of treatment for all students.
- b. The maintenance of academic standards.

11.1.3 For online programmes, the following points also apply:

- a. Students **should** complete, at the next available opportunity, any referred assessments.
- b. Students **must** take any referred/deferred assessments at the end of a module where the programme is delivered sequentially, where the end of a stage may be many months after the initial learning. (Please also see the guidance notes for online programmes in the Approval and Amendment of Taught Programmes and Modules Handbook).
- c. For online programmes offering very short modules, students' who are taking referred/ deferred assessments **may** be offered to do so whilst studying for a new module or pause and re-join at the next module. Also see Chapter 8, 'Progression', and the guidance notes for online programmes in the Approval and Amendment of Taught Programmes and Modules Handbook.

11.1.4 For Nursing programmes offered by the Medical School, please see the Special Provisions information for further guidance.

11.1.5 For Degree Apprenticeship programmes, please see the Special Provisions information for further guidance.

11.2 Referral

- 11.2.1 Referral is a further attempt at a module assessment without the requirement to repeat any attendance.
- 11.2.2 Where failure cannot be condoned in a stage, the Faculty Assessment, Progression and Awarding Committee will automatically approve referral/deferral in all failed/deferred modules. Any exceptions to this rule **must** be referred to the Dean for Taught Students for consideration. For FCH programmes, where condonement of a core subject module may limit future module choice or degree title options for an individual student, the FCH Programme Assessment, Progression and Awarding Committee (APAC) will recommend to the Faculty APAC referral/ deferral in all failed/ deferred modules.
- 11.2.3 PGT programmes may permit 'in-year' referral, whereby students may be offered the opportunity to be referred in failed assessments as soon as the module outcome is known, and without waiting for the Department Assessment, Progression and Awarding Committee to meet, unless otherwise specified in the programme specification. Students are able to opt-out of 'in-year' referrals and await confirmation of their final marks following the Faculty Assessment, Progression and Awarding Committee before sitting any referrals. Students must be given clear guidance about their referral options in advance.
- 11.2.4 In programmes where students register on a module-by-module basis, it is not appropriate to wait until the end of the stage of study (using the University's usual meaning of a stage) prior to making decisions regarding referrals, deferrals and condonement. These programmes will hold an Assessment, Progression and Awarding Committee (APAC) at the end of each module when decisions on reassessment will be made. Where students have not already exceeded a condonement limit for the programme, they can be offered the chance to take a referral to secure a pass mark in the module, or choose to continue study and have the fail condoned when they have completed all modules on their programme of study. Students must be given clear guidance about referral options and condonement rules on their programme of study. The APAC will need to be aware of

any modules that have already been failed by a student, in order that a student does not continue to register and pay fees in circumstances in which it is impossible for them to achieve their intended award. Students must be given clear guidance about the timing of referred and deferred assessments in advance.

- 11.2.5 Where students are studying standalone modules, an Assessment, Progression and Awarding Committee (APAC) will be held at the end of each module when decisions on reassessment will be made. It is recognised that students may be studying the modules for their own sake, while others may be intending to accumulate credit towards an intended award. Therefore, students must be given clear guidance with regard to referral options and the implications for any further study towards an intended award. The APAC will need to be aware of any modules that have already been failed by a student, in order that a student does not continue to register and pay fees in circumstances in which it is impossible for them to achieve their intended award. Students must be given clear guidance about the timing of referred and deferred assessments in advance.
- 11.2.6 Where a student fails part of the assessment on a module, but passes the module as a whole, the module will be deemed to have been passed and referral will not be applicable (unless all elements of a module have to be passed for professional accreditation purposes).
- 11.2.7 Principles in the application of referral are as follows:
- a. Where assessments for part or all of a module are referred the whole module **must** be capped at 40% for undergraduate modules (except as defined in section 5.2.2a and 5.2.2b) and 50% for postgraduate modules.
 - b. Referrals **should** be taken at the next scheduled assessment point³ for the module. In the case of PGT 'in-year' referrals students should be given clear expectations of when they may be informed of their referral and when any referred assessments will take place, including whether examinations will be sat during the August referral/deferral examination period or at another time; students may be given the option of taking their referrals based on their provisional module mark or waiting until the final mark is known following the Department Assessment, Progression and Awarding Committee.
 - c. Where there are practical reasons where parts of the assessment of a module cannot be replicated for referral purposes alternative forms of assessment **may** be

