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Academic Regulations Examinations

Section 5

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Section 5

Examinations

Originating Department:	Quality Assurance Services
Enquiries to:	gas@leedsbeckett.ac.uk
Approving Body:	Academic Board
Last Approved:	4 July 2023
Next due for approval:	July 2024
Document Type	Regulation
Target Audience:	Relevant for all University staff and students and of particular relevance to: Academic staff who set examinations, academic and professional support staff engaged in invigilation and staff and students at Collaborative Partners.

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Section 5: Examinations

5.1 Purpose

This section of the Academic Regulations deals with examinations, including the drafting and approval of papers, timetabling, invigilation, security and confidentiality and the conduct and responsibility of students (*referred to as 'candidates' for the purposes of this section*) undertaking the examination.

Examinations are one of the methods used to assess students' achievement of learning outcomes. Examinations may take different forms including written papers and practical assessments and may be online or in person.

Procedural requirements for staff in respect of examination support are detailed within guidance produced by Registry Services.

Schools are responsible for bringing these regulations to the attention of all candidates prior to their first examination.

5.2 General Principles of Examinations

5.2.1 Definition of Examinations

For the purposes of these Regulations, an examination is defined as follows:

- a) A Formal Invigilated Examination:
 - a timed written question paper;
 - normally answered in writing;
 - answered individually by each candidate;
 - on a specific day;
 - at a specified time and place.

- b) A Formal Invigilated Practical Assessment:
 - a timed practical assessment;
 - undertaken individually by each candidate, or in a group of candidates;
 - on a specific day;
 - at a specified time and place.

In addition, assessments would normally be considered under examination regulations where the assessment is invigilated or has an identified time constraint for submission (for example online timed assessments).

Practical assessments, oral assessments and/ or assessed presentations may be delivered under examination conditions, in which case the relevant sections of this code apply.

Where such assessments are not delivered under formal examination conditions, tutors will advise students in advance of any protocols governing, for example, non-attendance or late attendance. Disabled students who have reasonable adjustments in place for examinations will be advised as to the transferability of these for any assessments (for example phase tests) which are not delivered under formal examination conditions. Decisions on transferability should be taken in conjunction with Disability Advice.

5.2.2 Examination and Other Summative Assessment Responsibilities

The Course Director (or nominee) is responsible for informing candidates in writing of the nature and form of the examination(s) through the provision of Course and Module Handbooks or equivalent information shared via the University's virtual learning environment. The same protocol applies to arrangements for informing students of the nature and form of all other summative assessment tasks.

The Dean (or nominee) is responsible for:

- a) secure arrangements for the drafting and typing of examination papers
- b) internal scrutiny of draft papers
- c) consultation with appropriate external examiners
- d) the subsequent amendment and reproduction of finalised examination papers.

The Dean (or nominee) is responsible for informing candidates of the timetable for their examinations at least 6 weeks prior to the event, unless the information relates to re-sit examinations. In these circumstances, candidates will be notified of arrangements in a timely fashion.

Normally examination timetables will be shared via the University's virtual learning environment and candidates are responsible for checking their timetable and reporting any difficulties to their Course Administrator.

Candidates are responsible for familiarising themselves with the Academic Regulations and are warned that any breach of the assessment and/ or examination regulations could result in penalties as defined in the University's Code of Practice on Academic Integrity.

University staff, staff based at collaborative partners and external examiners are each responsible for ensuring the security and confidentiality of examinations during each stage of examination activity (e.g. setting, reproduction, marking, moderating and storing of papers/ scripts).

5.2.3 General Principles on Moderation and Approval of Examination Papers

An internal team must moderate draft examination papers but must not retain copies.

Written examination papers must follow the agreed University format and rubric as defined by Registry Services.

Where the examination paper(s) contribute to the assessment of the final award at, or above, Level 4 of the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications, the draft papers must be submitted to the external examiner(s) for approval with reasonable time for the detailed consideration of the drafts and discussion with internal staff as appropriate.

In accordance with the general principles of assessment defined in section 3.2 of these regulations, after the internal marking and moderation process has concluded, the scripts/submissions, or a regulatorily defined sample, should be sent to the external examiner(s). Reasonable time will be given to consider the scripts/submissions prior to the meeting of the relevant Module or Progression and Award Board.

The same protocol applies to arrangements for sending submissions, or a regulatorily defined sample, of all other summative assessment tasks to the external examiners. Summative assessment submissions which cannot easily be shared in this way will be subject to review by the external examiner through the most practicable way that can be arranged. (For example, the examiner will visit the University to review artefact submissions.)

5.2.4 General Principles on the Conduct of Examinations

School staff, together with the responsible post holder from Registry Services, are responsible for the individual arrangements relating to each examination on the day of the examination.

