

### III. Undergraduate Examination Conventions

*These conventions apply to all students registered on Undergraduate programmes in academic year 2017/18.*

*Variations to these conventions, non-standard stage weightings and exceptions to the Qualifications and Credit Framework can only be agreed by University Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Committee (ULTSEC), except where the power is explicitly vested in the relevant Faculty Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Committee (FLTSEC) or Degree Programme Director (DPD) in the conventions themselves.*

#### A. Introduction

1. These conventions shall be understood alongside the definitions of terms in the *Undergraduate Progress Regulations*, and in conjunction with requirements laid down in the General Regulations of the University, and shall be read together with any examination conventions specific to the relevant degree programme, as approved by the relevant faculty learning, teaching and student experience committee.

**Note:**

#### ***Integrated Masters***

*Integrated Masters Examination Conventions are provided separately in Section VII. Note however, that the pass mark for level 7 modules is 50, which may affect Undergraduate students.*

#### ***Level 7 Modules***

*The pass mark for level 7 modules is 50. For the sake of clarification, this represents a higher standard of work than the undergraduate (levels 4-6) pass mark of 40. This rule applies to level 7 modules taken as part of an Undergraduate Degree.*

#### B. The Board of Examiners

2. A board of examiners shall be appointed for each award-bearing programme. A board of examiners may be responsible for a number of programmes. Membership of a board of examiners shall include the relevant degree programme directors, named representatives of the main areas of study involved in the programme and the appointed external examiners. The Board of Examiners for those BA and BSc Joint and Combined degrees specified by the university learning, teaching and student experience committee (ULTSEC) shall include an external assessor who is required to report to the University on the reliability and integrity of the processes used in the award of these degrees.

3. The membership of each board of examiners shall be agreed by the relevant board of studies and names of the chair and secretary reported to the

appropriate faculty learning, teaching and student experience committee and to the examinations office.

4. The relevant degree programme directors and named representatives of the main areas of study involved in the programme shall be present at meetings of the board of examiners. The appointed external examiners shall normally be present at meetings of the board at which qualifications are awarded.

5. Where it is necessary to call an additional or reconvened meeting of the board of examiners, the external examiners shall be notified and, if they are unable to attend, shall be given the opportunity to make known in writing their views on the cases to be discussed.

### **Chair of the Board**

6. The chair of the board of examiners shall be appointed by the head of school and this appointment reported to faculty learning, teaching and student experience committee. The chair is responsible for conducting all meetings of the board, and for ensuring that all decisions are taken by the board in the full knowledge of all the performances for each student. In appropriate cases, the board may delegate to the chair the right to consider and make decisions. In so doing, the chair should consult as many members of the board as possible (including the external examiners). Action taken by the chair must be reported to the next scheduled meeting of the board. The chair shall exercise discretion only in a manner consistent with the normal practices and any additional agreed principles of the board. All agreed mark sheets, confirming decisions taken by the board, shall be signed by the chair.

### **Secretary**

7. The board of studies shall appoint a secretary who shall be responsible for ensuring that all members of the board of examiners, including the external examiners, are informed of meetings. The secretary shall also be responsible for keeping a record of all decisions reached by the board. In all cases of the exercise of discretion, the reason for the decision shall be recorded.

### **External Examiners and External Assessors**

*Note: Conventions 8-11 also apply to external assessors (see Convention 12).*

8. Procedures for appointing external examiners are set out in the *Policy and Procedures for External Examiners of Taught Programmes* at <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/ltds/assets/documents/qsh-extexam-policy.pdf>. The policy is the definitive source on matters relating to external examining and in the event of any conflict between the policy and these regulations, the Policy would prevail. The duties of external examiners are set out in the policy.

9. The external examiner shall be a member of the relevant board of examiners and have the right to attend any meetings of the board. Normally no decision on the recommendation of an award may be made by a board of examiners unless there is an external examiner present. If, exceptionally, any

external examiners cannot be present, they shall be given the opportunity to make their views known to the board.

