

Examination Board guidance and resources 2022/23

Information for students

1. Introduction

The information and guidance given here and in the supplementary Appendices are for all those who are involved in the processing of examination results and recommendations for Undergraduate (UG) cohorts in 2023, under the 2022/23 UG Graduating Cohort Arrangements, the 2021/22 Assessment Framework, the 2020/21 Fair Assessment and Fair Outcomes Policy, or the 2019/20 Emergency Framework for Assessment and Progression (and other relevant Regulations where applicable for your School/Department).

Please note that there is no set of arrangements in place for 2022/23 PGT students, as they can be considered under standard regulations, with the exception of PGT students on flexible programmes who were studying in 2019/20 and/or 2020/21 and should have their degrees considered in accordance with the 2021/22 Assessment Framework.

*****Please read this pack carefully. Section 4 is particularly important as contains information related to operational processes taking place over End of Session including Final Year Sits/Resits and the schedule for release of Dubai campus student results*****

Documentation relating to this guidance is available via links in the Appendices section below.

In an effort to streamline the guidance contained in this document and avoid repetition, you will be directed to the protocol in **Appendix K** throughout some sections of this pack where all the information you need is located, and to relevant web pages where applicable.

Guidance is provided on:

- Where to access guidance on the process for mark calculations, credits totalling and degree classification calculations;
- Undergraduate protocols for Boards of Examiners meetings
- Recommendations made Not Withstanding UG Graduating Cohort Arrangements, Assessment Framework, the Fair Assessment and Fair Outcomes, and Emergency Framework for Assessment and Progression Regulations;
- Extenuating circumstances;
- Adjusted Regulations;
- Transcripts.

2. Role of the Board of Examiners

Please refer to **Appendix K - Role of Boards of Examiners** for information (for UG Exam Boards).

3. Calculation and Determination of Degree Classifications at the Board of Examiners and summary of process for mark calculations

UG: Calculation and Determination of Degree Classifications at the Board of Examiners

Please refer to **Appendix K – Calculations in BIRMS Parts A and B** for an explanation of calculation and determination of UG Degree Classifications and how marks, credits and awards will be calculated for the following cohorts:

- **PART A:** arrangements regarding credits, reassessment, review of marks profiles, and degree classifications that apply to **all** graduating UG students in 2023.
- **PART B:** For UG students on a programme **with a year abroad** who are graduating in 2023.

PGT: Calculation and Determination of Degree Classifications at the Board of Examiners

For PGT students due to graduate this academic session, no particular provisions are required for the majority of students and their degrees can be calculated using the [Calculate Degree Classification] button in BIRMS ES02 in accordance with standard regulations.

For those who are in the final year of a multi-year part-time postgraduate taught programme, the following principle will continue to apply as it has done in previous years:

- For students now in the final year of a multi-year part-time postgraduate taught programme (for example, year three of a three-year programme), the marks carried forward from each year relate to the Regulations in place at the time. The Regulations in place in each year of study will be taken into account at final award Boards when calculating the student's degree. This refers to (where applicable, depending on the cohort), the Policy on Fair Outcomes and Fair Assessments for PGT students ("Fair Assessment Policy") published in January 2021, and (where applicable, depending on the cohort) the Framework for Assessment and Progression of Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught Graduating Cohorts ("the Emergency Framework") developed in spring 2020. For PGT students graduating in 2022/23, if they were also studying in 2019/20 and/or 2020/21 the requirement to have achieved a mark of 40 or more in all taught modules does not apply for credits attempted in those years; the requirement to pass all taught modules to be awarded a 3 degree with Merit or Distinction also does not apply for credits attempted in those years.
- Any students in this situation should have their degrees calculated using the [Calculate 21/22 AF PGT Degree Calculation] button in BIRMS ES02.

4. Operational information for End of Session processing in BIRMS

UG graduating students who have completed an overseas industrial work placement as part of their programme

There is no mechanism to identify students who may have undertaken a work placement abroad and are due to graduate in 2022/23. If you are aware of any students in this situation, please notify the BIRMS Team for advice on calculating the degree classification for these students.

