

EMERGENCY SITUATION [EmSi] REGULATIONS FOR TAUGHT PROGRAMMES

IV. EmSi Assessment Regulations For Taught Programmes

In cases where remote teaching, learning and assessment has come into effect, both first and/or second/resit examinations will either be carried out as a take-away 24hr paper or alternative assessment. These changes will be prescribed by the School/Board of Studies and approved by the Chair of the Faculty Education Committee and students will be informed by the Examinations Office and via the VLE for each individual component assessment.

A. Introduction

1. These Emergency Situation [EmSi] regulations shall be understood alongside the standard regulations and not in isolation. They consider the respective definitions of terms and requirements outlined in the General Regulations of the University and in the specific regulations on progression and classification of awards. They should be read together with any examination regulations specific to an individual degree programme, as approved by the relevant Faculty Education Committee. These Emergency Situations [EmSi] regulations shall not be used without reference to the standard regulations.

B. Credit Transfer and the Recognition of Prior Learning

No EmSi Regulations are in this section, please refer to Standard Regulations.

C. Absence from Examinations, Failure to Submit Assessed Work and Assessment Irregularities

No EmSi Regulations are in this section, please refer to Standard Regulations.

D. Aural and Oral Examinations

No EmSi Regulations are in this section, please refer to Standard Regulations.

E. Marking Procedures

13.1 Senate has agreed that Newcastle University adopt a Safety Net policy for 2019/20, implemented in ways that builds on already approved approaches to mitigate the impact of Covid-19 as set out in the policy statement approved by Executive Board in March, and as set out in the previously Emergency Guidance approved by Senate.

Undergraduate and integrated masters programmes

13.2.a. All assessment up to and including Semester 1 assessments in 2019-20 will be used to calculate a 'baseline' average (initially provisional and subsequently confirmed after the Module Moderation Board and External Examiner scrutiny for presentation to the Board of Examiners) and guarantee that each student's academic average for the year 2019-20 or for their final year average is no lower than this **provided that students meet the learning outcomes for their programme by achieving the normal requirements in respect of the amount of credit awarded for their Semester 2 modules (i.e. pass each module).**

13.2.b. It is noted that programmes with professional recognition where the requirements of the relevant Professional and Statutory Regulatory Body (PSRB) do not allow this Safety Net to be applied in whole or in part. In those cases the University will work with the relevant School to support them in trying to secure as accommodating an approach for the relevant PSRB as is feasible. In some instances exemptions will be approved by the Chair of the Faculty Education Committee and noted in the minutes of the Board of Examiners.

Taught postgraduate programmes

13.3.a. Semester 1 2019-20 will be used as a secure indicator of student attainment, and this information can be provided to Boards of Examiners **in addition to the information on performance across the whole programme so that the decisions of Boards can take full account of any significant variations between performance across the three postgraduate semesters.**

13.3.b. To reflect the fact that Semester 1 2019-20 represents only a third of the total credit taught postgraduate students for the current academic year, you are **entitled as of right** to one resit for any and all taught modules that you did not pass at the first attempt.

F. Module and Aggregated Assessment

15.1 Where a revised module and/or aggregated assessment has been approved by the Chair of the Faculty Education Committee the standard regulations remain in place as mitigation against the Emergency Situation has already been taken into account.

G. Assessments and Conduct of Examinations

19.1 If you feel unable to sit the end of year assessments you can request to defer all of the remaining assessments until the August assessment period if notification was received by 15th May 2020. No evidence will be required to support your request, this will be processed through the submission of an online deferral form (<https://secureforms.ncl.ac.uk/view.php?id=103771>) and submitted forms will be logged centrally by the SPS Student Data Team, and Schools will receive a copy of the action for their records.