10. External examiners have the right to speak on any matter at the meeting of the board of examiners, regardless of whether their opinion has been specifically invited. The board of examiners shall take into account, but need not defer to, the views of external examiners in taking decisions.

11. Final classification lists shall be signed by the chair and the external examiners and these lists be retained within the academic unit. Where an external examiner is unable to be present, s/he should be asked by e-mail to confirm the decisions made by the board. The minutes of the meeting should confirm whether the external examiners have endorsed the decisions made by the board.

12. The assessment of the work of students on BA Combined Honours and those Joint Honours programmes specified by ULTSEC is subject to the normal examination processes and scrutiny by external examiners in the relevant subjects. An external assessor shall be appointed by the relevant faculty learning teaching and student experience committee, in line with the criteria laid down for external examiners. The external assessor will not scrutinise the work of students, but is required to report to the University on the reliability and integrity of the processes used in awarding these degrees.

### **Personal Extenuating Circumstances (PEC) Committee**

13. A Personal Extenuating Circumstances (PEC) Committee shall be appointed by each board of studies to review and consider medical and mitigating circumstances which may have an effect on a student's performance. This committee shall normally consist of a chair, secretary and two other senior members of academic staff, one of whom should be selected from outside of the academic unit. The chair should be a senior member of academic staff with experience of sitting on a board of examiners. If the secretary is not a member of academic staff then a fourth senior member of academic staff must be appointed to the committee. The chair of the PEC Committee shall report the committee's recommendations, including a summary of action taken throughout the year by the PEC Committee, members and delegated staff, to the chair of the board of examiners. The board of examiners shall, accordingly, be made aware if medical or other circumstances have been put forward for or by a student; however, no more detail than is necessary shall be disclosed, and this shall include no personal or medical details. All personal information shall be handled by the PEC committee and the board of examiners in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act.

14. The Personal Extenuating Circumstances Committee shall have the power to grant the following, subject to the appropriate evidence being provided for or by the student;

- a) Extensions within and beyond those permitted as part of the Submission of Work policy;
- b) Exemptions from minor elements of assessed work (normally a maximum of 20% of the module in question);

- c) Deferral of a formal examination or assessment attempt to the next normal occasion (generally August);
- d) Deferral of a formal examination or assessment attempt to a later normal occasion;
- e) Extraordinary examinations, including those outside of the regular assessment periods;
- f) Setting aside previous attempt(s) at a module, semester or stage and allowing repeat tuition if required;
- g) Allowing a student to retake a module, semester or stage with tuition (subject to payment of the appropriate tuition fees);
- h) Allowing a student to proceed to the next Stage of a programme carrying fails

And

- j) To provide boards of examiners with an assessment of the scope and severity of mitigating circumstances affecting a student, which have not been addressed by a-h above (i.e. to recommend the use of discretion).

15. A PEC committee may, on occasion, need to consider other adjustments in response to a student's personal extenuating circumstance case. Adjustments other than those listed in 14. a-j above must be approved by the appropriate Dean.

**Notes:**

**i) The PEC committee must only approve such actions if there is an evidenced case presented for or by the student.**

**ii) Where appropriate, Schools may convene one School PEC committee to consider cases for more than one programme.**

**Guidance on PEC procedures is provided by the Student Progress Service ([www.ncl.ac.uk/students/progress](http://www.ncl.ac.uk/students/progress))**

16. Students shall be reminded annually by notice (in electronic or paper form) of the Personal Extenuating Circumstances procedure and reminded that applications should be made in a timely manner. A student who fails to disclose relevant circumstances to the committee at the time of impact should be aware that this may have a bearing on any future case.

**Board of Examiners Procedures**

17. Members of the board of examiners should declare any personal (i.e. non-academic) interest relating to any individual students to the Chair of the

Board prior to the meeting. Such declarations are required despite the anonymity of the board of examiners meeting.

