

# Regulatory Framework and Undergraduate Assessment Regulations

This handbook should be used for students who are in  
Level 6 during 2023/24



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If you would like this handbook in an alternative format, please contact [quality@aub.ac.uk](mailto:quality@aub.ac.uk)

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## Section A: Purpose of the Regulatory Framework

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The purpose of the common framework is to set the parameters for course design and delivery at postgraduate taught and undergraduate level. It reflects the educational experience which the University considers most relevant and appropriate for its taught student body, and which responds to its Mission, resource strategy and size.

The objectives of the Regulatory Framework are:

- to enable all students to meet the intentions of the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications and the relevant Subject Benchmark Statements;
- to ensure equivalence of academic experience for all students on courses leading to qualifications at the same level;
- to support the delivery of the University's Portfolio Plan;
- to provide a structure which enhances the student experience through the facilitation of collaboration and complementarity between courses.

In consequence, curriculum design will ensure that all students:

- are equipped with a critical, historical and theoretical framework appropriate to their subject area and to other relevant fields of practice;
- will gain an understanding of the professional and business context of their discipline and of the creative industries in general;
- will engage with ethical, social and cultural issues appropriate to the concept of a responsible practitioner;
- are aware of, and respond to, the demands of sustainability;
- will develop a breadth of knowledge and range of skills that will help them prepare for further study, and for employment opportunities within and beyond their specialist subject.

In consequence, the University has developed a set of precepts which govern all higher education awards. These precepts are set out in Section B. Section C covers the Assessment Regulations for awards at postgraduate and undergraduate level. The qualification descriptors for each higher education award are set out in Appendix A, and Appendix B covers the Verification of marks for undergraduate and postgraduate taught awards.

## Section B: Regulatory Framework for taught courses

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### 1. General principles: units, credits and levels

- 1 The Framework is based on self-contained blocks of learning, known as units, each of which has a coherent set of aims and learning outcomes, and associated assessment processes.
- 2 The result of each unit is expressed as a series of Learning Outcomes. Attainment of these is the objective of the unit; measuring their attainment is the purpose of assessment. The expression of unit objectives as Learning Outcomes, and how they are assessed, is included within each unit descriptor and published for students.
- 3 Whilst units may be related by sequence or content, each unit is essentially freestanding and results in an assessment of defined learning outcomes within the period of the unit.
- 4 All units are described in a common and consistent manner detailing their level, credit rating, aims, learning outcomes and assessment components. This information is contained within a formal unit descriptor, which is considered and approved at validation. There is no standard definition of delivery methods, except that these should be appropriate to the stated learning outcomes. Additional information will be available on Canvas; this gives details about start date, the timing and nature of taught sessions, delivery methods, resource access, assessment component submission date, and the date for assessment feedback.
- 5 All units are credit-rated. The University's Credit Framework is compatible with other frameworks in operation across the UK HE sector, and accords with the HE Credit Framework<sup>1</sup>. Such compatibility helps to provide a standardised framework within which relative achievement can be considered.
- 6 'Notional learning hours' are used to describe the size of a unit, and indicate the length of learning time which it is estimated will be taken, on average, to achieve the specified learning outcomes. This includes all the study time for the unit including contact hours (lectures, demonstrations, seminars, tutorials etc), directed study, independent study, and assessment activity (including preparation). In accordance with practice across the UK HE sector, one credit is allocated for ten notional learning hours (and each full level of undergraduate study comprises 120 credits, or 1200 notional learning hours).
- 7 A student successfully completing any unit is awarded the full amount of credit assigned to that unit. The amount of credit is determined by the size of the unit, i.e. the amount of time required to complete the learning and assessment for the unit. The standard unit is worth 20 credits (i.e. a volume of 200 notional study hours).
- 8 The award of credit indicates the achievement of the threshold standard or better within the unit. Credit is wholly allocated on a pass/fail basis. All learning outcomes must be passed for an overall pass to be awarded in the unit. There are no circumstances in which partial credit can be awarded for partial completion or success in particular components or elements of a unit.
- 9 Credit is not used for grading, but quantifies the volume of learning and is thus used to determine eligibility for progression or awards. The standard of achievement is signified through the assessment and classification scheme (see the relevant Assessment Regulations for detail).

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<sup>1</sup> see <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/standardsandquality/credit/default.asp>

- 10 Credit also facilitates transfer between courses and / or institutions by providing an accessible record of achievement. It permits transfer across the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), with each credit worth 0.5 ECTS credits.
- 11 Once awarded, credit cannot be taken away or withdrawn as it represents the recognition of achievement. Even if students fail the course for which they are registered or do not complete it, they retain the credit gained and may use it as the basis for negotiating future study at the University or another provider. (The only exception to this is where the results of a unit are amended or annulled following a proven case of academic misconduct; see the relevant assessment regulations).
- 12 In accordance with the National HE Credit Framework, all units are attributed to a level (L4, L5, L6 or L7). The levels indicate the increasing complexity and demands of units as studies progress. The University has developed level descriptors, which conform to the descriptors in the HE Credit Framework, and indicate the typical requirements of units at each level.
- 13 The credit attaching to a unit of a given level is described as L4 credit, L5 credit, L6 credit or L7 credit.
- 14 The level descriptors give the general characteristics associated with study at each level and provide a template against which units (or the progression of units through a level) may be aligned. Whilst the complexity of content contributes to the assignment of a level, the key determining factor in ascribing a level is the complexity of the assessment component. Hence, two units which appear similar in content may be at different levels if the assessment components differ.
- 15 If a student is admitted with advanced standing, or as a direct entrant to Level 5 or 6 of an undergraduate course, no credit is awarded against units or levels of study to which their previous certificated learning or experience is deemed equivalent, and which they are not required to take. General credit is awarded at the appropriate level of study.

## **2. General principles: named courses and named awards**

- 16 The standard of an award is safeguarded by regulations which define requirements for minimum amounts of credit necessary at a given level to satisfy the requirement for that award. The full list of available awards, and the associated credit requirements, is given at Appendix A.
- 17 All approved courses of study will lead to a named award. The naming of courses is the subject of a separate policy, available from the Quality and Standards team.
- 18 Parentheses may be used to provide an additional focus or specialism to a more generic award title. The element of the award indicated by the parentheses may either be delivered through dedicated units / teaching, or through the particular focus of the work undertaken. For undergraduate awards, this would normally comprise at least 60 credits at Level 6, and some study also at Level 5. Admission will be made to the broad course title, with specialist titles confirmed during Level 5 study, except where there are strong grounds to the contrary. For postgraduate awards, the specialism is likely to be delivered through the focus of work, and will be determined before the final 60 credits are commenced.
- 19 Subject to certain qualifying conditions, students who do not achieve their target qualification will normally be offered an intermediate (or “exit”) award, which reflects the volume and level of credit they have successfully achieved during their period of study. Students will normally be considered for an intermediate award if they are withdrawing from the University, and have completed the requisite credit (see the relevant assessment regulations).

- 20 Courses will be designed in accordance with the general requirements for credit, and will stipulate any requirements specific to that course which students will have to meet in order to qualify for the award.
- 21 Postgraduate courses may acknowledge distinctive performance; and undergraduate awards will normally be classified. The details are given in the relevant assessment regulations.

### **3. Admission, Registration, Progression and Award**

- 22 The Arts University Bournemouth has established an Admissions Policy, which is reviewed annually by Academic Board. Minimum entry criteria are included as an appendix to this Policy. The Admissions Policy is published on the AUB Intranet.
- 23 All students shall be registered for the named final award to which their course of study leads. All courses, and therefore students, shall be the responsibility of a named subject area and School. Students undertaking standalone units will be allocated to the home subject area and School of the unit they are taking.
- 24 The Framework permits both full-time and part-time modes of study. A course can be offered in full-time mode, part-time mode or both. Accelerated study is also permitted for undergraduate courses (see precept 43 below).
- 25 The following maximum periods of registration apply:  
Master of Architecture: 5 years  
Master of Arts: 4 years  
Integrated Master's: 8 years  
Honours Degrees: 8 years  
Foundation Degrees: 5 years.
- 26 The minimum period of registration for all undergraduate courses and awards is one academic year. The minimum period of registration for all postgraduate courses and awards is one half of the total credit required for the intended award.
- 27 The maximum credit awarded through Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) towards the fulfilment of an undergraduate award will not normally be more than two thirds of the total credit required for the award. The maximum credit awarded through RPL towards the fulfilment of a postgraduate taught award will not normally be more than one third of the total credit required for the award.
- 28 A student may change their mode of study (i.e. full-time or part-time) where this alternative mode has been validated, and is in operation. Any proposal for a change of mode of study must be approved by the Academic Lead on Standards and Quality or nominee.
- 29 Students may normally only change between modes of study at the start of a level, although exceptions may be made where this would be in the student's interest. The judgement of the student interest is the sole responsibility of the Academic Lead on Standards and Quality or nominee.
- 30 For courses of more than 180 credits, there is a formal progression point at the end of each block of 120 credits. Students who have not achieved the full balance of credit, through either deferral or failure, will normally be required to achieve this outstanding credit before progressing.
- 31 Students who have completed a level of study and achieved the full balance of credit (including any credits achieved by compensation where this is permitted under the assessment regulations) will progress automatically to the next level of study.
- 32 Exceptionally, at the sole discretion of the Progression and Awards Board, a student may be permitted to progress conditionally (i.e. with outstanding units which still have to be passed). In such cases, the Board will also set the deadline by which any outstanding work must be submitted. If the work is passed, the progression is

