



**HARTPURY**  
UNIVERSITY

# **Hartpury Academic Regulations**

## **2024-25**

# Contents

<b>Contents.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Part A: Hartpury Awards .....</b>	<b>5</b>
A1 Awards.....	5
A2. Credit structure of awards.....	6
A3. Award titles.....	10
A4. Differential levels of awards .....	10
A5. Joint awards with other institutions .....	13
A6. Recognition of prior learning .....	13
A8. Honorary degrees.....	15
<b>Part B: Admission and study.....</b>	<b>16</b>
B1. Admission.....	16
B2. Enrolment .....	16
B3. Suspension, withdrawal and expulsion from enrolment.....	18
B4. Studying.....	19
B5. Student complaints .....	22
<b>Part C: Conduct of assessment .....</b>	<b>23</b>
C1. Assessment.....	23
C2. Module assessment .....	24
C3. Module types .....	25
C4. Late submission of work for assessment.....	25
C5. Taking assessments requiring prescribed conditions off campus.....	26
C6. Assessments Marking and Feedback .....	26
C7. General resit information.....	26
C8. General retake information.....	27
C9. Capping of Marks.....	28
<b>Part D: Assessment decisions .....</b>	<b>29</b>
D1. Boards of examiners' responsibility for modules and programmes.....	29
D2. Compensated pass for marginal failure.....	30
D3. Granting an award .....	30
D4. Absence of assessment marks as a consequence of significant disruption.....	32
D5. Publication of results and confirmation of credit .....	33
D6. Appeals against a decision of a board of examiners.....	34
D7. Review of an examining board decision .....	34
D8. Annulment of a decision of an examining board.....	34

D9. Formally revoking an award from a graduate .....	35
<b>Appendix. Additional and variant regulations .....</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>Appendix. Academic dress.....</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Appendix. Academic Misconduct (Assessment Offences).....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Appendix. Appeals Procedure .....</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>Appendix. Assessment Cycle .....</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>Appendix. Conduct of Examinations .....</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>Appendix. Extenuating Circumstances: Students experiencing difficulties which impact on their ability to meet assessment deadlines .....</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>Appendix. Fitness to study and reside.....</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>Appendix. Professional Suitability.....</b>	<b>80</b>
<b>Appendix. Reasonable Adjustments to Assessment Arrangements .....</b>	<b>96</b>
<b>Document Approval and Review Cycle .....</b>	<b>103</b>
<b>Change Log to the 2024-25 regulations .....</b>	<b>103</b>

# Introduction

Hartpury University (prior to 13 September 2018 Hartpury College) is an autonomous UK degree awarding body with the power to award taught academic qualifications up to the level of taught Master's. For the purposes of this document it will be referred to as Hartpury. These Academic Regulations are intended to:

- a. provide the framework of rules governing academic practice relating to the provision of learning and teaching leading to Hartpury awards and taught elements of research degrees;
- b. be deployed consistently across all areas of operations;
- c. inform all decision-making designed to enhance the quality of Hartpury's educational provision;
- d. be written in clear language and available in a range of forms upon request;
- e. be the basis for the assurance and maintenance of academic standards.

## Scope

The Academic Board authorises committees, boards and panels of Hartpury to act on its behalf in applying the Academic Regulations. Reference is made to these delegated powers at appropriate points within the Academic Regulations.

Students enrolled on programmes validated by the University of the West of England (UWE) should refer to UWE's Academic Regulations.

## Annual review

The Academic Regulations are reviewed annually with due regard to The Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area, the Office for Students Regulatory Framework for Higher Education in England, the UK Quality Code for Higher Education and Hartpury's Student Protection Plan. The Academic Regulations may be up-dated, reviewed or amended as determined by the Academic Board and may only be varied following approval by the Academic Board.

Students are required to familiarise themselves with the Academic Regulations. If material or significant changes are made to the Academic Regulations, Hartpury will determine the extent to which the changes apply to current students and provide notification of such changes by direct communication to students' Hartpury e-mail account.

# Part A: Hartpury Awards

**A.1** It is the student's responsibility to ensure that they are familiar with, understand and abide by the Academic Regulations. The Academic Regulations apply in all cases except where variant regulations are expressly stated within the approved programme specification. For example, 'non-standard' variant regulations are exceptionally permitted for awards where there are specific professional body requirements.

## A1 Awards

**A1.1** Hartpury Awards are approved by Academic Board in accordance with the UK National Qualifications Framework that includes the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

**A1.2** To be eligible for an award, students must have successfully completed the required number of credits at the level(s) specified for that award, and within the prescribed time-frame, except where an examining board determines otherwise. Section D contains more information about assessment decisions.

**A1.3** A student progresses through a programme of study by achieving credit, through successful completion of modules detailed within an approved programme specification. The approved programme specification states the award title, award structure, curriculum, teaching, learning and assessment requirements for the programme and modules making up the programme as well as the assessment regulations and other requirements as prescribed by Academic Board.

**A1.4** Modules are the academic building blocks for programmes and form the basis for assessment and the award of credit. Modules are offered at specified academic levels (3 to 7), in accordance with the UK National Qualifications Framework, and lead to specified amounts of credit.

**A1.5** Credit recognises and provides a means of recording student achievement, incrementally and cumulatively. The credit tariff reflects the number of hours on average that a student is expected to study to achieve the specified learning outcomes at a specified level.

**A1.6** If students choose or find it necessary to end their studies earlier than planned, the accumulation of credit may make it possible to obtain an award at a level determined by the amount of credit that has been achieved at the point of departure.

**A1.7** The minimum credit size of a module is 5 credits.

### Credit tariff

**A1.8** The amount of credit carried by a module is linked to the notional study time expected of students in order to succeed at the stated level. Notional study time includes scheduled study, staff/student contact time, independent study, private study, time spent in professional practice when required, revision and the completion of assessment requirements.

**A1.9** The total notional study hours for an award are determined by the credit requirements for that award. Under Hartpury’s credit tariff 1 credit involves 10 hours of notional study time and is expressed in Credit Accumulation and Transfer Scheme (CATS) points. For the purpose of comparison with the European Credit Accumulation and Transfer System (ECTS), 120 CATS is equivalent to 60 ECTS.

**A1.10** Learning outcomes and their assessment requirements specify what a student must achieve to be awarded credit.

## **A2. Credit structure of awards**

**A2.1** Each award shall specify the minimum number of credits at stated levels that a student must obtain in order to be eligible for the award.

**A2.2** Awards recognised or accredited by a professional body may require more than the minimum amount of credit. Where this is the case, a named award not exceeding the minimum credit requirements will be available as part of the programme.

**A2.3** Awards which lead to a Hartpury award, are required to adopt the same credit structure as that used by Hartpury and displayed in tables A1 to A3.

**Table A1: Hartpury’s Undergraduate Awards**

Award Title	Course route	NQF level	Total credits	Minimum credits required for award				
				Level 7	Level 6 or above	Level 5 or above	Level 4 or above	Level 3 or above
Higher Education Foundation Award	Certificate	3	30					30
Higher Education Foundation Certificate	Higher Education Foundation Certificate	3	90					90
Undergraduate Award	Undergraduate Award	4	30				15	15
Undergraduate Certificate	Undergraduate Certificate	4	60				45	60
Certificate of Higher Education	Certificate of Higher Education	4	120				90	120
Professional Certificate of Higher Education	Professional Certificate of Higher Education	4	120				90	120
Diploma in Professional Studies	Diploma in Professional Studies	5	240			90	210	240
Diploma of Higher Education	Diploma of Higher Education	5	240			90	210	240
Foundation Degree	Foundation Degree	5	240			90	210	240
Foundation Degree with sandwich year <sup>1</sup>	Foundation Degree with sandwich year <sup>1</sup>	5	240			90	210	240

<sup>1</sup> Credits from a placement year must be included.



Foundation Degree with integrated placement year <sup>1</sup>	Foundation Degree with integrated placement year <sup>1</sup>	5	240			90	210	240
Undergraduate Level 6 Award	Undergraduate Level 6 Award	6	30		15	30		
Bachelor Degree Ordinary	Bachelor Degree Ordinary	6	300		60	150	270	300
	Bachelor Degree Ordinary (Level 6 entry)	6	60		60			
	Bachelor Degree Ordinary (with foundation year)	6	420		60	150	270	420
Bachelor Degree Ordinary with integrated placement year <sup>1</sup>	Bachelor Degree Ordinary with integrated placement year <sup>1</sup>	6	300		60	150	270	300
	Bachelor Degree Ordinary with integrated placement year (with foundation year)	6	420		60	150	270	420
Bachelor Degree with Honours	Bachelor Degree with Honours	6	360		90	210	330	360
	Bachelor Degree with Honours (Level 6 entry)	6	120		90		120	
	Bachelor Degree with Honours (with foundation year)	6	480		90	210	330	480
Bachelor Degree with Honours with integrated placement year <sup>1</sup>	Bachelor Degree with Honours with integrated placement year <sup>1</sup>	6	360		90	210	330	360
	Bachelor Degree with Honours with integrated placement year (with foundation year) <sup>1</sup>	6	480		90	210	330	480
Bachelor Degree with Honours with sandwich year <sup>1</sup>	Bachelor Degree with Honours with sandwich year <sup>1</sup>	6	360		90	210	330	360
Integrated Masters Degree	Integrated Masters Degree	7	480	120	210	320	450	480
	Integrated Masters Degree (with foundation year)	7	600	120	210	320	450	600



Integrated Masters Degree with integrated placement year <sup>1</sup>	Integrated Masters Degree with integrated placement year <sup>1</sup>	7	480	120	210	320	450	480
	Integrated Masters Degree with integrated placement year (with foundation year) <sup>1</sup>	7	600	120	210	320	450	600

**Table A2: Hartpury's Graduate Entry Awards**

Graduate Entry Awards	NQF level	Minimum credits required for award				
		Total credits	Level 7	Level 6 or above	Level 5 or above	Level 4 or above
Graduate Certificate	6	60		45		60
Graduate Diploma	6	120		90		120

**Table A3: Hartpury's Postgraduate Awards**

Award Title and abbreviation	Course route	NQF level	Minimum credits required for award				
			Total credits	Level 7	Level 6 or above	Level 5 or above	Level 4 or above
Postgraduate Award (PgA)	PgA	7	30	15	30		
Postgraduate Certificate (PgC)	PgC	7	60	45	60		
Postgraduate Diploma (PgD)	PgD	7	120	90	120		
Master of Arts Degree (MA)	MA	7	180	150			
Master of Research Degree (MRes)	MRes	7	180	150			
Masters in Research Degree (MRes)	MRes	7	180	150			
Master of Science Degree (MSc)	MSc	7	180	150			
Master of Business Administration (MBA)	MBA	7	180	150			
	MBA (Top-Up)	7	60	60			
Master of Business Management (MBM)	MBM	7	180	150			

**A2.4** The following undergraduate awards may be granted with specific subject variations:

Foundation Degree

Foundation Degree Arts (FdA)

Foundation Degree Science (FdSc)

Bachelor Degree and Bachelor Degree with Honours

Bachelor of Arts Degree (BA)

Bachelor of Science Degree (BSc)

Integrated Masters Degree

Integrated Master of Arts Degree (MAi)

Integrated Master of Science Degree (MSci)

### **A3. Award titles**

**A3.1** Programmes shall have entry conditions, curriculum and other particular requirements specified within the approved programme specification. Students may obtain a named award only by satisfying the requirements for that award as set out in the approved programme specification.

**A3.2** Only modules which are approved for a named award may contribute towards the credit requirements for that award. These modules may be designated as one of the following:

- Core – credits from a core module or group of core modules must be awarded by the examination board in order for the student to be eligible for the intended award.
- Option – enrolling on the module is optional. Credits awarded by the examination board can contribute towards the credit total of the intended award.

A programme specification details the modules, and their designated roles, that can contribute towards a named award.

**A3.3** An approved change to an award title should normally be introduced on a phased basis so it does not impact upon current students. Exceptionally, if a change is deemed to be desirable for existing cohorts all students must be consulted and give their unanimous consent to the change in writing.

**A3.4** Award titles shall be described using '*and*' to mean an approximately equal balance of credit tariff across the two subjects. Award titles shall be described using '*with*' to mean that the minor subject accounts for at least a quarter of the credit tariff for that programme.

### **A4. Differential levels of awards**

**A4.1** An award may be granted with differential levels of pass, merit, distinction, or with honours classification.

**A4.2** Hartpury may approve other forms of award differentiation where specifically required by a professional or statutory body and agreed for the purpose of the professional recognition or accreditation of an award.

**A4.3** Calculations of differential levels of award shall be based on marks achieved from modules named in the relevant programme specification detailing that award.

**A4.4** Differential levels of award may be based upon the marks achieved for fewer credits than specified below, where some modules have been assessed as passed/not passed only or where some of the qualifying credits have been approved through recognition of prior learning. This may result in differential levels of award being calculated using all available marks.

**A4.5** Differential levels of award are awarded based on an overall award mark calculated to 1 decimal place. A percentage to 0 decimal place is considered to start 0.5% below the percentage and finish 0.4% above the percentage. For example, 68% is considered to range from 67.5% to 68.4%.

### **Bachelor degree with honours classification**

**A4.6** The Bachelor Degree with Honours' classification is based upon the highest marks achieved for 100 credits at level 6 and the next highest marks achieved for 100 credits at level 5 or above (including any remaining level 6 marks). Marks achieved for the best 100 level 6 credits are weighted three times the value of the marks for the 100 credits at level 5 (or any remaining at level 6). Where the credit size of a module which is counted towards the 100 credit set of best marks would give a credit total greater than 100, only the relevant portion of credit needed to complete the 100 credit total is counted. The unused credit may be counted towards the second 100 credit set of best marks.

**A4.7** Students on a Bachelor Degree with Honours (Level 6 entry) will have their honours classification based on the best marks achieved for 100 credits at level 6.

**A4.8** Degree classifications are:

70% or more	First Class;
60% to less than 70%	Second Class (Upper Division);
50% to less than 60%	Second Class (Lower Division);
40% to less than 50%	Third Class.

### **Undergraduate awards other than honours degrees: differential levels of awards**

**A4.9** An Integrated Masters Degree with distinction shall be awarded when a student achieves an average of 70% or more across 210 credits at level 6 or above. An Integrated Masters Degree with merit shall be awarded when a student achieves an average of at least 60% to less than 70% across 210 credits at level 6 or above. This average will be calculated based upon the marks for all of the level 7 modules and the marks for the best level 6 modules which are required to make up the credit total.

**A4.10** A Bachelor Degree Ordinary is awarded with distinction when a student achieves an average of 70% or more across the best 60 credits at level 6 which are valid for the award. A Bachelor Degree Ordinary is awarded with merit when a student achieves an average of 60% to less than 70% across the best 60 credits at level 6 which are valid for the award.

**A4.11** The calculation of the differential level of Foundation Degree shall be based on marks from 90 credits at level 5. The mark from the designated level 5 module or modules incorporating the work placement or work based learning element of the award shall be used within the calculation and the best marks from the remaining credits required to total 90 credits at level 5. A Foundation Degree with distinction shall be awarded when an average of 70% or more is achieved. A Foundation Degree with merit shall be awarded when an average of 55% to

less than 70% is achieved.

**A4.12** A Diploma in Professional Studies with distinction shall be awarded where an average of 70% or more is achieved across the best 90 credits at level 5 or above which are valid for the award. A Diploma in Professional Studies with merit shall be awarded where an average of 55% to less than 70% is achieved across the best 90 credits at level 5 or above which are valid for the award.

**A4.13** A Diploma of Higher Education with distinction shall be awarded where an average of 70% or more is achieved across the best 90 credits at level 5 or above which are valid for the award. A Diploma of Higher Education with merit shall be awarded where an average of 55% to less than 70% is achieved across the best 90 credits at level 5 or above which are valid for the award.

**A4.14** A Professional Certificate of Higher Education with distinction shall be awarded where an average of 70% or more is achieved across the best 100 credits at level 4 or above, which are valid for the award. A Professional Certificate of Higher Education with merit shall be awarded where an average of 60% to less than 70% is achieved across the best 100 credits at level 4 or above, which are valid for the award.

**A4.15** A Certificate of Higher Education with distinction shall be awarded where an average of 70% or more is achieved across the best 100 credits at level 4 or above which are valid for the award. A Certificate of Higher Education with merit shall be awarded where an average of 60% to less than 70% is achieved across the best 100 credits at level 4 or above, which are valid for the award.

### **Graduate Entry Awards: differential levels of awards**

**A4.16** A Graduate Certificate with distinction is awarded where an average of 70% or more is achieved across the best 45 credits at level 6 or above which are valid for the award. A Graduate Certificate with merit is awarded where an average of 60% to less than 70% is achieved across the best 90 credits at level 6 or above which are valid for the award.

**A4.17** A Graduate Diploma with distinction is awarded where an average of 70% or more is achieved across the best 90 credits at level 6 or above which are valid for the award. A Graduate Diploma with merit is awarded where an average of 60% to less than 70% is achieved across the best 90 credits at level 6 or above which are valid for the award.

### **Postgraduate awards: differential levels of awards**

**A4.18** Differential achievement on postgraduate awards shall be expressed as pass, merit and distinction, other than where specific designations are approved by Hartpury and set out in the approved programme specification.

**A4.19** A Postgraduate Certificate with distinction shall be awarded where an average of 70% or more has been achieved across all level 7 credits. A Postgraduate Certificate with merit shall be awarded where an average of 60% to less than 70% has been achieved across all level 7 credits.

A Postgraduate Certificate with pass shall be awarded where an average of less than 60% has been achieved across all level 7 credits.

**A4.20** A Postgraduate Diploma with distinction shall be awarded where an average of 70% or more has been achieved across all level 7 credits. A Postgraduate Diploma with merit shall be awarded where an average of 60% to less than 70% has been achieved across all level 7 credits. A Postgraduate Diploma with pass shall be awarded where an average of less than 60% has been achieved across all level 7 credits.

**A4.21** A masters degree with distinction shall be awarded where an average of at least 70% or more has been achieved across the best 120 level 7 credits. A masters degree with merit shall be awarded where an average of 60% to less than 70% has been achieved across the best 120 level 7 credits. A masters degree with pass shall be awarded where an average of less than 60% has been achieved across the best 120 level 7 credits.

## **A5. Joint awards with other institutions**

**A5.1** The Academic Board may exceptionally approve awards offered by Hartpury in conjunction with one or more organisations recognised as having awarding powers comparable to those of Hartpury.

## **A6. Recognition of prior learning**

**Definition:** Recognition of prior learning allows a student to be exempted from study where credit can be awarded based upon the prior achievement of learning outcomes. The exempted module/s or stage/s may contribute to the credit requirements of Hartpury awards, subject to the student meeting all other requirements set out in these regulations.

- Recognition of Prior Certificated Learning (RPL) is learning accredited or certificated by a UK or overseas higher education institution or by an external body (e.g. a professional or other awarding body).
- Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL) is learning achieved through experience and/or self-directed study, which may not be formally certificated.

**A6.1** Only credit from prior learning awarded by Hartpury's Recognition of Prior Learning Panel may count towards a Hartpury award.

**A6.2** A student must pay any fee required when they apply for recognition of their prior learning. Paying the fee entitles a student to have their application considered. If the applicable fee is not paid, the application will not be considered.

**A6.3** A student may be awarded credit through recognition of prior learning to contribute to the credit requirements of a Hartpury award unless explicitly stated otherwise within the programme specification.

**A6.4** A student is not eligible for an award based solely on credit gained through recognition of

prior learning.

**A6.5** Any award of credit from RPL/RPEL must take the form of one or more of the following:

- Module exemption, exempting the student from studying a particular module. To be eligible for this type of exemption the prior learning must be comparable with the module's learning outcomes, level and notional study hours, in keeping with expectations of current knowledge, and the student must be able to demonstrate they successfully completed what is claimed.
- General credit exemption, exempting the student from studying a number of modules in a programme. To be eligible for this type of exemption the prior learning must be comparable with the learning outcomes of the overall programme or the relevant stage of the programme. This award of credit may only be counted toward a specified programme. If the student wishes to change programme, they may need to re-apply for recognition of prior learning.
- Collaborative scheme credit, where credit from curriculum delivered by a particular collaborative academic partner institution may be used as an alternative to Hartpury's modules where they are specified as part of that programme specification.

In all cases, the student must be able to demonstrate the authenticity, volume, currency and relevancy of the credit being claimed, to the Recognition of Prior Learning Panel. Some modules and programmes preclude the use of RPL/RPEL credit. Where RPL/RPEL is not available it will be detailed on the relevant module or programme specification.

**A6.6** Credit awarded for RPL/RPEL will not carry marks or grades.

**A6.7** The award of RPL/RPEL credit will be recorded at the appropriate examination board and identified as RPL or RPEL on the student's certificate of credit.

**A6.8** If a student receives an award of credit in recognition of their prior learning, they may elect not to accept all or part of it before the award is confirmed by an examination board and in line with any conditions that Academic Board may set.

## **A7. Counting Hartpury credit towards more than one award**

**A7.1** To be eligible for an award a student must have unique study credit. Unique study credit is Hartpury module credit which has not previously been counted towards a Hartpury award and has not been awarded on the basis of recognition of prior learning, and may contribute to the award as detailed on the relevant programme specification.

**A7.2** A student can use credit, and its associated marks, awarded by an examination board for study and assessment on a programme under the Hartpury Academic Regulations or following assessment through Hartpury Taught Provision towards more than one award. This is subject to meeting the unique study requirements in A7.1 and provided the:

- modules are valid for the award;
- learning is in keeping with expectations of current knowledge; and;
- programme specification does not state that this is not possible.

**A7.3** The credit for a module of type 'Masters Dissertation' (identified within the programme

specification) must be obtained by study and assessment under Hartpury's Academic Regulations, and credit for such modules cannot be awarded on the basis of recognition of prior learning.

## **A8. Honorary degrees**

**A8.1** Hartpury may grant honorary degrees to persons who have made a major contribution to the work of Hartpury or in recognition of achievement associated more widely with or supportive of its mission, aims and activities whether in business, cultural endeavour, education, the professions, public service, science or technology or otherwise.

**A8.2** The Academic Board shall approve nominations for the award of honorary degrees. Within the other provisions of the Academic Regulations they may establish more specific criteria for the honorary degrees to be awarded in a particular year or at a particular ceremony.

# Part B: Admission and study

## B1. Admission

**B1.1** Hartpury requires all applicants and provisional students to show evidence of being able to meet the specified entry criteria for the programme at the point of entry to which they have applied. Admission to programmes delivered by Hartpury leading to awards of other bodies shall additionally be subject to the requirements of the body concerned.

**B1.2** An applicant or provisional student who does not satisfy the normal minimum entrance requirements for an award or module may be admitted on provision of evidence which demonstrates to Hartpury's satisfaction that the applicant can benefit from study at the appropriate level and is likely, on the evidence presented, to achieve the required standard. The following may be accepted as satisfying all or part of its entry requirements:

- a. qualifications, credit or other forms of learning from institutions of higher education or recognised bodies;
- b. evidence of experiential learning not previously assessed by or contributing to the awards of other institutions or bodies which is open to scrutiny and, where necessary, to assessment.

**B1.3** An applicant may seek admission to a programme beyond the initial entry point, termed advanced entry, subject to satisfying the entry requirements specified for the programme and providing evidence which satisfies Hartpury that the applicant has achieved the learning outcomes specified for any part of the programme not undertaken under its assessment regulations. Advanced entry may be achieved through a successful application for Recognition of Prior Learning or by using credit and marks achieved from modules passed before previous withdrawal from a Hartpury programme. In all cases the applicant must be able to demonstrate the learning for which the credit was awarded is valid and relevant for the intended programme; and in keeping with expectations of current knowledge.

**B1.4** Hartpury reserves the right not to offer a place to an applicant where Hartpury, has concluded they were unsuitable for a particular programme, for admission to Hartpury in general, or if they have an outstanding tuition fee debt.

**B1.5** Applicants and provisional students must additionally meet all the other eligibility criteria as set out in Hartpury's Admissions Policy and the offer letter.