18. Notwithstanding any numerical or other conventions, the board of examiners shall have discretion to pass any student, in the whole (or any part) of the assessment, at any stage (Conventions 38-40).

19. Where the board of examiners is unable to reach a decision on any issue by common consent, a vote shall be taken and the matter shall be decided by the majority of members then present and voting. The academic members of the board, including the external examiners and the chair, shall each have one vote. In the event of a tied vote, the chair shall have a casting (i.e. second) vote.

20. As soon as possible, following the meeting of the board of examiners, students will be notified of the decisions of the board by the secretary to the board. In the case of final year students, the decisions of the board will normally be released within 48 hours of the meeting of the board.

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

21. Where a student has been absent without formal approval from an examination, a mark of zero shall be returned for that component of the assessment. Where a student has failed to submit any other element of the assessment, a mark of zero shall be returned for that element. Any late submissions must be considered in line with the University's Submission of Work Policy, available at <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/ltds//assets/documents/qsh-assmt-assessedwork-policy.pdf>.

22. Where a student has failed to comply with any other assessment requirement, the consequence, if any, stipulated in the degree programme handbook shall apply.

23. The University's procedure for assessment irregularities shall apply to any reported or suspected cheating or plagiarism. It should be clear that sanctions imposed under the Assessment Irregularity Procedure take precedence over Board of Examiners, and therefore cannot be overturned. The procedures are available at:

<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/students/progress/Regulations/SPS/assessment.htm>.

### **D. Aural and Oral Examinations**

24. The details of any aural or oral assessment must be published in the appropriate degree programme handbook. The chair of the appropriate board of examiners shall be responsible for ensuring that students are informed of the timing and form of any such assessment.

## E. Marking Procedures

25. It shall be a duty of all examiners to carry out all assessments in accordance with the published assessment criteria approved by faculty learning, teaching and student experience committee and normally available in degree programme handbooks.

26. In line with the University Policy and Guidance on Moderation and Scaling <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/ltds/assets/documents/qsh-assmt-modscal-pol.pdf>, the following shall constitute the procedure and, where appropriate, minimum requirements, for marking throughout the University:

- a) All marking shall be guided by explicit statements of standards, which shall be published in the degree programme handbook;
- b) Each board of examiners shall have a written Moderation and Scaling policy which should comply with the University's guidance.

In line with the University Policy on the Submission of Assessed Work <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/ltds/assets/documents/qsh-assmt-assessedwork-policy.pdf>:

- c) When coursework is submitted late but remains eligible for a capped mark, the mark that would have been awarded had the work been submitted on time must be recorded and must be available to the Board of Examiners if required.

## F. Return of Marks

27. The mark for each module on an Honours degree programme shall be returned to the board of examiners, and disclosed to students, using one of the established University Common Scales below, either the Degree Classification (DC) Scale or the one applicable to modules not used for degree classification:

	<b>Summary description applicable to <i>level 7</i> Degree Classification (DC) Modules</b>	<b>Summary description applicable to Degree Classification (DC) Modules <i>below level 7</i></b>	<b>Summary description applicable to modules <i>not used for degree classification</i></b>
0-39	Fail	Fail	Failing
40-49	Fail	Third Class	Basic
50-59	Second Class, Second Division	Second Class, Second Division	Good
60-69	Second Class, First Division	Second Class, First Division	Very Good

70-100	First Class	First Class	Excellent
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28. The final mark returned to the board of examiners for a module, or for any non-modular aggregated assessment, shall be the rounded nearest whole number on the University Common Scale.

*The rounding of marks shall follow the convention: decimal marks with a decimal component of 0.5 or larger shall be rounded up to the next whole number; marks with a decimal component of less than 0.5 shall be rounded down to the next whole number.*

### **G. Releasing and Adjusting Marks**

29. Marks awarded for course work shall be disclosed to students as soon as they are available and within 20 working days. It should be made clear to students that such marks are provisional and will be subject to review, and to possible moderation.