confirmed. If the work does not pass, and no credit is awarded, the progression decision is automatically revoked. The Progression and Awards Board, or a sub-group of the Board including at least the Chair, the Chair of the Subject Examination Board and an independent member appointed by the Academic Lead on Standards and Quality, confirms the action to be taken (which may be a requirement for academic intermission or, where the failure is irretrievable, the termination of studies).

#### **4. Curriculum structure**

- 33 The Framework provides a structure which enables collaboration and complementarity across the University's curriculum offer, such that courses are enabled to work together on projects and units of mutual relevance and value. The Framework provides sufficient flexibility for course teams to develop linked units with other courses where this is appropriate.
- 34 The smallest building block within the framework is the standard unit of 20 credits. The regulatory framework does not permit half units, or multiples involving half units.
- 35 The Framework acknowledges progressive study in terms not only of breadth but also of depth. Hence, the size of units may be progressively larger at higher levels of the framework, which may correspond to progression through the course.
- 36 The largest unit permitted within the framework is normally 60 credits (which may be one unit at Level 6 only). Exceptionally one 80-credit unit at Level 6 or Level 7 may be approved where this is part of a "closed course" designed specifically to respond to an external demand, as described in the Guidance on course development. In consequence, an 80-credit unit is not available for a typical course. At Level 4 and Level 5, the maximum unit size is 40 credits. There are no restrictions on the number of 40 credit units that may be used at any level; these will be tested on a course-by-course basis at validation and review.
- 37 The Framework recognises the increasing development of independent learning across levels such that the contact time for each student may progressively decrease through the levels of the course.
- 38 There must be an appropriate balance of study, so courses will be structured in such a way to ensure an equitable workload across the taught academic year. Similarly, courses are structured to ensure that student learning is progressive, and early units or levels are used, in part, to prepare students for the demands of the later study requirements.
- 39 Courses may offer Pathway options to allow students to specialise in a specific area of interest, and for these courses, students will take the units assigned to their chosen Pathway. Pathway options represent different routes through the course from a single named admission point, with shared delivery where this is appropriate. Precept 18 above provides details of the credit and naming arrangements for such awards, which must be approved at validation or periodic review. Where a course offers a Pathway, the list of students who are intending to complete a named award must be presented to Registry by mid-point of the final year of study.
- 40 Courses may offer a limited amount of choice, either through offering optional units (which are alternate but course-specific units, available at any level), or through offering elective units (which may include units from other disciplines, at Levels 4 and 5 only, to a maximum of 20 credits per level). The range of optional and/or elective units available will be considered and approved at validation or periodic review. In addition, an independent study unit is available, where this is included at validation or periodic review, which enables a student to develop their own programme of activity and agreed learning outcomes. Further guidance on the development of optional and elective units is contained within the *Guidance on course development*, available on the Intranet and updated as appropriate through Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee (LTQ).



- 41 Part-time courses will ideally be aligned to the full-time offer to secure maximum cross-cohort engagement and provide the best possible student learning experience. However, part-time students will not be expected to study more than an average of 20 hours per week.

## **5. Study time**

- 42 For Master of Arts awards, there are three phases of study, each of fifteen weeks. These will normally commence in October, February and June.
- 43 For all other taught courses, including the Master of Architecture and all undergraduate awards, the year is divided into four terms. Full-time courses will normally be delivered over three terms, commencing in the Autumn term, with a 10-10-10 week structure, and a total of 30 weeks<sup>2</sup>. Thus, the taught year will normally equate to one academic level. Courses may be designed for delivery using all four terms, providing accelerated learning, where this meets applicant demand and where delivery can be managed. The formally agreed terms of study shall include the full student learning experience, including assessment, tutorials and academic counselling. Students who have not completed the full balance of credit during the scheduled teaching time may be required to retrieve outstanding units during untaught time.
- 44 For part-time awards, the taught year may not equate to an academic level. Progression between levels will be determined at the end of each level, which will always be at the end of a term.
- 45 Teaching and assessment will fall within the specified taught time, although students who have not completed the full balance of credit during the scheduled teaching time may be required to retrieve outstanding units during untaught time.
- 46 The Framework permits educational visits where they take place during the agreed weeks of study, and are arranged in accordance within the Educational Visits Procedure<sup>3</sup>. Arrangements for educational visits, work placement and other activity off campus must permit other units normally taught at that time to be studied appropriately.
- 47 Student Exchange is permitted, in accordance with the University's Student Exchange Policy. The way in which the outcomes of the Exchange will be assessed, and will contribute to the student's overall academic profile, must be agreed through a dedicated Learning Agreement in advance of the Exchange taking place.
- 48 Except where explicitly approved by LTQ, all periods of work placement activity must fall within the agreed weeks of study, and are not additional to it. All such activities must be approved by the Course Leader as providing relevant knowledge or experience to support the student's overall learning on the course. Placement units may be undertaken during the vacation periods where necessary, but the total study time should be no more than the standard agreed number of teaching weeks. Periods of work placement activity must be arranged in accordance with the Work Placement and Release Policy.
- 49 The University may offer a reading week for Higher Education students but this will not count as one of the agreed weeks of study. Individual courses may include a teaching-free week as part of the agreed weeks of study where this is appropriate.
- 50 There will be an even distribution of learning hours across the academic year.

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<sup>2</sup> This is the traditional undergraduate year

<sup>3</sup> The Educational Visits Procedure, Checklist and Risk Assessment is available via the intranet

## **6. Curriculum content**

- 51 All courses will include reference to the historical, theoretical and contextual frameworks of their discipline. Assessment components will take account of knowledge and understanding of these frameworks.
- 52 Employability skills are a key feature of all courses at the University. Additionally, all degrees have an element of career planning and development within the discipline, and offer students the chance to reflect on their learning and professional development. All degrees will include a course outcome relating to an understanding of the professional context, although this may be assessed in a variety of ways (including indirectly).
- 53 All undergraduate courses include a major project component during the final level of study, which enables students to complete a significant body of work. This major project must comprise a minimum of 40 credits. All students will normally be expected to produce a piece of academic writing of at least 5,000<sup>4</sup> words as part of their assessed work in the final year of study. In addition, all courses will include a critical evaluation of practical work for the Major Project unit set against Learning Agreements with a 1,000-word limit. For postgraduate awards, it is imperative that students are able to demonstrate the scope and depth of learning required of an award at this level, and hence the final phase of study will typically comprise a 60-credit project unit, with the outcomes demonstrated through the study plan or learning agreement.
- 54 Neither the major projects nor written submission described in precept 53 above may be replaced by a period of work experience, RPL or any other activity.
- 55 All courses are designed to provide opportunities for students to reflect on their learning, and the implications for their professional development. These opportunities may be formalised through a dedicated unit, or through aspects of larger units.
- 56 All Foundation Degree courses will include a period of work placement, as required by the QAA Foundation Degree Characteristics Statement.