NB: *It is not necessary to notify the BIRMS team of students who completed a UK-based work placement, as functionality exists in BIRMS to calculate their awards.*

Final year sits/resits

****Please note that this process should be followed both for students with Extenuating Circumstances who are offered the opportunity to take first sits and students taking capped resit(s) of failed modules****

****Please do not enter ART C (Review) for any students eligible for a degree; instead, follow the process to calculate ART B (Successful Completion) as detailed below. Students are directed to contact TSA by submitting the online Final Year Reassessment form if they wish to retrieve failure and defer their July degree congregation, and contact TSA via finalyearresit@contacts.bham.ac.uk with any queries****

Section A1.8 of the protocol confirms that 'With effect from 2021/22, students will be permitted to retrieve failure in the final stage of an undergraduate degree (which includes year three of a four-year UG Masters

degree). This includes students who took a leave of absence in 2020/21 and have returned to their final year in 2021/22. Reassessment will normally be taken in the supplementary assessment period and will be capped at the pass mark (unless the student has ECs, as normal). Students who have already passed sufficient credits to be awarded their degree will be required to complete an online form to defer their graduation in order to take any reassessments."

Registry staff are working with the Student Communications and Engagement Team in Student Services to publicise the policy to students via appropriate channels including the Brum Bulletin.

The student-facing [Defer Graduation - Final Year Reassessments](#) web page has a set of FAQs for students to provide advice and guidance.

Students can also access a link to the web page and a link to the online Final Year Reassessments form via the online results page of the student gateway where an ART B or ART G has been released.

Due to the short deadlines for confirming students eligible to graduate at the July degree congregations, students who elect to take their reassessments and therefore wish to opt out of July graduation have a deadline of **5.00pm** (UK time) on **Friday 30 June** to submit their online Final Year Reassessments form. It would be appreciated if this could also be highlighted

Once submitted, the form will be received by:

- Registry
- Funding, Graduation and Awards
- Colleges

so that all parties can take required action. Students will receive an automatic confirmation that their form has been received.

Students are directed to an email address owned by Registry for any queries relating to final year resits (finalyearresit@contacts.bham.ac.uk). This inbox will be monitored daily by Registry staff.

To make the process as simple as possible for Colleges, Registry staff in TSA will do the following upon receipt of an 'opt out of graduation' form:

1. Reopen the ART B (Successful Completion) and undo the actions of this ART, resetting the student to their status before the ART B was released ('Normally Registered' or 'External Resit');
2. Process and release an ART C (Review) so that the student record is correct for Colleges to input the new marks/Exam Board decision for the Supplementary Exam Board, and for Colleges to release ART B following the Board.

It is not necessary for Colleges to take Chairs Action to ratify the ART C (Review) in these cases. A section (point 7) has been added to the Chair of Exam Board statement to cover this process:

"7. Final year UG students may opt out of their July or December 2023 graduation to undertake resits in any failed LH/LM module(s) taken in 2022/23. The awards confirmed at this Board will stand, and where final year students defer graduation, no further ratification of award will be required unless the degree classification changes following the reassessment."

Where the degree classification changes following reassessment, this should be ratified at the next appropriate Exam Board.

Where a student has further resit opportunities available to them but is eligible for a degree award, LH/LM

marks below the pass mark will calculate with an SE or SU module recommendation (in the same way that currently happens for LF/LC/LI modules) so it is not necessary for College staff to manually amend module recommendations. The only instances where you will need to recalculate module marks and recommendations are where these were calculated prior to the new functionality being deployed into BIRMS (this went live on 25 January 2022).

In practice, this means that where a student has further reassessment opportunities available to them but is eligible for a degree award, LH/LM marks below the pass mark will calculate with:

- SE or SU recommendation in the Main assessment period*
- RP or RS module recommendation in the Supplementary period where they had a 'sit' recommendation in the Main period (as the calculation functions for LF/LC/LI modules)*

** In either case, where exceptional circumstances (ECs) have been approved for the assessment period being processed, the appropriate 'sit' recommendation (ME, M, MI, MX or MB) may be manually selected to replace the calculated recommendation. This would ensure that, should the student's reassessment mark be used in the final degree classification auto-calculation, it would not be capped.*

Use of ART E (Proceed and Transfer for UG students)

Where continuing students are progressing and transferring qualification e.g. from an undergraduate masters to a bachelors or vice versa, or are transferring to another degree title within the same School/Department, the most efficient way to process these is to use the **ART E (Proceed and Transfer)**.

