

SPECIAL PROVISIONS FOR HEALTHCARE PROGRAMMES

1. Preamble

- 1.1 This document outlines special provisions which have been agreed for programmes in subjects relating to healthcare. It contains specific provisions which amend, for those programmes only, the regulations, policies and procedures set out in:
 - a. The Handbook for Approval and Revision of Taught Modules and Programme
 - b. The Handbook for Assessment, Progression and Awarding: Taught Programmes
 - c. The Credit and Qualifications Framework
 - d. The Quality Review Framework
 - e. The University of Exeter Policy and Procedures for Fitness to Practise (FtP)
 - f. The University Terms and Academic Calendar
- 1.2 The provisions set out in this document have the same status as the provisions set out in the document that they amend.
- 1.3 Some of the provisions in this document are regulations which affect students – for instance in relation to referral and deferral rules. Some of them are policies which relate to staff – for instance, in relation to module development quality assurance.
- 1.4 This document also seeks to set out the rationale for the special provisions.
- 1.5 While this document aims to identify all exceptions to university regulations and codes of practice relating to healthcare programmes, other exceptions or specific provisions may exist within the regulations themselves.
- 1.6 Different programmes will require amendments to different regulations. Therefore this document is divided into sections according to specific programmes or groupings of programmes.

2. Special Provisions for Nursing Programmes

- 2.1 Preamble
 - 2.1.1 The Special provisions for Nursing Programmes outline special provisions which have been agreed for programmes which are offered by the Academy of Nursing and are subject to regulation by the Nursing and Midwifery Council.
 - 2.1.2 Please see the [NMC's Standards for Nurses](#). The key documents for Nursing programmes are:
 - a. Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education

- b. Standards for student supervision and assessment
 - c. Standards for pre-registration nursing programmes
- 2.1.3 Please also see the [NMC Quality Assurance Framework](#).
- 2.2 **Programme Approval and Revision** (see: Approval and Revision of Taught Modules and Programmes Handbook)
- 2.2.1 The University may not give approval to the delivery of a Nursing programme except where approval to run such a programme has been granted by the NMC, as required in the NMC's 'Standards for pre-registration nursing education' requirement R10.2.
- 2.2.2 Any amendment to a Nursing programme must follow the requirements and guidance of the NMC, seeking the NMC's approval where appropriate.
- 2.3 **Credit and Qualifications Framework** (see: Credit and Qualifications Framework)
- 2.3.1 The award of BSc and MSc degrees in Nursing shall meet the credit requirement outlined in the Credit and Qualifications Framework.
- 2.3.2 However, due to the legal requirement (as mandated by EU Directive 2013/55/EU) that pre-registration nursing programmes must equate to a minimum of a BSc and have a minimum of 4,600 hours of academic and clinical learning, pre-registration programmes are longer than undergraduate programmes. Programmes leading to dual registration in two fields of nursing must be of sufficient length. The MSc nursing will run over four years and equates to maximum of 6,222 hours.
- 2.4 **Referral, deferral, condonement** (see: Assessment, Progression and Awarding: Taught Programmes Handbook)
- 2.4.1 Certain modules (usually practice modules) on the Nursing programme will be assessed as pass/fail. This is because these assessments require the demonstration of core, essential proficiencies. All students must perform these proficiencies to the acceptable, safe standard. The nature of the assessment means that additional credit could not be given for exceeding the standard, and therefore they cannot be marked on a variable scale.
- 2.4.2 Students who meet the academic requirements of the modules (typically by completing all assessments to the required standard) will be deemed to have passed the module. Pass/fail modules will usually be those relating to clinical placement.
- 2.4.3 No numerical mark will be given for pass/fail modules.
- 2.4.4 Pass/fail modules will be excluded from calculations of stage averages, degree averages and award classifications.

