



Senate Handbook

Assessment Rules (Taught Courses)

These Rules (version 3.3.1) apply fully to all students newly-registered from 1 September 2019.

For students who registered before 1 September 2019, version 3.3.1 of the Rules will apply to the consideration of your overall award. They will also apply to any modules and assessments taken after 1 September 2019. Senate's Education Committee reserves the right to apply versions 1.1, 2.0, 3.0, 3.1 or 3.2 of the Rules to individual students or course cohorts after due consideration of any negative impact the implementation of the new Rules might cause.

This Handbook supplements Regulations governed by Senate.

It includes policies, advice and/or guidance that all staff are expected to follow in the proper conduct of University business.

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Changes to this document since version 3.2 September 2018:

- Clarification that compensation is only applied if the overall average for the taught phase is 50% or over, and that any compensation will only be applied if all of the credits required for an award (either the intended award or a lower exit award) are passed or compensable
- Clarification that there is no one week grace period for the submission of Corrections or theses that have been referred for Revise and Represent outcome
- Clarification that re-sat assessments will be marked using the marking criteria in place when the module was originally attended.
- Reference to process for arrangement of alternative assessments
- Removal of separate dictionary rules for Shrivenham
- Clarification that Turnitin submissions after the deadline are recorded as late
- Addition of process for Course Director approval of extensions
- Requirement for evidence to be provided to support deferral requests added
- Process for post-assessment, pre-board exceptional circumstances requests added.
- Change of title from Compliance Officer to Student Casework Team, and Registry manager to Head of Registry Services

Changes to this document (version 3.3.1) since version 3.3 September 2019:

- Correction on Page 29 that deferral request will require supporting evidence (version 3.3 stated that evidence may not be required for deferrals.)

PREFACE

1 Introduction

This Handbook outlines the University's assessment rules and the expectations placed on you as a student. It is very important that you read this Handbook carefully in order to familiarise yourself with your rights and responsibilities. If you have any questions about these rules, you should seek further guidance or clarity from your Course Director or SAS Lead.¹

The rules in this Handbook apply to all taught courses,² which include:

- Master of Business Administration MBA³
- Master of Design MDes
- Master of Science MSc
- Master of Technology MTech
- Postgraduate Diploma PgDip
- Postgraduate Certificate PgCert
- accredited short courses (see in particular, the footnote on page 10)

This Handbook supplements Regulations 54-56 and is designed to provide you with transparent, clear and essential information on assessment rules to enable you to successfully complete your award. Additional Handbooks are available on related subjects and should be read in conjunction with this Handbook:

- your course handbook
- the General Student Handbook
- Senate Handbook on Academic Misconduct
- Senate Handbook on Managing Taught Courses
- Student Handbook on Changes to Registration
- Student Handbook on Academic Appeals (Taught Courses)

This Handbook includes assessment criteria for the award of degrees, implemented for all new and continuing students from September 2015. Where the implementation of the new pass/fail criteria will result in an award fail at a board of examiners, the board of examiners⁴ will revert to previous pass/fail criteria in order to ensure that students who commenced their course before this date are not disadvantaged by the change in criteria.

This Handbook applies to all fully and temporarily registered students. Students enrolled on a temporary registration may sit assessments, which may be marked. However, no marks will be released or confirmed at an examination board until a student has fully registered with the University.

Differences in the information between courses on Cranfield campus and courses at the Defence Academy at Shrivenham are highlighted throughout this handbook, as shown:

Cranfield

Shrivenham

For the avoidance of doubt, where a module is delivered at the site where a student is not normally based, the information for that site should be followed.

¹ The Student and Academic Support Lead or 'SAS Lead' is a professional member of staff in Education Services, who is responsible for managing the progress and support of taught course students.

² Information on the assessment processes for research programmes are not included and can be found in the Senate Handbook on Managing Research Students.

³ The pass criteria for the MBA are different from those outlined in Section 4 of this Handbook, and given at Appendix C.

⁴ Decisions relating to reassessment opportunities for students can be taken outside of a formal examination board meeting by the Chair of the Examination Board in consultation with at least two other examiners.