Examination scripts, including examination submissions in other media, shall be retained by the School for one year after the date of the meeting of the Module or Progression and Award Board at which the student outcomes were considered.

Where a breach of Assessment or Examination regulations is suspected:

- a) The Senior Invigilator will record this on the candidate's script(s) and remove any object(s) which have raised suspicion concerning unfair practice.
- b) The candidate will be allowed to continue the examination but will be informed that an investigation will be conducted, in accordance with University regulations.

Equivalent intervention would be expected where a breach of assessment regulations is suspected during an online examination, wherever possible. A record of the time of the suspected breach would be made within the invigilator's report.

5.3 Code of Practice on Examinations

5.3.1 Written Examination Papers from External Bodies or Professional Bodies

Where examinations are set by an external or professional body, or to an external or professional body prescription, additional requirements to those defined within this code may apply.

5.3.2 Examination Timetables

Registry Services, in conjunction with each School, is responsible for the preparation of provisional and final timetables for all formal examinations, and allocation of suitable accommodation. In preparing examination timetables the following will be considered:

- a) Where a module is shared by a number of courses, any identical examination must be taken simultaneously.
- b) The final examination timetable will be published at least 6 weeks before the date of the first examination.
- c) Candidates will be notified of examination arrangements via the University virtual learning environment. If candidates anticipate difficulties in the scheduling of their examinations, they are requested to contact the Course Administrator in the first instance. These would include matters such as a timetable clash for examinations or requirements of religious festivals and practices.
- d) With regards religious festivals and practices, reasonable adjustments will be considered

Scheduling of examinations as specified below will *not normally* be valid grounds for review of the examination timetable. The University may schedule examinations so that:

- a) a candidate would not normally be expected to sit more than two examinations on any day;
- b) examination start times, where possible, are either 9.30 am or 2pm GMT;
- c) examinations may be located in non-University premises (or online).

5.3.3 Invigilation

Each School is responsible for the appointment of invigilators for all examinations. Staff guidance is issued by Registry Services for the conduct of invigilation of examinations and may be found on Registry Services web pages.

5.3.4 Responsibilities of Candidates

It is the responsibility of candidates to familiarise themselves and comply with University regulations.

Candidates should note these responsibilities in particular:

- a) To be considered to be registered for any assessment, a student¹ must have completed the requirements of the University in respect of registration and the payment of fees.
- b) To have their student ID cards checked by, or on behalf of, the Senior Invigilator within 30 minutes of the commencement of an examination (ID cards should have a full face photograph. Candidates who do not have their student card with them will be required to complete a verification process). Equivalent candidate verification processes will be undertaken where the examination is taken online.
- c) To make representations to their Course Administrator, in cases of difficulty.

5.3.5 Electronic and Other Personal Equipment

Electronic and other personal equipment which is permitted to be used during an examination will be specified in the examination rubric and candidates will be given advance notice of the specifications of such equipment. Candidates may not use or access equipment outside of these specifications, including mobile phones. Any attempt to do so may be construed as unfair practice.

¹ Responsibility for payment of costs associated with an apprenticeship is outlined in contractual documentation.

5.3.6 Additional information about Equipment

All candidates may request the use of the dictionaries provided by attracting the attention of the invigilator.

All candidates whose first language is not English may consult with their Course Administrator with a view to a foreign language dictionary being made available. Such consultation should take place no later than 6 weeks prior to the examination. English dictionaries are provided.

All candidates must use only the approved examination stationery supplied by the University.

All “rough work” must be undertaken on the paper provided and must be attached to, and handed in with, the candidate’s script.

All candidates must ensure that their mobile phone or other unauthorised electronic device is switched off. If the mobile phone of any candidate sounds in the examination room (or during an online examination), the Senior Invigilator will make a report to the Chair of the Module Board or Progression and Award Board detailing the incident and identifying the candidate whose phone caused the disturbance.

5.4 Conduct of Examination Candidates

Immediately prior to the commencement of the examination:

- a) Candidates must assemble outside the examination room in good time before the published commencement time of the examination. Where the examination is to be taken online, candidates will be expected to present themselves online in good time before the examination commences.
- b) Candidates must not enter the examination room until instructed to do so by the Senior Invigilator. This will be around 15 minutes before the published commencement time of the examination.

Arriving late:

- a) A candidate may be admitted up to 30 minutes after the start of the examination, but not thereafter, and must conclude his or her examination at the same time as the other candidates. These same requirements will normally apply where the examination is taken online.