- 2.4.5 Summative assessments on other modules may also be 'pass/fail'. However, when this is the case, these assessments will be weighted at 0% so that an overall module mark may be calculated. Typically these assessments will be to ensure the programme complies with section 4.6 of the 'Standards for pre-registration nursing programmes' which requires the University to "ensure that all programmes include a health numeracy assessment related to nursing proficiencies and calculation of medicines which must be passed with a score of 100%".
- 2.4.6 No condonement or compensation will be permitted on any module (both theory and practice) forming part of a nursing qualification leading to professional registration. This is in order to comply with the NMC's 'Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education' section 5.16 which states that "there is no compensation in assessments across theory and practice learning".
- 2.4.7 Except where specifically detailed in the module description, all summative assessments on Nursing modules (with code beginning NUR) must be passed in order for the module to be passed. A student who has failed an assessment will be deemed to have failed the module, even if the average mark for the module is above the usual pass mark. This applies for all summative assessments, even if they have been weighted at 0% of the module mark. This is in order to comply with the NMC's 'Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education' section 5.16 which states that "there is no compensation in assessments across theory and practice learning".
- 2.4.8 For summative assessments with a passing mark of 100% students will be permitted up to two referral attempts (i.e. a total of three attempts at the assessment).
- 2.4.9 The Practice Assessment Document (PAD) consists of specified proficiencies that must be signed off at least once by the end of a specific part. The PAD is comprised of three parts. Part one will be assessed in year one of the programme, part two will be assessed in year two of the programme, part three will be assessed across years three and four of the programme. Certain NMC proficiencies can be met in either Part 2 or Part 3 of the PAD and they are listed in the Ongoing Achievement Record (OAR). The PAD includes single opportunity of assessment for Medicine Management and Episode of Care in each part. A consolidation period of three weeks is available at the end of each academic year to meet the needs of students, especially those who have been referred in practice.

- 2.4.10 When a student has failed an assessment they will be given the opportunity to be referred in that assessment. The referred assessment will be capped at the pass mark. The module mark will not be capped. In some circumstances a second referral attempt may be allowed, where specified in the module descriptor.
- 2.4.11 Referral of failed assessments will normally take place within the Nursing programme academic year; there will be no separate referral/deferral assessment period, and decisions on referral will not require an Assessment, Progression and Awarding Committee. Wherever possible a timeframe for reassessment will be indicated on the module descriptor. In the event that a referral cannot be completed within the academic year the APAC may decide to allow the assessment to be completed in the subsequent academic year (i.e. as Resit Without Attendance).
- 2.4.12 Students who fail a referred assessment will be deemed to have failed the academic stage, except in instances where an additional referral attempt is permitted.
- 2.4.13 All students will normally be allowed a maximum of one repeat stage, regardless of any exceptional mitigating circumstances, provided that they have not been withdrawn from the course for fitness-to-practise reasons.
- 2.4.14 Failure of a repeat stage will normally result in a student being required to leave the programme. Decisions on student progress will be taken by the Assessment Progression and Awarding Committee at the end of the academic year.
- 2.4.15 The theory and practice modules of the course are interlinked, therefore, a student who is repeating study due to previous failure will be required to repeat all the modules of that stage in full.
- 2.5 **Assessment, Progression and Award Committees** (see: Chapter 7 of the Assessment, Progression and Awarding: Taught Programmes Handbook)
- 2.5.1 As all referrals will take place within the academic year, there will be no separate referral/deferral APAC.
- 2.5.2 There will be a single APAC at the end of the academic year.
- 2.5.3 In addition to the responsibilities outlined in Chapter 7 of the Assessment, Progression and Awarding: Taught Programmes Handbook it will be the responsibility of the APAC to:
- a. Confirm in-year referral decisions.
 - b. Approve any interim or exit awards.
 - c. Confirm student proficiency for professional registration.

2.5.4 Before any award is made that will lead to professional registration, the APAC must be sure that:

- a. The student has completed and passed all modules that form the programme.
- b. The student meets the required proficiencies and programme outcomes in full.
- c. The student has demonstrated their fitness for practice.
- d. The student is eligible for academic and professional award.