## B2. Enrolment

**B2.1** An applicant who has accepted an offer of a place (a provisional student) shall be required to enrol to become a Hartpury student. Enrolment is an annual process, which encompasses agreement of contractual obligations of registration, whereby provisional students and returning students are required to confirm all of the following at the start of each academic year:

- a. the programme upon which they are enrolling and the associated award for which they are registering;
- b. their mode of study as a full-time, part-time or accelerated study student;
- c. the number of credits they will be attempting in the academic year;



- d. their acceptance of Hartpury's Academic Regulations, policies, procedures and other applicable codes of practice and terms and conditions then in force;
- e. their acceptance of any payment schedule associated with the prescribed fees for the programme;
- f. provision of any other evidence that may be required by Hartpury decision-making bodies demonstrating the student's suitability for study, including that they had met any conditions within their offer letter.

Students are responsible for ensuring that they are enrolled on the correct programme, award and modules, and on the correct number of credits in any given year. Students may only change their programme (including transfer between programmes), award, mode of study and number of credits within an academic year upon receiving written permission by Hartpury following the student making a written request.

**B2.2** Enrolment on a programme or module is subject to the following criteria:

- a. Meeting the specific entry requirements,
- b. Not having an outstanding tuition fee debt (or if they do Hartpury is satisfied they can meet their financial obligations); and;
- c. Any limit of the number of available places on the programme or module.

Hartpury may take account of logistical and educational reasons in determining entry to a programme or module. Hartpury may, in exceptional circumstances and at its sole discretion, refuse to permit a provisional student or student to enrol for a programme.

**B2.3** An undergraduate student may not enrol on more than one Hartpury programme simultaneously.

**B2.4** A postgraduate student may enrol on more than one Hartpury programme simultaneously, subject to not exceeding the maximum number of credits for which enrolment is permitted at any one time.

**B2.5** At the start of the programme, and each academic year, an individual is required to enrol within a designated enrolment period. The enrolment must reflect their programme (if applicable) and a valid set of module attempts reflecting their mode of study and their stated target award for the entirety of that academic year. A student who fails to enrol within the designated enrolment period, will be deemed no longer a student and will be withdrawn from their studies.

**B2.6** Except on accelerated study programmes, students enrolling for full time study must enrol on between a minimum of 90 credits and a maximum of 150 credits in one academic year. Enrolling on more than 120 credits is at the discretion of the University, and is usually permitted to support students with a 'Trail' status confirmed by a Programme Examination Board.

**B2.7** Students enrolling for part time study may enrol on a maximum of 90 credits in one academic year.

**B2.8** Students may enrol on a module attempt without enrolling on a programme of study.

**B2.9** Students may enrol on modules additional to those valid for their programme subject to the maximum permitted enrolment of credits, provided they can be accommodated for logistical

reasons, and they satisfy all of the following criteria:

- a. Hartpury’s entry requirements,
- b. The module’s stated pre-requisites,
- c. Any professional or third-party requirements of the module.

The exception to this is that a student may not enrol on a module attempt involving work placement unless enrolled on a programme of study that includes this module on its programme specification.

### **B3. Suspension, withdrawal and expulsion from enrolment**

**B3.1** A student may apply to suspend their studies for a period, normally not exceeding more than two academic years, but during this time they will be enrolled on the programme and the maximum period of enrolment (if applicable) will not be extended. Time constraints do apply to this process and more details can be found in the Appendix Extenuating Circumstances.

**B3.2** A student may withdraw from a module before 14 calendar days have elapsed from the start of their programme enrolment for the academic year and the attempt at the module is not lost.

**B3.3** Irrespective of any fee liability, undergraduate students may withdraw from a module without losing an attempt on that module if withdrawal occurs within one quarter of the module’s teaching period or before the deadline for submission of the first assessed element, whichever is the sooner. Students may still withdraw from a module after this point but the module remains on the student’s record and an attempt is lost.

**B3.4** Irrespective of any fee liability, students enrolled on taught postgraduate modules only, can withdraw from a module in writing without loss of the attempt within a given time period determined by the timetabled contact time, and illustrated in the table below. The Module Enrolment Change Form should be submitted by e-mail to the student advisor and the programme manager, or submitted in person to the student advisor.

**Table B1: Postgraduate Withdrawal Time Periods**

Module’s timetable	Scenario	Outcome
Timetabled contact time over a single period of consecutive days	Students can withdraw from the module before 17:00 of the second day of contact time	Module is removed from the student’s record – the attempt is not lost
Timetabled contact time over more than a single period of consecutive days but less than 6 weeks	Students can withdraw before 17:00 on the fifth (5) working day after the first date with timetabled contact time.	Module is removed from the student’s record – the attempt is not lost
Timetabled contact time over a 6-8 week period	Students can withdraw before 17:00 on the tenth (10) working day after the first date with timetabled contact time.	Module is removed from the student’s record – the attempt is not lost
Timetabled contact time over at least a 9 week period	Students can withdraw before 17:00 on the fifteenth (15) working day after the first date with timetabled contact time.	Module is removed from the student’s record – the attempt is not lost

All module delivery types	Anything except the above	Module remains on student's record and its status is 'withdrawn' – an attempt is lost.
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**B3.5** A student may not withdraw from an individual module after the module completion date.

**B3.6** A student may withdraw from their programme of studies by informing Hartpury of their intention and their requested date of withdrawal, in writing. The withdrawal will be subsequently considered by a board of examiners who will consider them for the highest award for which they are eligible.

**B3.7** A student may be required to withdraw from programmes and modules for any one of the following reasons:

- a. As a result of a decision by a Programme Examination Board due to failing to meet the requirements of the programme.
- b. If the student voluntarily withdraws from a compulsory professional practice module.
- c. As the result of an institutional procedure, including if the student is deemed to be unfit to undertake a compulsory professional practice module (taking into account the Fitness to Study and Reside Appendix as appropriate).
- d. If the student is found to have submitted false or incorrect information to gain entry to, or claim credit against, a programme of study. Authorities, required by legislation or institutional agreement, will be informed of this action and the nature of the offence.
- e. If the student has misrepresented their achievements at Hartpury to an external body. The external body, and any authorities required by legislation or institutional agreement, will be informed of this action and the nature of the offence.
- f. If the student is deemed by a Programme Examination Board as withdrawn due to prolonged absence or other valid reason;
- g. If the student has not returned from a period of suspended study within the specified time period;
- h. If the student's maximum registration period has elapsed;
- i. If the student is expelled from study due to financial, disciplinary, academic or other valid grounds.

A student required to withdraw under any of these circumstances will be eligible to receive a transcript indicating any credit legitimately earned.

**B3.8** Upon withdrawal, any fee liability will be calculated in line with the student's date of withdrawal. The date of withdrawal shall be the date of the receipt of the notification of withdrawal or the requested date of withdrawal, whichever is the latest. A student is responsible for ascertaining the implications, including financial, of the withdrawal. Where applicable the relevant funding body will be notified of the withdrawal. Following withdrawal from a Hartpury programme if a student wishes to commence a new enrolment for the same or a different programme they must apply through the admissions process.

**B3.9** Students may be required to suspend their studies or be expelled from Hartpury for breach of academic regulations by the Principal (or nominee).

## **B4. Studying**

**B4.1** All courses shall be taught and assessed in English, unless explicitly specified within a module specification.

**B4.2** Attendance will be required in line with programme and module specifications and may be required during evenings, weekends and outside standard term time. Students are not permitted to undertake a distance learning mode of attendance unless the programme or module on which they are registered has been formally approved for delivery via distance learning and Hartpury has given written permission that the student may do so.

**B4.3** Students should be aware that the main communication channels used by Hartpury to provide accurate, relevant and timely information are the virtual learning environment (VLE) and student email account. Students are expected to check the VLE and their Hartpury student email account at least twice a week. If students do not activate and check this account, or choose to automatically forward emails to a different email account, then Hartpury will not be responsible if important information such as details about classes, assessments, fees, enrolment etc. is missed.

**B4.4** It is the responsibility of students to maintain links with their academic department and the central administration, respond to requests for information, acknowledge specific communications related to the status of their enrolment and studies, and keep Hartpury informed as to any changes in their contact details. Changes of name, title, or address are to be communicated without delay and, in any event, before the termination of the student's enrolment.

**B4.5** The Academic Board requires departments and Affiliated Academic Partner Organisations to establish and promote arrangements for securing consultation with, and feedback from, students on teaching, learning, assessment methods and procedures as well as other arrangements for programmes and modules.

**B4.6** Each module has a module specification, which sets out the following information:

- a. the learning outcomes and means by which outcomes are achieved and demonstrated.
- b. the validated statement of teaching, learning and assessment requirements.

**B4.7** A student who is unable to undertake, elects not to enrol on, or does not pass, an integrated placement year will be unable to meet the requirements of an award with integrated placement year. If the programme has an award at the same academic level validated within the programme specification without an integrated placement year then the student may remain enrolled on the programme, but their target award will be amended. Where this is not the case, the student will be considered by the Programme Examination Board and may be required to withdraw from the programme.

**B4.8** The rights of students to tuition, assessment, certification and conferment of an award are subject to remaining in good standing with Hartpury, which means acting in accordance with Academic Regulations, policies and codes of practice concerning (but not limited to) discipline, conduct, academic integrity and ethics.

## Maximum enrolment periods for programmes

**B4.9** A programme has a maximum period of enrolment. The maximum enrolment period will be applied on a *pro rata* basis to students admitted with Advanced Entry, as a result of programme transfer, or who change mode of study. Periods of time when a student's studies are suspended do contribute towards the maximum enrolment period.

**Table B2: Hartpury's Undergraduate Programmes**

	Maximum Enrolment Period (years)	
	Full Time study mode	Part Time study mode
Higher Education Foundation Certificate	3	3
Certificate	3	3
Certificate of Higher Education	3	3
Diploma	5	6
Diploma in Professional Studies	5	6
Diploma of Higher Education	5	6
Foundation Degree	5	6
Foundation Degree (with integrated placement or sandwich year)	6	7
Bachelor Degree (ordinary and with honours)	6	9
Bachelor Degree (with integrated placement or sandwich years)	7	10
Bachelor Degree (Level 6 entry)	3	3
Bachelor Degree (with foundation year)	6	9
Bachelor degree with integrated placement year (with foundation year) <sup>+</sup>	8	10
Integrated Masters Degree	7	10
Integrated Masters Degree with integrated placement year	8	10
Integrated Masters Degree (with foundation year)	8	10
Integrated Masters Degree with integrated placement year (with foundation year)	9	10

**Table B3: Hartpury's Graduate Entry Programmes**

	Maximum Enrolment Period (years)	
	Full Time study mode	Part Time study mode
Graduate Certificate	3	3
Graduate Diploma	5	3

**Table B4: Hartpury's Postgraduate Programmes**

	Maximum Enrolment Period (years)	
	Full time study mode	Part Time study mode
Postgraduate Award	Not available	3
Postgraduate Certificate	Not available	4
Postgraduate Diploma	3	5
Master of Arts Degree	5	7
Master of Research Degree	5	7
Masters in Research Degree	5	7
Master of Science Degree	5	7
Master of Business Administration	5	7
Master of Business Management	5	7

**B4.10** The maximum enrolment period within which a student may complete the route to their target award, including permitted reassessment, may be constrained by limitations on the life span of a module or programme. This is in order to safeguard the currency of knowledge and its application in a professional context or the availability of resources to deliver a module or group of modules. If the maximum enrolment period is constrained, this will be stated in the programme or module specification.

**B4.11** Where a student has not completed their target award, and reaches the maximum enrolment period, they will be allowed to complete outstanding reassessment within a module attempt. However, a student will not be allowed to enrol on a further attempt at a module. They will then be required to withdraw and will be granted the highest award to which they are eligible, validated within their programme of study.

## **B5. Student complaints**

**B5.1** Complaints from students about any academic matter related to teaching and learning provision, will be considered according to the Complaints Procedure (available on the Hartpury website).

# Part C: Conduct of assessment

## C1. Assessment

**C1.1** It is a student's responsibility to ensure that they obtain the information they require to present themselves for assessment. The form of assessment of a module is included within the module specification.

**C1.2** A student is required to submit their own work for assessment (unless submitting an assessment that is the result of requested group work, when all the authors should be clearly stated).

**C1.3** Students are required to submit to all formal assessment required of them. It is the student's responsibility to submit assessment in accordance with the published assessment submission method and submission deadline (date and time).

**C1.4** Hartpury operates a strict code relating to the conduct of examination candidates outlined in the Appendix Conduct of Examinations. This code may be varied where necessary to comply with the written requirements of relevant professional or accrediting bodies and on these occasions a clear statement of the variation will be e-mailed to all candidates' Hartpury e-mail addresses prior to the examination.

**C1.5** In the event that a student is affected by significant and unforeseen personal difficulties or circumstances which may impact on their ability to complete, submit on time or attend a specific assessment, they should advise Hartpury as soon as possible, following the processes and guidance outlined in Appendix Extenuating Circumstances, to enable appropriate action to be taken.

**C1.6** Reasonable adjustments to assessment arrangements may be made for students with a disability or severe short term illness, specific learning difficulty (including dyslexia), mental health condition or chronic medical conditions, pregnancy, maternity or paternity. The method and timing of an assessment may be adjusted in line with a student's needs, taking into account the learning outcomes/competencies of the module and award. Existing practice and experiences will be taken into account, as will the individual's specific needs and adjustments in prior educational settings. See the Appendix Reasonable Adjustments to Assessment Arrangements for more information.

**C1.7** Academic misconduct is any action which has the potential to give a student an unfair advantage in an assessment. It is an academic offence for any student to attempt to achieve through unfair means a higher grade or mark than they would otherwise secure. Academic offences threaten academic integrity and standards and may bring Hartpury and its awards into disrepute.

**C1.8** Where a submitted assessment is suspected to constitute academic misconduct it must be reported and will be considered in accordance with the procedure within the Appendix Academic Misconduct. Assessments may be penalised that are determined to be in breach of Hartpury's Academic Regulations and a formal record of proven academic offences will be kept.

## C2. Module assessment

**C2.1** A student is only entitled to submit assessment for a module when they are enrolled on an attempt at that module. A module attempt incurs module tuition fees as outlined in the Tuition Fee Policy, and may consist of a first 'sit' and any 'resit' (reassessment) opportunity the student is awarded by a board of examiners for that module.

**C2.2** The assessment requirements of a module are as described in the module specification.

**C2.3** An assessment can be described as being under controlled conditions, providing that the control exerted is sufficient to determine that the work submitted for assessment is the student's own and that there is parity of treatment between all students taking the assessment.

**C2.4** A module shall have components of assessment. Components may contain one or more elements of assessment.

**C2.5** A module, a component and an element may be marked as 'pass' or 'not pass' or as a percentage, as described in the module specification.

**C2.6** In order to pass a module the overall module mark must be a minimum of a 'pass', or a percentage of 40% for modules at levels 3 to 6 or 50% for modules at level 7. These criteria must also be met in order to pass a resit or retake. The final module mark is expressed as a whole number and is rounded up.

**C2.7** A student who has achieved a module outcome of 'pass' will not be allowed any further assessments to gain a higher mark. As such a student may only submit a further assessment where the board of examiners has confirmed this is permissible within the Academic Regulations (ie the module has an outcome indicating a resit or retake is available).

**C2.8** For modules at levels 3 to 6 with more than one component, the threshold pass mark for a component is a 'pass' or 35% and the threshold pass mark for a module is 'pass' or 40%. If the student does not achieve the threshold for one of the components, but has a mark of 40% or higher for the module and are eligible for a resit, they must resit that component. If the student achieves a mark between 35% and 39% (inclusive) for both of the components, they cannot achieve the module pass mark at that opportunity and if they are eligible for a resit, they must resit both components. Any deviation from this methodology for an individual module will be detailed within the module specification.

**C2.9** For level 7 modules with more than one component, the threshold pass mark for a component is 'pass' or 40% and the threshold pass mark for a module is 'pass' or 50%. If the student does not achieve the threshold for one of the components, but has a mark of 50% or higher for the module and they are eligible for a resit, they must resit that component. If the student achieves a mark between 40% and 49% (inclusive) for each of the components, they cannot achieve the module pass mark at that opportunity. Therefore, if they are eligible for a resit, they must resit both components. Any deviation from this methodology for an individual module will be detailed within the module specification.



**C2.10** Within an attempt, a student is not eligible to resit a component for which the mark already achieved is 40% (levels 3-6) or 50% (level 7) or above.

**C2.11** The mark for a module is calculated as the weighted average of the marks for the components of assessment. Components may be differently weighted. The mark for a component of assessment is calculated as the weighted average of the marks for the individual elements of the component. A pass/not pass element does not contribute a percentage grade to a mark calculation at component or module level. Rather the mark shall be calculated from the remaining points of assessment. Hence, if the pass/not pass assessment is the only element of assessment within a component, then that component shall be marked as 'pass'/'not pass' accordingly. For modules where all elements of assessment are pass/not passed, the module mark is expressed as 'pass' or 'not pass' only.

**C2.12** If a student is eligible to resit a component, they will be eligible to submit all elements for that component as identified in the module specification. This will be the case even if, at the previous opportunity, the student completed some or all of the assessments or had extenuating circumstances accepted. Marks for elements of assessment may not be carried forward between assessment opportunities. The only exception to this is for Pass/Fail elements of assessment where if a student achieves a Pass at the sit opportunity then the Pass mark for that element of assessment will be carried forward to the resit opportunity and the student shall not be eligible to submit this element again.

**C2.13** If a student has valid extenuating circumstances (accepted) that would mean a resit is inappropriate the Programme Examination Board may permit a student to retake a module.

### **C3. Module types**

**C3.1** All modules are classified as one of either standard or project module types, which may determine how they are assessed.

### **C4. Late submission of work for assessment**

**C4.1.R** Except when business has been significantly affected by force majeure late submission of an element of assessment without documented and approved extenuating circumstances (see Appendix Extenuating Circumstances) is penalised in accordance with the following criteria:

- a. The mark for the element of non-examination assessment submitted up to 24 hours after the published deadline will be reduced by 10% or to the module pass threshold, whichever results in the higher mark, if above the module pass threshold. If the mark for the element of assessment is at or below the module pass threshold it will have no reduction.
- b. The mark for the element of non-examination assessment submitted more than 24 hours after the published deadline will be 0% or 'not pass'.
- c. The mark for the element of examination assessment submitted after the published deadline will be 0% or 'not pass'.

The resultant mark for the element of assessment will be used in the calculation of the component and overall module marks and outcome.

## **C5. Taking assessments requiring prescribed conditions off campus**

**C5.1** No student shall have the right to take any assessment off campus and permission to do so is at Hartpury's discretion. More information can be found in the Appendix: Reasonable Adjustments to Assessment Arrangements.

## **C6. Assessments Marking and Feedback**

**C6.1** The Hartpury's processes for setting assessments, marking and providing feedback and moderating marks in its taught provision are approved by Academic Board and articulated in the Appendix Assessment Cycle.

**C6.2** Where a written assessment exceeds the set word limit stated on the assessment brief, the marker will not include any work after the maximum word limit has been reached within the allocation of marks. Unless specified otherwise in a particular assessment brief, the word count of an assessment includes all material such as quotations and quantitative or qualitative data presented within the main body of the text (introduction to conclusion), but does not include the reference list/bibliography or supplementary material presented in the form of an appendix. Students may therefore be penalised for a failure to be concise and for failing to conclude their work within the word limit specified.

## **C7. General resit information**

**C7.1** Students who do not pass one or more components at the first sit are entitled to a resit in the component(s) which have not been passed.

**C7.2** Resits of components will be capped at the threshold pass mark for the module unless:

- a. a Programme Examination Board decides otherwise (usually on the basis of accepted extenuating circumstances); or;
- b. the module is at level 3 or 4, and the student has either made an assessment submission for all elements of assessment or had accepted an extenuating circumstances missed assessment or removal of marks' application for that component of assessment.

The capping of resit components may not reduce a module's mark below the threshold pass mark for the module.

**C7.3** Once a module has been passed, no further assessments are permitted unless under exceptional circumstances in order to satisfy the requirements of professional bodies. A resit or retake is not permitted to improve a mark where a pass has already been achieved.

**C7.4** The module specification will state where attendance is mandatory for a resit.

**C7.5** A student who does not pass the module after the resit will either be eligible for a further

resit, a further attempt or will be deemed to have failed the module, as confirmed by a Programme Examination Board.

**C7.6** A further resit for a component (usually without further timetabled teaching) may be offered to students in their final year of study towards their target award if:

- a. the student would be able to be awarded their target award if they were successful in the further resit; and
- b. the student has either made an assessment submission for all elements of assessment within the component at sit, or had accepted an extenuating circumstances missed assessment or removal of marks' application for that component of assessment; and;
- c. the student meets any requirements for Professional Accrediting Bodies or Health and Safety requirements for accessing the further resit.

**C7.7** The outcome for a component may not be carried forward from one attempt to the next (ie to retake).

C7.8 It may not be possible to provide an opportunity for a resit or further resit for some modules before the next occasion on which the module is run in its entirety. This will not affect the student's right to a resit, or a retake, but it will affect the timing of that resit or retake.

## **C8. General retake information**

**C8.1** A retake is a further attempt at a module. Students may retake a module if they are eligible for a further attempt. The overall module mark for a retake will be capped for the purposes of determining a student's eligibility for a differential award (classification) unless the Programme Examination Board decides otherwise. No marks are normally carried over between attempts.

**C8.2** Students may enrol on a retake of the module at an enrolment point determined by the Programme Examination Board. The requirements for the payment of fees for further attempts are set out in Hartpury's Tuition Fee Policy.

**C8.3** A student retaking a module may not demand reassessment in components or modules which are no longer current within the programme. If a module is no longer available for a retake, then an appropriate alternative module will be determined for the student to undertake.

**C8.4** Modules or awards recognised or accredited by professional or statutory bodies may be subject to restrictions (stated on the module or programme specification) on the number of times a retake is permitted to achieve a specific named award.

**C8.5** A student who does not pass the module after the retake will be deemed to have failed the module unless they are eligible for a further retake, as confirmed by a Programme Examination Board.

**C8.6** Students who are confirmed as failing a module which is designated compulsory for the programme on which they are enrolled will be unable to complete a target award of their programme of study. As such the student will be withdrawn from the programme and may not

enrol for another programme for which that module is compulsory.

## **C9. Capping of Marks**

**C9.1** Capping applies across all modules. Capping is at 'Pass', or 40% (levels 3-6) or at 50% (level 7). The capping may not reduce a module's mark or a component's mark below the threshold pass mark for the module.

**C9.2** Once a mark is capped, it shall not be uncapped for any subsequent submission.

**C9.3** The actual mark achieved for a capped module shall be recorded on a student's Certificate of Credit.

**C9.4** Students are required to resit at the component level and the component mark is capped, unless a Programme Examination Board has decided otherwise.

**C9.5** Students are required to retake at the module level. Therefore the overall module mark of a retake is capped, unless a Programme Examination Board has decided otherwise.

**C9.6** For the purposes of calculation of a differential level of award the overall module mark will be used, which may be the result of capping at component or module level.

# Part D: Assessment decisions

## D1. Boards of examiners' responsibility for modules and programmes

**D1.1** Every module and award is the responsibility of a board of examiners. A board of examiners must include, in its membership, at least one external examiner approved by Academic Board.

**D1.2** The board of examiners is the sole body which may act on behalf of Academic Board in recommending the award of credit, granting an award or amending a properly executed decision.

**D1.3** For modular programmes, Hartpury will operate a two tier structure. A Module Examination Board is responsible for validating module marks and awarding credit, and a Programme Examination Board is responsible for determining eligibility for awards. For those programmes where the use of a single tier board has been approved, a Programme Examination Board will perform both functions.

**D1.4** A board of examiners must include an external examiner (either in person or contributing via a video, web, telephone or other link) in order to have the authority to grant credit or an award to students. However, when a Module Examination Board is considering results for the resit of a module, it may award credit for that module without the relevant external examiner being present.

**D1.5** A board of examiners may exceptionally offer a student the opportunity to be examined through viva voce by the external examiner to inform the board's decision. In such cases, the viva voce shall not lower a student's marks.

**D1.6** No student shall be a member of a board of examiners other than as a candidate for assessment. No member of staff who is enrolled on a module or enrolled for a programme under consideration by the board shall be a member of the board whilst the module or programme is under consideration.

**D1.7** The board of examiners must delegate authority for a sub-committee to act on its behalf if required. A board of examiners may be required to review a decision.

**D1.8** Where a Programme Examination Board has determined that a student has failed to meet the stated requirements for a programme the student may be required to withdraw from the programme. If the student's application on the grounds of extenuating circumstances (with correctly presented evidence) has been accepted, the Programme Examination Board may permit a student to continue on a programme despite a failure in one or more modules subject to the student satisfying any specific requirements, for the award.