2 Student responsibilities

The University expects you, both at the point you originally register, and at the point at which you commit to a particular module of study, to honour your commitment. When agreeing to a module or course, you are accepting that you are able to meet the necessary commitments for:

- attending classes and other scheduled events;
- managing any private study commitments; and
- meeting the stated dates of assessment (either examination dates or deadlines for the submission of work for assessment),

as outlined in course documentation provided to you through your course handbook, website or virtual learning environment.

The University encourages you to take full responsibility for your learning: while it permits you to take control of your studies and assessment in advance, it has strict rules relating to the consequences without prior approval, of:

- failure to attend formal examinations; or
- late submission of work for assessment; or
- failure to submit work for assessment.

2.1 Participating in scheduled assessments – the concept of ‘fit to sit’

In submitting work for assessment or attending an examination, you are declaring yourself as ‘fit to sit’ (i.e. that you are capable and competent to undertake the assessment and therefore that you have determined that any relevant exceptional circumstances will not adversely impact on your ability to undertake the assessment).

If you do not feel able to attend an examination or complete an assessment for whatever reason, you must raise this in advance through the exceptional circumstances procedure.

Exceptionally, the University will consider requests after examination dates or submission dates (see section 13.3), but will not do so once marks have been released for the assessment (even if you subsequently are deemed to have performed badly). If a request is made following the examination or submission date, and the University does not accept that your circumstances could not have been managed proactively, this may have serious consequences for your ongoing studies. Further guidance is outlined in Part C of this Handbook.

It is your responsibility to manage adjustments to your studies in good time, and to proactively seek appropriate advice if you have concerns about your academic progress.

If you receive <50% for any assessment, you must make contact with the course team to discuss how this mark affects your academic progress, and your continued eligibility for your intended award.

2.2 Managing the impact of personal circumstances on scheduled assessments

Where personal pressures result in you concluding in advance that you cannot commit to the pattern of studies you have previously agreed to, you are expected to take responsibility for resolving these in good time. Some of the options available to you are outlined in detail in Section 13 (i.e. deferrals and extensions) but you should also consider options detailed in the Student Handbook on Changes to Registration, including:

- suspension of studies;
- switching from full-time to part-time registration;
- switching to an alternative award (e.g. changing from an intention to receive an MSc to a Postgraduate Diploma or Certificate).

Such options should be discussed with your SAS Lead but any changes to your registration or requests for exceptional circumstances will not be considered until submitted in writing.

Further advice on your options can be discussed with independent staff as well, including:

- staff in Education Services (including the Assistant Registrars and staff in the Student Advice Centre);
- staff and students in the Cranfield Students' Association (CSA);
- staff across the University who have been appointed as Learning Support Officers and/or Dignity at Study Advisers.

Prior approval of non-attendance at an examination, or deferral of an assignment (i.e. opting to complete a new and different assignment at a later date) is granted through approval from the Course Director and SAS Lead.

Prior approval of a short extension to the deadline for an existing assignment is granted through the Course Director and SAS Lead, but requires the presentation of "exceptional circumstances" – see Part C of this Handbook.

2.3 Failure to attend or submit an assessment – risk of award failure

There are serious consequences if you fail to complete scheduled assessments, and do not arrange in advance a modification to your pattern of studies and/or assessment.

Failure to attend an examination (without prior approval) will result in you failing to be awarded the learning credits associated with the examination. You will normally be permitted one further assessment opportunity, but your mark will be capped at 50%.⁵

Failure to submit an assignment by the specified deadline (without prior approval) will result in the mark being capped at 50% if submitted within one week of the specified deadline⁶. Thereafter the assessment will be formally recorded as you failing to be awarded the learning credits associated with the assignment. You will normally be permitted one further assessment opportunity, which must be submitted by the stated deadline provided by the course director, with your mark capped at 50%.⁵ Any late submission will result in an outright fail of the assessment - there is no one week grace period for resubmissions.

Subsequent failures to attend examinations or to submit assignments (without prior approval) will automatically result in the loss of learning credits, and accordingly will result in award failure.

Failure to submit a thesis by the specified deadline (without prior approval of an additional writing up period)⁷ will result in the work being capped at 50% if submitted within one week of the specified deadline, and thereafter the assessment being formally recorded as failing to be awarded the learning credits associated with the thesis, and accordingly will result in award failure. There is no one week grace period for the submission of Corrections or theses that have been referred for Revise and Represent outcome.