2.6 **External Examining**

2.6.1 It is a requirement that Nursing programmes should have at least one external examiner for practice modules, and one external examiner for theory modules. This is to comply with 2.20 of the NMC's 'Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education' which requires us to "ensure appropriately qualified and experienced external examiners consider and report on the quality of theory and practice learning".

2.6.2 In addition to the usual roles and responsibilities of external examiners, they shall also be required to give approval (where appropriate) to applications for Accredited Prior Learning. This is to ensure that we can "demonstrate a robust process for recognition of prior learning (RPL) and how it has been mapped to the programme learning outcomes and proficiencies" as required by section 2.8 of the NMC's 'Standards framework for nursing and midwifery education'.

2.7 **Fitness to Practise**

2.7.1 The University's Annual Quality Review process (see: Chapter 2 of the Quality Review and Enhancement Framework) facilitates holistic reflection across a Faculty (or delegated School) on the programmes it offers and provides an opportunity to agree prioritised actions to enhance provision based on evidence arising from student performance and satisfaction.

2.7.2 Students enrolled for programmes leading to professional Nursing registration will be subject to the Fitness to Practise regulations as outlined in the [University Calendar](#).

3. **Special Provisions for Diagnostic Imaging and Radiography Programmes**

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 The provisions outlined in this document apply to the following programmes:

- a. BSc Diagnostic Radiography and Imaging.
- b. MSc Diagnostic Radiography and Imaging (pre-registration).

3.2 Assessment

3.2.1 It is a requirement of the programme that every assessment is passed.

3.2.2 When a student has failed an assessment, they will be given the opportunity to be referred in that assessment. The referred assessment will be capped at the pass mark. The module mark will not be capped. In some circumstances a second referral attempt may be allowed, where specified in the module descriptor.

3.2.3 Referral of failed assessments will take place within the programme academic year.

There will be no separate referral/deferral assessment period, and decisions on referral will not require an Assessment, Progression and Awarding Committee.

Wherever possible a timeframe for reassessment will be indicated on the module descriptor.

4. Special Provisions for the General Medical Council accredited Primary Medical Qualifications

4.1 Preamble

4.1.1 This document outlines special provisions which have been agreed in relation to programmes leading to a primary medical qualification, accredited by the General Medical Council. This includes programmes leading to an award of 'Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery'. These programmes are subject to regulation by the General Medical Council (GMC) and meet the standards set out in the [GMC's Outcomes for Graduates](#) and the GMC national Medical Licensing Assessment.

4.1.2 It contains specific provisions which amend, for those programmes only, the regulations, policies and procedures set out in:

- a. The Handbook for Approval and Revision of Taught Modules and Programme
- b. The Handbook for Assessment, Progression and Awarding: Taught Programmes
- c. The Credit and Qualifications Framework
- d. The Quality Review and Enhancement Framework
- e. The [University of Exeter Policy and Procedures for Fitness to Practise \(FtP\)](#)
- f. The [University Terms and Academic Calendar](#)

4.1.3 This document will also refer to other documents that include policy and provisions applicable to Primary Medical Qualifications at the University of Exeter