## **D2. Compensated pass for marginal failure**

**D2.1** Marginal failure of a module may receive a compensated pass by Programme Examination Boards. Marginal failure is a module outcome with a mark of 30% or greater at levels 3 to 6, or 40% or greater at level 7. The Programme Examination Board will ascertain that this decision will not prevent a student meeting the programme learning outcomes and ensure that the requirements of any professional, statutory and regulatory bodies have been met, before any decision to grant a compensated pass will be made. Decisions to grant a compensated pass are final and may not be used as grounds for a subsequent academic appeal.

**D2.2** Compensated Pass credit awarded by a Programme Examination Board may contribute to the credit total of an award up to maximum amounts, which must fulfil all of the following conditions:

- a. no more than one quarter of the total credits required for the award;
- b. no more than a maximum of 30 credits at any single level of the UK National Qualifications Framework, unless the student has a current and accepted Extenuating Circumstances application within the module when the maximum amount of credit that can receive a compensated pass is 45 credits at any single level of the UK National Qualifications Framework.

**D2.3** A compensated pass may not be granted after the end of the academic year that the module's enrolment ended.

## **D3. Granting an award**

**D3.1** A Programme Examination Board will recommend an award where a student has met the minimum specified credit and specific requirements for their intended award. A lower level award will be recommended (provided the student has met the minimum specified credit and specific requirements of that award) if the student becomes ineligible to continue onto a higher level of award or the student has suspended their studies or the student has withdrawn from the programme. Having regard to the standard of the award and the student's overall profile of assessment a Programme Examination Board may exercise its discretion as permitted under the assessment regulations in recommending an award to a student.

**D3.2** Academic credit, and an award, may be granted only when all of the following conditions are fulfilled:

- a. the student is enrolled on a programme where the award is specified within the programme specification;
- b. the student has paid the appropriate tuition fees;
- c. the student has successfully met the requisite credit requirements for the award and in accordance with the Academic Regulations;
- d. the award has been recommended by an appropriately convened board of examiners;
- e. the student is not the subject of an allegation of a breach of student conduct
- f. the student has not breached the Terms and Conditions.

**D3.3** A Programme Examination Board may not override a student's credit total as determined by Module Examination Boards except where there is an outcome from the Fitness to Study and Reside Appendix recommending that the student is not eligible for a professionally accredited or recognised award. Where an award is not made to students on grounds of professional unsuitability, and providing the credit requirements have been met in full, students may be entitled to receive a different award as stated in the approved programme specification.

**D3.4** Where death, illness or a similar incapacity means that an enrolled student cannot complete the programme or its required assessments, and there is evidence from previously submitted work that had they been assessed they would have achieved the necessary standard for the award, an aegrotat award may be granted. The Programme Examination Board should ensure that the student is not disadvantaged by applying this regulation and this is subject to the student having met professional, statutory and regulatory body requirements as appropriate for the award.

- Where the student has achieved at least 80% of the required credit total for the award the Programme Examination Board may recommend an aegrotat award with a differential level.
- Where the student has achieved less than 80% of the required credit total for the award the Programme Examination Board may recommend an aegrotat award without a differential level.

**D3.5** A student may decline to accept an aegrotat award. Where a student has not already exhausted the assessment opportunities for modules valid for the award, they may enrol on a module or modules in order to achieve the credit required.

**D3.6** Once the Programme Examination Board has recommended an award and the award has been granted, a student may not continue on that programme to improve their result.

### **Recommending a higher differential level of award**

**D3.7** The Programme Examination Board will consider recommending students whose final award aggregate falls within 1% of a differential award boundary for the higher differential level of award. The following factors may justify this recommendation:

- The majority of credits at the highest FHEQ academic level are in at least the upper boundary.
- Where there is an equal amount of credits (at the highest FHEQ academic level) in at least the upper boundary as in the lower boundary, the mark for the distinctive module(s) of the programme is in the upper boundary.

Modules with accepted Extenuating Circumstances (including Adverse Group Circumstances) or a Force Majeure Flag recorded as affecting their current module mark shall not contribute to calculations of credit totals in the lower boundary.

## **D4. Absence of assessment marks as a consequence of significant disruption**

**D4.1** The Chair of Academic Board may formally invoke mitigating processes in response to circumstances where business has been significantly disrupted by force majeure, with due consideration of Hartpury's Student Protection Plan. Such action will be reported to the first subsequent meeting of Academic Board. Unless stated otherwise, this action will cover all programmes delivered under these Academic Regulations. In case of doubt, this regulation takes precedence over other regulations relating to student differential awards and progression. Regulations relating to appeals processes remain in force during periods of disruption caused by force majeure. In the case of variant regulations, the Chair of Academic Board will decide which regulations will prevail.

**D4.2** When business has been significantly disrupted by force majeure a Programme Examination Board may award excused credit. The excused credit may contribute to the credit total of an award up to maximum amounts, which in combination with condoned credit, must fulfil both of the following conditions:

- a. no more than one quarter of the total credits required for the award; and;
- b. a maximum of 45 credits of the credits required at any FHEQ level.

The Programme Examination Board will ascertain that this decision will not prevent a student meeting the Programme Learning Outcomes and ensure that the requirements of any Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies have been met, before any decision to excuse credit will be made. Decisions to excuse credit are final and may not be used as grounds for a subsequent academic appeal.

**D4.3** When business has been significantly disrupted by force majeure a threshold pass mark of 'pass' and module outcome of 'pass' may be awarded to a student, for a module if:

- a. the assessment for a module has not been able to be completed as published to students and described in the module specification; and;
- b. assessment has determined that the student has demonstrated achievement of a minimum of all except one of the module's learning outcomes and any professional competencies component contained within a professional practice module.

**D4.4** Modules with marks validated by a Module Examination Board acting under Academic Regulations recognising that business has been significantly disrupted by force majeure will be identifiable within the student record and by Programme Examination Boards.



**D4.5** When business has been significantly disrupted by force majeure, and a student is eligible for an award with a differential level then provided both of the following are met:

- a. A Programme Examination Board has been held in the current academic year prior to the force majeure; and;
- b. The student had marks validated by a Module Examination Board, for modules at the FHEQ academic level of the award at the time of that prior board;

Two calculations of differential level of award, made using the method outlined in A4 of these regulations, will be completed.

1. A calculation based on the marks validated by a Module Examination Board at the time of the most recent Programme Examination Board prior to the force majeure – the prior differential level of award; and;
2. A calculation based on the marks validated by a Module Examination Board when eligible for the award post the force majeure – the post differential level of award.

If this prior differential level of award is higher than the differential award calculated at the time of the current board (post differential level) the student's profile will be identified and considered by the Programme Examination Board. The Programme Examination Board will recommend the higher differential level of award unless at least one of the criteria below are met, in which case the post differential level of the award will be recommended.

- a. If no credits awarded at the FHEQ academic level of award were achieved with marks of at least the upper boundary.
- b. If the only credits achieved at the FHEQ academic level of award in the upper boundary have confirmed assessment offences on the current assessments.

**D4.6** When business has been significantly disrupted by force majeure a Programme Examination Board will decide not to cap at the threshold pass mark a component of assessment or the overall module mark when confirming eligibility for further resits or retakes. This decision will not alter decisions by previous Programme Examination Boards.

**D4.7** When business has been significantly disrupted by force majeure late submission of an element of assessment without documented and approved extenuating circumstances (see Appendix Extenuating Circumstances) is penalised in accordance with the following criteria, except during a period when business has been significantly affected by force majeure:

- a. The mark for the element of non-examination assessment submitted up to 24 hours after the published deadline will have no reduction.
- b. The mark for the element of non-examination assessment submitted more than 24 hours after the published deadline will be 0% or 'not pass'.
- c. The mark for the element of examination assessment submitted after the published deadline will be 0% or 'not pass'.

The resultant mark for the element of assessment will be used in the calculation of the component and overall module marks and outcome.

## **D5. Publication of results and confirmation of credit**

**D5.1** Students are individually responsible for accessing and ascertaining their own results:-

**D5.2** The Certificate of Credit is the formal record of the grades achieved for all modules taken and credit achieved. It is given to a student at the point at which their enrolment ends.

**D5.3** The Certificate of Award confirms that a Hartpury award has been granted. The Certificate of Award records:

- a. Hartpury's name and, if appropriate, any other organisation sharing responsibility for the programme of study;
- b. the student's legally registered name as held on Hartpury's student record;
- c. the award title including any differential level;

## **D6. Appeals against a decision of a board of examiners**

**D6.1** Students enrolled on a programme of study leading to a Hartpury award have the right of appeal against the decision of a board of examiners. Students will not suffer any disadvantage or recrimination as a result of making an appeal in good faith. How to submit an appeal is set out in the Appendix Academic Appeals.

**D6.2** The only grounds for appeal, against the decision of a board of examiners, shall be that there has been material and significant administrative error or other material irregularity such that the assessments were not conducted in accordance with the approved academic regulations for the programme.

**D6.3** In all cases the original outcome shall be final unless the appeal is upheld and results in an alternative decision.

## **D7. Review of an examining board decision**

**D7.1** Where an examining board is required to review its decision, it may delegate its responsibility to a sub-committee established for this purpose where there was an error or other procedural irregularity which may have materially affected the integrity of the board's decisions. The terms of reference for this sub-committee are limited to the review in question.

**D7.2** The consent of an external examiner is required for any changes to the original decision of an examining board.

## **D8. Annulment of a decision of an examining board**

**D8.1** Academic Board may annul a decision of a board of examiners where there has been a material and significant administrative error or other material irregularity, or where it is not possible to reconvene a board of examiners. If the error or irregularity is found to have affected more than one student, the Academic Board may annul all or part of an assessment.

**D8.2** Following consideration of an appeal by a board of examiners, if Academic Board is of the opinion that the board of examiners did not take proper account of the factors for review, it may annul the decision of the board of examiners.

**D8.3** Where a decision has been annulled, the Academic Board shall appoint a board of examiners with the power to make decisions on students' progress and/or awards, including, if necessary, the appointment of new external examiners.

## **D9. Formally revoking an award from a graduate**

**D9.1** Academic Board may revoke an award granted by Hartpury if:

- a. the graduate has been granted an award and has been found to have been admitted to the programme or granted the award under false pretences or on material non-disclosure;
- b. the graduate has been granted an award or an honorary degree and has acted in a manner which the Academic Board considers would bring and/or had brought the Hartpury name into disrepute, as a result of the granting of the award.

# Appendix. Additional and variant regulations

The following is a list of the additional variant regulations that may apply to a programme or module. Where these regulations are applicable the relevant programme or module specification will include details.

## **AV1.** Variant to Academic Regulation C2.8

For modules at levels 3 to 6 with more than one component, the threshold pass mark for a component is a 'pass' or 40% and the threshold pass mark for a module is 'pass' or 40%. If the student does not achieve the threshold for one of the components, but has a mark of 40% or higher for the module and are eligible for a resit, they must resit that component.

## **AV2.** Variant to Academic Regulation C2.9

For level 7 modules with more than one component, the threshold pass mark for a component is 'pass' or 50% and the threshold pass mark for a module is 'pass' or 50%. If the student does not achieve the threshold for one of the components, but has a mark of 50% or higher for the module and they are eligible for a resit, they must resit that component.

## **AV3.** Variant to Academic Regulation C2.8

For modules at levels 3 to 6 with more than one component, the threshold pass mark for an element is a 'pass' or 40% and the threshold pass mark for a component is a 'pass' or 40% and the threshold pass mark for a module is 'pass' or 40%. If the student does not achieve the threshold for one of the elements, but has a mark of 40% or higher for the component and are eligible for a resit, they must resit that component. If the student does not achieve the threshold for one of the components, but has a mark of 40% or higher for the module and are eligible for a resit, they must resit that component.

## **AV4.** Variant to Academic Regulation C2.9

For level 7 modules with more than one component, the threshold pass mark for an element is a 'pass' or 50% and the threshold pass mark for a component is 'pass' or 50% and the threshold pass mark for a module is 'pass' or 50%. If the student does not achieve the threshold for one of the elements, but has a mark of 50% or higher for the component and they are eligible for a resit, they must resit that component. If the student does not achieve the threshold for one of the components, but has a mark of 50% or higher for the module and they are eligible for a resit, they must resit that component.

## **AV5.** Variant to Academic Regulation D2.1

Marginal failure of a module may not be condoned by Programme Examination Boards. Marginal failure is a module outcome with a mark of 37% or greater at levels 3 to 6, or 47% or greater at level 7.

**AV6.** Variant to Academic Regulation B2.6

Students enrolling for full time study usually enrol on a minimum of 90 credits in one academic year. Enrolling on more than 120 credits is at the discretion of the University, and is usually permitted to support students with a 'Trail' status confirmed by a Programme Examination Board.

**AV7.** Variant to Academic Regulations C2.12

If a student is eligible to resit a component, they will be eligible to submit all elements for that component as identified in the module specification. This will be the case even if, at the previous opportunity, the student completed some or all of the assessments or had extenuating circumstances accepted. For elements of assessment marked as a percentage, if a student does not submit the element at the resit opportunity then the percentage mark at the previous opportunity will be carried forward to the resit opportunity. For elements of assessment marked as Pass/Fail if a student achieves a Pass at the previous opportunity then the Pass mark for that element of assessment will be carried forward to the resit opportunity and the student shall not be eligible to submit this element again.

**AV8.** Variant to Academic Regulations C7.6

A further resit for a component (usually without further timetabled teaching) may be offered to students towards their target award if:

- a. the student would be able to be awarded their target award or progress to the next stage of study if they were successful in the further resit; and
- b. the student has either made an assessment submission for all elements of assessment within the component at sit, or had accepted an extenuating circumstances missed assessment's or removal of marks' application for that component of assessment; and;
- c. the student meets any requirements for Professional Accrediting Bodies or Health and Safety requirements for accessing the further resit.

# Appendix. Academic dress

## Academic Dress for Hartpury Awards

### **Level 3 and 4 Awards (e.g. Foundation Certificate and other Undergraduate Certificates)**

Gown: Black traditional gown.

Hood: Black hood, CNAAs shape, part lined (tip) black silk with red 'Hartpury University' acorns. No cord on cap edge. Neckband is black silk.

Hat: Black mortar board.

### **Level 5 Awards (e.g. Foundation Degree and Diplomas)**

Gown: Black traditional gown

Hood: Black hood, full shape, fully lined black silk with red 'Hartpury University' acorns. No cord on cap edge. Neckband is black silk.

Hat: Black mortar board.

### **Level 6 Awards (e.g. Bachelor Degree, Graduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma)**

Gown: Black traditional gown

Hood: Black hood, full shape, fully lined black silk with red 'Hartpury University' acorns. Red cord on cap edge. Neckband is black silk with red 'Hartpury University' acorns.

Hat: Black mortar board.

### **Postgraduate Certificate, Postgraduate Diploma**

Gown: Black traditional gown

Hood: Black hood, full shape, fully lined red silk with black 'Hartpury University' acorns. No cord on cap edge. Neckband is red silk with black 'Hartpury University' acorns.

Hat: Black mortar board.

### **Masters Degrees (including Integrated Masters)**

Gown: Black traditional gown with full sleeves

Hood: Black hood, full shape, fully lined red silk with black 'Hartpury University' acorns. Red and grey cord on cap edge. Neckband is red silk with black 'Hartpury University' acorns.

Hat: Black mortar board.

# Appendix. Academic Misconduct (Assessment Offences)

## Principles

It is the responsibility of every student studying under Hartpury's Academic Regulations (including students studying at Hartpury's Affiliated Academic Partner Organisations) to familiarise themselves with the academic regulations and associated policies and documents. Every Hartpury student is required to act with honesty and mutual trust (Academic Integrity) to ensure that their marks and outcomes are based on their own efforts and awarded in accordance with the academic regulations that promote a fair and equitable educational experience for all.

Hartpury's approach to academic integrity is to foster and facilitate good academic practice, providing practical guidance to students to help them develop learning skills that will enable them to represent their work correctly. Where individuals' behaviour or assessed work is found to display poor levels of scholarship, advice and support will be offered. Good academic practice includes appropriate referencing practice, providing credit to others, and anchoring work within the existing knowledge base.

Hartpury requires all students to comply with the academic regulations and to take care to follow the appropriate conventions and standards for academic practice in their subject discipline as may be defined in assessment briefs and other guidance provided by academic staff. Work that does not meet appropriate or acceptable standards of academic practice in this respect threatens academic integrity and standards and will be investigated as alleged academic misconduct.

Work that is identical, or nearly identical, to another person's work or source of information (without proper acknowledgement) is highly unlikely to have occurred by chance and is likely to be judged to be the result of academic misconduct.

## Academic Misconduct

It is an academic offence for a student to commit any act whereby they obtain or assist another to obtain an unfair advantage with a view to, complete an assessment or achieve a higher grade or mark than they might otherwise secure. Hartpury takes the investigation of all alleged assessment offences seriously and reserve the right to assess the student for the purposes of establishing originality of work or meeting learning outcomes where misconduct is suspected (e.g. viva voce, or other controlled conditions assessment).

Behaviour that constitutes academic misconduct in the context of this policy statement includes, but is not limited to, the examples outlined below.

### Plagiarism

Plagiarism is presenting someone else's work as your own.

- Copying more than a single phrase from another person's work without the use of quotation marks or acknowledgement of the sources;
- Summarising another person's work (including another student's) by simply changing a few words or altering the order of presentation without acknowledging the original author;
- Submitting entirely as your own work, assessment that was completed in collaboration with another person(s) (including another student(s));

- Submitting work that is identical or nearly identical to work of another student outside designated group work where each student in the group should be named on the assessment;
- Not respecting or acknowledging the copyright and intellectual property of others;
- Presenting concepts or designs that have been created by others without acknowledgement of the source;
- Downloading material from the web and submitting it as your own work;
- Using course notes without referencing;

### Self-plagiarism

- Students may not re-use work (or a substantial part of it) that has previously been submitted for a different assessment (internal or external to the University), unless this is explicitly allowed, and stated in writing in the module's published assessment information.

### Contract Cheating

- Submitting as your own, work which has been produced in whole or part by another person on your behalf, e.g. by using a 'ghost writing' service, essay mill, or similar.
- Submitting as your own, work which has been produced in whole or in part by AI content generating software (i.e. large language models including but not limited to ChatGPT, Explainpaper, and DALL-E 2).
- Making available, or seeking to make available, material to another student with the intention that the material is used by the other student within an assessment that they submit as being the product of their own work.

### Falsification

- Misrepresenting the word count on written work;
- Falsifying your references, citations, and/or bibliography;
- Falsifying third party evidence, a signature, or witness statement
- Misrepresenting extenuating circumstances

### Fabrication

- Reporting on work placement hours never completed.
- Reporting on experiments/research never performed or data never collected.

### Cheating in assessments

- Having in your possession materials and/or devices which are not allowed for that assessment;
- Unauthorised communication in an assessment, including talking before an invigilator gives you permission to do so.
- Leaving an examination within the first thirty minutes, without permission of a member of the examinations staff.

### Breaches of the University's Code of Research Practice

- Not observing ethical requirements laid down by the University, e.g. collecting research data without ethical consent
- Not maintaining promised anonymity or confidentiality surrounding research data.
- Falsifying or misrepresenting the results of experimentation/research data;

### Hartpury's Responsibilities

Hartpury will foster good academic practice and support student learning by:

- i) Ensuring that students are provided with appropriate information promoting good learning,



teaching and assessment practices and raising awareness of academic misconduct during taught sessions; and;

- ii) Ensuring allegations of academic misconduct, typically made by Hartpury staff, are investigated robustly and fairly.

Hartpury will appoint an Academic Misconduct Adviser who will:

- Provide advice to staff members on whether a suspected academic misconduct case should be formally referred to the investigation procedure;
- Oversee arrangements for providing guidance, support and/or further training to students;
- Compile information and evidence about specific alleged academic misconduct as part of the investigation procedure;
- Provide advice about the implications and possible outcomes of the process of academic procedures to students and provide details of any other sources of support or counselling available to them e.g. the student representative body;
- Take an active role to identify and promote good practice and staff development in relation to the detection and deterrence of academic misconduct; and;
- Identify emerging issues and trends in monitoring data and promulgate suitable actions arising from them.

Hartpury will appoint an Executive Officer who shall be a member of the Higher Education Executive and who will:

- Facilitate the formation of, and chair, an investigating panel where required.
- Consider the evidence for the alleged academic misconduct and confirm the decision and penalty (as applicable) according to this appendix of the academic regulations;
- Contact the relevant Department if there may be a case to be considered under the Fitness to Study and Reside or Professional Suitability Appendices or Research Misconduct Policy;
- Contact a Dean if the alleged academic misconduct may have brought Hartpury into disrepute;
- Ensure that the outcome of each case is communicated in writing as per the academic misconduct process.

## **The Student's Responsibilities**

Students are expected to:

- i) undertake assessment in accordance with the academic regulations, policies and associated documents;
- ii) be responsible for their own work, and not knowingly allow others to commit plagiarism or collusion or other types of academic misconduct by copying/using their work in breach of academic regulations;
- iii) acknowledge their source(s) of information accurately and consistently
- iv) be aware of the consequences of engaging in academic misconduct (see below section on Examination Board Decision section on Level 3 concern in Appendices "Professional Suitability" and "Fitness to Study and Reside")
- v) avail themselves of the information and training opportunities provided which are aimed at developing their understanding of good academic practices and skills such as referencing, citation, paraphrasing and compiling a bibliography; and;
- vi) retain all evidence of preparation for the assessment by themselves and be prepared to submit this for scrutiny on instruction/ request, regardless of final submission method.

## The use of text-matching and academic misconduct detection software

Hartpury reviews assessments for plagiarism and other academic misconduct as part of its assessment of student work and has the right to subject work to scrutiny using detection software, or other resources, as appropriate, on either a comprehensive or sample basis.

It is important to note that the use of electronic detection software in this way is seen as an adjunct to the normal exercise of academic judgement not as a replacement for it. Academic staff may choose to make the outcome reports from this software available to students to be used as part of formative feedback to the student, or as a learning tool to improve the student's understanding of acceptable and unacceptable academic practice in areas such as referencing, paraphrasing, citation and the use of generative AI.

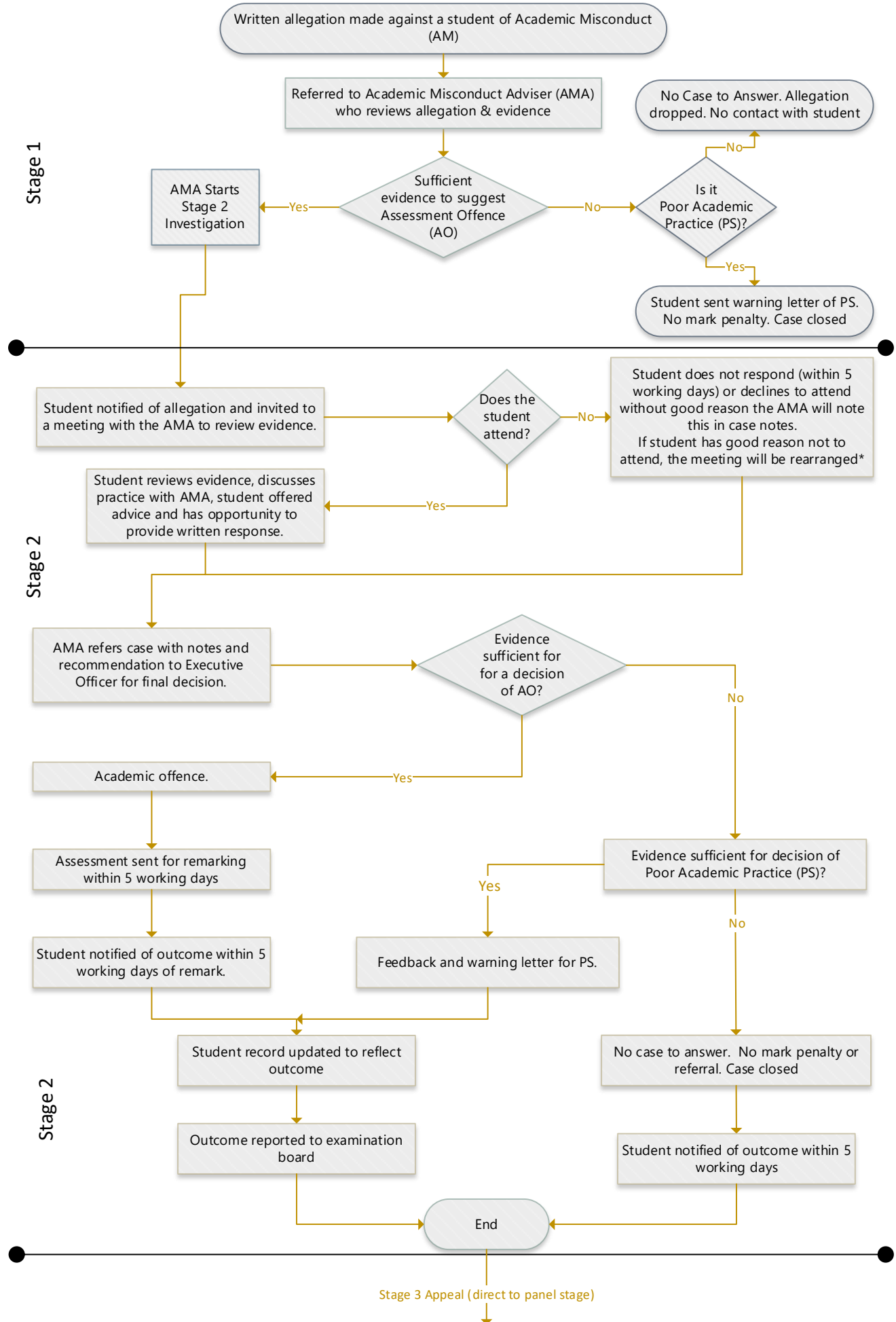
Where academic misconduct is suspected in a particular piece of work it may be scrutinised using electronic detection software and/or other resources. A student must be prepared to submit all evidence of preparation of the assessment by themselves for scrutiny, regardless of final submission method. Subsequently, the student will be informed that this process has taken place and should there be a case to answer will be able to view the outcome report of the scrutiny as part of the evidence gathered during the investigation.