Students should be asked to complete an application to transfer programme form to ensure they understand the possible implications of a transfer, but the forms can be retained by the School for the purposes of determining who should be given the ART E for ratification at the Board. TSA (Registry) only require copies of transfer forms for overseas students (this information will be required by the International Student Team (IST) in determining any visa implications). Please forward a scan of the forms for overseas students to your named TSA contact as per the current process.

NB: ART E can still be selected in BIRMS for overseas students, and released following ratification by the Exam Board.

Use of the ART E in these circumstances will enable students to register for the correct version of their programme as soon as this is released from BIRMS (release deadline 3 July 2023 for continuing students) and should reduce the number of queries received by Colleges and Registry related to seeing the wrong qualification on online registration. Online Registration also opens on 3 July 2023.

If you cannot see the new degree title in the drop-down list in BIRMS ES02 '**Programme Transfer or Alternative Qual**' field, please contact TSA by completing the [ART E Programme Transfers form](#), and this will be set up as a priority.

Chairs Actions and changes to Exam Board decisions requiring an ART to be reopened

TSA are working on a standardised Chairs Action template and considering a process for Schools to submit these as there has been a marked increase in the number of Chairs Actions received following Exam Boards during the past few years, and a variance in the amount and quality of information provided.

We appreciate that management of this process must be increasingly challenging for both College and Registry staff and we are keen to work with Schools to better understand the reasons for the increase. You may already have been contacted as we have reached out to Schools with the highest use of Chairs Actions during 2022.

If we can jointly achieve a reduction in the time spent on preparing Chairs Actions and processing them along with the required ART unlocks, this will be of benefit to all staff involved in End of Session processing and will give TSA more opportunity to focus on urgent staff and student queries.

Once the template and process has been finalised, this section will be updated and School users will be notified.

Dubai Campus students and observance of The Day of Arafah and Eid al-Adha during June 2023

It is anticipated that these will fall on 27 and 28 June, meaning that the Dubai campus is likely to be closed from the 27 June to 2 July inclusive.

In order to publish end of year results to Dubai students at a point that they can seek advice and guidance promptly should they need to, Colleges have agreed to release results from BIRMS on Monday 3 July for all Dubai students (graduating and continuing cohorts).

Please note that the Dubai campus Degree congregation takes place on 20 July. TSA will need to post certificates and transcripts to Dubai by 6 July. Therefore, it is essential please that Exam Board paperwork is submitted to both TSA and the Dubai Team for graduating students promptly so as not to delay the audit and document production processes.

Students on a programme with a Year Abroad

Students with an admit term of 2020/21 or later are subject to the change in Regulations which means that their year abroad is recorded as pass or fail and does not contribute to the degree classification.

In the current 2022/23 session, students taking their year abroad in Year 3 will be the first cohort subject to these rules, and will be eligible to graduate in 2023/24.

There will also be some students with an admit term of 2019/20 or earlier who are:

- taking their year abroad in 2022/23 as an inverted year in Year 4 of their studies, and;
- students who have repeated previous years of study or taken leave of absence and so have reached the point of taking their year abroad this session.

For the cohort above, these students will require a numerical mark to be recorded which will be used in their degree classification calculation, in line with their pre-2020/21 admit term.

UG Datasheets for graduating students who are repeating their final year in 2022/23

It does not appear to be the case that any datasheets will be required for 2022/23 (these apply only for students that were in their final year in 2019/20 and through subsequently repeating the final year or taking leave of absence are expected to graduate in 2022/23). If a datasheet is required for any students, it can be requested from TSA.

Students given an Exam Board recommendation of 'External sit/resit' who wish to sit/repeat internally

It has come to our attention that students in this situation are sometimes being directed to the appeals process to request that they be permitted to take their failed modules internally during the next academic session.

There is an established procedure in place for this scenario, whereby students are able to apply to their School/Department to sit/repeat internally using the '**External students applying to repeat internally**' form

available via the [External students – applying to repeat internally](#) page.

There is reference to this form and web page in the explanatory text that students given an **ART J - External sit/resit** see when they access their results on the student gateway.