## **7. Skills, behaviours and competences**

- 57 All undergraduate courses must develop in students a comprehensive body of transferable skills.
- 58 No single profile of transferable skills applies to all undergraduate courses. All courses will be expected to demonstrate the availability of transferable skills through the aims and outcomes of units and this will be tested at course validation.
- 59 However, there is a body of employability skills that must be delivered to all students. At Level 4 this will include academic conventions and good academic practice (such as the avoidance of plagiarism); information retrieval; and general skills which facilitate academic study within higher education. As students' progress through the course, they will increasingly be expected to demonstrate advanced skills in communication (verbal, visual and written); an ability to apply their knowledge to new situations; critical reflection and self-evaluation; an appreciation of information literacy; team-working; and higher-level problem solving. They will also be expected to show appropriate levels of organisation and time management, and to demonstrate, through their work, the professionalism required of a graduate; and to be able to position their own work within the wider context of the discipline.
- 60 Many of these skills are pre-requisites for completion of a degree, and a student's command of them will be reflected throughout their work. In addition, there are behaviours and competences that are expected of a graduate in art, design, media

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<sup>4</sup> Please note that all word counts should be considered as a norm, but +/- 10% is acceptable.

and performance. Achievement of each of the full range of skills might be through a specific assessment criterion in one unit; or through the totality of the student experience on a unit or level (e.g. organisation and time management skills might be tested through the way in which a student approaches a project); or through other means.

## **8. Assessment**

- 61 Assessment components should enable all learning outcomes for a unit to be assessed through summative assessment. The assessment components for each unit are included within the unit descriptor, which is in the Course Handbook.
- 62 Normally, there will be no more than one assessment component for each standard unit of 20 credits and no more than two assessment components for any unit. Where two summative assessment components are used, a percentage weighting must be given to each. All assessment components should be explicitly defined in a written brief, except where a learning agreement is developed to define individual study within the parameters of a unit. Formative assessment components, which are primarily diagnostic and do not contribute to the overall mark for the unit, must also be listed, and the contribution to the student learning experience must be explicit.
- 63 Any grouping of assessable activities into one “portfolio” assessment component must specifically identify the required elements and should reflect an appropriate level of complexity and scale commensurate with the credit weighting of the unit. A maximum number of pieces to be submitted should be identified within the unit descriptor, with a minimum also given where this is essential to demonstrate breadth as well as depth of learning. The overall assessment component must be a coherent, integrated submission, and the portfolio must respond to one brief, even where this may have more than one required element.
- 64 Wherever possible, assessment methods should be flexible to encourage achievement by students with a variety of strengths and learning styles. This may include alternative forms of submission within one unit, each meeting the specified learning outcomes, or may be delivered through the range of methods used across course units.
- 65 It is permitted, under the regulations, for written work to be replaced by alternative forms of submission, where it can be demonstrated that this also meets the stated learning outcomes and assessment criteria and where the student learning experience, and assessment, is equivalent. The Course Leader is responsible for ensuring equivalence, in consultation with the Chair of the Examination Board.
- 66 Feedback should be constructive and contribute to the student’s learning and development. This is facilitated by ensuring that a timely and consistent assessment process is operated. Comment should reference performance against the learning outcomes, and should substantiate the mark given. For units completed after week 20 of a graduating cohort, feedback will be limited to the justification of the mark. Developmental comment will only be given where the unit has not been passed.
- 67 Each subject area will have at least one Subject Examination Board per annum to ratify the results of units owned by its undergraduate courses. There will be at least one Postgraduate Examination Board per annum to ratify the results of units owned by postgraduate courses. The terms of reference and constitution of the Examination Boards are outlined in the assessment regulations. The respective Examination Boards may, at their discretion, arrange for additional meetings during the year to consider the outcomes for part-time courses at points of progression between levels; or to consider the results of work submitted for reassessment.
- 68 The University’s Progression and Awards Board will meet as required to consider the recommendations of Subject and Postgraduate Examination Boards. This will always

include a meeting at the end of the full-time undergraduate academic year; and again at the end of the full-time postgraduate taught year, to consider recommendations for award.

## **9. Recording and reflecting on progress**

- 69 Students are entitled to regular information about their progress through the course. Each student is entitled to a minimum of one academic guidance tutorial in each taught term.
- 70 Personal development planning (PDP) is seen as an essential tool when assisting students to achieve their own potential. It is therefore introduced to all undergraduate students at Level 4 and forms an integral part of unit delivery throughout the course. Students will be encouraged to take responsibility and ownership for their personal development planning; each course will determine the most appropriate mechanisms through which PDP is introduced, encouraged and monitored. PDP is also an integrated part of all postgraduate taught courses.
- 71 A transcript recording individual achievement will be made available by Registry to the student at the end of each level of study. This will be a means by which students can monitor, build on and reflect upon their personal development and career planning. The transcript conforms to the European Diploma Supplement Requirements.

## **10. Managing delivery**

- 72 Courses will be designed to facilitate formal opportunities for complementary work across disciplines and courses.
- 73 Whilst units have a volume defined by the time required to achieve their stated learning outcomes, they have no intrinsic 'shape'. The pattern of study is specified only by points at which teaching is delivered and periods when access to facilities occur within the overall duration of the unit. The use of independent study time, which tends to increase throughout the course, is extremely flexible (when not strictly related to the provision of technical resources).
- 74 To deliver this flexibility, the accurate scheduling of student groups against fixed resources (staffing, accommodation and equipment) is required, through a standardised timetabling system visible across the entire range of named courses. This is further necessary to monitor effectively study patterns and deliver the best possible levels of resource utilisation.
- 75 The Framework provides a central structure for scheduling all academic activities. It allows academic courses to be constructed as a series of intensive study blocks, a group of longer concurrent syllabi or a combination of both.
- 76 For new students enrolling at the start of the course, an induction will be organised. In the case of undergraduate students, this will normally take place before the formal start of the course, and new students joining Levels 5 or 6 will also be offered an induction prior to the start of the autumn term. For postgraduate students, the induction will normally happen at the start of their first taught week.
- 77 Graduating students are requested to remain in attendance until the meeting of the relevant Examination Board so that they are able to meet the external examiner if requested, but this is not required.
- 78 The academic calendar for each academic year will specify the deadline for all work to have been submitted for assessment, and a further deadline for marks to be notified to Registry. The results of earlier units should be notified on their completion.
- A unit may be heavily taught at the outset, followed by an independent study project with a handing-in date in advance of the conclusion of the unit to allow marking or another form of assessment to be conducted (e.g. small group seminars for the

purpose of a peer evaluation element). In determining the completion time for a unit, the following guidelines must be observed:

- i. No activity related to the assessment outcome of a unit can be programmed into the remaining period following assessment of that unit.
  - ii. Early completion cannot be used to facilitate the early start of another unit.
  - iii. The overall study load placed on students does not give rise to unreasonable peaks and troughs through the truncation of delivery times within units.
- 79 Academic Board, through LTQ, will establish and amend from time to time the academic structures required to underpin the University Regulatory Framework. Details of the Examination Boards required are outlined in the relevant assessment regulations.
- 80 The University's management team will establish, and may amend from time to time, the management structures required for the operation of the Framework.

## **11. Quality Assurance and Enhancement**

- 81 LTQ has overall responsibility for the arrangements for the quality assurance and enhancement of the University's academic provision. The University employs a number of measures to ensure that all courses are regularly reviewed, and their quality assured and enhanced.
- 82 Processes for quality assurance and enhancement are themselves subject to regular review by the Committee and are detailed in the HE Quality Assurance Handbook, which is published annually and available on the Intranet.

## **Appendix A: Awards available**

The following awards are available at undergraduate and postgraduate taught level (Levels 4-7)

(In each case the italics show where the course title is included; this is given in plain type on all certificates and associated documentation)

Master of Architecture	Master of Architecture	Level 7
Master of Arts	MA <i>Subject</i>	Level 7
Master of Science	MSc <i>Subject</i>	
Master of Arts with specialism	MA <i>Subject (Specialism)</i>	Level 7
Master of Science with specialism	MSc <i>Subject (Specialism)</i>	
Master of Research	MRes	Level 7
Postgraduate Diploma	PGDip <i>Subject</i>	Level 7
Postgraduate Certificate	PGCert <i>Subject</i>	Level 7
Integrated Master's	MArt <i>Subject</i>	Level 7
Honours Degree	BA (Hons) <i>Subject</i> BSc (Hons) <i>Subject</i>	Level 6
Honours Degree with specialism	BA (Hons) <i>Subject (Specialism)</i> BSc (Hons) <i>Subject (Specialism)</i>	Level 6
Degree (without Honours)	BA <i>Subject</i> BSc <i>Subject</i>	Level 6
Foundation Degree	FdA <i>Subject</i>	Level 5
Diploma of Higher Education	DipHE <i>Subject</i>	Level 5
Certificate of Higher Education	CertHE <i>Subject</i>	Level 4

The following credit requirements apply:

For the award of a Master of Architecture (MArch), a minimum of 240 credits must be gained, of which a minimum of 180 credits must be at Level 7. An MA will be awarded to any student undertaking an award leading to 240 credits, who leaves their course of study having successfully completed 180 credits.