30. Provisional module marks awarded at the end of the Semester 1 assessment period shall be disclosed once they are available, and within 20 working days of the end of the exam period, but it should be made clear to students that the marks are provisional and will be subject to review and to possible moderation.

31. Any adjustment of marks of a cohort shall take place prior to the meeting of the board of examiners. Once marks have been returned to the board of examiners they shall not be adjusted, except that the correction of errors in the transcribing of marks is permitted. It should be noted that the conventions governing the award of classes of degrees and particularly the use of discretion by the board of examiners, shall not result in any adjustment of marks.

### **H. Progression from One Stage to Another**

32. A stage average is defined as the weighted average mark over all modules at that stage, where the weighting reflects the credit value of each module. Degree programme regulations may allow for additional credit value for non-modular aggregated assessment. The stage average shall be calculated and rounded to one decimal place.

- a) When calculating a (non-final) stage average for the purposes of compensation under Convention J34, the calculation must use the best module marks that relate to the given stage, regardless of whether the best marks are from first or second attempts, except that the pass mark must be used for a module passed by discretion.
- b) When calculating a (non-final) stage average under all other circumstances the marks used shall be:
  - i. The module mark, for modules passed at the first attempt.
  - ii. The pass mark (i.e., a mark of 40 for modules up to level 6 and 50 for level 7 modules) for modules passed by discretion, compensation or on reassessment (Convention N57).

- iii. The best mark, for modules failed after two attempts (Convention H33).
- c) When calculating a final stage average, the marks used shall be:
  - i. The module mark, for modules passed at the first attempt and for consideration of the first attempt at the stage.
  - ii. The pass mark (i.e., a mark of 40 for modules up to level 6 and 50 for level 7 modules) for modules passed at the second attempt (Conventions N57, P58).
  - iii. The second attempt mark for modules failed after two attempts (Convention P58).

Note that stage averages will need to be recalculated after the application of discretion or compensation and after reassessment.

33. A student is permitted to proceed from one stage to the next of the programme of study if the student passes or is deemed to have passed all the modules in the current stage, or the stage is passed by discretion (exercised under Conventions 38-40) notwithstanding failures in specific modules.

- a) When the stage is passed by discretion, notwithstanding failures in specific modules, the specific modules are not deemed to have been passed, and any subsequent calculations must use the best actual mark for each of the specified modules.
- b) If a student fails up to 20 credits of non-core modules at Stage 2 of a 3 year programme after two attempts, or over Stages 2 and 3 of a 4 year programme, it is the normal expectation that the stage will be passed by discretion (in recognition of the fact that it is still possible for a student to gain an Honours degree by right subject to convention 49). A Board of Examiners deciding not to exercise discretion on this matter must minute a specific reason for not doing so. [N.B. Integrated Masters programmes are subject to the Integrated Masters Examination Conventions].
- c) A student who has failed a first attempt at one or more modules and has not yet completed a second attempt may not proceed to the next stage unless granted permission by the PEC Committee (in response to the student submitting a PEC form).

In accordance with Conventions 63 and 65, a student not permitted to proceed may be considered for the award of a Higher Education Certificate or Higher Education Diploma.

## **J. Principles of Compensation**

34. At Stages 0, 1 and 2 of degree programmes (and at Stage 3 where the final stage is Stage 4) a student shall, on assessment and any reassessment, be deemed to have passed all modules at the stage and to be eligible to progress to the next stage of the degree programme, notwithstanding that marks of less than 40 have been obtained in one or more modules for that stage, provided that each of the following conditions for compensation are met:



- a) the stage average (calculated according to Convention H32), is not less than 40;
- b) no single mark for any module of levels 4-6 assessed is below 35;
- c) no single mark for any level 7 module assessed is below 40;
- d) the modules for which marks lie between 35 and 39 (levels 4 – 6) or 40 – 49 (level 7) do not include core modules (UG Progress Regulations B4(c)) and have total credit value at most 40 (out of the 120 credits studied).