## Investigating Misconduct

Allegations of misconduct will be investigated by the Academic Misconduct Investigation Process following three stages, represented in the process diagram.

1. Stage 1 – Initial assessment of the allegation to determine if it has merit. Where an allegation is considered to have merit as a potential academic offence it will be decided whether it is related to
  - Type 1: an assessment already submitted (Type 1) or
  - Type 2: behaviour or an assessment yet to be submitted (Type 2)
2. Stage 2 – Further investigation of allegations of academic misconduct deemed of merit, to determine outcome and penalty and/or referral to other processes as appropriate. Guidance to inform a decision of poor academic practice includes the:
  - a. Volume of assessment affected; and;
  - b. academic experience of the student, including but not limited to:
    - i. academic level
    - ii. previous allegations and their outcomes
    - iii. evidence of academic good practice training
    - iv. year(s) of higher education study.
3. Stage 3 – Appealing a Stage 2 outcome. Appeals are made using Appendix: Academic Appeals, should the outcome be called into question from the presence of additional evidence not available at Stage 2, or material irregularity in the investigation process. Appeals should be made no later than six months after written notification of the Stage 2 outcome.

# The Academic Misconduct Investigation Process



## Penalties for proven academic offences

Students found to have engaged in poor academic practice or committed academic misconduct may be required to undertake supplementary academic integrity training to help them improve their academic practice in addition to any other penalty that may be imposed by the Institution.

The outcomes of Poor Academic Practice and Academic Offence will be placed on the student's academic record, which will be visible to Boards of Examiners. If the Executive Officer decides that the offence warrants it then the student's case may also be referred to other investigative procedures as appropriate (e.g. Professional Suitability, Research Misconduct Policy of Student Disciplinary Policy).

Alleged academic misconduct will normally be processed as one offence if:

- the assessments have been submitted in parallel; and;
- the student had not yet been notified of the first academic misconduct allegation prior to submission of the subsequent assessment(s).

Any penalty applied in the event of academic misconduct within a group assessment will normally be applied to all members of the group. The two exceptions, when the penalty will only apply to the member(s) of the group who committed academic misconduct, are:

- Where a member of the group acknowledges, in writing to the Academic Misconduct Adviser, that they have committed an academic offence, and this does not involve other group members;
- Where the academic misconduct can be shown to be committed by (a) specific member(s) of the group responsible for those sections of the work that contain (are affected by) the academic misconduct.

The range of penalties that may be imposed where cases are proven are shown below.

Type of Misconduct	Offence Committed	Normal penalty to be applied
TYPE 1: Offences relating to work a student has submitted for marking:	Poor Academic Practice	No mark penalty. Check mark has considered poor academic practice and concerns are communicated to the student in writing.
	First Offence	Areas of the work affected by the academic offence identified, and submission is marked against the assessment criteria without it. May result in no change to mark.
	Second and subsequent academic offences	Assessment element and component marks reduced to 0% or NOT PASSED/FAIL regardless of the extent of the offence.
TYPE 2: Offences relating to behaviour or work yet to be submitted:	Poor Academic Practice	Concerns are communicated to the student in writing.
	First Offence	Executive Officer refers student's case to other investigative procedure as appropriate. Misconduct is recorded on the student profile.
	Second and subsequent academic offences	Executive Officer refers student's case to other investigative procedure as appropriate.

## Reporting academic misconduct to the Boards of Examiners

It is not within the remit of the Boards of Examiners to determine whether an offence has occurred or to make a decision on an appropriate penalty. Academic Misconduct Outcome Decisions are shown on student profiles reviewed within the board. However, where an academic offence is found to have occurred in two or more modules the Programme Examination Board may decide to:

- take no further action;
- with-hold awarding credit for an affected module (i.e. interim award)
- refer a Level 3 concern to Academic Registry for investigation; or:
- vary the class of award recommended.

The Chair of the Programme Examination Board may make a report to a Dean to consider instituting further action.

# Appendix. Appeals Procedure

## Principles

As outlined in the Academic Regulations students enrolled on a programme validated by Hartpury have the right to appeal a decision of a board of examiners and any other decision-making body at Hartpury, unless the decision is a consequence of a procedure that explicitly has its own route of appeal detailed within it. The only grounds for appeal shall be that:

- the University has failed to follow its own procedures adequately;
- there has been material and significant administrative error or other material irregularity;
- the decision is unreasonable and/or a disproportionate sanction has been imposed;
- if new material evidence comes to light that the student was, for valid reasons, unable to disclose to the decision-making body at the time of the decision.

All appeals shall be considered on their individual merit.

A student studying at an Affiliated Academic Partner Organisation may submit an academic appeal to Hartpury, following this procedure if they are enrolled on a franchised programme. If they are studying on a validated only programme a student should complete the affiliated organisation's procedures for considering appeals against decisions first and then may utilise stage two of this procedure following the same steps and time scales described.

The following shall not be deemed legitimate grounds for appeal. Any appeals founded exclusively on one or more of these grounds shall be rejected automatically:

- i. appeals against the academic judgement of internal or external examiners (including marginal failure to attain a higher differential award);
- ii. appeals based upon informal assessment of student work by members of academic staff;
- iii. appeals based upon a board of examiners' decision to condone a module;
- iv. that, at the time of the assessment, there existed circumstances which adversely affected the student's performance and which the student was unable to communicate to the Programme Examination Board before it reached its decision. – these should be dealt with under the Appendix Extenuating Circumstances unless evidence is provided that a claim has been submitted under this procedure but has not been considered in accordance with the appendix at the time of assessment;
- v. dissatisfaction with teaching or service-related provision, including supervision – these should be dealt with under the Complaints Procedure;
- vi. lack of awareness by a student of the relevant procedure or regulations.

## Procedure

A student shall always bring their concern to the institution's attention by using an informal outcome query form to facilitate timely resolution.

Should submission of an outcome query form not produce a satisfactory outcome the student may submit a formal academic appeals' application, which shall:

- a. be submitted electronically and in writing. Third party applications must include a signed consent from the student to act upon their behalf;
- b. be received no later than ten working days after the formal notification of the board's decision.

Discretion may be used to consider and allow a late request where a student demonstrates good reason for delay;

- c. state clearly the grounds on which the application is based, identify the issue(s) about which remedy is sought and where appropriate identify the new decision sought;
- d. include all relevant documentary evidence on which the application relies (for example, medical or death certificates); discretion may be exercised to allow late submission of evidence where a student demonstrates good reason for delay.

### **Formal consideration of the appeal**

If an application meets the conditions listed above, a nominated investigating officer shall undertake such enquiries as necessary to establish the facts of the board's decision and the evidence on which it was made in light of the relevant regulations.

In light of these enquiries, the nominated investigating officer shall either:

- i. determine that there is no legitimate grounds on which the application can proceed; or
- ii. agree the action to be taken in relation to the appellant's academic profile in light of the appeal, or
- iii. reject the appeal.

An appellant shall normally be notified of the outcome (and reasons for the outcome) at this stage of their appeal application by email within four to six weeks from the receipt of the submission of supporting evidence (where relevant). Where a case is likely to take longer than four to six weeks, students shall be notified to this effect. The student shall be notified of their right to request a review of this decision.

### **Review of appeal decision**

- a. An appellant that has grounds to believe that there has been material and significant administrative error or other material irregularity such that the assessments were not conducted in accordance with the approved academic regulations for the programme or if new material evidence comes to light that the appellant was, for valid reasons, unable to disclose at the time of the assessment has the right to request a review of the handling of their appeal by the Hartpury Appeals Review Panel.
- b. Requests for review, with grounds given, should be submitted in writing within 10 working days of receipt of the email informing them of the outcome of their application.
- c. The Appeals Review Panel shall include a member of the Senior Management Team or nominee (Chair), one senior member of academic staff from each department, with considerable experience of the board business and a nominee of the Academic Registry. No member of the Appeals Review Panel shall consider an appeal in which they have a direct interest. The quorum shall be two-thirds of the members eligible to attend including the Chair.
- d. If the appellant has disclosed grounds for a review the Appeals Review Panel will review the documents relating to the case within the scope of those grounds.

- e. If the appellant is a student on a validated only programme at an Affiliated Academic Partner Organisation, the Chair of the Affiliated Academic Partner Organisation's review group, shall have the right to appear before the panel, to speak and to amplify any written statement
- f. The Appeals Review Panel may:
  - i. confirm the decision made during formal consideration of the appeal was appropriate; or;
  - ii. agree a different course of action to be taken in relation to the appellant's academic profile in light of the review of the appeal decision.
- g. If an Affiliated Academic Partner Organisation is required to review an appeal decision, it shall do so (so far as is practical) involving the same officers. Any meeting of an affiliated institution's review group shall (so far as is practicable) comprise the same members and meet within seven working days of the date of the instruction to do so.
- h. The appellant shall be advised in writing of the Appeals Review Panel's decision, normally within four to six weeks of the Request for Review having been received. The student will be given reasons for the decision. The decision of the Appeals Review Panel will be final and the appellant will be issued with a Completion of Procedures Letter.

## **Independent review**

Once a student has been issued a Completion of Procedures letter, this denotes the exhaustion of internal procedures. At this stage, appellants who believe that their case has not been dealt with properly or that the outcome is unreasonable may be able to complain to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) if the complaint is eligible under its rules and once all internal procedures have been concluded.

## **Changes to decisions**

Changes made to decisions as a result of an appeal must be approved by the Chair of the relevant decision-making body and recorded as an addendum to the minutes.

## **Annual report**

As part of the Annual Quality Report, Academic Board receives an annual report that covers the volume and nature of appeals received by Hartpury, and the proportion of those that are upheld and lead to review of decisions of boards of examiners. Appellants' personal details are anonymised for the purposes of annual reporting. Annual reporting informs the review of Hartpury's Appeals Procedure to ensure that we continue to adopt a fair and consistent approach to applications.



## Appendix. Assessment Cycle

This assessment cycle covers all Higher Education taught curriculum, including provision delivered by Academic Partner Organisations. The Academic Standards and Enhancement Committee has oversight of this cycle to ensure it operates effectively and that all students receive parity of assessment.

The revised UK Quality Code 2018 has a Standards' Core Practice that requires 'The provider uses external expertise, assessment and classification processes that are reliable, fair and transparent'. A part of the Advice and Guidance that underpins this Core Practice, and others, focusses on Assessment. Within it is states 'Deliberate, systematic quality assurance ensures that assessment processes, standards and any other criteria are applied consistently and equitably, with reliability, validity and fairness.' For more information about the purposes of assessment see the Advice and Guidance: Assessment document available from <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code> .

<b>Stage of cycle</b>	<b>Details</b>
<b>Stage 1</b>	<b>Curriculum Design</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="488 727 1973 826">1. Module specification assessment strategy sets out clearly how the assessment will enable demonstration of the learning outcomes and will state the assessment to be used utilising approved Hartpury University assessment terminology.</li><li data-bbox="488 836 1973 903">2. An "assessment <i>for</i> learning" approach will use a strategy that facilitates the process of reaching the outcomes rather than being merely after the event measurement.</li><li data-bbox="488 912 1973 1082">3. Assessment strategies should (a) take account of the diversity of the student body and promote inclusivity (b) encourage sound academic practice and "design out" academic misconduct (c) support the student to become 'employment ready' and (d) take a programme level holistic view of the assessment experience of students (including a range of assessment types and opportunities for formative feedback, whilst avoiding over-assessment).</li><li data-bbox="488 1091 1973 1260">4. Timings of assessment, type and feedback to be considered at curriculum approval stage at a programme level (including any consequent resourcing issues). To be supported by a programme level assessment map within the programme specification template and a calendar of assessments. There would not normally be more than one assessment due within a single teaching week, although there may be more than one assessment due within an assessment period week.</li></ol>

<p><b>Stage 2</b></p>	<p><b>Assessment setting</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. An internal verifier will be allocated to every module to support the content, level and student’s experience of the module’s assessment. The Academic Standards and Enhancement Committee will have oversight of this process to ensure it is meeting expectations. Either the module leader or internal verifier would normally be qualified to the academic level above that of the module. An inexperienced module leader will be supported by the allocation of an experienced internal verifier.</li> <li>2. Stage one of the internal verification process (IV1) will be completed by the allocated internal verifier reviewing all draft assessment documents (including the assessment brief). Evidence of this scrutiny is included within Module File.</li> <li>3. Assessment briefing information will contain assessment criteria, marking criteria (an explanation of the criteria to which the work will be marked), submission date and guidance, statement indicating if marking is not going to be completed anonymously and the date a student may expect feedback.</li> <li>4. External examiners will be asked to scrutinise draft assessment documents prior to publication where this scrutiny is believed to be beneficial for the assessment quality. External examiners may have the opportunity to scrutinise all assessment briefs as part of the preparation for Module Examination Boards and controlled conditions assessment briefs at levels 5, 6 and 7 prior to publication to students. However, in circumstances of significant disruption by force majeure this may not occur. The involvement of the external examiner in the assessment setting is captured in the Module Enhancement Report within the Module File. Assessments from modules at levels 3 and 4 will only be scrutinised by an external examiner on specific request, e.g. from Academic Standards and Enhancement Committee or a Professional Accrediting Body.</li> <li>5. Following publication of the HE Academic Calendar the programme team agree an assessment calendar to ensure feasibility of assessment feedback return for staff and that the calendar is supportive of student achievement.</li> <li>6. For Collaborative Provision – the timings and requirements may differ depending on the agreed assessment calendar for that partnership, however the internal verification process should still be evidenced consistently. The Programme Link Tutor should have oversight of a staged process of delegation according to the development of the partnership.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Stage 3</b></p>	<p><b>Assessment Information Publication</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. The following assessment information is available through the module’s HE Moodle page: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Module specification (including information on Reasonable Adjustments).</li> <li>• Assessment briefing information and associated documentation.</li> <li>• Information on the type and timing of feedback (formative/summative) that can be expected during the module, e.g. assessment template with feedback summary sheet for online submission).</li> </ul> </li> </ol>

	<p>ii. The SEEC Marking Criteria are published on the programme's HE Moodle page.</p>
<b>Stage 4</b>	<p><b>Assessment Submission</b></p> <p>1. The student completes and submits assessment (e.g. submits coursework, written or practical examination) following the guidance on the assessment briefing information. The assessment submission will be recorded, which may involve video recording assessment, if the submission cannot be assessed by an artefact alone. The recording will be retained for the duration required for quality monitoring purposes.</p>
<b>Stage 5</b>	<p><b>Assessment Marking</b></p> <p><b>A. Guiding principles</b></p> <p>The purpose of these processes is to ensure that marks appropriately reflect the standard achieved (a particular issue around borderlines) and are consistent across the cohort of students. <i>"Policies and procedures for marking assessments and moderating marks are clearly articulated, consistently operated and regularly reviewed."</i> (from revised UK Quality Code: Advice and Guidance: Assessment)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In all instances marking should be recorded and evidenced consistently within the Module File for audit trail purposes and for the benefit of successor module leaders and external examiners.</li> <li>• New markers (to either the institution or higher education marking) should be mentored by an experienced marker.</li> <li>• Normally the internal verifier will remain the same for internal verification one (assessment setting) and internal verification two (assessment marking).</li> <li>• An exception for practical reasons to internal marking processes includes assessments that rely on the evidence of practice in a professional workplace.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>B. Which internal marking and verification process is appropriate?</b></p> <p>1. If an assessment has a team of markers the module leader (or nominee) should lead Process D Standardisation (see section C below) before further internal verification is completed</p> <p>2. If the submission for the assessment is not able to be recorded in a way that demonstrates the student's submission fully then Process C Sample Moderation cannot be used and Process B Double Seen Marking should be used as a replacement in points 3, 4, 5 and 6.</p>

	<p>3. Assessments which contribute 100% of module grade and outcome for modules of less than 30 credits shall utilize Process C Sample Moderation.</p>
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	<p>4. Assessments which contribute 100% of module grade and outcome for modules of more than 30 and less than 60 credits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• where all questions have a marking scheme that can identify a definitive correct answer shall be assessed by a single marker. Process C Sample Moderation shall be utilized during internal verification.</li> <li>• which includes questions where a marking scheme cannot identify a definitive correct answer shall be assessed by more than one member of staff (Process B Double Seen Marking for internal verification).</li> </ul> <p>5. Assessments which contribute 100% of module grade and outcome for modules of 60 credits or more shall utilise Process D Double Blind Marking for internal verification.</p> <p>6. Assessments which contribute less than 100% of module grade and outcome shall utilize Process C Sample Moderation.</p> <p>7. Collaborative provision: as agreed with the collaborative partner, but usually this would follow the same procedures as above.</p>
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	<p><b>C. Internal Marking and Verification Processes' Descriptions</b></p> <p><b>A - Double Blind Marking:</b> first marking by two different markers for each assessment who cannot see the feedback and mark allocated by the other marker. The two marks are recorded and if both are within a grade boundary the first marker's mark becomes the final mark; if they differ across a single grade boundary then the two markers have a discussion (with a record completed of key points) to determine a final mark (and appropriate feedback); if they differ across more than one grade boundary or they cannot agree a final mark then the assessment is marked by a third experienced marker to produce a final mark. Following double blind marking a student will receive a single assessment grade and a single set of assessment feedback taking into account the comments of all markers.</p> <p><b>B – Double Seen Marking:</b> each assessment is marked (with feedback and a grade) by a first marker. A second marker (usually the module's internal verifier) then reviews the assessment, the feedback and the grade to confirm the suitability of the feedback and mark awarded. If they agree with the grade boundary then they add any feedback to the feedback summary sheet; if they differ by one grade boundary then the two markers have a discussion to determine a final mark (and appropriate feedback); if they differ across more than one grade boundary or they cannot agree a final mark then the assessment is third marked to produce a final mark. This process is</p>
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recorded on an IV2 form. Following double marking a student will receive a single assessment grade and a single set of assessment feedback taking into account the comments of all markers.

**C – Sample Moderation:** following each assessment being marked by a first marker the distribution of marks for all assessments and a sample of the assessments will be scrutinised by the module's allocated internal verifier to confirm the suitability of the feedback and grade boundary awarded. The sample is the square root of the number of assessments submitted for marking, with a minimum of 6 (or all the assessments if less than 6) and a maximum of 12 ensuring a representative spread from the lower, mid and high range of marks, including a sample of borderline marks. N.B. If a computer marked the assessment the sample should be double that indicated above. If the internal verifier identifies an arithmetic error (most commonly with examinations with multiple questions) or believe the mark should be in a different grade boundary (and retain this belief following discussion with the module leader [or main first marker if the internal verifier is the module leader]) the sample should be increased to 50% of the submitted assessments. If a further error/difference is identified all assessments should be revisited. If no further error/difference is identified then the sample moderation stops at this point. If the internal verifier identifies a concern regarding feedback then all submitted assessments should be revisited. The internal verifier does not provide feedback to the student but does record on the IV2 form which assessments have been part of the internal verification sample. The final marks and feedback can then be confirmed. This process is recorded on an IV2 form.

**D - Standardisation:** The module leader (or nominee) will lead the standardisation process. The first stage is a compulsory briefing for all members of the marking team (which ideally would involve all members attending (or viewing a recording of) the students' assessment briefing alongside reading the assessment brief (and marking scheme if appropriate). The second stage is optional and involves the team completing a pre-marking exercise using a sample of assessments to set standards. This is recommended for new modules or new marking teams. The third stage is compulsory and involves the module leader (or nominee) ensuring that the marks awarded for assessments are consistent and comparable across markers (*or that discrepancies can be explained and rationalised and this is evidenced*). If the sample is adjusted during this process, adjust all work marked by that marker(s) appropriately (sampling might identify a problem across the whole range of marks or just in particular areas of range). If sampling identifies inconsistencies in marking, all work marked by that marker(s) should be reconsidered by the module leader (or nominee) as in Process B Double Marking. Once the module leader (or nominee) is assured that the marking is consistent and appropriate across all markers then this process is complete. This process is recorded on an IV2 form.

	<p><b>D. Assessment Feedback</b></p> <p><b>I. Feedback on assessments of first order assessment classes Coursework and Practical Examination</b>  Feedback shall:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. inform students explicitly whether or not they have met specific threshold assessment criteria;</li> <li>b. inform students how well they have met specific assessment criteria;</li> <li>c. be legible;</li> <li>d. be provided within the timescale stated above and not later than the date published in advance to the students.</li> </ol> <p>Additionally, where possible, feedback shall:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>e. provide comments on content and technique;</li> <li>f. act as a form of dialogue between student and tutor;</li> <li>g. describe how students could have improved the current piece of work and/or how they could improve future work;</li> <li>h. encourage students to reflect critically on their work; and;</li> <li>i. improve students' understanding of the topic of the assignment, particularly highlighting areas where misunderstanding is evident.</li> </ol> <p><b>II. Feedback on assessments of first order assessment class Written Examination</b>  Students will be informed of the outcome in terms of the grade obtained and the module leader shall state on the module's Moodle page how the students will have access to feedback on individual examinations including individual questions.</p>
<p><b>Stage 6</b></p>	<p><b>External Examiner Scrutiny of Marking</b></p> <p><b>For modules at levels 5, 6 or 7:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. The external examiner will review a sample of submitted assessments prior to confirming the grades and outcomes are appropriate at the Module Examination Board. The sample is the square root of the number of assessments submitted for marking, and a maximum of 12 ensuring a representative spread from the lower, mid and high range of marks, including a sample of borderline marks.</li> <li>ii. The following will also be made available to external examiners: module specification, appropriate evidence of internal verification, assessment/exam briefs, marking criteria, overview of assessment marks awarded, draft module report within the Module File.</li> </ol>

	<p><b>For modules at levels 3 or 4:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. The external examiner will only review a sample of submitted assessments and the Module File as described above on specific request, e.g. from Academic Standards and Enhancement Committee or a PSRB.</li> <li>ii. A member of the Higher Education Executive will review the Module File and may review a sample of submitted assessments.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Stage 7</b></p>	<p><b>Agreeing the module aggregate</b>  (for modules with more than one component of assessment) <i>revised UK Quality Code: Advice and Guidance: Assessment ... "Where borderline marks are identified, policies for the consideration of grades to be awarded are consistent, fair and freely available to staff and students."</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The aggregate of the different assessment components for the module needs to be agreed prior to the Module Examination Board.</li> <li>2. Where the aggregate mark ends up as a borderline (see definition for sampling), module leader may need to consider whether this mark is the correct reflection of overall demonstration of how learning outcomes have been met (this is more likely to be an issue where the nature of the assessment makes accuracy to within 1% difficult).</li> <li>3. There should be an audit trail within Module File confirming that borderline marks have been considered (or that not appropriate to do so) and, where changed, rationale noted.</li> <li>4. For modules at levels 5, 6 or 7 external examiners should be provided with a final set of marks as signed off by module leader (including comments about changes) within the Module File.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Stage 8</b></p>	<p><b>Continuous Monitoring for Enhancement and Curriculum Design</b>  Assessment outcomes and external examiner reports will feed into continuous monitoring and review and inform curriculum design and assessment setting for the future.</p> <p>Module and Programme Enhancement Reports will consider the appropriateness of the assessment strategy and should be the first place to initiate a change. These include capturing discussions with the external examiner.</p>

## Appendix. Conduct of Examinations

- a. Candidates must not enter the examination room until instructed to do so by the examinations staff or the online examination until the allotted time. Candidates are permitted to enter the exam room or online examination up to thirty minutes after the official start time of the examination. No additional time will be given to a candidate who has arrived after the official start time of the examination.
- b. Online examinations will require a candidate to enter a password-protected online platform and follow instructions to complete submission of their examination.
- c. No candidate may leave the examination room or online examination during the first thirty minutes of the examination and until examinations staff has instructed them they may leave. A candidate who leaves the examination room during the first thirty minutes without the permission of an invigilator or other member of the examinations staff will normally be deemed to have withdrawn from the examination, will receive an outcome of 0% or not pass and will not be re-admitted to the examination room. The candidate's behaviour will be reported to the Academic Misconduct Advisor for investigation.
- d. Upon entering the examination location or online examination candidates must comply with the invigilators', or other member of the examinations staff instructions.
- e. Candidates must bring their institutional ID card as proof of identity and produce it for inspection as requested.
- f. Once in the examination location candidates must not communicate in any way with any person other than an invigilator or other member of the examinations staff.
- g. A candidate must not leave their place in an examination location without the permission of a member of the examinations team, and will be accompanied by a member of the examinations team if they wish to do so temporarily. In online examinations a candidate must not leave the online examination, including if required the camera view, without the permission of a member of the examinations team. A candidate who leaves their place without this permission will normally be deemed to have withdrawn from the examination at that point.
- h. A candidate whose answers have been submitted for marking, will not be re-admitted to the examination.
- i. A candidate must not start the examination other than to complete identification details, until given permission to do so by examination staff.
- j. The examination question paper (if provided) may be retained by the candidates only where this is indicated on the rubric of the examination paper.
- k. Candidates completing hard copy examinations must only use the official stationery provided and must submit all work completed for assessment. Rough work must be done on the stationery provided and handed in with the completed answer script. No candidate shall remove any answer script, rough work, official stationery or equipment from the examination location.



