



## Universal Assessment Regulations: Emergency Academic Regulations (Force Majeure)

### Document Control

Responsibility for Policy:	Registrar
Approved by and date:	24 <sup>th</sup> June 2020
Frequency of Review:	5 years
Next Review date:	2025
Related Policies:	
Minor Revisions:	<p>Amendment to clause 9.3.1 agreed at Senate on November 11<sup>th</sup> 2020</p> <p>Amendments throughout to demark actions taken as a consequence of the COVID 19 pandemic and future use.</p> <p>Specifically:            Status of the Conventions and throughout: clarity that the regulations can be applied wholly or partially, for individuals or cohorts of students dependent upon the Emergency.            Throughout:            3.3 Reworded to give further flexibility in relation to University processes.            4. Rewording for clarity.            5. Reiteration of COVID 19 actions as an example of how the Emergency Regulations may be implemented.            6. Amended to reflect the revised Board structure now confirmed as University practice. Incorporates Clause 11: Quoracy and Operation of Assessment Boards.            7. Reiteration of COVID 19 actions as an example of how the Emergency Regulations may be implemented.            8. Continuation and Completion of PGT awards incorporated into Clause 7 (7.2).            9. Clauses 9 and 10 now 8 and 9 and reworded to clarify adjustments during COVID 19 pandemic.</p>
EIA:	

## **1. Status of the Conventions**

The Emergency Academic Regulations apply to students being assessed for the first time in the academic year in which the Regulations are invoked (excluding those having deferred assessment from a previous academic year and therefore studying through an assessment only route at any Level in that year).

The adjustments associated with the Emergency Regulations can be applied wholly or partially, as appropriate to the emergency. They may also be applied differentially as appropriate to the impact of the emergency on individuals or groups of students.

## **2. Introduction**

2.1 At all times the University takes appropriate steps to ensure that learning, teaching and assessment continue without significant disruption so that students achieve fair, timely and appropriate outcomes. As a consequence, in the event of disruption caused by force majeure, these Emergency Regulations will be invoked at the request of the University Vice Chancellor on behalf of Senate. Examples when the Regulations may be invoked include natural disaster, pandemic, acts of terrorism and industrial action of extended duration.

2.2 The requirements of Professional Regulatory Bodies may override the Emergency Regulations, in which case the University will take additional steps to support its students in meeting these requirements.

2.3 Students completing their award or level of study will meet the Learning Outcomes laid out in the Validation document for that program of study. These regulations will not impact on academic standards or the fairness of assessment but instead aim to provide a mechanism through which timely outcomes can be reached within the constraints imposed by the force majeure.

## **3. Emergency Academic Regulations and their Relationship to Liverpool Hope Universal Regulations and Conventions**

3.1 The Vice Chancellor will advise the University Registrar of the need to invoke the Emergency Regulations, and Senate will be notified of this decision at the first available opportunity.

3.2 When wholly or partially invoked, the Emergency Regulations take precedent over all other Liverpool Hope Universal Assessment Regulations and Conventions as appropriate. The Postgraduate Research Regulations and associated Code of Practice will remain in place. Time frames detailed in these Regulations and Code may however be impacted, including notification of outcomes to students.

3.3 Other operational processes will be reviewed and adjusted as appropriate to the Emergency. This includes the Academic Misconduct Policy, Appeals Policy, Student Complaints procedure, Fitness to Study, Fitness to Practice and Concessions for Students with an Illness, Disability, Injury and Other Circumstances.

## **4. Teaching, Learning and Assessment**

Alternative arrangements for those impacted by the emergency, in relation to learning, teaching and

assessment will be informed by inclusion, fairness and the accommodation of individual needs.

- 4.1 In the event of an emergency, which prevents the normal methods of learning, teaching and assessment taking place for individuals or groups of students, the University will make all reasonable attempts to ameliorate the situation.
- 4.2 Where changes to assessment are required for individuals or groups of students, the Head of School/ Department will notify the University Registrar. These changes will then be considered by the University Provost on behalf of the Chair of Senate. Once approval is granted the appropriate External Examiner will be notified of the amendment. The University will record all such changes for purposes of audit in the form of an Impact Statement for each School/ Department.
- 4.3 The University Registrar is empowered to revise the Examination Timetable including revoking formal examinations and requesting that examinations are replaced with alternative assessments.

## **5. Internal Moderation and Externality**

Where the disruption impacts individuals or groups of students to the extent that it impacts on assessment and moderation, amendments to the University Regulations and Conventions will be considered. However, other emergency situations may require further or different adjustments which will be agreed by the Vice Chancellor on behalf of Senate, as appropriate.