The modules in d) above are deemed to be **passed by compensation**.

35. In any case where any form of non-modular aggregated assessment is used at Stages 1 and 2 of Honours degree programmes (and at Stage 3 where the final stage is Stage 4), the relevant degree programme regulations shall specify whether compensation may be applied to the non-modular aggregated assessment and, if so, the relevant degree programme examination conventions shall set out how such compensation may be applied.

36. The principles of compensation (Conventions 34-37) shall also apply to any consideration for the award of a Higher Education Certificate or Higher Education Diploma.

37. Where the rules for compensation do not apply, the board of examiners may still exercise discretion under Conventions 18, 38-40.

## **K. Principles of Discretion**

38. Notwithstanding the student's results, and without prejudice to the requirements for professional accreditation, the board of examiners may, in its ultimate discretion:

- a) Deem a student to have passed specific modules – including core modules,
- b) Deem a student to have passed the stage of a programme.
- c) Deem a student to have progressed to the next stage of a programme, despite not meeting a specific progress regulation or examination convention.
- d) Recommend a student for an award, a higher award or a higher degree classification (See Conventions 54 & 57). A recommendation for an award, a higher award or a higher degree classification is not necessarily limited to the appropriate award or classification related to the student's final programme average.

39. The exercise of discretion does not set a precedent as each individual case should be considered individually. However, in any discussion regarding the possible exercise of discretion, the board shall ensure that no student in similar circumstances has been treated less favourably.

40. The reasons for exercising or not exercising discretion shall be recorded in the minutes of the proceedings in every case where the exercise of discretion is considered, both those where such consideration is required under Convention 54 or where it is considered on other grounds. The minutes shall record the issues raised and the decisions reached, whilst maintaining, wherever possible, the anonymity of board members contributing to the debate. Boards of Studies are required to report annually on the exercise of discretion as part of the Annual Monitoring and Review Process.

## **L. Reassessment**

41. A student who passes a module (including by compensation or discretion), at any stage of the degree programme, cannot be reassessed for any component of that module.

42. A student at the final stage of an Honours degree programme shall, under the conditions laid down in Conventions 48 and 58, have the right to one reassessment of some or all failed modules.

43. A student at any other stage of an Honours degree programme has the right to a maximum of one reassessment of each failed module (Convention 47).

44. The form of the reassessment at any stage may vary from the original, at the discretion of the board of studies. Note that the board of studies may delegate this authority to the board of examiners, but that the students who are to be reassessed must be informed of the style of reassessment to be adopted, including identification of the various assessment components and weighting. Boards may specify components for which students may opt to carry forward marks. Changes to the format of assessment must apply to the whole cohort.

45. A final module mark is calculated by using the most recent component marks. In some cases, this may be a combination of second and first attempt component marks, depending on the resit arrangements for the module. It is not the case, however, that the best component marks automatically carry forward to the final module mark.

46. Exceptionally, a student may be permitted to resit a module that has been passed at University standard, but not to external accreditation requirements. Such resits are for accreditation purposes only and stand outside of the University Examination Conventions. Final module marks and award calculations are not affected. Programme-specific arrangements for accreditation resits are included in the degree programme regulations <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/programme/>.

### **Timing of reassessment at any stage other than the final stage**

#### *47. Second Attempt*

- a) A student who has the right to a second attempt will automatically be entered for failed modules (and any failed non-modular aggregated assessments) at the next available occasion of assessment (normally in August/September of the same academic year as the first attempt);
- b) A student required, under degree programme regulations, to spend a period outside the United Kingdom, or take up a placement within the United Kingdom, during the reassessment period in August/September may, subject to the approval of the degree programme director, elect to be reassessed in the following August/September.

### **Timing of reassessment at the final stage of a degree programme**

#### *48. Second Attempt*

When a student elects to be reassessed in some or all failed assessments in the final stage of a degree programme (as determined under Convention 58), the reassessment will normally be at the next normal occasion or at an alternative occasion designated by the board of examiners.