- l. Candidates must stop writing immediately when they are instructed to do so at the end of the examination.
- m. Smoking or the use of electronic cigarettes is not permitted in the examination location and candidates are not permitted to leave the examination location for a smoking break at any time.

### **Items permitted in the examination room**

It is a candidate's responsibility to ensure they have the correct equipment for their exam e.g. pen, pencil, eraser, non-programmable calculator, computer, reliable internet connection if allowed for that examination. Candidates are permitted to bring in with them still water or juice in a clear, unlabelled plastic bottle with no wording or logos, unless the examination location prohibits this for their safety, or the safety of others. They are also permitted small amounts of food that are not noisy or distracting to others, unless the examination location prohibits this for their safety, or the safety of others. Any items that do not comply with this will be removed. Exceptionally, a candidate for whom a reasonable adjustment has been authorised in advance may have available and use additional aids not specified in the rubric of the paper or by the assessment regulations.

### **Items not permitted in the examination room**

Candidates must not have in their possession at their place in the examination location nor make use of any book, mobile phone/device, manuscript, calculator, watch, personal computer, electronic organiser, or similar device or any other aid which is not specifically allowed in the rubric of the examination paper. Devices must be switched off and all alarms disabled.

A candidate who brings any unauthorised item to their place by mistake shall inform a member of examinations staff immediately they discover its presence.

### **Emergency evacuation of examination room**

In the event of an emergency evacuation of the examination location (e.g. when a fire alarm sounds) candidates must obey the instructions of the examination staff, who will give priority to the safety of the candidates and then to actions enabling the resumption of the examination. Where it is logistically possible, the time elapsed between the start of the evacuation and the resumption of the examination will not count towards the time allocation for the completion of the examination. Where this is not possible the circumstances will be reviewed, taking the advice of the module's external examiner if required, to determine the best course of action, which may include re-running the examination if this is required.

### **Variations to the procedures**

These procedures may be varied where necessary to comply with the written requirements of relevant professional or accrediting bodies.

### **Breaches of examination regulations and procedures**

A candidate who a member of examination staff believes to be using unfair means (including unauthorised aids, copying or communicating with others), will be informed of this and their

answer paper marked at the appropriate place. Unless the candidate is required to leave the examination location for any other reason, they will be permitted to continue the examination.

A candidate who, in the opinion of the invigilator, causes an unreasonable disturbance, and continues or repeats it after warning, shall be required to leave the examination location and will not be re-admitted.

A candidate breaching any examination regulation or element of procedure will be reported to the Academic Misconduct Advisor and investigated following the Appendix Academic Misconduct.

# Appendix. Extenuating Circumstances: Students experiencing difficulties which impact on their ability to meet assessment deadlines

## Principles

These procedures apply to students on the Hartpury's taught programmes and modules only. Taught modules which are part of research programmes do fall under the procedures as described in this document.

Whilst it is each student's personal responsibility to undertake their required assessments on the dates set, Hartpury recognises that at times students may encounter personal difficulties or circumstances outside of their control that they were not aware of when enrolling on their course (programme or module), which affect their ability to sit an exam or submit a piece of work on or by the required date.

## Scope of circumstances considered

The circumstances should be outside the student's control and not able to be reasonably anticipated.

<b>Personal circumstances which may prevent submission of, or attendance at assessments on the required date</b>	<b>Example of appropriate evidence</b>
<b>Serious personal accident or injury of self or close family member.</b>	Medical certification of serious accident (doctor's note, hospital letters, hospital appointments).
<b>Serious illness of self or close family member (including mental health):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• an incapacitating illness or unexpected deterioration in an ongoing illness or medical condition;</li><li>• breaks and sprains of the normal writing hand/arm.</li></ul>	Medical certification of serious illness (doctor's note, hospital letters, hospital appointments, copy of prescription or medication, letter from a counsellor).
<b>An assault where the student is the victim</b>	Independent (third party) evidence of the assault (e.g. police report)

<b>Personal circumstances which may prevent submission of, or attendance at assessments on the required date</b>	<b>Example of appropriate evidence</b>
<p><b>Death of significant close individual</b> The definition of 'close' is not confined to partner, parent or child and might reasonably include significant others (e.g. primary carers, grandparents, or friends) where the relationship between the student and the deceased can be proven to be demonstrably close. Regardless of the type of relationship it is the impact of the death on the student that needs to be clearly explained.</p> <p>It is recognised that the anniversary of a death might trigger a claim for personal circumstances – again it is the impact on the student's ability to undertake assessments that needs to be evidenced.</p>	<p>A statement of circumstances can be used to cover time periods of up to 2 weeks, and for longer periods evidence in the form of the below is usually required.</p> <p>Death certificate, order of service, newspaper or media announcement or corroboration from a member of the student's family (e.g. a supporting letter).</p> <p>In cases of death relating to 'significant others', or where the student's family name does not correspond to that of the deceased, the claim should be accompanied by a brief explanation of the student's relationship to the deceased.</p>
<p><b>Major household problem: fire, burglary, requirement to appear in court.</b> All must be relevant to the date of the assessment event or the period leading up to it, and confined to student's own (or dependent's) household.</p>	<p>Independent (third party) evidence of serious personal disruption e.g. fire officer, police officer, court or tribunal officer.</p>
<p><b>Serious personal disruption:</b> victim of a crime, court attendance, relationship breakdown, unanticipated or non-negotiable commitment to duties associated with an elected office (that would not be rearranged), membership of a voluntary organisation or service with reserve forces. Examples of relationships include husband/wife, civil partner; long term relationship.</p>	<p>Independent (third party) evidence of serious personal disruption e.g. letter of corroboration from the relevant organisation, solicitor's letter, letter from courts or member of the student's family, written evidence from the police (including a crime reference number) counsellor, social worker, victim support, etc.</p>
<p><b>Unplanned or unexpected circumstances during pregnancy</b> or for a parent with a baby under six months old: in cases where a student or infant becomes unwell during pregnancy or post-birth or something unplanned or unexpected happens and the student needs additional support beyond that outlined in the pregnancy support plan.</p>	<p>A statement of circumstances can be used to cover time periods of up to 2 weeks, and for longer periods evidence in the form of medical certification is usually required (doctor's note, hospital letters, hospital appointments).</p>
<p><b>Impact of natural disaster:</b> severe weather which prevents attendance or submission, civil disruption or other major hazard (including major breakdown in transport system).</p>	<p>A letter from the police or other authority depending on the nature of the incidence confirming its nature and severity; evidence of flight cancellations, evidence of local conditions (e.g. travel web pages), evidence from local web pages of road closures.</p>

<b>Personal circumstances which may prevent submission of, or attendance at assessments on the required date</b>	<b>Example of appropriate evidence</b>
<b>Major, unplanned and verified changes in work commitments that could not be rearranged.</b>	Employer letter providing confirmation of significant change of employment circumstances.
<b>Highly contagious illness:</b> for example swine flu/norovirus/gastroenteritis/Covid-19 where the medical advice is to stay at home and not visit a doctor.	An application may be submitted with self-certification evidence if it is not possible to obtain any third-party evidence. However, if evidence is available to the student it should be submitted and cover the period of Absence (e.g. notification of positive test and request to self-isolate).
<b>Students who are the primary carer for a person</b> and something unexpected has affected their ability to submit.	Medical certification (doctor's note, hospital letters, hospital appointments). Independent evidence of serious personal disruption e.g. letter of corroboration from relevant organisation, counsellor.
<b>Students with Disabilities where either:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• they are affected by other illnesses or events disproportionately because of their disability;</li> <li>• the condition is fluctuating or episodic; or;</li> <li>• the disability, mental health condition, medical condition or Specific Learning Difficulty (e.g. dyslexia) has been diagnosed since the module's enrolment.</li> </ul>	<p>Medical certification (doctor's note, hospital letters, hospital appointments).</p> <p>A staff evidence form or Assessment plan signed off by a member of Hartpur University staff authorised to do this.</p>
<b>If evidence of a requirement for reasonable adjustments is provided too late to be taken into account in the delivery or assessment of a module.</b>	Corroboration from a Dyslexia Adviser or Disability Adviser.
<b>Religious observance</b> <b>Scheduled examinations only:</b> where a student misses an examination due to participation in collective worship, abstinence or a ritual.	<p>One or more of the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. a letter from a religious leader (giving their title and role) explaining the nature of the obligation and how it impacts on the student;</li> <li>b. a personal statement by the student explaining the nature of the obligation and the way in which it impacts on their assessment calendar supported by independent evidence such as a published timetable of festivals or events showing the date, time and nature of the observance.</li> </ol>
<b>Unplanned or unexpected circumstances associated with gender reassignment or transition</b>	Medical certification (doctor's note, hospital letters, hospital appointments). Independent evidence of serious personal disruption e.g. letter of corroboration from relevant organisation, counsellor.

Personal circumstances which may prevent submission of, or attendance at assessments on the required date	Example of appropriate evidence
<p><b>Commitment at a national/ international level (e.g. sporting);</b> the student is selected to compete at national or international level or attend a training camp which requires absence from Hartpury on the date that the assessment was due to be submitted or the assessment sat or for at least a week during the period she/he might reasonably have been expected to give time to the production of work for assessment.</p>	<p>Official correspondence from the relevant organization or sporting body confirming the requirement to be available on specified dates. Letter from organiser or team manager (or appropriate equivalent source) confirming representation and relevant dates.</p>
<p><b>Unique career enhancing opportunity:</b> this should be linked to practice based learning and/or contribute to regional development and entrepreneurialism. It should be relevant to the programme of study and supported by the programme team and apply to required absence on the date that the assessment was due to be submitted or the assessment sat.</p>	<p>Official correspondence from the relevant employer/programme team confirming the requirement to be available on specified dates.</p>
<p><b>Verifiable Institution-wide, site-wide, nationally or internationally-wide failures of equipment.</b></p>	<p>As appropriate to the situation.</p>

Examples of circumstances which are **not** acceptable reasons for failing to submit or undertake an assessment:

- **Colds or known conditions such as hay fever.** Sore throats, sprains (other than in the writing hand/arm).
- **Accidents/illness affecting relatives or friends** unless serious or if the student is a sole carer / has a disability so is disproportionately affected.
- **Normal assessment/examination stress or anxiety experienced during revision or the assessment period.**
- **Non-serious domestic, social or personal disruptions:** moving house, change of job, holidays, weddings, normal job pressure, failed travel arrangements, minor financial difficulties, oversleeping.
- **Study related circumstances:** equipment failure including computing/printer difficulties (unless they occur in the examination itself), failure to have taken back up copies for work stolen or corrupted, bunching of deadlines/examinations, missing books, poor time management, misreading the examination timetable, taking the wrong examination.
- **Difficulty with the English language.**
- **Different teaching methods in the United Kingdom to a home or previous institution.**
- **Examination conditions:** disruption in the examination room, excessive noise, behaviour of other students. Normally such conditions will have been reported to the invigilators who will pass the reports onto the faculty to be dealt with as appropriate.

## Information requirements

Students applying under any of the processes outlined in this appendix, must explain the impact of the personal circumstances that are affecting their ability to complete and submit their assessment. This must show that their personal circumstances were out of their control and could not be prevented.

Applicants will often provide original, independent documentary evidence, which should be dated and correlate with the dates of the assessment. Evidence must be in English with any translation of supporting documentation organised and financed by the student and undertaken by an authorised translator, for example, a local authority translation service.

Evidence relating to medical conditions must be written by appropriately qualified professionals who are independent to the student.

Evidence presented by email may be acceptable if the email has been sent by the author from the official address of the relevant organization. Hartpury reserves the right to take such steps as deemed necessary to verify the evidence submitted, including requesting to see the original documentation, without prior notification to the student.

Hartpury may deem any documentation that has been amended either by the original author or by the student for any reason as inadmissible. If there is concern that a student may have fraudulently presented documentation to Hartpury, the matter will be investigated and considered under the Hartpury's procedures for investigating alleged academic misconduct or under the terms of the Appendix. Student Expulsion for Academic Reasons.

## Self-certification

A student may use self-certification as evidence of personal ill health to accompany an application through the assessment deadline extension or missed assessment processes if they cannot provide any other form of evidence. Self-certification may cover the period recommended by the UK government for employees in England at the date of the first day covered by the self-certification (published by [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)). Self-certification may be used no more than three times during each academic year (September to August). Each use may cover one or more assessments.

## A student cannot submit on time due to the impact of a significant and serious event arising shortly before the deadline: assessment deadline extension process.

Students are expected to plan their workload to avoid being impacted upon by conditions that exist when enrolling on a module, a minor illness or other cause. However, if a **significant** and **serious** event arises shortly before the published hand-in deadline for an individual coursework assessment which may prevent submission they may apply for an extension to the hand-in deadline.

Extensions will only be granted if the academic integrity of the assessment and future assessment can be maintained. If granting the extension provides the student with an unfair advantage or the work is unable to be processed prior to examination boards then an extension may not be able to be granted or the period of the extension given may be less than the requested period.

The normal extension period is five working days to avoid delaying the provision of feedback to the rest of the cohort, to allow for sufficient marking time and to facilitate the efficient processing of student work, particularly prior to examination boards.

**To note:** Dates when Hartpury is closed do not count as working days. For example, public holidays do not count as working days.

A student applying for an extension of longer than five working days must provide information, and include original, independent evidence where available, as to why the additional time is necessary to support them in completing and submitting the work. Please note that extensions are usually given in multiples of five working days, e.g. 5, 10, 15 working days.

### **The process for applying for an extension**

A student making a request for an extension must do so through the Student Advisor. Extensions may not be agreed between an individual tutor and the student.

If an extension to a deadline is granted the assessed work will be marked as if on time.

The extension request must normally be submitted at least two full working days (48 hours) before the deadline, and always before the submission deadline. An extension request will normally only be considered if:

- a. the request is submitted within the permitted timescale;
- b. relevant third party documentary evidence or self-certification is attached to the request.

A student using the Assessment Deadline Extension Process may still apply through the Missed Assessments Process.

### **Assessment types and extensions**

Due to the type and timing of some forms of assessment it will not be possible for a typical extension to be given, or the maximum extension may be less than five working days. Where the type and timing of the assessment mean it is not possible for a typical extension to be given then it may be possible to change the timing of the assessment, within a specific window (e.g. an assessment period). This will only be possible if it can be facilitated with the same assessment organization, e.g. time constrained written examinations will not be eligible for this. Students can apply for a change of time in a similar way to an extension.



<b>A. Extensions are normally available for the following assessment types</b>	<b>B. Extensions are <u>not</u> normally available for the following assessment types</b>
<p>An individual piece of work not involving time-constrained resources for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• coursework;</li> <li>• oral presentation;</li> <li>• a written test</li> </ul>	<p>Individual assessments limited by logistical constraints, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• assessments to be completed whilst on a field trip;</li> <li>• written examinations;</li> <li>• written tests involving time-constrained resources;</li> <li>• practical assessments involving time-constrained resources;</li> <li>• Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs).</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group assessments of coursework (first order assessment class)</li> <li>• Group assessments of practical examinations (first order assessment class) not limited by logistical constraints</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group assessments of practical examinations and written examinations (first order assessment classes)</li> <li>• Group assessments of practical examinations (first order assessment class) limited by logistical constraints</li> </ul>

Additional points to note:

- i. as the work is submitted after the deadline a student may receive their mark later than the rest of the cohort;
- ii. repeated requests for extensions to deadlines would normally activate a detailed review of a student's current support, or to consider whether a student who does not have reasonable adjustments in place, requires them;
- iii. Granting an extension must not disadvantage other students enrolled on the module, or unduly advantage the student who is applying for the extension;
- iv. a student is permitted to submit the work earlier than the expiry date of the extension period if they wish;
- v. there will be no further extension upon an already granted extension.

### **Late five working day extension requests**

Requests made after two full working days (48 hours) before the assessment submission deadline will not be considered. Only if an incident occurs during the two full working days (48 hours) before the deadline will a later request be considered. An example of such a situation may be an emergency event on the evening before/morning of the hand in. For example, if a student was unexpectedly admitted to hospital for medical treatment.

### **A student is unable to submit or attend an assessment due to their personal circumstances: Missed assessments process**

If a student has chosen to submit an assessment or attend an exam, they cannot usually apply under the missed assessments process (see section on late applications below).

A student may use the missed assessments process in one of the following circumstances:

- i. they submit a title page stating that they are submitting an application under the missed assessments process;

- ii. they do not submit an assignment due to the impact of their personal circumstances;
- iii. they notify Hartpury they are unable to attend an assessment due to the impact of their personal circumstances; or;
- iv. they do not attend an examination or other controlled conditions assessment (such as a presentation) due to the impact of their personal circumstances.

Students must ensure they have read the Academic Regulations alongside this procedure before submitting an application for a missed assessment. Applications for missed assessments will be rejected if a student goes onto submit an assessment after making an application.

Applications for missed assessments should be submitted before the day of the formal notification of the examining board's decision on the outcome of the assessment.

### **Using the missed assessments process.**

- a. Applications for missed assessments must be submitted via the Student Advisor, and should be on the application form.
- b. Students are encouraged to submit a title page stating they are submitting an application under the missed assessments process or notify the Student Advisor and Module Leader they are unable to attend a face-to-face assessment.
- c. Students are strongly advised to obtain guidance or advice from the Student Advisor prior to submitting their form. Such advice will be limited to the procedures to be followed and the required evidence.
- d. Where a student is studying with an academic partner they should contact their local administration office for guidance.
- e. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that the form is completed in full and that all relevant information and supporting documentary evidence is submitted. A verbal notification regarding personal difficulties is not sufficient.
- f. When filling out the form, students must ensure they record exactly which assessments have been affected and link this to the modules they relate to. They must clearly state why the circumstances adversely affected their ability to attend or to submit the assessment. The reasons given must be linked to the dates of the assessment and the Scope of Circumstances above.
- g. A student's application will not be carried forward between assessment opportunities. A new form, with appropriate evidence, will need to be submitted which demonstrates that the circumstances are continuing and affecting the student's ability to submit or attend assessments. For longer term circumstances please see the sections on 'ongoing conditions, disabilities or pregnancy and maternity' or 'suspension of studies'.

### **Late applications**

Applications received after the formal publication of the examining board's decision on the outcome of the assessment will be termed late applications. A late application will not be considered unless a student can demonstrate that circumstances beyond their control prevented the disclosure of the relevant factors at that time. In addition to providing independent evidence of their circumstance, students should also provide evidence showing why they did not apply at the appropriate time.

In exceptional circumstances, where a student can demonstrate, with the support of independent

documentary evidence, that they could not reasonably have been expected to have complied with the regulations owing to the specific nature of the issues involved, a late application may be reviewed.

Where appropriate, if the late claim is upheld after the relevant examining board has met, the Chair of the Examining Board will be notified and a sub-examination board convened to reconsider the student's academic profile.

### **Third party applications**

A third party may not make a submission on behalf of a student unless in very exceptional circumstances where a student is unable to submit a request on their own behalf. For example, if they are unexpectedly confined to hospital for medical treatment. For such an application to be accepted the submission must state why the student was unable to make the application themselves; the name and contact details of the third party and their connection to the student; and that the application is supported by evidence.

### **A student requests the exceptional removal of a mark due to personal difficulties affecting an assessment they have attempted**

Exceptionally, a student may apply to have their mark for an assessment removed **after** attempting the assessment. This is permitted on only two grounds and there are specific requirements for the independent third-party evidence which **must** be provided. Self-certification cannot be used as the only evidence to support a request for exceptional removal of a mark.

#### **Ground 1: The student's circumstances affected their judgement to the extent they were unable to determine that they should not have done the assessment.**

The application should be supported by written, verifiable, and independent third-party evidence. The information provided must cover the period of assessment and explain the impact on the student's judgement at that time.

#### **Ground 2: The student attended an examination but was taken ill during the event and was unable to complete the assessment.**

The application must be supported by written, verifiable, and independent third-party evidence of the illness. For example, the evidence would usually be corroborated by an institutional record of the student leaving the assessment (for example, a report of the examination invigilator or academic staff responsible for supervising the assessment).

The application process and all deadlines around late applications are the same as for the missed assessments process. Applications for the exceptional removal of a mark should be made by the student **as soon as possible** after the assessment, (and no later than six months after the formal publication of the examining board's outcome of the assessment).

### **The process for considering missed assessment or exceptional mark removal applications**

Hartpury operates a two-stage process which has full delegated authority from Programme Examination Boards to make decisions whether to accept or reject applications.

#### **Stage one**

Designated staff will consider cases following the submission of the application. Depending on the

nature of the circumstances and evidence provided, the staff member may be able to consider the application or will consult with an academic reviewer before a decision is made.

### **Stage two**

Where staff are unable to reach a decision at stage one, the application will be considered by a Panel. The panel will convene at intervals during the year, meeting onsite or online. The panel may, if appropriate, request and receive reports from tutors. The panel will comprise at least three members of staff, including the Chair and an academic.

### **Confidentiality**

All cases and information provided must be treated as confidential. If a student subsequently appeals (using the Appendix. Appeals Procedure) or makes a complaint (using the Complaints Procedure) any relevant paperwork may be accessed as part of that investigation.

### **Notification of outcomes**

The decisions to accept or reject missed assessments applications will be recorded and entered onto the Student Record system. Students will be notified of the outcome via email and any subsequent Programme Examination Board decision will be available following the publication of results.

### **What happens when a missed assessments or exceptional mark removal application is accepted?**

If an application for the removal of a mark is accepted, the mark will be removed and replaced by a mark of 0%. A student may not subsequently use this decision as grounds for academic appeal should any further assessment give a lower mark than the mark that has been removed under this process.

Decisions about the impact of individual personal circumstances upon a student's progression or eligibility for an award will be made by a Programme Examination Board. Where a missed assessments application has been accepted or where a mark has been removed due to a student's personal circumstances, the Board can use its discretion to take account of these and may:

- i. allow a resit or retake of a failed module;
- ii. allow the mark for a resit or retake to be uncapped;
- iii. accept failure of a module/s when recommending eligibility for a named award.
- iv. recommend an aegrotat award.