19.2 'Pre-approved' deferral requests are only available if you are seeking to defer a first attempt for ALL remaining assessments. If you wish to request to defer individual assessments, you will need to submit a PEC form setting out your reasons for making the request, which will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

19.3 If an alternative assessment was put in place for semester 2 in response to remote learning, it is likely that students deferring their assessments to August 2020 will also take the remote alternative assessment, i.e. they will not revert to an original. As a reminder, the university will only conduct face-to-face exams if it is a requirement of the Professionally Accredited Programme (PSRB).

19.4 If all assessments are deferred to the August 2020 assessment period, you will normally be entitled to one reassessment for any failed modules. If an undergraduate or Integrated Masters student fails more than 20 credits they will be entitled to

reassessment in all failed modules, but they may be required to take a year out of their studies and undertake a reassessment as an external student during the 2020-21 academic year. There are implications that students need to be aware of when taking a year as an External Candidate, such as:

19.5 The overall length of the programme of study will be increased by one year and students with Tier 4 visas may need to apply for a new visa which will cover this additional period – Contact Visa Advice Team for guidance visa@newcastle.ac.uk

19.6 An external assessment student will retain access to their email/IT account and Blackboard, but as you are not fully registered they will not be attending classes (only with PEC approval can a student repeat study)

19.7 As the student is not registered, but on a particular type of 'Leave of Absence', there will be no tuition fee for the year. Students will need to advise their Student Loan Company of their year out and engage with the SLC for subsequent years for financing the remainder of their programme

19.8 Where an assessment has already been submitted in advance of the student making a request to defer all remaining assessments, the earlier submission will be accepted as a student's first attempt and the mark recorded accordingly.

H. Return of Marks

25.1 The final mark produced for a module is the one that must appear on the transcript, even if this is a low mark that is treated appropriately for the purposes of a degree- classification calculation (by decision of the Board on the basis of a recommendation from the PEC Committee), or one that has been superseded in the final classification by the implementation of the 'safety net'.

I. Principles of Discretion

27.1 Boards of Examiners are reminded that they are empowered to use discretion as they deem fit, in accordance with University regulations, bearing in mind the specific progression and classification rules for individual programmes.

27.2 Boards of Examiners should proceed on the basis that their core role is to decide whether individual students have satisfactorily demonstrated the achievement of the learning outcomes associated with the programme of study. They should be prepared to take full account of any disruption to examinations or assessments and to exercise discretion on an individual basis. This requires that Chairs and Secretaries are adequately informed of the impact on individual candidates. Progression and award decisions taken by the Board must also comply with any external accreditation requirements.

27.3 Boards of Examiners will need to decide if they have sufficient evidence on which to base a decision on achievement of learning outcomes in respect of each individual student. The guiding principle is that there should be sufficient evidence on which to base the decision of the Board. Sufficient information is not necessarily complete information, and the Board must use its discretion in deciding whether the available run of marks is sufficient to determine a progression decision. Boards should consider the balance of evidence available about a particular candidate and

consider whether sufficient learning outcomes have been met to be able to award a degree classification.

27.4 Boards considering candidates for whom professional accreditation issues arise must ensure that any decision based on incomplete results is consistent with the terms of the accreditation or is otherwise acceptable to the accrediting body. For some stages of a degree it may be appropriate to publish only a broad outcome (e.g. pass or fail) and then to reconvene if or when further information becomes available to determine a more detailed set of outcomes.

27.5 To avoid the risk of inconsistency in determining whether there is sufficient evidence for a decision to be made, Boards of Examiners should seek advice from the Chair of Faculty Education Committee (FEC), in line with any further guidance issued.

27.6 Caution should be exercised, and if the Board is not convinced that sufficient evidence exists to enable decisions to be made on an academically sound, fair and consistent basis, they should not be made. If this is the case:

27.7.a The Board should empower the Chair to make decisions as required at a later date or otherwise arrange for a re-convened Board.

27.7.b Where the Chair is given authority to act, the Chair shall consult the Chair of Faculty Education Committee (FEC) before acting.

27.8 In accordance with normal procedures, the Board should retain a full minute when discretion is used – and, if appropriate, where discretion is withheld.