## **M. The Award and Classification of Degrees**

49. A student is recommended, as of right, for the award of an appropriate Honours degree (according to Convention 53) if all the requirements for the award are met, and

- a) all the modules beyond Stage 1 in the degree programme are passed,  
*or*
- b) no more than 20 credits beyond Stage 1 are failed and:
- c) the final programme average (calculated as specified in Convention M52) is not less than 40.

50. Marks from all modules studied at Stages 2 and 3 (or at Stages 2, 3 and 4 of a 4-stage programme) are used to determine degree classification and so the marks for these modules must be returned using the University Common Scale (DC Scale); note that appropriate modules taken during an intercalating year, in accordance with the degree programme regulations, may be excluded from the calculation.

51. Any non-modular aggregated assessment at Stage 2, Stage 3 and, where appropriate, Stage 4, may contribute to degree classification as specified in the relevant degree programme regulations.

52. The degree programme regulations shall specify the weight to be given to each stage beyond Stage 1. The stage averages (as defined in Convention H32) shall be combined, according to the prescribed weightings, to produce an **overall average**, which is also rounded to one decimal place. The **final programme average** is then obtained by rounding the overall average to the nearest whole number according to Convention 28. For a 3-year programme, the weighting Stage 2: Stage 3 shall be one of 1:1, 1:2; 1:3 unless ULTSEC

has approved an exemption. For a 4-year programme (unless Stage 3 is regarded as an intercalating year – see Convention 50) the weighting Stage 2: Stage 3: Stage 4 shall be one of 1:2:2; 1:3:3; or 1:2:3 unless ULTSEC has approved an exemption.

53. Students shall be entitled, as of right, to the class of degree yielded by the final programme average as defined in Convention M52 and using the appropriate stage average as defined in Convention H32.

### **Use of Discretion**

**The Board of Examiners under Conventions 19, 38 - 40 has a general power to exercise discretion to treat any student more generously than the numerical and other conventions require.**

54. Discretion may be applied to progression (Convention 38-40) or to classification decisions. The board of examiners must consider whether or not to exercise discretion (including the possibility of awarding a higher classification of degree, if relevant) when:

- a) There is a positive assessment of the impact of medical or other mitigating circumstances by the Personal Extenuating Circumstances Committee (Conventions 13 and 14).
- b) In addition, for final year students, the board of examiners must consider whether or not to exercise discretion to award a higher classification of degree when:
- c) Students have final programme averages (as defined in Convention M52) of 68 or 69, 58 or 59, 48 or 49, 38 or 39. The board of examiners shall have regard to the following:
  - i. The overall profile of individual marks achieved in modules;
  - ii. Exceptional performance by the student in any particular module, including, for example, research-based modules or in an oral examination where this is part of the degree programme regulations;
  - iii. Progressive improvement in performance by the student during the final 2 (or 3) stages of study, only where the stage weighting is 1:1.
- d) The board may also use discretion to recommend the award of an Honours degree of any class to a student who has not been recommended for the award of an Honours degree under Convention 53.

55. The University does not permit the use of a viva voce either as a means of monitoring standards or for determining whether a higher classification should be recommended.

56. In any discussion regarding the possible exercise of discretion, the board shall ensure that no student in similar circumstances has been treated less favourably as a result of any particular decision. The reasons for recommending or not recommending a higher class of degree shall be

recorded in the minutes of the proceedings. The minutes shall record the issues raised and the decisions reached, whilst maintaining, wherever possible, the anonymity of board members contributing to the debate. Chairs of Boards of Examiners should report in writing annually to the relevant Board of Studies on the exercise of discretion for the recent examination sessions. Reports should then be forwarded to faculty learning, teaching and student experience committees for review. No student shall be identified by name in this report. The exercise of discretion is reviewed via the Annual Monitoring Review process.