Please note:

- i. these decisions are subject to the assessment requirements (including professional body requirements) for the award;
- ii. some of these outcomes may have visa implications for those students who require one.

Acceptance of an application does **not** permit any of the following:

- i. an adjustment to the marks for individual modules;
- ii. to allow students who have passed a module to retake it;
- iii. to waive the fees for a retake unless in very exceptional cases which are markedly different from the usual run of cases;
- iv. to allow marks for elements of assessment within a failed component to be carried forward;

Please note that if a mark is removed for an assessment where an academic offence has been proven to have taken place, the academic offence will remain on the student's record.

## **Adverse circumstances affecting a whole student cohort or sub-cohort.**

A member of staff may raise a written concern to the Academic Registry that the delivery or assessment of a module adversely affected the performance of a whole cohort or a sub-group of students on a component of assessment or the module (for example, an incident affecting an examination).

### **The process for considering adverse circumstances concerns**

Hartpury operates a two-stage process which has full delegated authority from Programme Examination Boards to make decisions whether the delivery or assessment of a module is likely to have adversely affected the performance of a whole cohort or a sub-group of students on a component of assessment or the module, and a proposal for what subsequent actions may be taken.

#### **Stage one**

Designated staff will consider cases following the submission of the concern. Depending on the nature of the circumstances and evidence provided, the staff member may be able to consider the concern or will consult with an academic reviewer before a decision is made.

#### **Stage two**

Where the designated staff are unable to reach a decision at stage one, the concern will be considered by a Panel. The panel will convene in response to a case, meeting onsite or online. The panel may, if appropriate, request and receive reports from members of staff. The panel will comprise at least three members of staff, including the Chair and an academic. As appropriate the panel will consult an appropriate external examiner.

#### **Outcomes of consideration**

The outcome will be a decision as to whether the delivery or assessment of a module is likely to have adversely affected the performance of a whole cohort or a sub-group of students and a recommendation for what subsequent action should be taken and whether that action would be sufficient to mitigate the adverse circumstances and enable the students' final module grade and outcome to be reliable.

Should the subsequent action be felt to be sufficient to mitigate the adverse circumstances and enable the students' final module grade and outcome to be reliable then the boards of examiners will take no further action.

Should the subsequent action be felt to be insufficient to mitigate the adverse circumstances and enable the students' final module grade and outcome to be reliable then the Programme Examination Boards may, following due discussion and consideration:

- i. determine a classification uplift.
- ii. allow a resit or retake of a failed module;
- iii. allow the mark for a resit or retake to be uncapped.

## **A student has experienced serious but temporary circumstances which have impacted upon their learning or ability to complete or attend assessments: Suspension of studies**

If a student is only enrolled on modules they may not suspend their studies. Only students enrolled on a programme may suspend their studies. A student may suspend their studies with the intention to return to the programme within twenty four calendar months. A request to suspend studies during the current academic year must be received no later than seven months after enrolment. The date of the suspension is the date that Hartpury receives written notification of the student's request to suspend their studies.

It will only be possible for Hartpury to grant a request from a student to suspend study on a programme that is available at the point of their anticipated return. Programmes that are in cessation may preclude, or limit the period of, a student's suspension of studies.

After the deadline if the student does not withdraw and they are experiencing serious but temporary personal circumstances preventing them from doing their assessments they should refer to the regulations on submitting a missed assessments application.

Students suspending their studies should note the following:

- i. academic progression may be affected;
- ii. there may be fee implications. Students are advised to consult the Hartpury Tuition Fee Policy for more information;
- iii. there may be academic consequences for a programme accredited by a Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body;
- iv. there may be implications on immigration status and for completion of studies for students who require a visa;
- v. they cannot submit work for assessment or sit examinations during a period of suspended studies;
- vi. no marks for work submitted after the suspension of studies commences will be recorded, but credit for modules which have been passed prior to the suspension of studies will be awarded;
- vii. any period of suspension is included in the student's maximum enrolment period for the programme on which they are enrolled.

On a student's return:

- i. all assessments for all modules will need to be taken, unless the whole module has been passed;
- ii. the form of module assessment may be different;
- iii. the student may be required to change their mode of attendance depending on the number of modules they have already passed e.g. from full-time to part-time;
- iv. the student will be required to enrol on the version of the programme currently running, to ensure the currency of their subsequent learning.

# Appendix. Fitness to study and reside

## Principles

Hartpury University needs to be satisfied that individuals admitted, enrolling for, and undertaking their studies are considered fit to study and reside. Hartpury University will consider and address concerns regarding students' fitness to study and reside howsoever they arise and will endeavour to take action to deal with concerns promptly and fairly. This procedure is not intended to deal with issues of professional suitability (in which case the Appendix. Professional Suitability will be used) or assessing practice competencies (in which case the Academic Regulations will be used). If a student is enrolled on a programme that is accredited by a Professional Accrediting Body then it is usual that a concern will be dealt with by the Appendix. Professional Suitability and not this procedure.

Hartpury University recognises that dealing with fitness to study and reside matters in this way is critical to ensure consistency and to support student wellbeing, learning and academic achievement and to the furtherance of a positive student experience. As such evaluation of the application of these principles and procedure will be included within the Annual Quality Report.

This Procedure applies to all applicants that have accepted an offer to study at Hartpury University at all times (not just during term time or placement learning). Students are required at all times to:

- demonstrate acceptable standards of conduct,
- demonstrate relevant values and attitudes,
- satisfy relevant criminal record requirements, and
- satisfy relevant health requirements

When operating this Procedure, Hartpury University staff will consider what support and guidance may be offered. Students are reminded of the support services provided by Hartpury University through the Academic Services team and by the Students' Union and are encouraged where appropriate to seek support from relevant external sources (e.g. local GP's or mental health services) as well as from sources internal to Hartpury University (e.g. the Wellbeing service or Learning Support or Aspire). Students will be encouraged to seek and engage with support.

Whilst Hartpury University anticipates that most matters involving fitness to study and reside concerns will be dealt with under this Procedure, matters may arise where it is appropriate for Hartpury University to implement other institutional processes as an alternative or in addition, and Hartpury University is not prevented from doing so at any time. In appropriately serious cases, Hartpury University has the right to require the suspension of a student's studies and/or the withdrawal of a student's enrolment on their studies.

Students should be aware that, in the course of dealing with fitness to study and reside concerns, Hartpury University may consider it appropriate to consult and/or refer matters to third parties such as PSRBs, the NHS Counter Fraud Service, Social Services, the Police or the Disclosure and Barring Service. Hartpury University will normally notify the student when doing so, but may do so on occasion without notification to the student in situations deemed to be of risk. Where such third party or agency carries out any investigation (including criminal proceedings) or other process, Hartpury University may suspend or delay taking action under this Procedure, although it is not obliged to do so. Hartpury University will not be bound by the outcome of any third party or agency investigation or other process.



Concerns about a student's wellbeing will be acted upon promptly. Early intervention may prevent situations developing into crises at a later stage. If concerns regarding a student's health (mental and physical) are considered to be posing a risk to their own, safety or wellbeing, or that of others, the Safeguarding and Wellbeing Manager will be contacted for advice or emailed via [safeguarding@hartpury.ac.uk](mailto:safeguarding@hartpury.ac.uk).

Hartpury University recognises that concerns may be raised by a variety of individuals, for example, Support staff, Course /Personal Tutors, Teaching staff and third parties (such as health professionals). This Procedure seeks to promote early intervention, active collaboration between staff, students and third parties, and consistency of approach. Matters will be dealt with sensitively and non-judgementally and in a coordinated manner across Hartpury University. Whilst Hartpury University will seek to work with students in a spirit of cooperation, cases may arise in which it may, under this Procedure, determine that a student is unfit to study or reside and that his/her Studies or Residence should be suspended or withdrawn.

In implementing this Procedure, Hartpury University will at all times remain mindful of its duty of care and its obligations to students under the Equality Act 2010, including in appropriate cases its obligation to make reasonable adjustments. It will also remain mindful of the confidential and sensitive nature of fitness to study and reside matters and of its obligations under the Data Protection Act 1998.

Staff dealing with fitness to study and reside cases must contact the Safeguarding and Wellbeing Manager or Head of Learning Support for guidance in order to consider the student's immediate support needs and the appropriateness of intervening under this Procedure.

Where there are critical concerns about the risks posed by a student's health or where a temporary suspension is being considered, the Safeguarding and Wellbeing Manager will normally get in touch with the "emergency contact" provided by the student at the point of enrolment. The student's consent for this action to be taken will be sought. Hartpury University reserves the right to make this contact if it deems the student's vital interests are at risk even if such consent is not given and/or the student is unable to give such consent.

## Scope

Hartpury University will be concerned if reasonable suspicion suggests that the student's fitness to study and reside may be, or may become, impaired and as a result any of the following may occur:

- a risk which may be serious and immediate is posed to the student's own health, safety or wellbeing and/or that of others;
- a student's behaviour is (or is at risk of) adversely impacting on teaching and learning activities of other students and staff and/or the studying, working, living co-operatively and in close proximity of others;
- Hartpury University is unable to balance the needs and rights of the student against the need to protect the wellbeing of other students and staff
- the support needs of a student fall outside the scope of the support and other services which Hartpury University can reasonably be expected to provide
- a relevant placement or work based setting is or may be undermined.

Examples of where fitness to study and reside concerns may arise include (but are not limited to)



instances where a student has or is suspected of having:

- health, mental health, emotional or inter-personal problems, or failure to disclose these, which indicate a lack of insight and appropriate management thereof, and which give rise to concerns about possible risk to self or others
- failed to act within any statutory frameworks which set out students' professional duties and responsibilities
- breached standards of acceptable conduct including those set out in Hartpury University policies, for example in connection with (but not limited to):
  - abuse or harassment, including through the use of social media
  - violent, aggressive or threatening behaviour (physical, verbal or other)
  - sexual misconduct
  - failure to ensure and promote animal welfare
  - failure to treat others with dignity or respect, or to practise in a non-discriminatory way
  - dishonesty or untrustworthiness (e.g misrepresentation of qualifications or professional experience, or the forging of documents or signatures, or theft or making false expenses claims)
  - repeat or serious assessment offences
  - breach of confidentiality
  - activities which constitute a criminal offence or the commission of a criminal offence
  - alcohol or substance abuse problems or addiction
  - lack of motivation or interest and/or failure to engage in learning activities
  - lack of communication and engagement with the programme team
  - anti-social behaviour which adversely affects the proper operation of placement/work-based settings
  - the failure to demonstrate an attitude, demeanour or communication appropriate for individuals working in the profession concerned
  - inconsistent, unreliable or inappropriate behaviour in learning, study or placement/work-based learning settings

## Procedure

Please note that where a student decides to withdraw from the programme, or is required to withdraw on academic (including competency) grounds, and there is an outstanding fitness to study and reside concern, the fitness to study and reside process will normally continue until completed so that a formal judgement can be reached, whether or not the student chooses to engage with the process.

Should a student without good cause be unwilling or unable to participate at any stage of this Procedure or attend a meeting/hearing, Hartpury University reserves the right to follow the Procedure in their absence.

1. Staff to whom disclosures are made or concerns are raised are encouraged to consult with their Head of Department (or nominee) or the Safeguarding and Wellbeing Manager (or nominee) to discuss next steps.
2. The relevant Head of Department or the Safeguarding and Wellbeing Manager (or nominee) will consider the concern raised and whether it should be considered through this procedure and/ or another mechanism.
3. The standard of proof applied at every stage of this Procedure is the balance of probabilities.

4. Where the Head of Department or the Safeguarding and Wellbeing Manager decides the concern should be considered through this procedure they will notify the designated administrator who will ensure they are recorded centrally. The Head of Department or Safeguarding and Wellbeing Manager will review and determine which level the concern is considered to be:

**Level 1:** Initial, emerging or minor concerns

**Level 2:** Serious and/or continuing concerns

**Level 3:** Critical and/or persistent or cumulative concerns.

The procedure may be entered at any level without any requirement for an earlier level to have been commenced or exhausted, although it is anticipated that most situations can be managed by action taken at Levels 1 and/or 2. At which Level the Procedure is implemented will depend on factors such as the nature of the fitness to study and reside concern, the seriousness of any risk posed and the student's response to any steps taken so far by Hartpury University to manage the situation

5. The Head of Department or the Safeguarding and Wellbeing Manager (or nominee) will assess whether the student about whom fitness to study and reside concerns have been raised poses a serious risk to:
- their own health, safety and/or wellbeing and/or that of others
  - the professional activities of a placement provider or other professional organisation or to a practice situation
  - the property of Hartpury University and/or others, and/or
  - the reputation of Hartpury University or a placement provider or other professional organisation, and/or its proper functioning and/or its activities

6. Where immediate action is reasonably required to remove or reduce risk, the Head of Department will make a recommendation to the Dean: Teaching and Learning (or nominee) or the Director of HR and Residential Services that the student be temporarily suspended and/or excluded from premises. Any temporary suspension or exclusion made under this section is a neutral act and is not a determination regarding any fitness to study and reside concerns raised.

The Dean or the Director of HR and Residential Services will consider the recommendation and may:

- i. suspend the student from their studies at their placement or work-based learning setting and/or related learning activities for a specified period of time
- ii. suspend the student from their studies for a specified period of time and/or
- iii. exclude the student from Hartpury University premises for a specified period of time pending steps being taken under this Procedure and/or any third party investigation/prosecution.

The Programme Manager or Associate Head of Department will consider whether specific arrangements can reasonably be put in place for the student in order to minimise the impact on their studies, and will liaise with the student's Head of Department to make these arrangements as appropriate.

The Programme Manager and Dean or the Director of HR and Residential Services will review at regular intervals whether it is reasonable for the suspension/exclusion to continue or whether it should be revoked or extended for a further specified period of time.

7. The student will be notified in writing (e-mail to their Hartpury University e-mail account) of the decision to investigate the allegation through this procedure and the level of the concern. They shall also be informed of any temporary neutral acts at this time, with reasons. This shall occur normally within 3 working days of the date of the decision.

Students shall be reminded that they may, at any stage, be accompanied and/or represented by

one member of staff, friend, relative, or representative of the Students' Union. This is in addition to any health professional or support worker who may usually accompany the student. The role of this individual is to provide support to the student. It is not to advocate or represent the student.

## **Investigations**

8. Prior to any matter being determined, Hartpury University will undertake an investigation as is reasonable and appropriate in the circumstances. The purpose of the investigation will be to inform Hartpury University of the nature of the fitness to study and reside concern, to recommend to the Head of Department or the Safeguarding and Wellbeing Manager the Level at which it should be dealt with (if any), and to investigate the concern itself and prepare a report to be presented at the relevant Level (if appropriate). A member of staff will be appointed by the relevant Head of Department or the Safeguarding and Wellbeing Manager to act as Investigating Officer. Any investigation will be carried out in a transparent and fair manner.
9. The Investigating Officer will determine the process to be followed for the investigation and will speak with the student concerned and with other students, staff and third parties where relevant (such as placement providers or health professionals). Where concerns are initial or minor, an investigation meeting with the student may not be necessarily be held. In more complex cases, a professionals' meeting or case conference may be called in order to ascertain the nature of the concern and gather information. The student will be informed that an investigation is being carried out, the identity of the Investigating Officer, and will be invited to respond.

### **Level 1 – Initial, Emerging or Minor Concerns**

- 1.1 The designated administrator will write to the student (in an e-mail to their Hartpury University e-mail account) that there is a concern about their fitness to study and reside and the nature of the concern and that the matter is to be dealt with under Level 1. The student will be provided with a copy of this Procedure. The student will be invited to a meeting to discuss the concern and any support needs the student may have.
- 1.2 The Programme Manager or the Safeguarding and Wellbeing Manager and student will meet, in the presence of the Associate Head of Department (or nominee).
- 1.3 Following the meeting, the Programme Manager or the Safeguarding and Wellbeing Manager will determine whether or not the student's fitness to study and reside is impaired or may become impaired and any actions to be taken. The Associate Head of Department's feedback will be considered during this process. Such actions may include (but are not limited to) one or more of the following outcomes:
  - no further action to be taken
  - issue a warning
  - support arrangements to be put in place for the student
  - an action plan be drawn up
  - the matter to be referred to another Level
  - the matter referred for consideration under another Hartpury University process

## **Level 2 – Serious and/or continuing or repeated concerns**

- 2.1 The student will be invited to a meeting with the Head of Department, or the Safeguarding and Wellbeing Manager and at least one other member of staff, to discuss the concern and any support needs the student may have. The student will be given full opportunity to respond, either before (in writing) and/or at the meeting, to the concern. The Head of Department may invite other staff members involved to attend the meeting and may consult with and seek information from other persons in order to deal with this matter and to provide support to the student. Records of previous meetings under this Procedure and any action plans may be available at the meeting.
- 2.2 The student will normally be given at least 5 working days' notice of the meeting and will be provided in advance of the meeting with the relevant documentation supporting the concern.
- 2.3 The Head of Department or the Safeguarding and Wellbeing Manager will determine whether or not the student's fitness to study and reside is impaired or may become impaired and any actions to be taken. Such actions may include (but are not limited to) one or more of the Level one examples and:
  - the student be withdrawn temporarily from placement, other work-based setting or related learning activity
  - the student maybe excluded from residence

## **Level 3 – Critical, and/or persistent or cumulative concerns**

- 3.1 The student will normally be given at least 10 working days' notice of a hearing before a Fitness to Study and Reside Panel. The student will normally be given in writing:
  - notice of the date, time and place of the hearing
  - details of the concern
  - a copy of the investigation report
  - a reminder of the right to be accompanied and/or represented at the hearing
- 3.2 A member of staff from Academic Services, will act as Secretary to the Fitness to study and reside Panel. They will act as a note-taker at the panel hearing and will provide guidance on procedure.
- 3.3 The main events of the hearing (and any subsequent meeting held to review progress and/or provide additional support) will be formally recorded (in writing) with one copy sent to the student, one copy retained, one sent to the Head of Department or the Safeguarding and Wellbeing Manager and one to any relevant third parties.
- 3.4 The student may submit to the Secretary of the Fitness to Study and Reside Panel, at least five working days in advance of the hearing date, a written statement in response to the concern to be considered at the hearing.
- 3.5 Notice of any witnesses to be called by the student and/or Hartpury University's Case Presenter at the hearing must be given in writing to the Secretary to the Fitness to study and reside Panel at least 2 working days in advance of the date of the hearing together with a written statement of the contribution that each witness will make. The Secretary to the Fitness to study and reside Panel will provide a copy of each party's witness notice and statements to the other party.
- 3.6 A Fitness to study and reside Panel will be convened and will normally consist of four members:

- one member of Hartpury University Executive, Dean, or Director of HR and Residential Services or Head of Department or the Safeguarding and Wellbeing Manager (who will act as Chair)
- one member of academic staff from the Department in which the student is based
- one independent member of academic staff from another Department
- one member of the relevant profession and external to Hartpury University

All Fitness to study and reside Panel members will be impartial and will have not normally have had prior involvement in the case. A Fitness to study and reside Panel will not meet unless all members of the Panel are present (although if required this may be by electronic means).

3.7 Whilst the order and procedure to be followed at a hearing before a Fitness to Study Panel will be at the discretion of the Chair and will comply with the principles of natural justice, the following will normally occur:

- A member of Hartpury University staff appointed to act as Case Presenter (usually the Investigating Officer) will outline the fitness to study and reside concern and the evidence in support of the concern.
- The student may respond at this stage.
- The Case Presenter may call and question witnesses.
- The student may question these witnesses.
- The student will present their case.
- The student may call and question witnesses.
- The Case Presenter may question these witnesses.
- The Case Presenter will sum up.
- The student may reply.
- The members of the Fitness to study and reside Panel may question the student, the Case Presenter and any witness at any time during the hearing and may recall the parties or witnesses at any time during the hearing.
- The Chair may adjourn or postpone the hearing where it is reasonable to do so.

The Fitness to study and reside Panel may ask for specific enquiries to be undertaken, additional witnesses to be called and/or additional information to be presented. This includes where the student, without good reason, has not attended.

3.8 The Fitness to study and reside Panel will retire in private to deliberate. The Secretary to the Fitness to study and reside Panel may retire with the Panel in order to provide procedural advice but will play no part in the Panel's decision-making. Matters will be determined by the Professional Suitability Panel on the balance of probabilities and by way of a simple majority. If a decision is not achieved, the Chair will have the casting vote.

3.9 The Fitness to study and reside Panel will determine whether or not the student's Fitness to study and reside is impaired, or maybe impaired (including if they are unfit to practice), and any actions to be taken. Such actions may include (but are not limited to) one or more of the following outcomes:

- no action to be taken
- the matter be downgraded to a lower Level (although where possible the matter shall be resolved at this point)
- the matter be referred for consideration under another Hartpury University process
- support arrangements and/or reasonable adjustments be put in place for the student
- an action plan to be drawn up
- a written warning be given to the student
- the student be withdrawn (temporarily or permanently) from placement or other work-based activity or related learning activity or Hartpury University residence

- the student be transferred to a non-professional programme
- a recommendation be made to the Dean that a professional award is withheld or withdrawn
- a recommendation be made to the Programme Examination Board that an alternative non-professional award be awarded
- a recommendation be made to the Dean that the student be required to suspend their studies for a specified period of time (with or without conditions)
- a recommendation be made to the Dean that the student be required to withdraw from their course
- a recommendation be made to the Dean that the student be expelled from Hartpury University and not be permitted readmission in the future

### **Notification of the decision and outcomes**

- 4.1 The student will be notified in writing (e-mail to their Hartpury University e-mail account) normally within 8 working days of the date of the decision, of the decision, the reasons for that decision and any actions to be taken (although for Level 3 concerns the student and the Case Presenter may also be notified verbally in advance of this time).
- 4.2 Where the outcome includes drawing up of an action plan, the plan will set out how the matter will be managed and any requirements to be placed in the student. The action plan will state the implications should the student fail to comply with any requirements placed upon them (e.g. the matter may be referred to be dealt with at a higher Level of the Procedure). The student will be provided with a copy of the action plan. The plan will state the date(s) that it shall be reviewed by an appropriate member of staff at a review meeting(s) who will consider whether any requirements have been complied with. The student will be invited to the review meeting and the outcomes of the review meeting notified to the student in writing (e-mail to their Hartpury University e-mail account).
- 4.3 A copy of the decision letter and any associated documentation will be retained and a copy within the student's file.

### **Appealing a decision**

A student may raise a written appeal following the Appeals Procedure (appendix of the Hartpury University Academic Regulations) against any neutral suspension or exclusion imposed, or against the outcome of Levels 2 and 3 of this Procedure, within 10 working days of the date of the decision letter

The decision of the Dean, Director of HR and Residential Services or Fitness to study and reside Panel, as appropriate, will take effect and remain in force until such time as it may be changed by the appeal outcome.

### **References**

Hartpury University regularly provides student related references to third parties (such as educational institutions and potential employers).

When providing a reference in a professional context (for example, in connection with potential employment in a profession or admission on to a professional programme of study at another

institution) for a student who has been subject to the Procedure at Level 3, Hartpury University will refer to the concern raised against the student, the associated circumstances, and the decision and outcome of the Level 3 proceedings. Students will be actively encouraged to contact the employing organisation and discuss full details of the case with the prospective employer.

Hartpury University will not normally refer to issues arising in connection with fitness to study and reside proceedings under Levels 1 and 2 when providing references, but reserves the right to do so when it considers it appropriate (for example, in a matter involving issues of safeguarding and/or client/animal/service user safety).

# Appendix. Professional Suitability

## Principles

Hartpury University needs to be satisfied that individuals admitted, enrolling for, and undertaking their studies on a number of programmes of study are professionally suitable to do so, with reference to the standards of the particular profession and/or the requirements of any relevant Professional Accrediting Bodies (PABs) (including Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs)) and in addition considered fit to study and reside (where resident in Hartpury onsite halls of residence).

If there is a concern about a student on a programme of study accredited by a Professional Accrediting Body then this appendix's Principles and Procedure will usually be used to investigate, in preference to other behavioural, disciplinary and fitness to study and reside procedures. More detail on this is included below, including how this procedure can be used with students who are not studying professionally accredited programmes.