For a Master's Degree, a minimum of 180 credits must be gained, of which a minimum of 120 credits must be at Level 7.

For a Postgraduate Diploma, a minimum of 120 credits must be gained at Level 7. A PGDip will be awarded to any student who leaves their course of study having successfully completed 120 credits at Level 7. Any credit undertaken at Level 6, as part of an agreed postgraduate taught programme, cannot contribute to the credit required for a PGDip.

For a Postgraduate Certificate, a minimum of 60 credits must be gained at Level 7. A PGCert will be awarded to any student who leaves their course of study having successfully completed 60 credits at Level 7. Any credit undertaken at Level 6, as part of an agreed postgraduate taught programme, cannot contribute to the credit required for a PGCert.

For an Integrated Master's award, a minimum of 480 credits must be gained of which a minimum of 120 credits must be at Level 7; a minimum of 120 credits must be at Level 6; and a minimum of 240 credits must be at Level 5 or above.

For an Honours Degree, a minimum of 360 credits must be gained of which a minimum of 240 credits must be at Level 5 or above. Of these credits, a minimum of 120 must be at Level 6.

For students who articulate from a Foundation Degree to an Honours Degree, a minimum of 120 credits at Level 6 must be gained to achieve the Honours Degree.

For a Degree without Honours, a minimum of 300 credits must be achieved, of which a minimum of 60 credits must be at Level 6, and a minimum of 180 credits must be at Level 5 or above.

For a Foundation Degree, a minimum of 240 credits must be gained, of which a minimum of 120 credits must be at Level 5.

For a Diploma of Higher Education, a minimum of 240 credits must be gained, of which a minimum of 120 credits must be at Level 5.

For a Certificate of Higher Education, a minimum of 120 credits must be gained.

## Section C: Undergraduate Assessment Regulations

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### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The regulations that follow apply to all students undertaking an undergraduate award of the Arts University. All staff involved in the delivery of an undergraduate course should be familiar with this document, and it is the responsibility of the Course Leader to ensure that all relevant staff complies with these provisions.
- 1.2 The University aims to render the assessment process explicit and transparent, to credit achievement where it occurs, and to give due recognition to transferable skills and related competencies. The regulatory framework that follows sets out the requirements for progression between levels, and for awards; and identifies the consequences of failure of units.

### 2. Assessment Procedure

- 2.1 Each unit will have a clear statement of assessment components, assessment criteria and methodology appropriate to its level, learning outcomes and length of study, and a timetable for assessment.
- 2.2 The assessment component is the evidence to be produced to demonstrate that the learning outcomes for the unit have been achieved. This may take a variety of forms (for instance, an artefact, a written report, a performance, a presentation, or a research file). Particular aspects of the learning may be weighted to emphasise their significance, but all learning outcomes must be passed to successfully complete the unit.
- 2.3 The manner in which components are to be assessed is made clear in the validated unit descriptor, which is included within the Course Handbook.
- 2.4 Each unit is assessed on completion. A minimum of one unit at Level 4 will be assessed on a pass/fail basis, with written feedback but no numerical grade. Details of this will be clearly expressed on the Unit Information Sheet. All other units will be given a percentage mark. The percentage mark is not an absolute judgement of performance, but an indication of achievement of the learning outcomes, assessed against the descriptions of performance given on the Assessment Feedback Form. The University has adopted a “notched” marking scheme whereby only certain marks are used within each grade, to support consistency and reliability within the assessment process. Hence the only marks available within any ten-point band are \*2, \*5 and \*8 (e.g. 62, 65, 68). These marks correspond to a low, mid- and high level of achievement within a grade band.
- 2.5 Units on the Extended Year of the 4-year study option are graded on a pass/fail basis. Grades do not contribute towards the final classification. Continuous study at Level 4 is automatic on successful completion of the Extended Year. If you fail a unit you will have the opportunity to achieve a pass mark through either Referral or Retake, unless this option has been refused due to academic misconduct (see section 7 below).
- 2.6 Each assessment component must be passed for the unit to be passed. Where an assessment component contains several elements (such as a portfolio submission which includes research, a case study and a self-evaluation), the elements are not marked individually and hence do not have to be passed.



- 2.7 All unit assessment will normally occur within the duration of the unit (other than where student work is liable to Referral or Retake) and hence feedback is provided to students throughout the academic year; and within four working weeks of the deadline. Exceptionally extensions in the assessment process may occur, for example if a large number of substantial pieces require verification. Students will be notified in cases where an extension to the marking period may occur. A sample of work must be retained (either originals or copies, whichever is practicable depending on size) and passed to the Course Leader for forwarding to External Examiners.
- 2.8 Assessment for the final units of a graduating cohort is summative. The deadline is set at week 20 of the academic year and students will not be notified of assessment outcomes for units completed after this deadline until final results have been confirmed. Developmental feedback for these units will only be provided when referral work needs to be undertaken.

### **3. Marks and Credits**

- 3.1 The Credit/Mark Scheme for undergraduate awards is as follows:
- i. the pass mark for all units is 40%
  - ii. an overall unit mark of 40% or more gains full credit
  - iii. an overall unit mark of 0-34% is a fail and gains no credit. It is not eligible for compensation
  - iv. an overall unit mark of 35-39% is a fail and gains no credit, but could be eligible for compensation by the Subject Examination Board (see section 9 below)
  - v. passed units may not be retaken in order to improve a pass mark or gain additional credit (but see para 3.6).
- 3.2 In order to meet the requirements of the professional body, the use of compensation is not applicable on BA (Hons) Architecture.
- 3.3 In cases where additional credit is taken as a result of earlier failure, the maximum amount of permitted credit taken at any level of a course will be 160 credits. The distribution of credits will be subject to the requirements of the course as outlined in the Course Handbook.
- 3.4 There may be occasions where a student takes additional units following earlier failure, for example, where the course offers optional units of study, or where a student intermits their studies and re-joins a course that has been altered through periodic review. This must be approved by the Course Leader, who must confirm that the proposed additional / alternative units will still enable the student to meet the level and course outcomes. The student will be permitted to be assessed in any approved alternative unit as if taking the unit for the first time.
- 3.5 Where more credits have been taken than are required by course regulations, the credits can only count towards the current level of study and cannot be transferred to other levels.
- 3.6 If, exceptionally, a student has achieved more than the requisite total credit, for the purpose of calculating the end of level mark average, the lowest mark from the passed units may normally be dropped to reflect marks from the best 120 credits. However, course regulations may specify units that must be included in the calculation (for instance, any which are essential to meet professional body requirements). Such regulations must be stated explicitly in the Course Handbook, and approved at validation or periodic review.

#### **4. Recognition of Prior Learning and Credit**

- 4.1 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is the procedure whereby a student has previously acquired learning, outside of the University, whether certificated or not, is recognised for the purposes of admission and progression. A student seeking recognition under this procedure should contact their Course Leader for further information and advice, and refer to the University RPL Policy.
- 4.2 The maximum credit awarded towards the fulfilment of any undergraduate award will not be more than two thirds of the total credit required for the award.
- 4.3 A student cannot be awarded with partial credit for a unit. A student may however be exempted from part of the assessment component(s) for a unit through RPL. On achieving the remaining assessment component(s), the credit for the unit may then be awarded. The RPL Policy is available at: <https://aub.ac.uk/regulations>

#### **5. Submission of Work**

- 5.1 All submission deadlines, including any staged submissions due during a unit, will be clearly stated to students in writing at the start of each unit. The assessment deadline is not flexible, and no submission will be accepted after the deadline (which includes the date and the time). Where submission is made using the online portal, the portal will automatically close at the time specified. Students are strongly encouraged to submit in good time, to avoid any last minute concerns.
- 5.2 Failure to submit any assessment work for a unit by the given deadline will be treated as failure of that unit unless mitigation circumstances apply (see section 15 below). A mark of 0% will automatically be entered on the student record. Where a unit has two components a mark of 0% will only be given where the student has failed to submit work for both components.
- 5.3 Normally a piece of work produced by a student for assessment can only be submitted once in full or part fulfilment of the assessment components for a unit.
- 5.4 Exceptionally, within a unit, a piece of work may be submitted more than once if the assessment components allow for this. For example, material used in a seminar presentation may also be used in an essay or other form of assignment. The student must secure the agreement of the Unit Leader where they intend to submit the same piece of work in order to meet separate assessment components. Failure to do so may result in the non-acceptance of the work.