## **N. Recording of Module Marks after Reassessment, Compensation or Discretion**

57. Where a student has achieved a passing mark following reassessment at any stage, including the final stage, or has been deemed to have passed in an assessment by the exercise of compensation or discretion, the actual mark achieved by the student must be recorded on the transcript, with an appropriate note if compensation or discretion has been applied, and a statement that a mark of 40 (or 50 for level 7 modules) will be used in any calculations. However, in such cases, the board of examiners may, in its ultimate discretion, have regard to the actual mark obtained at resit.

## **P. Failing Performance by Honours Degree Students**

58. A student who, following a first attempt at the final stage, has not been recommended for the award of an Honours degree under Convention 49 or by the use of discretion under Convention 54, has a number of options. Subject to any recommendations made by the board of examiners under Conventions 60, 63 and 65, the student must elect whether to accept a Pass degree or a Higher Education Diploma, or a Higher Education Certificate, or to proceed to one reassessment of some or all failed modules, or to withdraw from the programme. The various routes available are:

- a) The board of examiners may recommend the student for the award of a Pass degree (subject to Conventions 60 and 61).
- b) The board of examiners may recommend the award of a Higher Education Diploma (subject to Convention 63) or a Higher Education Certificate (subject to Convention 65).
- c) Notwithstanding the options described in a) and b) above, a student may elect to be reassessed in some or all failed modules, subject to:
  - i. the maximum recommendation available after reassessment is a third class Honours degree and discretion may not be applied to award a higher class than this;
  - ii. in the event that the student's performance at reassessment is less than that at the first attempt, the assessment at the second attempt will be used to calculate the entitlement. (For example, a student who has a final programme average of 36 at the first attempt, and so would have been eligible for a Pass degree, but

whose final programme average after reassessment is 32, will no longer as of right, be eligible for the award of a Pass degree.)

*Note: The conditions for the award of a Certificate could occur at the completion of Stage 3 e.g. 120 credits at Stage 1, but only 100 credits at Stage 2: 20 carried into Stage 3, and these plus all at Stage 3 failed.*

59. Students recommended by the board of examiners for the award of an Honours degree after the first occasion of assessment, may not enter for re-assessment.

*Note: The chair of the board shall, in the return of marks to the examinations office, make clear that a student has an automatic right to resit final stage modules, when a Pass degree, Higher Education Diploma, or Higher Education Certificate is recommended by the board. The chair of the board of examiners shall then consult the student as soon as possible to confirm whether the student wishes to receive the Pass degree, Higher Education Diploma or Higher Education Certificate to which he or she is entitled, or to proceed to re-assessment. The student must advise the chair of the board of examiners in writing, and within a period laid down by the chair. See also Convention 47 above.*

## **R. Recommendation of other than an Honours Degree**

### Pass Degree

60. A candidate for an Honours degree, who is not recommended for Honours under the preceding conventions, shall be considered by the board of examiners for the award of a Pass degree. A Pass degree shall be recommended, as of right, to a student who has satisfied the examiners in at least 300 credits, of which 60 must be at level 6, provided that the student's final programme average (calculated as in Convention M52), is not less than 35.

61. A student who is not entitled to a Pass degree under Convention 60 may be recommended for a Pass degree by the board of examiners, using its ultimate discretion, following the principles laid down in Conventions 54-56.

62. The award of a Pass degree is not classified and, unless specific recognition arrangements are in place, carries no professional accreditation. The degree will be '*Pass degree in X*' corresponding to the '*Honours degree in X*' for which the student was a candidate.

### Higher Education Diploma

63. A candidate for an Honours degree who has satisfied the examiners in at least 240 credits, of which at least 90 credits are at level 5 or above, shall be awarded a Higher Education Diploma in that programme, typically when:

- a) the student is entitled to proceed into Stage 3, but instead elects to withdraw from study at the University; or
- b) the student elects to withdraw from study at the University during Stage 3 of the programme; or

- c) the student leaves the programme to transfer to an unrelated programme within the University, without carrying forward any credit; or
- d) the student fails to satisfy the examiners for the award of the Honours degree or Pass degree.