employed but these **must** have already been communicated to students. Further guidance can be found in Chapter 2.

- d. Students **must** be referred in sufficient modules to obtain an overall credit-weighted average of the pass mark for the stage.
 - e. Students have the right of referral on only one occasion per assessment.
- 11.2.8 Students who have failed to achieve the module pass mark after a referred assessment **should** have the higher of the two fail marks recorded on their transcript and for progression and classification purposes.
- 11.2.9 In cases where a referral is inappropriate, the Faculty Assessment, Progression and Awarding Committee **may** consider recommending a lesser award.
- 11.2.10 Students **must** be provided with information about the costs associated with sitting referred examinations. Details are available from the Examinations Office.

11.3 Consequences of Failure in Referred Assessments

- 11.3.1 Absence from referred assessment(s) will be treated as described in Chapter 3 on Examinations (3.1). Success or failure in a deferred referral will be treated as it would be for a referral.
- 11.3.2 Referred coursework which is submitted late, without any mitigating circumstances, will be given a mark of zero.
- 11.3.3 Where, after referral, a student still has failed to achieve a credit-weighted mean which permits progression to the next stage or to classification of the award, and/or has failed a module not eligible for condonement, the Faculty Assessment, Progression and Awarding Committee can:
- a. Recommend an award commensurate with the results achieved, as defined in the Credit and Qualifications Framework.
 - b. Allow the student to proceed to an alternative award commensurate with results which can still be achieved, as defined in the Credit and Qualifications Framework.
 - c. In circumstances where mitigation has been approved or where there are external requirements by a PSRB, or where an exit route is not available, repeat study following failure in referred assessment(s) **may** be permitted with the approval of the Faculty Assessment, Progression and Awarding Committee (see 11.5).
 - d. Recommend to the Dean for Taught Students withdrawal from the programme.

- 11.3.4 In programmes, where students register on a module-by-module basis, where a student has failed a referred assessment but has not failed more than the total number of credits that can be condoned on their programme of study, the Assessment, Progression and Awarding Committee (APAC) can permit the student to continue with their programme of study. Students must be given clear guidance about condonement rules and the APAC must explain that fails will only be condoned in circumstances where these rules have been met at the end of their programme of study.
- 11.3.5 Where students are studying standalone modules, it is recognised that students may be studying the modules for their own sake, while others may be intending to accumulate credit towards an intended award. Therefore, students must be given clear guidance with regard to the failure of modules and implications for any further study towards an intended award. The Assessment, Progression and Awarding Committee (APAC) will need to be aware of any modules that have already been failed by a student, in order that a student does not continue to register and pay fees in circumstances in which it is impossible for them to achieve their intended award. Students must be given clear guidance about the timing of referred and deferred assessments in advance.

11.4 Consequences of Failure in Deferred Assessments or where deferred assessments have not been completed at the end of the academic year.

International Students who are Tier 4/ Student Visa holders:

Repeat study or resitting without attendance can have serious consequences on your immigration status.

Students repeating study with attendance: may need to consider a Visa extension.

Students completing assessments without attendance: The University will be required to report this information to the Home Office. This will lead to the curtailment of your Visa.

It is important that you receive advice on the implications of repeating or resitting assessments, which you can access by contacting International Student Support.