#### **6. Verification of Work**

- 6.1 As part of good academic practice, student work at the University will be routinely subjected to moderation of grades by a second academic marker or team marking. This is known as “verification”. (For further details see Appendix B at the end of this document).
- 6.2 The verification procedure applies across all undergraduate courses. A minimum sample of 25% of work is verified at Level 5, and a minimum 40% sample at Level 6, including all work initially adjudged to be at a fail grade or at a grade of 75% plus.
- 6.3 All work in units of 60 credits or above will be subject to verification. For units of 40 credits, a minimum sample of 50% must be verified.

- 6.4 The verification process only applies at Levels 5 and 6. It is not required at Level 4 unless the Subject Examination Board or Course Leader requests this (either because of concerns that have arisen, or in support of new staff members).
- 6.5 At the end of each level, the marks for each unit are considered by the Subject Examination Board (see section 18 below). Marks are subject to moderation by the Board, which confirms the marks for each unit, and the award of credit. It then considers recommendations for progression and award. The Board also calculates a single end of level average mark (with units weighted according to their size) to quantify the overall achievement of each student.

## **7. Failure**

- 7.1 Credit can be retrieved from a failed unit by Referral or Retake, subject to the conditions set out in these Regulations (see section 7.2 (Referral) and section 7.3 (Retake) below). Referral relates to unit assessment and is the responsibility of the Subject Examination Board with which the unit is associated. However, this responsibility can be devolved to the Board's internal members as appropriate. The opportunity to offer a student the chance to redeem failure through Retakes as a result of failed Referral is the responsibility of the Progression and Awards Board, on the recommendation of the Subject Examination Board.

### **7.2 Referral**

- 7.2.1 Referral gives a student an additional opportunity to undertake work equivalent to the failed assessment component(s) of the unit. This involves the completion of additional work or the repeat of the component(s) in order to secure the learning outcomes of the failed unit. The opportunity to redeem failure through Referral is only given once for each failed unit.
- 7.2.2 Referral is available for all failed units, except where a student has been barred from undertaking a referral as a penalty for academic misconduct (but see 7.2.4 below).
- 7.2.3 Referral will normally take place at the point of failure (i.e. the unmoderated notification of unit results). The terms of Referral are confirmed by the Subject Examination Board (or by Chair's action) taking into consideration the recommendation of the relevant Unit Leader. The Referral must relate substantively to the content of the failed unit; referral tasks cannot be given for units not taken by a student. The time allowed for Referrals will in all cases be standard, agreed centrally and consistent across all awards.
- 7.2.4 A student will never be given a deadline for resubmission that permits less than two weeks for the work to be retrieved. For a graduating cohort no referral will be issued for any unit completed after week 20 of the academic year; if these units are failed, the Subject Examination Board will consider whether to offer a Referral (see section 14 below).
- 7.2.5 The Subject Examination Board must confirm that submitted Referral work is satisfactory before credit can be awarded. This confirmation will be given as soon as possible, and students will be notified of the date their results will be available.
- 7.2.6 Successful completion of a Referral for any assessment component gains a pass mark of 40% for the unit. Where the Referral mark does not improve upon the previous mark, the previous mark will stand. If the unit has not been passed, the student will normally be offered a Retake by the Progression and Awards Board unless other factors (such as the student's overall balance of failure) exclude this under the regulations (see section 7.3 below).

7.2.7 Referral work may be subject to the terms of Compensation.

### **7.3 Retake**

- 7.3.1 Retake provides a student with one final opportunity to retrieve a failed unit. A Retake may be offered by the Progression and Awards Board, on the recommendation of the Subject Examination Board, to enable a student to meet the requirements for progression or award.
- 7.3.2 In determining its recommendation, the Subject Examination Board will consider the overall profile of the student as indicated by the unit results achieved. The Board may consider evidence about how the student has engaged with the course, including patterns of attendance and the submission of work.
- 7.3.3 If a student has failed to submit any work for assessment in a unit on both previous occasions, this is categorised as a double non-submission. A student is permitted a double non-submission in a unit weighted up to a total of 20 credits per year and may be eligible for a Retake in this unit. Where a double non-submission has taken place in a unit, or combination of units, equivalent to 40 or more credits, the units are deemed to have been failed irretrievably and the students' studies will be terminated. However, the student may be offered the opportunity to repeat the year (see section 7.4 below).
- 7.3.4 To permit continuous study, and direct progression to the next academic level, Retakes will normally be offered up to a maximum of 40 credits. To ensure consistency of approach, the deadline for all such Retakes will be set centrally by the University, and will apply to all students. A student will never be given a deadline to submit the work which permits less than four weeks for the work to be retrieved.
- 7.3.5 Where the Board does not consider that the work is retrievable before the start of the next academic level, or where 60 credits are outstanding, the student will normally be required to intermit to retrieve the outstanding units. This may be with or without attendance, as determined by the Board. (This includes situations where work is outstanding following deferral, and is intended to ensure that a student is not over-burdened during the next level of study). Intermission is described at section 13 below.
- 7.3.6 Where a student has achieved fewer than 60 credits with the remaining units being failed, no Retake will be issued. The student will be deemed to have failed the year without the opportunity to retrieve the outstanding units. This will normally result in the termination of studies. However, the student may be offered the opportunity to repeat the year (see section 7.4 below).
- 7.3.7 The Subject Examination Board must confirm that submitted Retake work is satisfactory before credit can be awarded. This confirmation will be given as soon as possible, and students will be notified of the date their results will be available.
- 7.3.8 Successful completion of a Retake for any assessment component gains a pass mark of 40% for the unit. Where the Retake mark does not improve upon the previous mark, the previous mark will stand. If the student fails a Retake, there are no further opportunities to retrieve the unit. If the student's overall balance of credit is insufficient to permit progression, this will normally result in the termination of studies by the Progression and Awards Board. However, the student may be offered the opportunity to repeat the year (see section 7.4 below).
- 7.3.9 Retake work may be subject to the terms of Compensation.

## **7.4 Repeat full year of study**

- 7.4.1 In cases where a student's overall profile would normally result in the termination of studies the Progression and Awards Board may, at its sole discretion, offer the student the opportunity to repeat the whole year. In such cases, the student will be offered a maximum of three opportunities to pass the unit (take, referral and retake) but a maximum mark of 40% is available. If you are repeating the year, you will not be permitted to submit the same work for an assessment that had been passed in the previous year. A student may only repeat a year once throughout their course of studies. This opportunity is not available at Level 6.

## **8. Progression**

- 8.1 The general requirements for progression between levels of a degree are as follows:

### *Progression to Level 5:*

A student must have achieved 120 credits at Level 4.

A maximum of 20 credits can be compensated credit, where course regulations permit.

### *Progression to Level 6:*

A student must have achieved 120 credits at Level 5.

A maximum of 20 credits can be compensated credit, where course regulations permit.

Foundation Degree students who wish to articulate to a named Honours Degree at Level 6 will be required to undertake specific study to prepare them for progression; this will usually be in the form of a particular unit at Level 5, but may where necessary include some additional study to be completed before enrolment at Level 6.

- 8.2 Exceptionally, at the sole discretion of the Progression and Awards Board, a student may be permitted to progress conditionally (i.e. with outstanding units which still have to be passed). In such cases, the Board will also set the deadline by which any outstanding work must be submitted. If the work is passed, the progression is confirmed. If the work does not pass, and no credit is awarded, the progression decision is automatically revoked. The Progression and Awards Board, or a sub-group of the Board including at least the Chair, the Chair of the Examination Board and an independent member appointed by the Academic Lead on Standards and Quality, confirms the action to be taken (which may be a requirement for academic intermission or, where the failure is irretrievable, the termination of studies).

## **8.3 Work placement units**

- 8.3.1 Where students on work placement can only conclude their work placement by study over the summer vacation period, the Examination Board may, for these units only, extend the period of assessment to allow for this (but see section 2.7 above). In such cases, the unit results will be considered at the next available meeting of the Subject Examination Board, and progression or award confirmed by a subsequent Progression and Awards Board. No student may progress until formal confirmation has been given by the Board.

## **9. Compensation**

- 9.1 Compensation is the award of credit applied by the Subject Examination Board. It is applied only in cases of marginal failure and is subject to the conditions set out below.