The University considers and addresses concerns regarding students' professional suitability however they arise and endeavours to take action to deal with concerns promptly, proportionately and fairly. It seeks to promote early intervention, active collaboration between staff, students and third parties, and consistency of approach. Matters will be dealt with sensitively and objectively and in a coordinated manner. Hartpury University recognises that dealing with matters in this way is critical not only to ensure consistency and that relevant professional standards are attained and maintained, but also to support student wellbeing, learning, academic achievement and experience and career progression.

This procedure will have relevance to those programmes of study that lead to professional registration and/or a license to practise in a professional context. Hartpury University reserves the right to use this procedure in situations where behaviour or an allegation or complaint is made that calls into question their suitability for their expected future profession. Students are required at all times to:

- demonstrate acceptable standards of conduct,
- demonstrate relevant values and attitudes,
- satisfy relevant and required criminal record requirements, and
- satisfy relevant health requirements

Hartpury University recognises that concerns may be raised by a variety of individuals, for example, as result of a disclosure made by the student, or from the circumstances of a student's practice, performance or conduct, or from issues raised by University staff, other students, health professionals, placement providers or service users. When operating this procedure, Hartpury University staff will consider what support and guidance may be offered. Students are reminded of the support services provided by Hartpury University through the Academic Services team and by the Students' Union and are encouraged where appropriate to seek support from relevant external sources (e.g. local GP's or mental health services) as well as from sources internal to Hartpury University (e.g. the Wellbeing service or Learning Support). Staff to whom disclosures are made or concerns are raised are advised to consult with their Head of Department or designated lead to seek advice.



## Scope

Hartpury University anticipates that most matters involving professional suitability concerns will be dealt with under this procedure. Matters may arise where it is appropriate for the University to implement other institutional processes as an alternative or in addition, and the University is not prevented from doing so at any time. An example includes suspected academic writing misconduct which would be considered by Academic Regulations' appendix: Academic Misconduct. Another example is minor inappropriate behaviour in student accommodation when the student accommodation rules apply.

These principles and procedure apply to:

- all applicants that have accepted an offer to study
- all enrolled students at Hartpury University (including periods of time when a student's studies are suspended), both on and off campus, and at all times (not just during term time or placement learning).
- students subject to an allegation in a placement or workplace setting which is part of their programme of study. The University and the placement provider/workplace will agree the process to be followed. The University usually expects the placement provider/workplace to undertake an initial investigation to establish the facts and produce a report to be referred to the University for action under these principles and procedure. In some cases, for instance where there are safeguarding concerns relating to a service user, the placement provider/workplace would usually follow their internal procedures in consultation with the University.
- former students seeking to return to study whose enrolment has previously been interrupted, suspended or terminated when they were under the procedure, or whose actions, if known, may have led to an investigation under these principles.
- students registered for an award with the University but studying in a partner organisation if the concerns relate to activities at the University's campuses, student accommodation or learning activities. In other circumstances these students are usually subject to the policies and procedures of the partner organisation, but may also be referred to the University.

The University also reserves the right to use these principles and procedure in relation to students who are qualified professionals on its programmes including continuing professional development courses and in situations where a student is following an academic programme but where an allegation or report is made that calls into question their suitability for their expected future profession.

The Professional Suitability Procedure is not intended to deal usually with issues of assessing professional competencies. These are managed under the University's Academic Regulations.

### **Programmes that have specific professional suitability expectations**

This appendix may be invoked for any student where it is deemed appropriate to do so however the University programmes to which this appendix normally applies include:

Department of Animal and Agriculture

- BSc (Hons) Animal Training and Performance
- BSc (Hons) Canine Training and Performance
- BSc (Hons) Animal Behaviour and Training (Clinical) (including all points of entry)

- BSc (Hons) Animal Behaviour and Training with Canine (Clinical) (including all points of entry)

#### Department of Equine

- Postgraduate Diploma Veterinary Physiotherapy
- MSc Veterinary Physiotherapy

#### Department of Sport

- BSc (Hons) Sports Coaching (including all points of entry)
- BSc (Hons) Sports Therapy
- MSci Sports Therapy (Equestrian)
- BSc (Hons) Strength and Conditioning (including all points of entry)
- MSc Sports Coaching
- MSc Sports Management
- MSc Strength and Conditioning

#### Department of Veterinary Nursing

- All programmes in the Department of Veterinary Nursing

### **Examples of Professional Suitability Concerns**

Professional suitability concerns may arise (but are not limited to) where a student has or is suspected of having:

- physical and/or mental ill health concerns (including reasons relating to the (mis)use of alcohol or any other substance), emotional or inter-personal problems, which indicate a lack of insight and appropriate management thereof, and which give rise to concerns about possible risk to self or others. These may be existing or may change or develop while on the programme.
- failed to comply with PSRB and/or Professional Accrediting Body expectations in relation to professional suitability at any point in time
- failed to act within any statutory frameworks which set out students' professional duties and responsibilities
- breached standards of acceptable conduct including those set out in the University's Terms and Conditions (including associated regulations, policies and procedures) or by a relevant PSRB and/or Professional Accrediting Body, for example in connection with (but not limited to):
  - abuse or harassment, including through the use of social media
  - violent, aggressive or threatening behavior (physical, verbal or other)
  - sexual misconduct
  - failure to treat others with dignity or respect, or to practice in a nondiscriminatory way
  - dishonesty or untrustworthiness (such as the misrepresentation of qualifications or professional experience, or the forging of documents or signatures, or theft or making false expenses claims)
  - repeat or serious assessment offences
  - activities which constitute a criminal offence
  - the commission or suspected commission of a criminal offence
  - alcohol or substance abuse problems or addiction – anti-social behavior, including that which adversely affects the proper operation of placement/work-based settings
  - the failure to demonstrate an attitude, demeanour or communication appropriate for individuals working in the profession concerned
  - breach of confidentiality
  - lack of motivation or interest and/or failure to engage in learning activities
  - lack of engagement to address a lack of competence or poor decision making resulting in repeatedly not demonstrating practice competence
  - lack of communication and engagement with the programme team, including failure to respond

to communications

- inconsistent, unreliable or inappropriate behaviour in learning, study or placement/work-based learning settings where, due to the nature of the programme, the concerns bring the student's professional suitability into question because they give rise to a reasonable assessment that as a result:
  - a risk is posed to the student's own health, safety or wellbeing and/or that of others; and/or;
  - a risk is posed to patients' health, safety or wellbeing, whether human or animal; and/or;
  - the proper operation of the profession is or may be adversely affected; and/or;
  - a relevant placement or work-based setting is or may be adversely affected; and/or trust in the profession or the University may be undermined or the profession or University is brought into disrepute.

## Procedures

Please note that where a student decides to suspend their studies, withdraw from the programme, or is required to withdraw on academic (including competency) grounds, and there is an outstanding professional suitability concern, the professional suitability procedure will normally continue until completed so that a formal judgement can be reached, whether or not the student chooses to engage with the process.

Should a student without good cause be unwilling or unable to participate at any stage of this Procedure or attend a meeting/hearing, Hartpury University reserves the right to follow the Procedure in their absence. A student's unreasonable failure to engage with an investigation may in itself become a professional suitability issue.

In these principles and procedure reference is made to named University officers and such reference is to be read as including reference to any appointed nominee.

## Support for Students

When dealing with students under these principles and procedure, University staff will consider what support and guidance may be offered to students. In this respect, all students are treated equally regardless of their part in the process.

Any students involved are reminded that the Students' Union is available to give independent, non-judgmental and confidential advice.

Students are encouraged where appropriate to seek support from relevant external sources (e.g. GP or mental health services) as well as from sources internal to the University (e.g. ASC and Wellbeing).

Any student who has been requested to attend for a meeting and/or a hearing, may be accompanied by one 'Companion' who shall be a:

- fellow student
- Students' Union representative; or
- member of staff at the University

A 'Companion' may not be a:

- fellow student who has had prior involvement in the case or who is likely to be or has been

interviewed as part of either the preliminary investigation or any hearings held under Level 2 or 3 investigations.

- a family member, partner or representative from any other body, except in cases where a reasonable adjustment under the Equality Act is required

A student's Companion will not be permitted to answer questions on behalf of the student.

The name and status of the Companion should be notified to the designated administrator in advance of any meeting and/or panel and no later than three days before the date of any meeting or panel held as part of a Level 2 or 3 concern.

### **Support for non-students**

Any person who is not a student studying towards an award made by Hartpury University, who has been requested to attend a meeting and/or a hearing as part of an investigation, may be accompanied by one 'Colleague' as they believe necessary.

A 'Colleague' would normally be a workplace colleague or similar but must not have had any prior involvement in the case or who is likely to be or has been interviewed as part of either the preliminary investigation or any hearings held under Level 2 or 3 investigations.

A Colleague is support for a witness and may not answer any questions on behalf of the person or provide any input into the relevant meeting or hearing.

The name and status of the Colleague should be notified to the designated administrator in advance of any meeting or panel and no later than three days before the date of any meeting or panel held as part of a Level 2 or 3 concern.

Staff can seek guidance from the Academic Registry prior to invoking an investigation.

### **Deciding whether to investigate a reported concern**

Prior to any professional suitability investigation, Hartpury University will explore a reported concern as is reasonable and appropriate in the circumstances. The purpose of the exploration will be to inform Hartpury University of the nature of the professional suitability concern, establish whether the reported concern should be investigated, to enable the Head of Department or the Safeguarding and Wellbeing Manager to determine at which level it should be dealt with (if any), and to contribute to the investigation of the concern itself (if instigated). Any exploration will be carried out in a transparent and fair manner. A reported concern will be sent to [HUstudentacademicconcerns@hartpury.ac.uk](mailto:HUstudentacademicconcerns@hartpury.ac.uk) in case action is already being taken elsewhere.

8. Staff to whom disclosures are made or concerns are raised are encouraged to consult with their Head of Department (or nominee) or the Safeguarding and Wellbeing Manager (or nominee) to discuss next steps. Safeguarding concerns should be reported without delay to a member of the Hartpury Safeguarding team. If concerns regarding a student's health (mental and physical) are considered to be posing a risk to their own, safety or wellbeing, or that of others, the Safeguarding and Wellbeing Manager should be contacted for advice or emailed via [safeguarding@hartpury.ac.uk](mailto:safeguarding@hartpury.ac.uk).

9. The relevant Head of Department or the Safeguarding and Wellbeing Manager (or nominee) will consider the concern raised and whether it should be considered through this procedure and/ or another mechanism.
10. The standard of proof applied at every stage of this Procedure is the balance of probabilities.
11. Where the Head of Department or the Safeguarding and Wellbeing Manager decides the concern should be considered through this procedure, they will notify the designated administrator who will ensure all procedural matters are followed in line with this policy and appropriate records are recorded centrally. The Head of Department or Safeguarding and Wellbeing Manager will review and determine which level the concern is considered to be:
  - Level 1:** Initial, emerging or minor concerns
  - Level 2:** Serious and/or continuing concerns
  - Level 3:** Critical and/or persistent or cumulative concerns.

The procedure may be entered at any level without any requirement for an earlier level to have been commenced or exhausted, although it is anticipated that most situations can be managed by action taken at Levels 1 and/or 2.

12. At which Level the Procedure is implemented will depend on factors such as the nature of the professional suitability concern, the seriousness of any risk posed and the student's response to any steps taken so far by Hartpury University to manage the situation. In determining the level at which the concern would be implemented, where a specific policy exists then reference will be made to that policy to inform this decision.

The following table illustrates the levels at which concerns about professional suitability are usually considered. It is intended to be illustrative and not exhaustive.

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Usually defined as an incident or issue that is initial, emerging or minor and/or contained.	Usually defined as serious and/or continuing or repeated incidents, behaviour or issues.	Usually defined as critical and/or persistent or cumulative incidents, behaviour or issues.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anti-social behaviour</li> <li>• Breaching the rules relating to student accommodation</li> <li>• Failure to demonstrate an attitude, demeanour or communication appropriate for individuals working in the profession concerned</li> <li>• Lack of motivation or interest and/or failure to engage in learning activities</li> <li>• Lack of communication and engagement with the programme team, including failures to respond to communications</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Persistent or repeated Level 1 concerns</li> <li>• Impact on others from possession and/or use of illegal drugs</li> <li>• Impact on others from use of other substances including alcohol</li> <li>• Physical, written or verbal abuse or intimidation against another member of the university community, including via social media;</li> <li>• Disruption of or improper interference with the academic, administrative, sporting, social or other activities of the University or of a placement or</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alcohol or substance abuse problems or addiction</li> <li>• Dealing illegal drugs and/or possession of quantities of drugs beyond normally associated with personal use, and/or possession of paraphernalia used in dealing drugs</li> <li>• Serious physical, written or verbal abuse or intimidation against another member of the University community or of a placement or work-based learning provider, including via social media</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Behaviour which disrupts learning activities, study or placement/workbased learning settings</li> <li>• Incidents showing a lack of respect for other members of the University community and/or local community</li> <li>• Minor misuse of social media which impacts on the University community</li> <li>• Vexatious, defamatory or malicious claims about other members of the University community</li> <li>• Failure to respect the rights of others to freedom of speech within the law</li> <li>• Misuse and/or unauthorised use of University property</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>work-based learning provider</li> <li>• Bullying, harassment or discrimination against another person, including the use of discriminatory language;</li> <li>• Sexual harassment;</li> <li>• Damage to or theft of property from the University or members of the University community;</li> <li>• Acts which bring or threaten to bring the University's reputation into disrepute;</li> <li>• Persistent failure to comply with outcomes at Level 1</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sexual misconduct including serious sexual harassment</li> <li>• Physical violence</li> <li>• Failure to treat others with dignity or respect, or to practise in a nondiscriminatory way</li> <li>• Dishonesty or untrustworthiness (such as the forging of documents or signatures, or theft or making false expenses claims)</li> <li>• Activities which constitute a criminal offence</li> <li>• The commission or suspected commission of a criminal offence</li> <li>• Persistent failure to comply with sanctions under Level 2.</li> </ul>
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13. The Head of Department or the Safeguarding and Wellbeing Manager (or nominee) will assess whether the student poses a serious risk to:
- their own health, safety and/or wellbeing and/or that of others
  - the professional activities of a placement provider or other professional organisation or to a practice situation
  - the property of Hartpury University and/or others, and/or
  - the reputation of Hartpury University or a placement provider or other professional organisation, and/or its proper functioning and/or its activities
14. Where immediate action is reasonably required to remove or reduce risk, the Head of Department will make a recommendation to the Academic Dean or the Vice Principal Resources that a precautionary measure be taken. Any precautionary measure made is a neutral act and is not a determination regarding any of the concerns being investigated.
15. The Academic Dean or the Vice Principal Resources will consider the recommendation of a precautionary measure and may:
- iv. remove access to specific University facilities and/or resources
  - v. instigate a non-contact agreement
  - vi. suspend the student from their studies at their placement or work-based learning setting and/or related learning activities
  - vii. suspend the student from their studies; and/or
  - viii. exclude the student from Hartpury University premises, either particular areas or as a whole
- These temporary measures will be imposed for a specified period of time pending steps being taken under this Procedure and/or any third-party investigation/prosecution or other external proceedings.
16. The Head of Department will consider whether specific arrangements can reasonably be put in

place for the student in order to minimise the impact on their studies, and will liaise with the Programme Manager and colleagues to make these arrangements, as appropriate.

17. Where there are critical concerns about the risks posed by a student's health (physical and/or mental) or where a temporary suspension is being considered, the Safeguarding and Wellbeing Manager will normally get in touch with the "emergency contact" provided by the student at the point of enrolment. The student's consent for this action to be taken will be sought. Hartpury University reserves the right to make this contact if it deems the student's vital interests are at risk even if such consent is not given and/or the student is unable to give such consent.
18. The student will be notified in writing (e-mail to their Hartpury University e-mail account) of the decision to investigate the concern through this procedure and the level of the concern. They shall also be informed of any temporary neutral precautionary acts at this time, with reasons. This shall occur normally within 3 working days of the date of the decision.
19. The Head of Department, and Academic Dean or the Vice Principal Resources, will review at regular intervals whether it is reasonable for the precautionary measures to continue or whether it should be revoked or extended for a further specified period of time.

### **Investigating a Professional Suitability Concern**

Once it has been decided that a professional suitability concern should be investigated, and at what level, then an Investigating Officer will be appointed.

The Investigating Officer will determine the process to be followed for the investigation and will speak with the student concerned and with other students, staff and third parties where relevant (such as placement providers or health professionals). Any previous action taken under these Principles and Procedure is reviewed. Where concerns are initial or minor, an investigation meeting with the student may not be necessarily be held. In more complex cases, a professionals' meeting or case conference may be called in order to ascertain the nature of the concern and gather information. The student will be informed that an investigation is being carried out, the identity of the Investigating Officer, and will be invited to respond.

Students should be aware that the University may consider it appropriate to discuss and/or refer matters and/or their outcomes to third parties such as Professional Accrediting Bodies, Professional Advisory Bodies, placement providers and agencies such as Social Services, the Police or the Disclosure and Barring Service. The University will normally notify the student when doing so, but may do so on occasion without notification to the student such as in situations deemed to be of risk. Where such a third party or agency carries out any investigation or other process, the University may suspend or delay taking action under this procedure, although it is not obliged to do so. The University will not be bound by the outcome of any third party or agency investigation or other process.

### **Level 1 Investigations – Local Intervention**

Level 1 normally involves intervention by a Head of Department within a department, or their nominee, at an early stage when an incident occurs or an issue arises with the aim of addressing it as quickly, close to the source and as effectively as possible.

- 1.4 On receiving a report that a Level 1 concern has been received, the Head of Department investigates the matter and gathers any evidence, including from the reporting person and any witnesses if appropriate.
- 1.5 The Head of Department will write to the student (in an e-mail to their Hartpury University e-mail account) that there is a concern about their professional suitability and the nature of the concern and that the matter is to be dealt with under Level 1. The student will be provided with a copy of this Procedure. The student will be invited to a meeting to discuss the concern and any support needs the student may have. The student is given advanced notice of the date and time of the meeting (usually at least 5 days) so that they can take advice/seek support before the meeting. They will be informed who will be present at the meeting.
- 1.6 Following the meeting, the Head of Department will determine whether the concern is justified or allegation is founded and, if so, whether the student's professional suitability is or may become compromised and any actions to be taken. Such actions may include (but are not limited to) one or more of the following outcomes:
  - no further action to be taken
  - issue a verbal or written warning
  - support arrangements and/or reasonable adjustments to be put in place for the student
  - draw up an action plan including, for instance requirements to meet established levels of attendance and engagement or to follow established procedures
  - seizure and retention for a period of time or permanent confiscation, without compensation, of items, for the purpose of maintaining the safety and wellbeing of others
  - removal of access to a service and/or specified facilities provided by the University for a given period of no longer than one week
  - the matter to be referred to another Level of this Procedure
  - the matter referred for consideration under another Hartpury University process
- 1.7 Within 8 working days of the date of their decision the Head of Department will normally notify the student in writing (email to their Hartpury University email account if exists) of the decision, the reasons for that decision and any actions to be taken.

### **Appealing a neutral measure or Level 1 investigation decision and outcomes**

A student may raise a written appeal against a neutral precautionary measure imposed, or against the decision and/or outcomes of Level 1 of the Procedure, by writing to [HUstudentacademicconcerns@hartpury.ac.uk](mailto:HUstudentacademicconcerns@hartpury.ac.uk) within 10 working days of the date of the decision letter, on one or more of the following grounds:

- the Procedure has not been followed adequately;
- the decision is unreasonable and/or a disproportionate sanction has been imposed;
- there is material new information/evidence which was not reasonably available before.

A decision will take effect and remain in force until such time as it may be changed by the outcome of an appeal.

1. The appeal request will be considered and whether there are valid grounds to appeal will be determined.
2. Where valid grounds are determined, the student will be notified in writing that the appeal will be investigated. If valid grounds are not determined then the student will be notified in writing.
3. The appeal will be investigated by an independent senior manager, and a decision will be made either to uphold the original decision, to refer the matter back to the Head of Department for further consideration, or to impose an alternative sanction.
4. The outcome of the appeal is notified to the student in writing together with reasons, within seven working days of an outcome being determined. This decision is final and concludes this



Procedure.

5. A 'Completion of Procedures' letter is issued to the student. Further information on procedures for external and independent review can be obtained from the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education website.

### **Level 2 and 3 Investigations**

- 2.4 On receiving a report that a Level 2 or 3 concern has been received, the Head of Department or their nominee, meets with the Investigating Officer and reviews any evidence, including from the reporting person and any witnesses if appropriate. The Safeguarding and Wellbeing Manager (or nominee) may be in attendance if required. It will be decided at this point, whether the Investigating Officer should report to the Head of Department and/or the Safeguarding and Wellbeing Manager at future stages of this Level 2 investigation.
- 2.5 The student is informed that an investigation is being carried out into a Level 2 or 3 concern, the identity of the Investigating Officer, the nature of the concern raised, and has a right to respond. Care is to be taken to avoid placing the student in a position whereby they incriminate themselves unfairly.
- 2.6 The Investigating Officer gathers further evidence as appropriate, including from any individuals felt to potentially offer relevant information about a concern and from those raising a concern or reporting an incident, as required. The officer speaks to the student to hear their response to the concerns and to gather evidence.
- 2.7 The Investigating Officer informs the individual reporting a concern/incident of the procedure that will be followed, that their identity and that of any witnesses cannot normally be withheld from the student, and how their statement and any evidence will be used and shared. Within the confines of data protection rules and the confidentiality of proceedings, they may be kept informed of progress.
- 2.8 The Investigating Officer provides a report and any evidence, including the student's statement and setting out the professional suitability concerns to the Head of Department, or the Safeguarding and Wellbeing Manager, or nominee, with a recommendation as to whether the matter is to be taken forward and if so, whether it is still appropriate to be considered at Level 2 or at Level 3.
- 2.9 The Head of Department or Safeguarding and Wellbeing Manager (or nominee) considers the report, evidence and recommendations and determines how the matter is to be progressed, and at which level. They notify HUstudentacademicconcerns@hartpury.ac.uk.
- 2.10 If the concern is to be taken forward at Level 2 then a Professional Suitability Meeting will be held. If the concern is to be taken forward at Level 3 then a Professional Suitability Hearing will be held.

### **Level 2: Professional Suitability Meeting**

- 2.11 Following determination that the concern is to be progressed at Level 2 the student will be invited to a Professional Suitability Meeting with the Head of Department and at least one other member of staff, to discuss the concern and any support needs the student may have. The student will be given full opportunity to respond, either before (in writing) and/or at the meeting, to the concern.
- 2.12 The Head of Department may invite other staff members involved to attend the meeting, including the Safeguarding and Wellbeing Manager, and may consult with and seek information from other persons in order to deal with this matter and to provide support to the student.

Records of previous meetings under this Procedure and any action plans may be available at the meeting.

- 2.13 The student will normally be given at least 5 working days' notice of the meeting and will be provided in advance of the meeting with the relevant documentation supporting the concern and reminded of the right to be accompanied by one Companion.
- 2.14 Following the meeting, the Head of Department (or nominee) will determine:
- whether the concerns are justified and/or any allegations about the student's conduct are founded; and, if so
  - whether the student's professional suitability is compromised or may become compromised and any actions to be taken.
- 2.15 Such actions may include (but are not limited to) one or more of the following:
- No further action to be taken
  - The matter be referred to another Level or for consideration under another University process
  - Any outcome at Level 1
  - Temporary withdrawal from placement, other work-based setting or related learning activity
  - Reparation to the University or individual in respect of loss caused
  - Referral to the Police or other external authority
  - A financial penalty (up to £500)
  - Restorative justice

### **Level 3: Professional Suitability Hearing**

- 3.7 A Level 3 concern will be dealt with by a Professional Suitability Panel at a Professional Suitability Hearing.
- 3.8 A Professional Suitability Panel will be convened by the Academic Registrar and will normally consist of four members:
- one member of Hartpury University Executive, Academic Dean, Academic Registrar, or Director of HR and Residential Services or Head of Department (not from the student's department) or the Safeguarding and Wellbeing Manager (who will act as Chair)
  - one member of academic staff from the Department in which the student is based
  - one independent member of academic staff from another Department within the University or a senior member from a professional services department if particular expertise is required; and
  - one member of the relevant profession and external to Hartpury University
- Relevant external professionals (for example psychiatrists, GPs, mental health workers, probation officers) may also be invited to attend.
- Consideration is given to the balance of the Panel in terms of knowledge, experience and representation and to reflect the responding and reporting students in the particular case. All Panel members will be impartial and will have not normally have had prior involvement in the case.
- 3.9 A member of staff will act as Secretary to the Panel. They will organise and act as a note-taker at the Hearing and will provide guidance on procedure. The Secretary acts as neutral observer at the Hearing. The Secretary ensures that information is shared as appropriate with the parties.
- 3.10 The Investigating Officer normally presents the University's case at the Hearing unless the Head of Department or the Safeguarding and Wellbeing Manager (or their nominee) decides to do so (Case Presenter).