- 11.4.1 Absence from deferred assessments will be treated as described in Chapter 3 except that an Aegrotat pass or award **may** also be considered in relation to missed deferral as described in Chapter 9. Where, after deferral, a student has failed to achieve

sufficient credit, which permits progression to the next stage or to classification of the award, the Faculty Assessment, Progression and Awarding

Committee **may** recommend:

- a. Progression, carrying a trailed¹ module(s) with referral at the next assessment point. This **may** only be recommended where a student has failed no more than the permitted maximum number of credits for the award/stage and has achieved the required credit-weighted stage mean, as defined in Chapter 8. In recommending a candidate to progress to the next stage under these circumstances, Faculty Assessment, Progression and Awarding Committees must take into account the academic requirements of the programme at future stages. Faculty Assessment, Progression and Awarding Committees **must** be carefully advised over any implications for module choice, prerequisites at the next stage, assessment requirements, financial support and the wellbeing of the student. In addition, Faculty Assessment, Progression and Awarding Committees must be satisfied that the candidate is able to pass the trailing modules while also studying (if full-time) for the 120 credits of the next stage.
- b. Progression, carrying a trailed module(s) with deferral at the next assessment point. This may only be recommended where Faculty Assessment, Progression and Awarding Committees have taken into account the academic requirements of the programme at future stages. Faculty Assessment, Progression and Awarding Committees must be carefully advised over any implications for module choice, prerequisites at the next stage, assessment requirements, financial support and the wellbeing of the student. In addition, Faculty Assessment, Progression and Awarding Committees must be satisfied that the candidate is able to pass the trailing modules while also studying (if full-time) for the 120 credits of the next stage.
- c. Non-progression and referral at the next assessment period. This **may** be recommended where;
 - i. the failure exceeds the permitted maximum number of credits for the award/stage as defined in Chapter 8.
 - ii. a student has failed no more than the permitted maximum number of credits for the award/stage but has either;
 - ii a) failed to achieve the required credit weighted mean, or,
 - ii b) the Faculty Assessment, Progression, and Awarding Committee is not satisfied

that the student can progress to the next stage carrying a referral in the failed assessment(s). Such students **must** pass the referred assessment(s), at the next available assessment period, prior to progression.

Students who are not progressing and sitting referrals or deferrals in the next assessment period will do so without attendance. These students will;

C1. Attempt an assessment(s), either via referral or deferral, which is usually sat in the subsequent academic year without attendance at scheduled teaching events.

C2. Have access to online learning resources related to the curriculum/assessment pattern of the year in which they were taught rather than having access to live/current teaching events occurring in-year.

C3. Have their progression decision on hold pending successful completion of these assessments and in alignment with module completion timeframes as outlined in Chapter 2 - Setting and Submission of Assessments, of the Assessment, Progression and Awarding Handbook. For students on PSRB-regulated programmes, failure to complete within the stipulated module timeframes could necessitate a repeat year.

C4. May be attempting one or multiple assessments/ modules per stage and with more flexibility during Exceptional Years i.e. students may opt to defer assessments without the need for evidence.

C5. Not pay tuition fees (with the exception of fees for any referrals) and are not eligible for student finance.

C6. Be classed as registered students.

C7. Have their module marks, in relation to any referrals, capped at the pass mark.

11.4.2 In programmes, where students register on a module-by-module basis, where a student has failed a referred assessment but has not failed more than the total number of credits that can be condoned on their programme of study, the Assessment, Progression and Awarding Committee (APAC) can permit the student to continue with their programme of study. Students must be given clear guidance about condonement rules and the APAC must explain that fails will only be condoned in circumstances where these rules have been met at the end of their programme of study.

11.4.3 Where students are studying standalone modules, it is recognised that students may be studying the modules for their own sake, while others may be intending to accumulate credit towards an intended award. Therefore students must be given

clear guidance with regard to the failure of modules and implications for any further study towards an intended award. The Assessment, Progression and Awarding Committee (APAC) will need to be aware of any modules that have already been failed by a student, in order that a student does not continue to register and pay fees in circumstances in which it is impossible for them to achieve their intended award. Students must be given clear guidance about the timing of referred and deferred assessments in advance.