- 9.2 Marks in the band 35-39% in any unit are regarded as borderline failure and may become eligible for compensation.
- 9.3 Compensation **cannot** be allowed:
- i. for any units excluded by course regulations;
  - ii. where this has been determined as a penalty for academic misconduct.
- 9.4 Compensation may be applied to a maximum of 20 credits within any level of a course provided the overall level average is 40% or above. If this condition is not met, the failed units are subject to Referral or Retake under the terms described above.
- 9.5 Where compensation is applied, the failed marks stand but compensation credits are awarded.
- 9.6 Compensation will be applied only where this is in the student's best interest. This will normally mean that compensation is applied only after any Retake has been undertaken, to give the student the best chance of demonstrating the requisite learning outcomes, although it will normally be applied if this will complete the course of study, and will permit the student to graduate.
- 9.7 In order to meet the requirements of the professional body, the use of compensation is not applicable on BA (Hons) Architecture.

## **10. Requirements for awards**

The credit requirements for the University's Undergraduate awards are listed below.

### **10.1 Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE)**

A student must have achieved:

- i. a minimum 120 credits at Level 4;
- ii. any specific requirements of the course as outlined in the Course Handbook

### **10.2 Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE)**

A student must have achieved:

- i. a minimum 240 credits of which a minimum of 120 must be at Level 5;
- ii. any specific requirements of the course as outlined in the Course Handbook

### **10.3 Foundation Degree (FdA)**

A student must have achieved:

- i. a minimum of 240 credits of which a minimum of 120 must be at Level 5;
- ii. any specific requirement of the course as outlined in the Course Handbook.

### **10.4 BA Degree (BA)**

A student must have achieved:

- i. a minimum 300 credits of which a minimum 180 must be at Level 5 or above and a minimum of 60 must be at Level 6;
- ii. any specific requirements for the course as outlined in the Course Handbook

## 10.5 BA Honours Degree (BA (Hons))

A student must have achieved:

- i. a minimum 360 credits of which a minimum 240 must be at Level 5 or above of which a minimum of 120 credits must be at Level 6;
- ii. any specific requirements of the course as outlined in the Course Handbook

## 11. Classifications

### 11.1 Honours Degree classifications

11.1.1 Honours Degrees are awarded using the nationally recognised classification system. The overall mark that is used as the basis to determine classification is calculated as follows:

25% of the Level 5 average mark plus 75% of the Level 6 average mark, with each unit weighted according to its size. No distinction is drawn between core and optional units.

11.1.2 Students who enter directly into Level 6, including students articulating from Foundation Degrees, shall have their classification determined on the basis of Level 6 credit only. The result is placed against the scale of marks and classification below.

11.1.3 The average mark at each level is calculated to two decimal places. A final mark will be rounded up if it is within 0.5% (inclusive) of the higher classification band.

11.1.4 Honours Degrees are classified in accordance with the following criteria:

#### Method A (*arithmetic*)

First Class Honours	Overall mark (see 11.1.1) of 70-100%, with a minimum of 40 Level 6 credits at 70% or above
Second Class Honours <i>Upper</i> Division	Overall mark (see 11.1.1) of 60-69%, with a minimum of 40 Level 6 credits at 60% or above
Second Class Honours <i>Lower</i> Division	Overall mark (see 11.1.1) of 50-59%, with a minimum of 40 Level 6 credits at 50% or above
Third Class Honours	Overall mark (see 11.1.1) of 40-49%.

#### Method B (*balance of credit*)

First Class Honours	Overall mark (see 11.1.1) of 65-100%, with a minimum of 80 Level 6 credits at 70% or above
Second Class Honours <i>Upper</i> Division	Overall mark (see 11.1.1) of 55+%, with a minimum of 80 Level 6 credits at 60% or above
Second Class Honours <i>Lower</i> Division	Overall mark (see 11.1.1) of 45+%, with a minimum of 80 Level 6 credits at 50% or above
Third Class Honours	Overall mark (see 11.1.1) of 40+%.

Where these methods produce different outcomes, the student will be awarded the higher class of degree.

## 11.2 Classification of Foundation Degrees

- 11.2.1 Foundation Degrees are awarded using the nationally recognised classification system. The overall mark which is used as the basis to determine classification is calculated as follows:

The average mark achieved in units at Level 5, with each unit weighted according to its size. No distinction is drawn between core and optional units. A final mark will be rounded up if it is within 0.5% (inclusive) of the higher classification band.

- 11.2.2 Foundation Degrees are classified in accordance with the following criteria:

### Method A (arithmetic)

Distinction:	Level 5 average of 70% or above with a minimum of 40 credits at 70% or above
Merit:	Level 5 average of 60% or above with a minimum of 40 credits at 60% or above
Pass:	Level 5 average of 40% or above.

### Method B (balance of credit)

Distinction	80 or more credits at 70% or above, and an average mark of 65.0% or above
Merit	80 or more credits at 60% or above, and an average mark of 55.0% or above
Pass	40-59%.

Where these methods produce different outcomes, the student will be awarded the higher class of degree.

## 12. **Transfer and Withdrawal**

- 12.1 A student wishing to change courses of study must consult both their current Course Leader and the Course Leader of the course to which they wish to transfer. Discussions will take place to ensure that any such change is available and the consequences of the change are fully understood. This may include a requirement that the student undertake an additional unit, or dedicated project work, to ensure that the discipline level outcomes can be achieved, and the student properly prepared for subsequent levels of study within the discipline.
- 12.2 If agreement is obtained from both Course Leaders and the student wishes to proceed with the change, an on-line internal transfer form must be completed and approved by the relevant Course Leaders.
- 12.3 If a student withdraws from their studies at the University before completing the course for which they are registered, the Subject Examination Board at its next meeting will automatically consider whether a student has earned the requisite credit for an award, and will make such an award in all cases where specific requirements have been met. The student will be notified of the award in writing.

## 13. **Intermission**

- 13.1 The regulations relating to intermission are concerned with the integrity of the academic award, and the coherence of the student experience. They provide a



supportive framework which enables student achievement, whilst acknowledging the importance of a structured, progressive learning experience.

- 13.2 Academic intermission offers students the opportunity to take a break from continuous study in order to redeem outstanding failures, or assessment which has been deferred. The Subject Examination Board will require a student to intermit when it considers that it is in the student's interest to concentrate on this outstanding learning before progressing to more advanced levels of the course. Academic intermission will normally apply where a student has only passed 60 credits by the date of the Examination Board; or where the student has passed 80 credits, but in the view of the Board, is unlikely to be able to retrieve the outstanding work before the start of the new academic year.
- 13.3 Non-academic intermission occurs when a student chooses to intermit, usually for personal reasons not associated with academic performance. Students seeking the opportunity to intermit for non-academic reasons must seek the approval of their Course Leader. All such requests must be made in writing to the Course Leader at the earliest point possible. The Course Leader will not normally support an application for intermission, which is made within two weeks of an assessment submission date. In such cases, a student may be required to make a submission before an intermission is approved. Failure to inform the Course Leader may result in permanent withdrawal from studies.
- 13.4 A period of intermission may not be approved for more than one academic year at a time. If an extension to this period is required, the student should discuss this with the Course Leader at the conclusion of the first year of intermission, and present any further supporting evidence. The decision about whether to agree a second academic year of intermission is at the sole discretion of the Subject Examination Board, which is required to consider the coherence of the overall educational experience, as well as the students' circumstances,
- 13.5 No student may intermit for a period of longer than two years. If, following two years of intermission, the student does not return to the course, they will be deemed to have withdrawn.
- 13.6 If a student intermits during the academic year, having commenced study of one or more units but not completed them, no credit will be awarded for these units. Upon their return to the course of study, the student would normally be expected to repeat the whole of the uncompleted unit(s). The University cannot guarantee that a unit or units available at the point of intermission will be available at the point of rejoining, and an alternative unit may have to be undertaken, as directed by the Course Leader.
- 13.7 Students may be encouraged to intermit if it is clear that health problems are affecting their ability to take full advantage of their course of study. When the University has evidence that a student's health is profoundly affecting the safety and well-being of the surrounding community, the student may be required to intermit.
- 13.8 Students who seek or are required to intermit their studies for medical reasons will be required to provide evidence that they are fit to resume their studies before they rejoin the course. In exceptional cases, where it is clear that the student is unfit to rejoin the course for medical reasons, this may result in the termination of studies.

#### **14. Failure of an award**

- 14.1 A course of studies may be terminated by the Subject Examination Board on academic grounds when a candidate fails to meet the requirement for progression or

award, including where one or more units has been irretrievably failed and no more options remain open to the student.