As a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic, the following adjustments were made.

- 5.1 Internal moderation of assessment outcomes should continue as detailed in the University Conventions. Where this is not possible the University Registrar should be notified and the University may decide either to release provisional outcomes to students, pending moderation, or may delay the release of outcomes until such time as moderation is possible.
- 5.2 In periods of Emergency, the University will require external examiners to focus their work on Levels H and M. External scrutiny of students work at Levels F, C and I will not, however, be required. External examiners should be advised of all amendments to teaching, learning and assessment at these levels of study using the Impact Statement detailed in 4.2 of these regulations. External Examiners will be expected to sample work as detailed in the University Regulations and Conventions and will attend the appropriate School level Examination Board (virtually or in person).

## **6. Decision making at Boards**

- 6.1 Where the emergency necessitates it, the University Registrar may advise the Chair of Senate that the scheduled subject meetings and Continuation and Award Boards agreed by Senate should be overridden by appropriate emergency arrangements. The emergency arrangements will ensure maintenance of robust academic standards, timely results release and consideration of individuals and groups of students disrupted by the situation.
- 6.2 Emergency arrangements for each School/ Department, including requirements for quoracy, will be documented in the appropriate Impact Statement and will be formally

agreed between the Head and the University Provost ahead of implementation.

## **7. Continuation within and Completion of Awards**

Where the disruption impacts individuals or groups of students to the extent that Continuation and Completion may be affected, amendments to the University Regulations and Conventions will be considered. However, other emergency situations may require further or different adjustments which will be agreed by the Vice Chancellor on behalf of Senate, as appropriate.

As a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic, the following adjustments were made.

### **7.1 Undergraduate**

All Levels F and C students (unless PSRB dictates otherwise):

- Student's Continuation will be determined on the basis of Subject decisions in relation to engagement. Students are required to complete all coursework assessment, to an acceptable standard as determined by the subject examiners but the student will not be required to complete alternative assessment in place of examinations.

Level I Single Honours Students (unless PSRB dictates otherwise):

- Student Continuation will be determined on the basis of completion of a minimum of 90 credits of assessment. Students will not normally be required to undertake examinations or alternatives in place of the examination.
- Students must have no outcomes of 0 with the exception of a mark of 0 in an assessment which has been exempted under the Emergency processes. This outcome will be discounted from the aggregate.
- Students who continue must achieve a weighted aggregate of 40 across these 90 credits. Students who achieve between 25 and 39 will normally be asked to undertake further assessment and will be Subject to capping at both assessment and block level.
- Students whose aggregate is less than 24 will normally be required to retake their Level of study.

Level I Combined honours students (unless PSRB dictates otherwise):

- Student Continuation will be determined on the basis of completion of a minimum of 45 credits of assessment in each Subject. Students will not normally be required to undertake examinations or alternatives in place of the examination. Students must achieve a weighted aggregate of 40 for each Subject.
- Students must have no outcomes of 0 with the exception of a mark of 0 in an assessment which has been exempted under the Emergency processes. This outcome will be discounted from the aggregate.
- Students who achieve an aggregate of 40 when both of their Subject outcomes are aggregated, and meet all other requirements for Continuation, but who have an aggregate between 35 and 39 in one of their Subjects, may be allowed to continue to the next level of study by changing to Single Honours in the Subject they have passed, where available.
- Students who have a Subject aggregate between 25 and 39 in one or both Subjects

will normally be asked to undertake further assessment and will be Subject to capping at both assessment and block level.

- Students who have a Subject aggregate less than 25 in one or both Subjects will normally be required to retake that/those Subject(s).

Level H Single Honours and Integrated Masters (unless PSRB dictates otherwise):

- Student completion will be determined on the basis of completion of a minimum of 90 credits. Students will be offered the opportunity to undertake an alternative in place of the examination but this will be optional. Students must achieve a weighted aggregate of 40 across their best 90 credits; their dissertation must be included in this best 90 (not integrated masters). Where 90 credits cannot be determined precisely, because of the construction of the assessment pattern, a range between 80 and 100 credits will be sought for use in the overall aggregate.
- Students must have no outcomes of 0 with the exception of a mark of 0 in an assessment which has been exempted under the Emergency processes. This outcome will be discounted from the aggregate.
- Students who have an overall aggregate between 25 and 39 or those whose aggregate is above 40 but who fail to complete because of other requirements will normally be asked to undertake further assessment and will be Subject to capping at both assessment and block level.
- Students who have a Subject aggregate less than 25 will normally be required to retake the level of study.