- a. The BMBS Assessment Handbook
- b. The BMBS Attendance Policy

- c. The BMBS Mitigation Policy
 - d. The Programme Description(s)
 - e. [The Module Descriptions](#)
- 4.1.4 The provisions within this document relate to both regulations and policies and may impact staff and students as appropriate.
- 4.1.5 This document aims to identify all exceptions to university regulations and codes of practice relating to Primary Medical Qualifications.
- 4.2 Credit and Qualifications Framework**
- 4.2.1 The award of the Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery (BMBS) shall meet the credit requirement outlined in the Credit and Qualifications Framework.
- 4.2.2 Total study hours are required by the GMC to be at least 5500 hours as a requirement of the UK membership of the European Higher Education Area ('Bologna Process').
- 4.3 Professionalism, Attendance, Fitness to Practise**
- 4.3.1 Due to the requirement for clinical placements, it will be necessary for the BMBS programme to teach outside of the usual [University term dates](#). Separate term dates for the programme will be published by the University of Exeter Medical School.
- 4.3.2 Teaching will also take place at clinical partner sites at locations across South West England and further afield, including options to undertake international placements. Students will be required to attend placements at locations as allocated by the programme.
- 4.3.3 Students will be required to be in attendance at all academic and clinical learning sessions as outlined by the BMBS Attendance Policy.
- 4.3.4 Students are expected to demonstrate professional behaviour as expected of a doctor in training. Students on the BMBS programme will be subject to the [Fitness to Practise regulations](#). Students must be deemed 'fit to practise' or 'fitness to practise in question and under review' in order to progress to the next academic stage. Students must be deemed 'fit to practise' in order to graduate.
- 4.4 Assessment, Referral, Deferral, Condonement and Repeat Stages**
- 4.4.1 Assessment in each stage will be across three key academic themes: Medical Knowledge, Clinical Practice and Special Study Units / Electives. In addition to ensure Fitness to Practise a theme of Professionalism sits alongside these academic themes.

4.4.2 A student will be expected to pass a Stage of study in its entirety before being allowed to progress to the next Stage. In addition, students must be considered fit to practise or 'subject to review' under the [Fitness to Practise Regulations](#).

4.4.3 The BMBS programme uses a variety of assessment methods as outlined in the [Module Descriptors](#) and BMBS Assessment Handbook. Due to the nature of these assessments, the marking schemes, pass mark and number of attempts will be different from the standard University regulations.

- a. The marking scheme used for a specific assessment will be published on the BMBS Virtual Learning Environment in advance of the assessment taking place.
- b. The methodology for setting the pass mark will be published in the BMBS Assessment Handbook in advance of the assessment taking place.
- c. The number of assessment opportunities and attempts in the event of failure is specified in the module descriptor.
- d. The BMBS programme takes a holistic programmatic assessment approach. As specified in the BMBS Assessment Handbook individual elements of assessment will be aggregated and a decision on whether a student has passed or failed an assessment theme will be taken at the Programme APAC.
- e. As outlined in the Module Descriptors and the BMBS Assessment Handbook, reassessment opportunities will be granted across assessment themes, not always for each individual assessment element within a theme.
- f. The University Academic Conduct and Practice regulations are applicable to the programme(s). However, due to the structure of programme delivery and assessment, it may sometimes be necessary to make adjustments to the application of these regulations, in order to fulfil the requirements of the programme. Any such adjustments will be considered alongside the principles of the regulations.

4.4.4 Each stage of the programme is a single non-condonable module. There is also no compensation between assessment themes, i.e. all assessment themes must be passed concurrently in order to progress or be awarded, regardless of whether any non-completion is as a result of health, personal circumstances or academic performance.

4.4.5 Students who fail to pass the stage will be given the opportunity to repeat the stage in full subject to the following:

- a. Students will not normally be permitted to refer or defer individual components into a subsequent academic stage, i.e. 'Resit without attendance' is not available for the BMBS programme.
- b. A maximum of two repeat stages are permitted across the programme.
- c. A failed stage may only be repeated once.
- d. When exceptional mitigating circumstances result in an incomplete assessment profile that also includes missed reassessment opportunities, the stage may be repeated subsequently as a first attempt.
- e. Students repeating a stage will be required to repeat the stage in its entirety. No marks will be carried forward from their previous attempts.
- f. Professionalism concerns are carried forward into a subsequent stage even if this is a repeat stage.

4.5 Mitigation

- 4.5.1 The [University's mitigation policy](#) will be applied, with adjustments made as appropriate for the specific assessment. Students should refer to the BMBS Assessment Handbook for guidance on how mitigated assessments are managed.
- 4.5.2 Proxy marks cannot be offered in place of assessments as a result of mitigation. Due to the nature of programmatic assessment it may be possible for the Programme APAC to make robust progression decisions without a complete assessment profile being presented. The Assessment Handbook provides guidance on this.