- 14.2 At termination, credit for all passed units is retained. Where a student has achieved the credit requirements for an award lower than their target qualification, the Subject Examination Board will normally recommend this award, in accordance with section 10 above.
- 14.3 If a student is awarded a Bachelor's Degree without honours (BA Unclassified), they may submit for an Honours Degree within five years, as long as opportunities for retrieval under the regulations have not been exhausted. Where re-submission is requested by the student, the Subject Examination Board will stipulate the terms and conditions (including any attendance requirement) of the re-submission. Requests to make a resubmission must be made in writing to the Course Leader.
- 14.4 Exceptionally, at Level 6, the Progression and Awards Board, on the recommendation of the Subject Examination Board, may offer a student one final opportunity to redeem some failed unit in order to achieve the Bachelor's Degree without honours. This will apply where a student has achieved 20 or 40 credits at Level 6, and where the overall profile of achievement indicates that the student has a realistic chance of redeeming some failure to achieve the BA. This is at the sole discretion of the Progression and Awards Board, on the recommendation of the Subject Examination Board, and is not granted automatically. If the student retrieves these units and secures the credit required for a BA, their course of study will terminate with the granting of this award; they may not be considered for progression to the award of an Honours Degree. Where appropriate, compensation may be applied using the criteria outlined in section 9 of these Regulations. If the student does not pass these units at the first retrieval opportunity, their studies will be terminated.
- 14.5 Students who are awarded a BA Degree (Unclassified) or lower award as a result of the outcome of an academic misconduct hearing will not have the opportunity to resubmit for the higher award at a later date, unless this was recommended as part of the outcomes to the hearing.
- 14.6 The University cannot guarantee that a unit or units available at the point of accepting the lower award will be available at the point of wishing to make a re-submission.
- 14.7 Where a re-submission for the higher award has been agreed by the Subject Examination Board, the student must surrender the previous award prior to the new award being conferred.
- 14.8 A course of study may also be terminated for non-academic reasons, such as breaching specific University, course or general regulations covering student conduct. The non-payment of fees or other University debt may also result in the termination of studies. Students should refer to the respective regulations for further details.

## **15. Mitigating Circumstances**

- 15.1 'Mitigating circumstances' is the term given to circumstances in a student's personal life, away from the AUB, which impact on their performance either directly (such as an illness or injury), or indirectly (by requiring their attention and commitment for an extended period of time).
- 15.2 Students are responsible for managing their learning (including assessment) throughout the duration of their studies. The University recognises that illness and difficult or distressing life events do occur, but considers it a normal part of everyday

life to have to manage these, and continue with work or study. For specific guidance on student pregnancy and maternity, please refer to: <https://aub.ac.uk/regulations>

- 15.3 The University does ensure that students suffering from serious illness and other forms of exceptional and unforeseen interference with their academic performance are treated fairly during the learning and assessment process. The policy for dealing with mitigating circumstances is available at: <https://aub.ac.uk/regulations>

## **16. Aegrotat**

- 16.1 A student who has not met the requirements for their target award because of serious illness or death may be offered an Aegrotat award by the Progression and Awards Board on receipt of such a recommendation from the Subject Examination Board. An Aegrotat award will only be offered where the circumstances are deemed to have prevented the student from making submissions for the purpose of assessment, and where there is sufficient evidence at the appropriate level that, in the absence of these circumstances, the student would have completed the level satisfactorily. An Aegrotat award is not classified.
- 16.2 If the student accepts the Aegrotat award, they may re-submit for the award within five years of receipt of the original award. Where a re-submission is requested by the student, the Progression and Awards Board, on the advice of the Subject Examination Board, will stipulate the terms and conditions (including any attendance requirement) of the re-submission. Requests to make a re-submission must be made in writing to the Academic Lead on Standards and Quality.
- 16.3 Students should note that the University cannot guarantee that a unit or units available at the point of accepting the Aegrotat will be available at the point of wishing to make a re-submission.
- 16.4 Where a resubmission for the higher award has been recommended by the Subject Examination Board, the student must surrender the Aegrotat award prior to the new award being conferred.

## **17. Academic Misconduct**

- 17.1 The University expects the highest standards of academic integrity from its students. Any form of academic misconduct, including plagiarism, constitutes a breach of the University's Assessment Regulations, and as such will be treated very seriously.
- 17.2 Students found to have breached the regulations by behaving dishonestly will be dealt with in accordance with the University's Academic Misconduct Policy. This is available at: <https://aub.ac.uk/regulations>

## **18. Examination Boards**

- 18.1 All undergraduate units are the responsibility of a named Subject Examination Board, which confirms the mark achieved by each student on each unit within its responsibility.
- 18.2 Subject Examination Boards exercise responsibility for the conduct of all assessments leading to an award of credit for a unit and for making recommendations on student progression and awards. They also consider the status of any student who has not met the criteria for progression to the next level, and determine whether further opportunities to retrieve outstanding work should be given, in accordance with these Regulations. The Subject Examination Board meets at least once in each academic year, and may devolve responsibility for aspects of the assessment

process to its internal members, subject to report to the full Subject Examination Board.

- 18.3 To discharge the University's obligation to ensure consistency of standards not simply within a course but also across all similar courses at the University, membership of each Subject Examination Board is supplemented by an independent member appointed by the Chair of LTQ. This independent member will normally be the University Secretary or their nominee. The role of the independent member is to ensure that the University regulations are applied consistently across all courses. This process also allows the University to make consistent decisions for each student.
- 18.4 The Progression and Awards Board considers the recommendations from all the Subject Examination Boards. It confirms that the regulations have been followed and applied consistently across all awards, and confirms decisions on retrieval, progression and award. Individual recommendations on progression and award are made to the Principal and Vice-Chancellor, as Chair of Academic Board, for approval.
- 18.5 Each undergraduate course has at least one External Examiner; the number is determined by the breadth of the course content of the units and the number of students undertaking those units. External Examiners are full members of the relevant Subject Examination Board, and are expected to attend all meetings where recommendations for award are made. Whilst External Examiners have a moderation duty for work at Level 5, in place of attendance they may submit a written report to the Subject Examination Board which considers the outcomes at Levels 4 and 5. In addition, the University appoints an Award Examiner who has extensive experience and knowledge of the application of assessment regulations and assessment board processes. The Award Examiner will attend the Progression and Awards Boards, where graduating cohorts are considered, to ensure that they are conducted fairly and in accordance with their terms of reference. External Examiners are confirmed by LTQ on behalf of the Academic Board.
- 18.6 The regulations governing the formal remit and operation of the University's External Examiner system are available in the HE Quality Assurance Handbook.
- 18.7 The terms of reference and constitution of the Subject Examination Board and the Progression and Awards Board are available on the Intranet.

## **19. Publication of Results**

- 19.1 Following confirmation by the Progression and Awards Board, results are forwarded to the Principal and Vice-Chancellor as Chair of Academic Board for approval, after which time the results are published. The Principal and Vice-Chancellor may, at their direction, devolve this authority to the Academic Lead on Standards and Quality. The date and time of the publication of results will be notified to students in advance.
- 19.2 All graduating students will be provided with an individual transcript of results detailing their performance on each unit of their course.
- 19.3 Continuing students are able to access their results online; in addition, students with outstanding work to complete will be contacted by letter. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that they access their results.

## **20. Recording Student Achievement**

- 20.1 On completion of each unit a student will receive notification of the provisional unit assessment mark. Students are responsible for ensuring that they obtain their assessment marks. Any mark notified during the academic year will not have been

confirmed, and may be subject to moderation by the Subject Examination Board. All marks following the completion of a unit should therefore be viewed as indicative.

- 20.2 The marks of summative assessments will not be made available to provide formative feedback. Hence the assessment outcomes for Level 6 units completed after week 20 of the academic year will not be released until after confirmation through the Examination Board process.
- 20.3 Upon successful completion of an award, a student will receive a Certificate, and a Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR). Students withdrawing prior to meeting the requirements of an award will receive a transcript of credits taken. If appropriate, a letter conferring the Certificate of Higher Education or Diploma of Higher Education will also be sent to the student (see section 10 above).
- 20.4 The purpose of the HEAR or transcript is to:
- i) Serve as a formal record of achievement;
  - ii) Supplement the Certificate, giving details of the credit obtained, and through the HEAR, further detail of the broader educational experience.