Level H Combined honours students (unless PSRB dictates otherwise):

- Student completion will be determined on the basis of completion of a minimum of 45 credits in each Subject. Students will be offered the opportunity to undertake an alternative in place of the examination but this will be optional. Students must achieve a weighted aggregate of 40 across their best 45 credits in each Subject; their research project or weighted dual dissertation must be included in this best 45.
- Where 90 credits cannot be determined precisely because of the construction of the assessment pattern a range between 80 and 100 credits will be sought for use in the overall aggregate. This does not need to be made up of credits taken evenly from both Subjects; for example, 60 credits could be used from Subject 1 and 30 credits from Subject 2.
- Students must have no outcomes of 0 with the exception of a mark of 0 in an assessment which has been exempted under the Emergency processes. This outcome will be discounted from the aggregate.
- Students who have an overall aggregate between 25 and 39 in one or both of their Subjects or those whose aggregate is above 40 but who fail to complete because of other requirements will normally be asked to undertake further assessment and will be Subject to capping at both assessment and block level.
- Students who have a Subject aggregate less than 25 in one or both of their Subjects will normally be required to retake the Subject(s).

## 7.2 Postgraduate Taught Awards including Professional Doctoral Part 1

Postgraduate Taught awards will be determined from the best 150 credits (range 140-180) which must include the research dissertation or equivalent.

## **8. Determination of Degree Classifications**

Where the disruption impacts individuals or groups of students to the extent that award classification may be affected, amendments to the University Regulations and Conventions may be considered. However, other emergency situations may require further or different adjustments which will be agreed by the Vice Chancellor on behalf of Senate, as appropriate.

As a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic, the following adjustments were made.

### **8.1 UG Students (Combined, Single Honours NOT Integrated Masters)**

The best 90 credits aggregate from Level H, and aggregates from Levels C and I will be used in the two degree algorithms as dictated by University Regulations (10/30/60 and 0/25/75). The lower of the two outcomes will be discarded. Students whose aggregate is within 2 rounded points of a classification border will be Subject to further scrutiny of their profile. Students will be raised to the higher of the two classifications if 60 credits of assessment outcomes at Level H are in the higher classification.

### **8.2 Integrated Masters Students (UGM)**

The best 90 credits aggregate from Level M, and aggregates from Levels C, I and H will be used in the two degree algorithms as dictated by University Regulations (5/25/30/40 and 0/25/25/50). The lower of the two outcomes will be discarded. Students whose aggregate is within 2 rounded points of a classification border will be Subject to further scrutiny. Students will be raised to the higher of the two classifications if 60 credits of assessment outcomes at Level M are in the higher classification.

### **8.3 No Detriment**

The University will adopt a no detriment approach for Undergraduates receiving awards when the Emergency regulations have been invoked. This will ensure that no student receives an overall outcome which is lower than would have been predicted by assessment outcomes before the Emergency began. Students whose final outcome is impacted by more than one case of academic misconduct during their final level of study will be excluded from the application of the no detriment policy.

The University may amend its degree algorithm to ensure no detriment for students in the academic years that follow implementation of these Emergency regulations.

### **8.4 Postgraduate Taught students**

Aside from the use of reduced credits in the calculations as detailed in 7.2 above, all other requirements detailed in Regulations and Conventions appropriate to Postgraduate Taught awards will remain in place. This includes those relating to calculation of Awards.

## **9. Continuation and Completion of Postgraduate Research Awards**

As a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic, the following adjustments were made. However, other emergency situations may require further or different adjustments, for individual or groups of students, which will be agreed by the Vice Chancellor on behalf of Senate, as appropriate.

9.1 The final examination in the form of a *viva voce* will be conducted through online video conferencing, with the same constitution of internal and external examiners as planned. The University includes within its Code of Practice guidance in relation to the use of online video conferencing for the purpose of examination.

Where a student is unable to participate by online conferencing, there will be a deferral until such time as this is possible. The situation will be reviewed at regular intervals.

9.2 Interim reviews including Confirmation of Registration processes will proceed as normal using on line video conferencing. Where this is not possible a short delay will be negotiated.

9.3 The annual monitoring process for research students will continue as usual in order to support students and ensure continuation is appropriate. Where continuation has been impacted by the emergency students and supervisors will consider how best to proceed. This is particularly pertinent for students undertaking research with human participants or in practical settings. A risk assessment must be carried out to establish whether research can continue under the emergency circumstances. Where the risk assessment requires the research to be suspended or significantly amended the student and supervisory teams must make appropriate arrangements which may include interruption of studies or amendments to the project. Ethical considerations must be reviewed where significant amendments are made to the research.