- 3.11 Once the date of the Hearing has been arranged, the student will normally be given at least 10 working days' notice of Professional Suitability Hearing. The student will normally be given in writing:
- notice of the date, time and place of the hearing
  - details of the concern
  - the identity of the Panel members
  - a copy of the investigation report
  - a reminder of the right to be accompanied by a Companion.
- 3.12 The Secretary arranges for the information collected during the investigation that is to be considered by the Panel, including but not limited to, the investigation report and written statements, to be provided to the Panel members and the student at least 7 working days prior to the hearing.
- 3.13 The main events of the hearing (and any subsequent meeting held to review progress and/or provide additional support) will be formally recorded (in writing) with one copy sent to the student, one copy retained, one sent to the Case Presenter, Head of Department or the Safeguarding and Wellbeing Manager and one to any relevant third parties.
- 3.14 The student may submit to the Secretary, at least four working days in advance of the hearing date, a written statement and evidence in response to the concern. The Secretary will arrange for this to be provided to the Panel.
- 3.15 Notice of any witnesses to be called by the student and/or Hartpury University's Case Presenter at the Hearing must be given in writing to the at least 3 working days in advance of the date of the hearing, together with a written statement of the contribution that each witness will make. The Secretary will inform each party of the other party's witness notice. It is their responsibility of each party to ensure that their witnesses are available to attend on the arranged date.
- 3.16 If a student chooses, without good reason, not to attend a Hearing and/or not to present a response to the allegations for consideration by the Panel, the Panel may decide to continue with the hearing and to reach a finding in their absence.
- 3.11 Whilst the order and procedure to be followed at the Hearing will be at the discretion of the Chair and will comply with the principles of natural justice, the following will normally occur:
- xii. The Case Presenter outlining the concerns/matters investigated, the professional suitability concerns raised and the evidence in support.
  - xiii. The student presenting their response to the concerns.
  - xiv. The Case Presenter may call witnesses to provide evidence, and for them to be questioned by the Panel.
  - xv. The student may call witnesses to provide evidence, and for them to be questioned by the Panel.
  - xvi. The Case Presenter will sum up.
  - xvii. The student may reply.
  - xviii. The Panel members may question the student, the Case Presenter and any witness at any time during the Hearing and may recall the parties or witnesses at any time.
  - xix. The Chair may adjourn or postpone the hearing where it is reasonable to do so.  
The Panel may ask for specific enquiries to be undertaken, additional witnesses to be called and/or additional information to be presented. This includes where the student, without good reason, has not attended.
- 3.10 After the case has been heard the Panel will retire in private to deliberate. The Secretary may retire with the Panel in order to provide procedural advice but will play no part in the Panel's decision-making. Matters will be determined by the Professional Suitability Panel on the balance

of probabilities and by way of a simple majority. If a decision is not achieved, the Chair will have the casting vote.

- 3.11 Where possible the Panel will inform the student and Case Presenter of the outcome, verbally, at the Hearing. However, if this is not possible, they will be informed of this fact and notified of the outcome as soon as possible.
- 3.12 The Professional Suitability Panel determines:
- Whether, on the balance of probability, the concerns are justified and/or any allegations about the student's conduct are founded and, if so
  - whether or not the student's professional suitability is compromised, or may become compromised and any actions to be taken.
- 3.13 Such actions include (but are not limited to) one or more of the following outcomes:
- no action to be taken
  - the matter be downgraded to a lower Level (although where possible the matter shall be resolved at this point)
  - any sanction at Level 1 and/or 2
  - removal (temporarily or permanently) from placement or other work-based activity or related learning activity
  - requirement to withdraw from a module
  - suspension of studies for a given period of time
  - transfer to a non-professional programme
  - recommendation of suspension from the University for a given period of time
  - recommendation of exclusion from the University, and/or parts of the campus/Hartpury University residence, for a given period of time
  - recommendation that a professional award is withheld or withdrawn, or an alternative non-professional award made
  - requirement to withdraw from their programme
  - recommendation of expulsion from Hartpury University
  - not permitted readmission to a professional programme at Hartpury University in the future
- 3.14 A Panel may, in cases where they have found that a student had breached the required standards and/or their professional suitability for the programme of study is compromised, at their discretion decide that the relevant professional body and/or the DBS is notified of the professional suitability concern raised against the student, the associated circumstances, and the decision and outcome of the Level 3 proceedings. Such a notification will not usually be made until any internal procedures are completed.

### **Notification of the decision and outcomes of Level 2 and 3 investigations**

1. Within 8 working days of the date of the decision the student will normally be notified in writing (e-mail to their Hartpury University e-mail account) of the decision, the reasons for that decision and any actions to be taken.
2. Where the outcome includes drawing up of an action plan, the plan will set out how the matter will be managed and any requirements to be placed in the student. The action plan will state the implications should the student fail to comply with any requirements placed upon them (e.g. the matter may be referred to be dealt with at a higher Level of the Procedure). The student will be provided with a copy of the action plan. The plan will state the date(s) that it shall be reviewed by an appropriate member of staff at a review meeting(s) who will consider whether any requirements have been complied with. The student will be invited to the review meeting and the outcomes of the review meeting notified to the student in writing (e-mail to

their Hartpury University e-mail account).

3. Following a Professional Suitability Hearing a copy of the record of the meeting will also be provided to the student. If the decision is to exclude, suspend or expel the student, the student is informed of any conditions associated with eligibility to return. In all cases the most appropriate and supportive manner for the outcome to be communicated to the student is considered in advance of notification to the student. If the student was not informed of the outcome at the Hearing, wherever possible, the written notification detailing the decision is given to the student in person.
4. Other parties will be notified, where appropriate, and others as necessary and appropriate of the outcome or parts of the outcome once the student has been informed formally.
5. A copy of the decision letter and any associated documentation will be retained and a copy within the student's file.
6. A brief report of the incident and action is provided to [HUstudentacademicconcerns@hartpury.ac.uk](mailto:HUstudentacademicconcerns@hartpury.ac.uk) so that a record of the case is kept centrally.
7. The University will notify external organisations of the investigation and/or the outcome where the Panel has decided it should do so, for instance to the relevant Professional Accrediting Body(s) or the DBS, or where it has an obligation to do so, such as Student Finance England.

### **Appealing a decision and outcomes of Level 2 and 3 investigations**

A student may raise a written appeal to [HUstudentacademicconcerns@hartpury.ac.uk](mailto:HUstudentacademicconcerns@hartpury.ac.uk) against the decision and/or outcome of Levels 2 and 3 of this Procedure, within 10 working days of the date of the decision letter, on one or more of the following grounds:

- the University has failed to follow its own Procedure adequately;
- the decision is unreasonable and/or a disproportionate sanction has been imposed;
- there is material new information/evidence which was not reasonably available before.

A decision and outcomes will take effect and remain in force until such time as it may be changed by the outcome of an appeal.

1. The appeal submission will be considered and whether there are valid grounds to appeal will be considered.
2. Where valid grounds are determined, the appeal will progress to the Vice-Chancellor, or nominee, for consideration. Should the Vice-Chancellor have been involved in the procedures at an earlier stage, the appeal will be considered by a member of the Board of Governors.
3. The Vice-Chancellor considers the evidence provided and determines the outcome of an appeal to be one of the following decisions:
  - Dismiss the appeal; or
  - Uphold the appeal and refer the matter back to an earlier level of the Procedure for reconsideration, e.g. if the correct process has not been followed, or if material new information or evidence has been made available
  - Impose an alternative sanction or action.
4. The outcome of the appeal is notified to the student in writing together with reasons, within seven working days of an outcome being determined. This decision is final and concludes this Procedure.
5. A 'Completion of Procedures' letter is issued to the student. Further information on procedures for external and independent review can be obtained from the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education website.

## **Complaints related to a Professional Suitability investigation**

Where a student has a concern related to the administration of these Principles and Procedures, they should raise it with [HUstudentacademicconcerns@hartpury.ac.uk](mailto:HUstudentacademicconcerns@hartpury.ac.uk) at the earliest opportunity, so that wherever possible the University can take quick action. Should it not be possible to resolve the concern, students may submit a formal complaint under the University Complaints Policy on the website <https://www.hartpury.ac.uk/about-us/governance-and-policies/policies-regulation-and-information/>.

Once a case has been completed the student should raise any matter about the application of the Procedures under the Appeals process described for the relevant Level investigation.

## **Return to study**

A request to return to study, following either voluntary or imposed suspension of studies or exclusion, must be made in writing to [HUstudentacademicconcerns@hartpury.ac.uk](mailto:HUstudentacademicconcerns@hartpury.ac.uk), by the student.

The process by which the outcome of a return to study request is determined may vary according to the circumstances of the matter and the interests of fairness and is at the discretion of the Head of Department or designated lead. In each case, a return to study by a student is dependent upon the student satisfying the Head of Department (or nominee) that they are in a position to return to study safely, has insight into the professional suitability concerns raised previously and that they have complied with any conditions placed upon their return.

If the return to study on a professionally recognised programme at Hartpury University was explicitly forbidden as an outcome from a previous professional suitability investigation, then a request to return to a professional programme will be denied.

Normally the student is invited to meet with the Head of Department. The Head of Department may require the student to produce satisfactory medical and/or other evidence to support the request to return (for example, evidence of engagement with support, a psychiatrist's report or GP's letter) from recognized professionals preferably with sufficient knowledge of the student, the demands of higher education, and the student's intended programme of study in order to give an informed opinion. The student may be asked to provide such evidence before a decision is made whether to arrange a meeting.

The Head of Department will determine whether to permit the student to return to study. In reaching their decision, they may consult with relevant University staff and/or external professionals. They may decide that the concern remains and may impose conditions upon any return to study (for example relating to the student's conduct, any support the student should seek and/or their academic progress). The Head of Department considers any support and/or reasonable adjustments

which should be put in place for the student in connection with their return to study and is responsible for ensuring that any support and reasonable adjustments identified are provided/made. The University works collaboratively with the student in respect of any support arrangements put in place for a return to study. Before or on their return, the student is invited to attend a meeting (or be in contact by other means) with appropriate members of academic staff and/or support services. An action plan may be drawn up to support the student's successful transition back to study. The action plan will detail any conditions imposed and any support identified by the Head of Department in respect of the student's return. The action plan will include a timetable for any review. If conditions are attached, failure to comply may lead to action under the Professional Suitability Procedure.

The Head of Department will notify the student in writing of their decision, with reasons, within a reasonable time of the student's written request to return to study. If the request is turned down the letter will include information on the process of reapplication for a return to study, if available. If the request is accepted, the letter will include information on any conditions and the action plan (if applicable).

The student may appeal the decision within 10 working days of the date of the written notification of the decision, using the Academic Appeals Principles and Procedures, on one or more of the following grounds:

- The University has failed to follow the procedure set out in this Procedure
- The decision was unreasonable and/or disproportionate
- Material new information/evidence is available which was not reasonably available before.

## References

Hartpury University regularly provides student related references to third parties (such as educational institutions and potential employers).

When providing a reference in a professional context (for example, in connection with potential employment in a profession or admission on to a professional programme of study at another institution) for a student who has been subject to the Procedure at Level 3 and the concern/allegation is found to be justified, Hartpury University will refer to the professional suitability concern raised against the student, the associated circumstances, and the decision and outcome of the Level 3 proceedings on the basis of there being legitimate and serious concerns about possible risks. Students are actively encouraged to contact the organization concerned and discuss full details of the case.

Hartpury University will not normally refer to issues arising in connection with professional suitability proceedings under Levels 1 and 2 when providing references, but reserves the right to do so when it considers it appropriate (for example, in a matter involving issues of safeguarding and/or client/animal/service user safety).

# Appendix. Reasonable Adjustments to Assessment Arrangements

## Principles

Hartpury values the diversity of its student population and is committed to creating and sustaining a first-rate and positive learning experience for all. The adoption of inclusive teaching, learning, and assessment methods does not negate the need to consider reasonable adjustments and alternative assessment methods for individual students. Hartpury will consider reasonable requests for adjustments or alternative assessments to reduce the effect of a difficulty or disability that places any student at a substantial disadvantage to other students.

Hartpury applies the following principles in considering reasonable adjustments to assessment arrangements (including alternative assessments):

- We ensure that equality and diversity is embedded in everything we do. Students will not be unreasonably prevented from applying for, registering upon, or successfully completing a programme of study.
- Reasonable adjustments must not undermine confidence in the academic standards of programme or modules, as demonstrated in the learning or programme outcomes.
- Reasonable adjustments for individuals must not disproportionately disadvantage the applicant or other students, or provide undue academic advantage to the applicant or other students.

### Reasonable Adjustment Definition

An adjustment to the published assessment brief but with no substantial change to assessment type (e.g. oral presentation, written examination, essay, etc.). The student has shown a significant difficulty in accessing a specific element(s) of the format as stipulated in the module leader's existing assessment design. An amended brief may be required to provide instructions on any format changes.

### Alternative Assessment Definition

An adjustment resulting in an alteration to the assessment type (e.g. oral presentation, written examination, essay, etc.); as published in the module descriptor. The student has shown a significant difficulty in accessing the specific assessment type and must have a new assessment brief, for a different assessment type, written to meet the modules learning outcomes.

From here onward within this appendix, where the term 'adjustment' or 'reasonable adjustment' appears it is inclusive of both 'reasonable adjustments' and 'alternative assessments' as defined above.

## Scope of circumstances considered

The circumstance must be having a substantial impact on a student's capacity to study and/or take assessments in the usual way, and are typically known to the student prior to or near the start of the module. A reasonable adjustment or alternative assessment assumes the student can attend the assessment and thus is not normally appropriate where the student states they are unable or not intending to attend. Reasonable adjustments and alternative assessments are normally provided for students with



- a disability,
- severe short-term illness,
- serious acute injury,
- specific learning difference (including dyslexia),
- mental health condition or chronic medical conditions,
- pregnancy,
- maternity or paternity, or
- faith obligations.

In exceptional cases applications for reasonable adjustment may be considered for circumstances that fall within scope of the Appendix: Extenuating Circumstances but are not listed above. The circumstance must clearly prevent access to the assessment format and where no other access options are available.

Circumstances outside the scope of the reasonable adjustment process are the same as those considered outside the scope of Extenuating Circumstances (see Appendix: Extenuating Circumstances).

### **Substantive Impact Definition**

Substantive impact exceeds the discomfort experienced with having preferences for assessment type or assessment anxiety. Students are expected to evidence substantive impact or inability to access assessment types through third party evidence.

### **Evidencing Substantial Impact**

The student is responsible for obtaining and providing evidence to support a request for reasonable adjustments or alternative assessments; including certification as appropriate and bearing any costs involved. Evidence must be third party and relate to the cited circumstances, be in English (translated where required), and include the relevant name and date(s). Where no evidence is provided or provided too late for adjustments to be considered, requests will not be approved.

Adjustments will not be applied retrospectively and a student should consult the Extenuating Circumstances Procedure.

## **Range of adjustments considered**

Reasonable adjustments and alternative assessments must maintain the validity and/or reliability of assessment outcomes for determining competencies and threshold standard of students.

Adjustments include but are not limited to;

- changing usual assessment arrangements, including location of assessment and submission deadlines,
- changing assessment types
- adapting assessment materials,
- providing assistance during an assessment,
- re-organising the assessment's physical environment,
- using assistive technology.

When considering assessment adjustments, advice will be sought from those professional staff with responsibility for the support of disabled students as required i.e. HE Learning Support in the Achievement and Success Centre.

### **Adjustments and Competence Standards**

In relation to assessment there is no duty to make any adjustment to the application of a 'competence standard', but the duty does apply to *the process* by which competence is assessed. Competence standards are defined as an academic, or other, standard applied for the purpose of determining whether or not a person has a particular level of competence or ability. Hartpury will consider applications for reasonable adjustments relating to assessments of competence. Adjustments will not be made which, by their nature, do not allow the student to demonstrate they have met the module learning outcomes.

### **Student Adjustment Requests**

Hartpury will make every effort to accommodate students' needs if adequate notice is given. However, Hartpury cannot permit students to dictate the precise form of modification to be adopted. Adjustments to assessments will be designed to ensure the student can demonstrate they have met the module learning outcomes.

### **Individuality of Adjustments**

Agreed adjustments are individual to the

- applicant's circumstances,
- module learning outcomes,
- the existing assessment brief,
- resource availability,
- the students' programme of study,
- available time frame for implementing the adjustments and;
- assessment of the time frame required for the students' preparation and submission.

Differences in adjustments may vary between programmes of study as a result of their differing requirements, particularly in relation to those recognized or accredited by a Professional Accrediting Body (PAB).

## **Process for considering requested adjustments to assessment arrangements**

The process for considering adjustments to assessment arrangements consists of 4 stages. Principles and expected actions of each stage of the process are outlined. Reasonable Adjustments must be approved through this Reasonable Adjustments Process. No alternative arrangements can be made unilaterally by a Module Leader, or Academic Tutor.

### **Stage 1. Pre-Application - Determining an Adjustment Need**

In the first instance students are expected to raise an issue with the Institution, typically via an academic and/or learning support staff. Typically, a student with a disability or diagnosed specific learning difference will declare this to the Institution during the admission process or as soon as they receive a diagnosis. Alternatively, any student can raise a concern accessing an assessment with their module leader as soon as they've identified the concern.

- As part of the inclusive teaching practice, students have access to the assessment brief from the start of any module and are expected to raise an access concern at this time.
- Staff are expected to consider if the student's access concern can be addressed within the existing published assessment design, usually via consultation between the student and module leader.

In the event the access cannot be facilitated within the existing published assessment design, a reasonable adjustment or alternative assessment application should be made as soon as possible.

## **Stage 2. Making an Application**

Applications should be made by students and identify where their access needs exceed the existing inclusive teaching practice. Third party applications will not be accepted except in very exceptional circumstances, where it can be evidenced why the student is unable to apply independently. However, students are encouraged to use the support network of academic personal tutors, module leaders, and learning support when preparing their application.

### **Submitting the Application**

- i. Students wishing to be considered for alternative assessment arrangements must apply in writing (usually a written email) via the Student Advisors.
- ii. The application should be made by week 6 of the semester, or 4 weeks prior to the assessment date; whichever falls soonest.
- iii. Adjustments to an assessment may not be possible if the application and submission of evidence misses the deadline.

## Application Content

The application must:

- a. explain why the adjustment is required,
- b. the assessments that require adjustment,
- c. what the access challenges of the current assessments are,
- d. reasoned proposals for adjustments or alternatives
- e. the nature of the circumstance or condition,
- f. the likely impact (and time period of this impact) on the student, and
- g. include any third party evidence available to them. Where evidence is not available to the student then the application should clearly state this and explain the challenges in obtaining evidence for the student.
  - Evidence already held by the Institution can be used, but should be resubmitted wherever possible.
  - Evidence should support the nature of the circumstances or condition and the likely impact (and time period of this impact) on the student.
  - When the student has been working with a University department or member of staff connected to the reason behind the application then the student should clearly state this and provide contact details for the department or staff member whenever possible.

Applications that do not contain the above information will normally not be considered.

### Stage 3. Receipt and Review

An acknowledgement of the application shall be sent to the student within two working days of receipt to the student's institutional e-mail address. If a student does not receive an acknowledgement they should verify that the Student Advisors have received the application.

Applications will be reviewed for scope, completeness, and on-time receipt.

- Outside Scope - Where the application is outside scope, it cannot be processed further and will not proceed to Stage 4.
- Completeness - Where applications are incomplete, additional evidence and information will be sought prior to convening a panel (Stage 4). Evidence must be provided with sufficient time to implement any adjustment, if approved by the panel.
- On-Time - Where applications are late, or made complete too late rendering implementation of an any adjustment unreasonable, the application will not continue to Stage 4. The student should consult Appendix: Extenuating Circumstances.

### Stage 4. Processing and Outcome

An Assessment Adjustments Panel will be convened to consider the application and the evidence submitted (in person or technology assisted). The meeting will include a member of Higher Education Executive with signatory authority (Chair), the HE Process Advisor (or nominee), the relevant Module Leader (or nominee) and a member of Learning Support.

The Assessment Adjustments Panel will:

- a. decide whether there is reasonable evidence that proposed adjustments are required,
- b. determine whether proposed adjustments are reasonable
- c. assess how adjustments enable the student to demonstrate the module's learning outcomes and any associated competence standards
- d. Make one of the following decisions:
  - Reject the application,
  - Approve the proposed adjustments in full,
  - Approve the proposed adjustments in part,
  - Propose different adjustments, or
  - request more information in order to consider the application further.

Where the proposed adjustment is approved in part or different adjustments are proposed, the panel will nominate a member to speak (in person or technology assisted) with the student to discuss the outcome of the panel.

If the student does not accept the revised proposals then the student will be able to submit an additional statement and/or evidence.

- i. The nominated panel member will re-convene the Assessment Adjustments Panel to review and finalise an outcome decision.
- ii. The outcome shall subsequently be confirmed in writing to the student, and the module leader via the institutional e-mail address.
- iii. Any associated assessment documentation shall be modified and/or produced and published to the student by the module leader; Registry will have oversight for quality assurance and adherence to the regulations.
- iv. A student has the right to appeal this decision following the Appeals Procedure.

## **Taking onsite assessments requiring prescribed conditions off campus**

A student enquiring about taking an assessment under controlled conditions off campus should be aware that the location off campus is subject to approval by Hartpury. A student seeking permission to take an assessment under controlled conditions off campus must apply in writing to the Student Advisor supported by relevant documentary evidence as early as possible and before the published assessment submission deadline.

Permission to take an assessment off campus will usually be granted only where the assessment:

- a. is for students participating in an academic exchange, and can be arranged at one of the other institutions participating in the exchange;
- b. is for students involved in national or international elite / high performance sporting / or other activities at that level, or a unique career enhancing opportunity approved by Hartpury and where the assessment may be invigilated by responsible approved individuals (e.g. staff from the national governing body of the sport);
- c. is for students on an approved period of work placement or similar programme-related activity e.g. presentation of research at an international conference, either in the UK or abroad, contributing towards the achievement of their award, to Hartpury's strategic mission or to the development of the student experience; or;
- d. is on a date a student is away from Great Britain and the student's permanent home address is

outside Great Britain.

A student other than those covered by these will not normally be permitted to take an assessment under controlled conditions off campus, unless they demonstrate very exceptional circumstances.

A student granted permission to take an assessment under controlled conditions off campus, except if this was part of a reasonable adjustment in response to illness or disability, will be charged a fee. The fee covers courier postage of examination papers and stationery, liaison with the examination centre off campus, and the administrative costs including preparing examination packs. It does not cover any other costs such as the organisation of the venue, fees charged by the venue or invigilators. Where any additional costs are incurred by Hartpury, these will also be charged to the student. The student will be invoiced for the fee and must pay any additional costs associated with the invigilation or organisation of the examination or assessment. A student who does not pay the fee and/or any additional expenses will be treated as a debtor.

### **Consideration of a request**

The application will be assessed to review whether it is within the scope of circumstances considered and if secure arrangements can be made in time. At this point a request may be rejected. However, if the request is accepted, contact will be made with the British Council Office or other institution to establish whether the exam sitting can be facilitated. This will determine whether the exam can be taken overseas. The student will then be informed of the decision in writing to their institutional e-mail address..

If a request is rejected or it is not possible to facilitate the examination off campus, the student will be expected to return to Hartpury to sit it.

If a request is accepted, students must be aware of the following:

- taking account of time zone differences, the assessment shall normally be synchronized with the scheduled time of the assessment so as to prevent any possibility of communication between candidates at different centres. Students should be aware this could mean that the examination may take place at an unsociable hour;
- in order to ensure security, a student taking an assessment under controlled conditions off campus will not be permitted to retain the question paper at the end of the assessment;

# Document Approval and Review Cycle

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<b>Next review date</b>	None scheduled

## Change Log to the 2024-25 regulations

<b>Version post change</b>	<b>Description of Change</b>