## **21. Outstanding debt to the University**

- 21.1 Students must ensure that all debts (including rent, course dues, library fines, etc) owed to the University are paid, and that all University books and equipment are returned before the final Subject Examination Board meeting. Continuing students with unpaid debt may be barred from enrolling and continuing their studies at the University. The Certificate of graduates will be withheld until any outstanding debt is paid to the University. Where a student has an outstanding debt to the University, assessment should be submitted according to the deadline date given for that piece of work, but will not be marked until the debt has been settled. Where an assessment takes the form of a presentation or performance work, the student will be informed of the specific arrangements which apply. For further information, refer to the Fees and Charges Payment Policy available on: <https://aub.ac.uk/regulations>

## **22. Appeals against Assessment Outcomes**

- 22.1 A student may appeal against an assessment outcome in relation to:
- i. individual unit(s); and/or
  - ii. progression from one level of the course to the next; and/or
  - iii. a recommendation for a final award.
- 22.2 A student may appeal against an assessment outcome on one or more of the following grounds:
- your performance in assessment may have been affected by mitigating circumstances that, for good reason, you were unable or unwilling to bring to the University's attention before your work was assessed. An appeal of this type **must** be supported by appropriate evidence;
  - there has been a procedural irregularity such as an administrative error or that the assessment was not conducted in accordance with the course regulations.
- 22.3 The University expects students to raise any concerns about their course, or their circumstances, as they arise. It will be exceptional for a retrospective claim to be

considered if it was not previously brought to the attention of the Course Leader, or a relevant member of the professional services.

22.4 There is no right of appeal against decisions of a Subject Examination Board which are matters of academic judgement.

22.5 The HE Appeals Policy may be accessed at: <https://aub.ac.uk/regulations>

## **Appendix A: Qualification Descriptors**

### **1. Level 4** (equivalent to Certificate of Higher Education)

Students who successfully complete Level 4 will have demonstrated the following outcomes:

1. knowledge of the underlying concepts and principles associated with the course of study and an ability to evaluate and interpret these within the context of that subject and
2. an ability to present, evaluate and interpret qualitative and quantitative data to develop lines of argument and make sound judgements in accordance with basic theories and concept of the subject.

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems related to their area(s) of study and/or work
- communicate the results of their study/work accurately and reliably, and with structured and coherent arguments
- undertake further training and develop new skills within a structured and managed environment
- demonstrate the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of some personal responsibility.

### **2. Level 5** (equivalent to Foundation degree or Diploma of Higher Education)

Students who successfully complete Level 5 will have demonstrated the following outcomes:

1. knowledge and critical understanding of the well-established principles of the subject and the way in which these principles have developed;
2. ability to apply underlying concepts and principles outside the context in which they were first studied including where appropriate the application of those principles in a vocational context;
3. knowledge of the main methods of approach to the subject and an ability to evaluate critically the appropriateness of different approaches to problem solving in the vocational area;
4. an understanding of limits of their subject knowledge of how this influences analysis and interpretations of the subject.

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- use a range of established techniques to initiate and undertake critical analysis of information, and to propose solutions to problems arising from that analysis
- effectively communicate information, arguments and analysis in a variety of forms to specialist and non-specialist audiences and deploy key techniques of the discipline effectively

- undertake further training, develop existing skills and acquire new competences that will enable them to assume significant responsibility within organisations.
- demonstrate the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making.

Courses designed with an award at Level 5, such as a Foundation degree, may have a vocational orientation, enabling award-holders to perform effectively in their chosen field, notably in situations requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making.

### 3. **Level 6** (equivalent to Honours degree)

Students who successfully complete a course with 120 credits at Level 6 will have demonstrated the following outcomes:

1. a systematic understanding of the key areas of the subject with a good range of contemporary knowledge and practice;
2. a range of techniques and behaviours including analysis and enquiry within the discipline;
3. conceptual understanding that allows them to argue, solve problems, use ideas and techniques appropriate to the subject and describe and comment on particular aspects of research in the discipline;
4. an appreciation of the uncertainty and ambiguity and limits of knowledge of the subject;
5. an ability to manage their own learning as an autonomous practitioner and learner including an ability to reference and research practical and theoretical issues associated with the subject.

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- apply the methods and techniques that they have learned to review, consolidate, extend and apply their knowledge and understanding, and to initiate and carry out projects
- critically evaluate arguments, assumptions, abstract concepts and data (that may be incomplete), to make judgements, and to frame appropriate questions to achieve a solution – or identify a range of solutions – to a problem
- communicate information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialist and non-specialist audiences.
- demonstrate the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:
  - the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility
  - decision-making in complex and unpredictable contexts
  - the learning ability needed to undertake appropriate further training of a professional or equivalent nature.

Holders of an Honour's degree will have developed an understanding of a complex body of knowledge, some of it at the current boundaries of an academic discipline. The holder of such a qualification will be able to evaluate evidence, arguments and assumptions, to reach sound judgements and to communicate them effectively. They will have the qualities needed for employment in situations requiring the exercise of



personal responsibility, and decision-making in complex and unpredictable circumstances.

## **Appendix B: Verification of marks for undergraduate and postgraduate taught awards**

1. Verification is the process through which the University assures itself that the marks awarded are fair, and represent an accurate assessment of student performance against the unit Learning Outcomes. It provides confidence that assessment is consistent and reliable.
2. It is a fundamental principle of the University's assessment process that assessment must be complete, and a final mark agreed, before any marks or feedback is shared with the student. The Unit Leader is responsible for confirming the mark on any unit. The purpose of verification is to ensure that these marks are accurate prior to be published.
3. Verification may be undertaken in three specific ways:

### *Team marking*

- 3.1 Team marking is most commonly used to confirm the marks for large project units, generally at Levels 6 or 7. A team of three or more assessors, led by the Unit Leader, reviews the work and comes together to agree the final mark. The team will discuss the merits of each assignment, and agree a mark and the key points for summative feedback, which will be overseen by the Unit Leader. As more than two assessors have confirmed their satisfaction with the marks awarded, no further verification is required.

### *Second marking*

- 3.2 Second marking occurs when a second assessor reviews all the work submitted for a unit, and reaches their own judgement on the mark which should be awarded. This is then compared against the view of the lead assessor. Where there is a disparity between the marks, the two assessors should meet and agree the final mark. (Exceptionally, where they are unable to agree a final mark, a third assessor may be used, at the discretion and appointment of the Course Leader). The role of the second assessor is to confirm the marks, or to raise concerns about either standards or consistency.

### *Sampling*

- 3.3 Sampling is similar to second marking, except that the second assessor only reviews a sample of the work, to assure themselves that marking is fair and consistent. The details of the sample should be agreed between the two assessors, subject to the parameters in paragraph 4 below. If there is any concern about the standards being applied, or the consistency of approach, this is likely to result in a review of the work for the whole cohort. Sampling is also common where there is a large number of students, and initial assessment may be shared across a group of two or more assessors. The Unit Leader will then sample the assessments of each individual assessor to ensure that judgements are consistent across the cohort.

## **4. Parameters**

- 4.1 The following parameters apply:
  - i) For units of 60 credits, at Levels 6 or 7, either team or second marking must be used.
  - ii) For units of 40 credits at Levels 5, 6 and 7, a minimum of 50% of the work in the unit must be reviewed, either through second marking or sampling.
  - iii) All work initially graded as Fail, and all work awarded a mark of 75% or above, must be reviewed, either through second marking or sampling.
  - iv) Overall, the following minimum levels of review apply:
  - v) At Level 7, a minimum of 50% of work across the year
  - vi) At Level 6, a minimum of 40% of work across the year; all units must be subject to some form of review in each academic year

- vii) At Level 5, a minimum of 25% of work across the year; each unit must be subject to review at least every two years
- viii) At Level 4, as marks do not contribute to the overall classification, there is no requirement for marks to be reviewed. However, it will commonly be used on new courses; where the lead assessor is a new member of staff; or where it is requested by the Course Leader, for example in response to concerns which have been identified.

5. Practical matters

- 5.1 Course teams will need to judge how, with limited staff availability, they can conduct verification. This includes securing access to the work, for instance in the case of presentations or screenings. Some forward planning is often required to ensure that the process can be conducted efficiently; this may include the need for a second marker to sit in on a sample of presentations, for example, or for work to remain in place within a studio.
  - 5.2 Where possible and appropriate, the second marker can be from another degree team.
  - 5.3 Course Leaders will oversee and review the verification process and are responsible to the Director for its efficient operation.
6. For completeness, it should be noted that the external examiner does not have a role in the assessment of work. The role of the external examiner is to review the marks awarded, and reach their own judgement about the appropriateness and consistency of internal assessment. Nevertheless, it is common to include in the external examiner's sample any work which has proved particularly challenging to assess (without bringing this fact to the external examiner's attention).