11.5 Repeat Study

International Students should refer to 11.4 above.

- 11.5.1 Repeat study following failure in referred assessment(s) may be permitted with the approval of the Faculty Assessment, Progression and Awarding Committee, following recommendation from the Mitigation Committee as appropriate (see 11.3). Repeat study may be permitted in the following circumstances:
- a. where mitigation has been approved.
 - b. where there are external requirements by a PSRB.
 - c. where condonement rules (as found in Chapter 8 of the Assessment, Progression and Awarding: Taught Programmes Handbook) are prevented from being followed (i.e. a student would have progressed if one or more failed modules had been condonable).
- 11.5.2 Mid-year proposals for Repeat Study may be approved under APAC Chair's Action in consultation with the Mitigation Committee. Following the Faculty Assessment, Progression and Awarding Committee, a report summarising the instances of approved Repeat Study must be provided to the Faculty Office.
- 11.5.3 In all cases:
- a. Students required to repeat a module or stage **should** do so with attendance.
 - b. The opportunity to repeat a stage or module(s) **should** only be available once throughout a student's programme of study.
 - c. Modules that have been passed **must** only be repeated in cases of exceptional mitigating circumstances and with the approval of the Dean for Taught Students.
 - d. Where the requirements for progression or an award have been met (despite the inclusion of failed modules in the final calculation) there will be no further opportunity for a student to resit failed elements in order to improve the final outcome.

- 11.5.4 In programmes where students register on a module-by-module basis, students may be permitted to repeat modules up to the credit value of one stage of their programme of study.
- 11.5.5 Students who are not registered on an award-bearing programme and are studying individual modules may only be permitted to register to repeat a failed module once. If these modules are subsequently transferred via Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) to an award-bearing programme, a student may only be permitted to include repeated modules up to the credit value of one stage of their programme of study in the transferred credit.
- 11.5.6 Students repeating a stage **should** start at the beginning of the next academic year. Students repeating individual modules **should** start at the beginning of the next available delivery of the module(s).
- 11.5.7 Repeat study is defined as follows:
- a. An additional attempt at a module(s) in the subsequent academic year which usually involves attendance at the relevant scheduled teaching events.
 - b. Progression is on hold pending successful completion of these assessments.
 - c. Repeat study can be of modules or whole years but requires submission of supporting evidence (with the exception of PSRBs) in order to be approved; the option to repeat a whole year or module is only available once per programme of study.
 - d. Repeat study students are not on RWA status, but instead on RSA status as they are in attendance.
 - e. RSA students are charged tuition fees on a pro-rata credit basis; repeat study years will count towards the total number of years for which a student is eligible for student finance (a maximum of five years' of student finance is available).
 - f. Module marks, in relation to any repeats, would not be capped.
- 11.5.8 The following Repeat Study Rules should be relaxed in Exceptional Years:
- a. Usually, the option to repeat a whole year or module is only available once per programme of study; however, where APACs have granted a period of repeat study as a result of an Exceptional Year, this should not count against the student should they subsequently require/ where they have previously required a repeat in non-Exceptional Years.
 - b. Where APACs believe a student has been severely impacted by an Exceptional Year, they may permit passed modules to be repeated.

- c. Where APACs believe a student has been severely impacted by an Exceptional Year, they may permit a further opportunity to resit failed elements in order to improve the final outcome.

¹Trailing/trailed module(s); where a student has failed deferred assessment in August but has satisfied the criteria as noted in 11.4.1a, they may progress to the next stage with referred assessment(s) to take place at the next available assessment point.

³Where it is recommended that deferrals or referrals should be taken at the next scheduled assessment point for the module, interrupted students will be required to complete their period of interruption before resuming study and will then be offered the opportunity to sit their outstanding assessments at the next available opportunity.