Non-final stages

28.1.a For other than the final stage of a degree programme, it may be necessary for Boards to issue results in different levels of detail for different students – e.g. full results with marks/grades for some students but only pass/fail for others, and perhaps no results at all for some. This will depend on the extent of the evidence available to the Board on the achievement of learning outcomes by each candidate. The Board should ensure that a clear minute is taken of the evidence relied on in reaching decisions on individual students.

28.1.b If a sufficient run of results is not available to support a progress decision, Boards should reconvene and agree more detailed results wherever practicable.

Final stages

28.2.a For the final stage of a degree programme, each Board will need to decide whether it has sufficient evidence to classify the result for each candidate. It is important that each Board has confidence in classification decisions which must be evidence based. Whether to award a classified degree, or a degree where the classification has yet to be determined, is a matter for the Board in light of all the circumstances and with a view to being as fair as possible to each student. The Board may also choose to make no award to particular students if there is insufficient evidence to have confidence in the award, but this must be regarded as a decision of last resort to be avoided where possible.

28.2.b To avoid the risk of inconsistency in determining whether there is sufficient evidence for a classification to be made, Boards of Examiners should seek advice from the Chair of Faculty Education Committee (FEC), in line with any further guidance issued.

28.2.c In line with the normal guidance for Boards of Examiners / PEC Committees, it is expected that Boards of Examiners will not consider students for a higher classification where there is little evidence of achievement at the higher level. It may therefore be more appropriate for students to be given another attempt at the affected assessment/s

28.2.d Where the results are incomplete and depending on the evidence available to them, Boards may choose for particular candidates:

28.2.d.i **To award a classified degree:** depending on the specifics of the case, a classified degree may be awarded in the absence of a complete set of results where the Board is nonetheless satisfied that there is sufficient evidence to support the classification proposed and that I.27.3 (see above) has been considered.

28.2.d.ii **To award an unclassified degree:** that is to award an Honours degree (undergraduate) or a Pass degree (Postgraduate). If the Board does not have sufficient evidence to award a particular degree classification, the Board must consider whether it is able to make an interim unclassified decision awarding an Honours degree (undergraduate) or Pass (postgraduate), enabling the candidate to graduate, with the class of degree being decided when the emergency is resolved.

28.2.d.iii **To make normal resit / repeat decisions.**

28.2.d.iv **Not to make any decision until further module results are known**

28.2.d.v In accordance with the principle noted above, Boards may determine whether other awards can be made – for example, it may be possible for an undergraduate Board to award a pass degree/ Higher Education Diploma / Certificate, and for a postgraduate Board to award a Diploma/Certificate.

28.2.e Boards should be very cautious about issuing fail results to individuals on the basis of incomplete information. The Board should ensure that a clear minute is taken of the evidence relied on in reaching decisions on individual student

J. Reassessment

Postgraduate Taught Programmes

32.1 Please note that regulations 32a, 32b, 33, 34, 35 and 36 do not apply and will not be used during Emergency Situations; Regulation 32 stands outright in that you are entitled to one reassessment for each taught module failed.

K. Resubmission of Dissertation – Postgraduate Taught

No EmSi Regulations are in this section, please refer to Standard Regulations.

L. Timing of Reassessment at any Stage Other Than the Final Stage – Undergraduate Programmes

No EmSi Regulations are in this section, please refer to Standard Regulations.

M. Mid-year Student Withdrawals

No EmSi Regulations are in this section, please refer to Standard Regulations.

N. Awarding of Qualifications

No EmSi Regulations are in this section, please refer to Standard Regulations.

O. Assessment of Incoming Study Abroad, Exchange and Occasional Students

No EmSi Regulations are in this section, please refer to Standard Regulations.

P. Aegrotat

No EmSi Regulations are in this section, please refer to Standard Regulations.

Q. Exemptions to these Regulations

No EmSi Regulations are in this section, please refer to Standard Regulations.