Please could you highlight this process to any colleagues who may not be aware, so as to avoid students being misdirected to Student Conduct, Complaints and Appeals.

5. Role of External Examiners

Please refer to **Appendix K - Role of External Examiners** for information (for UG Exam Boards).

6. Practical arrangements for virtual Board of Examiners meetings

Please refer to **Appendix K - Practical Arrangements for Board of Examiners Meetings** for information.

7. Documentation to be returned to Taught Student Administration

A copy of the following should be submitted by **12 noon** (UK time) on **Monday 26 June 2023** for main summer graduating cohorts, and by close of business (**5.00pm** UK time) on **Monday 3 July 2023** for continuing students.

i. Minutes

The **minutes** (in paper or electronic format) from the main meeting of the Board of Examiners (with all recommendations notwithstanding Assessment Framework or Notwithstanding any other Regulations clearly identified). Minutes should include programme and module codes and student ID numbers for ease of reference. Minutes should be anonymised in accordance with paragraph 6.1.1 of the Code of Practice on the Assessment of Taught Programmes and Modules and Academic Feedback.

ii. Pass lists

Copies of **pass lists for graduating students**, which should include student names to facilitate checking of Degree Congregation proofs. Pass lists should be carefully checked before submission to Taught Student Administration to ensure that all students are included with the correct degree classifications.

iii. Signed Chair of Board of Examiners Statement

The Chair of the Board of Examiners should complete the Chair's statement to confirm that all decisions have been taken in accordance with the relevant Regulations and that appropriate information on exceptional cases is provided for consideration by the Progress and Awards Board. There is a new section on the form (point 7) that confirms that as part of the sign off, where final year students opt out of graduation to take resits during the supplementary period, no further ratification of results will be needed unless their degree classification changes (which will be ratified at the supplementary Exam Board).

Please note that this form requires the External Examiner's signature.

iv. Summary of Extenuating Circumstances

A summary of extenuating circumstances cases that resulted in a change of award.

v. Summary of Recommendations Notwithstanding Regulations

A summary of Recommendations made Notwithstanding Assessment Framework, or Notwithstanding any other Regulations in use which are to be considered by the Progress and Award Board should be reported on the Recommendations Notwithstanding Regulations (NWR) pro-forma as required. A detailed summary of each case must be included to enable the Progress and Awards Board to make an informed decision.

vi. Progress and Awards Board

Please note:

- there will be a meeting of PAB on **Wednesday 28 June 2023**;
- any later cases relating to continuing students should be submitted to the PAB secretary as they arise;
- later cases will be considered via Chairs Action/email circulation to PAB members.

8. Extenuating Circumstances

Overall principles and framework

The overall principles and framework set out in the Regulations and [Code of Practice on Extenuating Circumstances \(ECs\)](#) continue to apply.

Evidence requirements

In 2021/22, the requirement for students to provide evidence when submitting ECs was reinstated (following a relaxation of requirements during the previous two years of the pandemic). This remains the case. If students wish to request a deferral of any assessments, they are also required to submit their reasons and supporting evidence. Deferred assessments will be scheduled for the Supplementary Assessment Period in August and they will usually take the same format as the original assessments.

Confidentiality

If continuing to use video conferencing facilities for EC Panel meetings, Panel members must ensure that they are able to work in a space which will allow for confidentiality when discussing student cases. This is due to the sensitive nature of the information which may be presented or discussed, to avoid any exposure to vulnerable members of the same household e.g. children, and because the information discussed may constitute special category personal data in accordance with GDPR if the student in question is identifiable.

Approval for repeat of final year related to COVID

If a student wishes to request that they repeat their final year due to COVID-related issues, the ECs panel must continue to refer this decision to the PVC (Education), or their nominee, for approval

9. Adjusted Regulations for Undergraduate Masters degrees

A slightly amended version of Adjusted Regulations are in operation this year under the UG Graduating Cohort Arrangements, for those Schools already signed up to them:

- Biosciences
- Chemical Engineering
- Chemistry
- Civil Engineering
- Computer Science
- Earth and Environmental Science
- Electronic, Electrical and Systems Engineering
- Geography
- Mechanical Engineering
- Mathematics
- Metallurgy and Materials
- Physics and Astronomy

For UG Masters programmes, the only change from the Code of Practice on Adjusted Regulations and UG Masters degrees is the removal of the requirement to achieve 100 credits at Level C (where taken in 2019/20- the COVID affected year), which also results in:

- removal of the need for less than or equal to 450 credits overall
- removal of the need for 420 credits overall to be awarded Class I or Class II Division I

There are no changes to Adjusted Regulations requirements for Bachelors degrees.