Boards of Examiners may use discretion in awarding a Higher Education Diploma in accordance with Conventions K38 – 40. In particular boards may wish to take account of modules that are failed solely because they are core.

64. The award of a Higher Education Diploma is not classified and, unless specific recognition arrangements are in place, carries no professional accreditation. The diploma will be '*Higher Education Diploma in X*' corresponding to the '*Honours degree in X*' for which the student was a candidate.

#### Higher Education Certificate

65. A candidate for an Honours degree who has satisfied the examiners in at least 120 credits, of which at least 90 are at level 4 or above, shall be awarded a Higher Education Certificate in that programme, typically when:

- a) the student is entitled to proceed into Stage 2, but instead elects to withdraw from study at the University; or
- b) the student elects to withdraw from study at the University during Stage 2 or Stage 3 of the programme; or
- c) the student leaves the programme to transfer to an unrelated programme within the University, without carrying forward any credit; or
- d) the student fails to satisfy the examiners in Stage 2 or Stage 3 of the programme.

Boards of Examiners may use discretion in awarding a Higher Education Certificate in accordance with Conventions K38 – K40. In particular boards may wish to take account of modules that are failed solely because they are core.

66. The award of a Higher Education Certificate is not classified and, unless specific recognition arrangements are in place, carries no professional accreditation. The certificate will be '*Higher Education Certificate in X*' corresponding to the '*Honours degree in X*' for which the student was a candidate.

### **S. Subsuming of Awards**

67. A student awarded an Honours degree or Pass degree will not be eligible for the awards of a Higher Education Certificate and/or a Higher Education Diploma for the same programme of study. Similarly, students awarded a Higher Education Diploma will not be eligible for the award of a Higher Education Certificate for the same programme of study.

## **T. Mid-year Student Withdrawals**

68. A student who withdraws from the University during the academic year will be considered for the appropriate exit award at the next scheduled meeting of the Board of Examiners.

## **U. Aegrotat**

69. The board of examiners may award an Aegrotat degree to a student who has registered for the final stage of the programme but who presents sufficient evidence of ill health or any other extenuating circumstance such that, in the judgement of the board, there is no reasonable possibility that the student can complete the degree programme. When considering the option of recommending this award, boards of examiners should be mindful of the possibility of enabling the student to sit the assessments at a later date, and so be eligible for a classified degree. In addition, the board should consider the appropriateness of recommending the award of a Higher Education Diploma or Certificate.

70. It is not open to the board to grant an Aegrotat to students registered on certain professionally accredited programmes. A student to whom an Aegrotat is awarded shall be deemed to have obtained Honours but without classification.

71. The Board of Examiners shall have the power to award a degree posthumously as it sees fit.

## **V. Retention of Assessed Work**

72. All material for assessment, which contributes to 30% or more of a final module mark, should be retained for a minimum period of the current academic year plus one year. Further information can be found in the Policies on Submission of Assessed Work, Feedback on Assessed Work and Return of Assessed Work at <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/ltds/assets/documents/gsh-assmt-assessedwork-policy.pdf>.

Student data relevant to student assessment should be retained as follows:

- i. Component marks on NeSS and PEC Committee and Exam Board minutes to be retained for 6 years after graduation.
- ii. Personal PEC information (Including Stage 1 PEC information for Board of Examiners' discretion usage) to be retained for 2 years after graduation.

## **W. Exemptions to these Conventions**

73. Certain programmes are exempt from the requirements of the *Undergraduate Examination Conventions* which relate to assessment, reassessment and the use of the University Common Scale.

Note that referral to each individual set of degree programme regulations for full information on programme exemptions is required. A complete register of exemptions can be found at: <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/ltds/governance/modules/regulations>