

Convening of Examination Boards and Assessment for Academic Awards



Summary			
<p>The document sets out how the conduct of assessment is governed, the appointment of externals, the convening of examination boards and details the authority by which the methods of examination and assessment of a student’s ability or proficiency are determined where the University is disabled from conducting examinations and assessment in the normal way.</p> <p>The content in this document was previously presented within Ordinance 17 prior to 2021/22.</p>			
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1. Conduct of Assessment for Academic Awards

Assessment of students for academic awards shall be carried out under the direction of the appropriate examination board by properly appointed examiners. The following shall also be governed by regulations: (a) assessment of University of Bristol students studying at other higher education institutions; and (b) assessment of students by members of staff of industrial or other similar organisations.

2. Examiners

On behalf of Senate, the Faculty PGR Director shall appoint examiners for higher degrees by research and faculty boards shall appoint other examiners, in accordance with regulations. Examiners shall be competent and respected individuals in their area of study. External examiners shall normally be members of the academic staff of other universities; they shall not be members of the Board of Trustees or of the University's staff and shall not have been employed by the University within the previous five years.

3. Examination Boards

(a) An initial examination board comprising at least three persons shall be convened to approve every undergraduate and taught postgraduate academic award of the University.

(b) For undergraduate and taught postgraduate awards, the initial examination board shall comprise the internal and external examiners for each subject or group of subjects included in the programme of study for the award. This examination board shall make recommendations to the faculty examination board of the faculty in which the degree is awarded. The faculty examination board shall be chaired by the dean or his or her nominee and its composition shall be determined by the faculty board. The faculty examination board shall not question the academic judgment of the initial examination board, but shall ensure that proper procedures have been carried out, and that the treatment of special cases is fair across the faculty, including consideration given for illness and personal problems affecting a student's performance, the award of aegrotat degrees and penalties imposed for plagiarism. Within this remit, the faculty examination board shall have the power to accept or amend recommendations made by the initial examination board.

(c) For all research degrees, the examiners shall make recommendations to the Research Degrees Examination Board, which shall have the power to accept or reject recommendations made by the initial examiner.

Notwithstanding anything contained to the contrary in the Ordinances, Regulations and Standing Orders of the University, in the event that:

(a) any act or omission on the part of a member or members of the academic staff or any other persons appointed to deal with examinations or assessment within the University; or

(b) any circumstances which are beyond the reasonable control of the University shall in the view of the Board of Trustees disable the University from conducting examinations and assessment in the normal way, the Board of Trustees (acting in accordance with the provisions of Statute 17.1 and Statute 21.1) may order that the Vice-Chancellor representing Senate as its Chairman and acting in his absolute discretion in what he considers to be in the best interests of the University and its students shall (subject always to the provisions of the Charter and Statutes of the University) have the power (after consulting with such members of Senate as he considers appropriate) to determine what methods of examination and assessment of a student's ability or proficiency shall be adopted by any relevant internal examiners and the relevant external examiners of the University for the purpose of:

- i. the award of any degree, diploma or certificate of the University
- ii. the classification of any degree of the University
- iii. the assessment of satisfactory performance or proficiency before any student is allowed to pass from one part of a programme of study or one University year to another;

and similarly have the power to exercise the authorities of University examination boards to approve the award of any degree, diploma or certificate so examined or assessed.