Please refer to the [Codes of Practice](#) on Adjusted Regulations and Bachelors degrees/Undergraduate Masters degrees for the appropriate cohort for background information.

10. Transcripts

Students who were in their first year of study in 2019/20:

- It was agreed by the Senior Education Team that as first year students were not offered a resit opportunity under the Emergency Framework for Assessment and Progression in 2019/20, that this cohort should not be disadvantaged by having fails recorded on their transcripts.
- An exercise was undertaken by Registry and IT Services to replace failed marks for year 1 students in 2019/20 with a mark and module recommendation of 'N' This displays as 'AUDITED' on the transcript.

Display of marks for students with Extenuating Circumstances who have failed their module at the first attempt:

In response to a small number of queries around how failed marks display on transcripts more generally, please be advised that where students fail a module at the first attempt and are given a module recommendation of sit (M, ME, MX, MI) and a mark of '0', this will display on the transcript as number of attempts '0' and the result will be recorded as 'NO RESULT'.

However, where a numerical mark below the pass mark (i.e. a mark of 1% up to 39% or 49% depending on module pass mark) has been recorded with a sit module recommendation, this will be recorded as number of attempts '1' and the result will be 'FAILED' due to an attempt at the assessments having been made.

Bearing this in mind, it may be felt to be fairer to students in this situation to record the overall module mark at your Exam Board as '0%' where they have not been able to attempt all the assessment associated with the module due to Extenuating Circumstances.

Please refer to **Appendix K – Transcripts** for further information on transcripts and **Appendix I** which illustrates the examples outlined above.

11. Data protection, student debtors and feedback to students

1. Students excluded from the University due to outstanding tuition fee debt should not have marks or an award confirmed at a Board of Examiners meeting (although their work completed prior to the hold being applied may be assessed and given a provisional, unconfirmed mark).
2. If you are unsure which students still have a financial or other hold, a BOXI report is available which will provide this information (*Banner Documents > Students > Students Records (General) > **Students with an Active Hold***).
3. If students have a financial hold, the validation within BIRMS will prevent these students' marks and progress and award decisions from being released to Banner.
4. If an excluded student has undertaken an assessment during the current academic year prior to their exclusion and requests feedback, this must be provided by the School, as this is personal information held under the Data Protection Act and therefore potentially liable to inclusion under a Subject Access Request. The student should be informed that any marks are not approved or ratified by the University until the tuition fee debt is cleared. Only Registry may produce transcripts for these students, which will have the words "Marks not approved" stamped across it.
5. Once the debt is cleared, Registry will ask the School to take Chair's Action and confirm the student's marks and progress or award decision. The marks and decision may then be released into the Student Gateway.
6. If you are unsure which students have had their financial or other hold recently released, a BOXI report is available which will provide this information (*Banner Documents/Students/Students Records (General)/**Students with a Released Hold***).
7. Students should not undertake assessment following a current hold being applied, in line with [Regulation 5.3.1.i](#) (PDF - 202Kb). Should this situation arise, a case should be submitted to the Progress and Awards Board of Senate (PAB) if the School feel there are grounds to request that the assessment should be counted, notwithstanding Regulations.

12. Useful web links

- **Assessment Arrangements (page for students)**
<https://www.intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/registry/exams/arrangements-for-graduating-and-continuing-students-2223.aspx>
- **Cohort Legislation:**
<https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/registry/legislation/index.aspx>
This provides cohort specific links to Codes of Practice that you may find useful such as the Code of Practice on Student Attendance and Reasonable Diligence.
- **Extenuating Circumstances procedure:**
<https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/registry/policy/extcircs/index.aspx>

- **Academic Integrity (Including Plagiarism and Conduct in Examinations and Class Tests):**
<https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/registry/policy/conduct/plagiarism/index.aspx>
- **Academic Appeals:**
<https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/registry/policy/complaint-appeal/appeals/index.aspx>