During the examination:

- a) Candidates must conduct themselves in a manner that will not cause disturbance to other candidates.
- b) Candidates shall not communicate with other candidates during the examination, whether the examination is taken in person or online.
- c) Candidates must comply with instructions given to them individually, or to all candidates, by the invigilator.
- d) A candidate who wishes to attract the attention of an invigilator shall do so by raising a hand, or other equivalent means where the examination is taken online.
- e) Candidates who wish to have the “instructions to candidates” or typographical points clarified with the Senior Invigilator may do so:
 - within the first 10 minutes of the examination or
 - during any reading time allowed.
- f) In examinations in which “reading time” is allowed, throughout the specified reading time candidates may make rough notes on the stationery and annotate or highlight the examination paper. After the period of reading time has expired, the invigilator will announce the start of the examination, at which time candidates may commence writing their answers
- g) A candidate who is unwell or who needs to leave the examination room for any reason deemed adequate by the Senior Invigilator may do so under the supervision of an invigilator and return whilst the examination is in progress. Where the examination is taken online, Senior Invigilators may make specific arrangements with the candidate to ensure the avoidance of unfair practices during the examination.
- h) No candidate shall be allowed to terminate his or her examination during the first or final 30 minutes of examination time.
- i) A candidate who leaves the examination room unaccompanied by an invigilator is not allowed to re-enter the examination room. Where the examination is taken online, Senior Invigilators may make specific arrangements with the candidate to ensure the avoidance of unfair practices during the examination.

On the conclusion of the examination:

- a) Candidates will cease writing their answers when instructed to do so.
- b) Candidates will remain silent and seated until instructed to leave the examination room.
- c) Candidates will ensure that their scripts, any continuation sheets and rough work sheets are attached together ready for collection by the invigilator.
- d) Candidates will not remove any item supplied by the University other than the question paper.

- e) When authorised to do so, candidates will collect all their belongings and leave the examination room.
- f) For examinations conducted online, candidates should follow the instructions provided to submit their answers.

5.5 Absence from Written Examinations

A candidate whose illness prevents them from attending an examination is required to provide a medical certificate to this effect which must be sent without delay to the relevant person outlined in the Course Handbook.

The University operates a 'fit to sit' policy in respect of examinations which is explained further in Section 8 of the Academic Regulations: **Extenuating Circumstances and Mitigation**.

In the event of a failure of the transport service due to industrial action or severe weather conditions, candidates are required to:

- a) obtain an official note from the transport company to confirm the reason for the absence;
- b) inform the Course Director as soon as possible;
- c) hand in or post the official note without delay.

In addition to providing information as required above, candidates should also submit a request for extenuating circumstances in accordance with the **section 8 on Extenuating Circumstances and Mitigation**.

5.6 Breach of Regulations

Actions which may be considered to be breaches of the University's Academic Regulations relating to assessment and examination are set out in Section 10 of these regulations. These include cheating and other forms of unfair practice provided in the appendix at the end of this section. In the event of an alleged breach of the assessment regulations, the matter will be investigated and considered in accordance with the University Regulations.

APPENDIX: ACTIONS WHICH MAY BE CONSIDERED TO BE BREACHES OF THE UNIVERSITY'S ACADEMIC REGULATIONS RELATING TO ASSESSMENT AND EXAMINATION

1 CHEATING

Section 10: Academic Integrity of the Academic Regulations defines cheating as:

Cheating is unfair behaviour relating to an examination (in person or online). It includes, but is not limited to:

- a) Actions within the examination room/online platform:
 - communicating with any other candidate during an examination
 - copying from any other candidate during an examination
 - communicating with any other person other than an authorised invigilator or another member of staff during an examination (including the use of electronic communication)
 - possession of any written or printed materials in the examination room/online platform unless expressly permitted by the examination regulations
 - possession of any electronically stored information in the examination room/online platform unless expressly permitted by the examination regulations
 - use of a mobile phone or other electronic device during an examination, unless expressly permitted by the examination regulations

- b) Actions outside of the examination room/online platform:
 - gaining access to any unauthorised material relating to the examination during or before the examination
 - obtaining a copy of a written examination paper in advance of the time and date for its authorised release.

This list is not exhaustive.

2 OTHER FORMS OF UNFAIR PRACTICE

Section 10: Academic Integrity of the Academic Regulations defines other forms of unfair practice as:

Other forms of Unfair Practice include, but are not limited to:

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- offering a bribe or inducement to any member of staff of the University, or any external invigilator or examiner, who is connected with the student's assessments
- falsifying data in any piece of work
- the assumption by one person of the identity of another person with the intent to deceive or gain unfair advantage
- submitting copies of another person's work stored on an electronic device
- non-compliance with university research ethics procedures
- failure to gain ethical approval for the submitted piece of work, as appropriate.