4.6 Assessment Progression and Awarding Committee

- 4.6.1 No scaling meetings are held as part of the APAC process.
- 4.6.2 For the non-final stages there will be a pre-APAC Assessment Panel to consider results for each assessment theme and for Professionalism, with the relevant External Examiner in attendance. The APAC will then consider each student's overall performance across all themes, with the awarding External Examiner present.
- 4.6.3 For the final stage the APAC will consider each student's overall performance across all themes, with the awarding External Examiner present.
- 4.6.4 For the referral-deferral period a single APAC meeting will consider all assessment data.

4.7 Awards and Classification

- 4.7.1 The BMBS is a pass/fail award, so no single overall average mark for either an academic stage or the programme is provided.

4.7.2 The BMBS programme is not classified according to the standard University classifications. Classifications will be given of 'Distinction' and 'Merit' according to the following criteria. Students who are eligible for an award but do not meet the criteria for a Distinction or Merit will be awarded a BMBS.

4.7.3 BMBS with Distinction

- a. The award of a BMBS with Distinction will normally be based on a student's assessment performance in the final stage of the programme.
- b. Students who attain an Excellent (top 10%) in the assessments for both Medical Knowledge and Clinical Practice, will be automatically eligible for the award of BMBS with Distinction.
- c. In addition, all students will be ranked on their performance in the assessment themes for Medical Knowledge and Clinical Practice in the final stage. A BMBS with Distinction may be awarded, at the discretion of the APAC, to students who have consistently performed to a high standard in final stage assessments for Medical Knowledge and Clinical Practice. This normally means within the top 10% of the cohort based on the overall rank from the Medical Knowledge and Clinical Practice Assessments in the final stage.
- d. At the discretion of the APAC, an award of Distinction may be withheld based on any significant professionalism concerns.

4.7.4 BMBS with Merit

- a. Students whose ranking falls in the top 25%, and who do not qualify for BMBS with Distinction will be considered for the award of BMBS with Merit.
- b. At the discretion of the APAC, an award of Merit may be withheld based on any significant professionalism concerns.

4.7.5 Students who leave the programme before completion may be entitled to an exit award, depending on how many credits they have completed. Details can be found in Chapter 9 of the Credit and Qualifications Framework and in the BMBS Programme Specification.

4.7.6 Exit awards will be in "Medical Studies" or for those completing 480 credits "Advanced Medical Studies" and will not qualify for registration as a healthcare professional. The methodology for calculating the classification of the exit award (where relevant) are published on the BMBS Virtual Learning Environment.

4.8 Interruption

4.8.1 Students returning from interruption must restart the stage in full, and no results will be carried over from the previous stage.

4.8.2 All students returning from interruption must obtain Occupational Health clearance before they can resume studies.

4.8.3 In the event that a student has been given exceptional permission to interrupt for more than two years they may, at the discretion of the Dean of the Medical School, be required to repeat an earlier stage of study on their return from interruption.

4.9 **Intercalation**

4.9.1 Students on the BMBS programme may intercalate provided that they have followed the application process and meet the requirements to intercalate.

4.9.2 Students can only be registered for one programme at a time therefore to intercalate students must be interrupted from their BMBS studies for the duration of the intercalation programme.

4.9.3 Intercalation will take place between Clinical Pathways 1 and Clinical Pathways 2. Students will not be given permission to interrupt for the purposes of intercalation at any other point in the programme.

4.10 **Fitness to Practise**

4.10.1 Students enrolled on the Primary Medical Qualification programmes will be subject to the Fitness to Practise regulations as outlined in the [University Calendar](#).

4.11 **Appealing against withdrawal or repeat stages**

4.11.1 The University's procedure for [Academic Appeals](#) applies to Primary Medical Qualifications.

4.11.2 Students cannot attend teaching or placements whilst an appeal against an APAC recommendation to the DfTS for withdrawal as a consequence of academic failure is ongoing.

4.11.3 While an appeal against a Faculty APAC decision to repeat a stage is ongoing a student must attend teaching and placements appropriate to the APAC decision of a repeat stage.