⁵ An additional assessment opportunity **will not** be awarded if you fail to attend a resit examination, or fail to submit a second attempt assignment.

⁶ The one week grace period allows students to submit by the same day/time the following week (i.e. for an original submission date of 17:00 Monday, the grace period ends at 17:00 the following Monday).

⁷ Requests for a delay in submitting a thesis (an application for a writing up period) should be made through the form available on the Education Services intranet.

2.4 Other responsibilities

Other important responsibilities you need to be aware of include:

Ownership of intellectual property

The copyright and intellectual property rights of the work that you prepare and submit and other materials prepared in the course of your studies, are assigned to and vested in Cranfield University, except where this has been specifically agreed otherwise in writing.⁸

The University, however, will generally allow unrestricted access to this work once it has been examined. The publication of your work is strongly encouraged, but permission must be obtained from the designated academic advisers in your School on behalf of the University.

If you undertake work sponsored by an industrial concern or similar outside organisation, you may be required to enter into and observe a confidentiality agreement.

Cheating, plagiarism and other academic misconduct

All assessed work, must be your own work, except where exceptions are allowed and stated explicitly. Plagiarism (i.e. the use, without acknowledgement, of the intellectual work of other people, and the act of representing the ideas or discoveries of others as one's own in any work submitted for assessment or presented for publication) is a form of academic misconduct and is not acceptable, and will normally result in failure of the work by the examiners and disciplinary action.

You should familiarise yourself with the Senate Handbook on Academic Misconduct, and take advantage of the courses and tools offered by the University to help you understand the definitions of academic misconduct and how to avoid it.

⁸ Theses completed on courses which form part of the University's AP contract with the Ministry of Defence are designated as having Crown Copyright.

PART A ASSESSMENT CONVENTIONS

This Part of the Handbook outlines the definitions and language used to describe assessment at Cranfield University, and the general principles involved in all assessments, including pass criteria at the individual assessment level and the overall award level.

3 Definition of assessment types

“Assessment” is the generic term for all student work that contributes formally toward taught course awards. We categorise all assessments as:

- an **examination** is a time-limited, real-time assessment under controlled conditions which will assess your skills, understanding and/or knowledge. Examinations are usually undertaken as part of a cohort and under invigilation (either by appointed persons or through regulated IT systems) or in an isolated one-to-one formal environment (i.e. an oral examination); or
- an **assignment** is an assessment that does not take place in controlled conditions and takes place in either private study time or scheduled classes and is submitted by a specified deadline, this includes written pieces of work, tasks, essays, reports, drawings, pieces of computer code, prototype designs and posters; or
- a **Group project** is an assessment based, either in full or in part, on the group work of two or more students. This may include group presentations or group assignments and part group work/part individual assignment. Depending on the assessment used students may receive a group mark, an individual mark or a combination of both; or
- a **thesis** is an extended piece of written research, design, development or management studies, usually only applicable for a full Masters award. (This may also be referred to as project, portfolio or dissertation).

Assessments are designated as:

- **Taught assessments** – an examination or assignment (usually relating to assessments linked to ‘taught modules’) which you are required to complete and attain the minimum mark. The pass mark for all assessments is $\geq 50\%$: additionally there is a minimum mark specified for each assessment (of either 40% or 50%), which is required in order to gain the associated learning credits. Where an assessment has a minimum mark of 40%, marks in the range of 40-49% will be automatically compensated by higher marks in other taught assessments. At the discretion of the Board of Examiners or by Board of Examiners Chair’s action a student may be permitted to re-take assessments between 40-49% with support of and rationale provided by the course director, which should include that your taught average (with the compensated module(s)) is $\geq 50\%$.
- **Substantial pieces of assessment** – A group project or other substantial piece of assessment corresponding to ≥ 40 credits and is not part of the taught assessment, which you are required to pass ($\geq 50\%$) in order to qualify for your intended award. A mark of $< 50\%$ cannot be compensated by higher marks in other assessments.
- **Thesis** – usually related to an independent research project, and corresponding to ≥ 60 credits, which you are required to pass ($\geq 50\%$) in order to qualify for your intended award. A mark of $< 50\%$ cannot be compensated by higher marks in other assessments.

The majority of assessments at Cranfield are designed as independent assessments, where the final mark is made up of a single assessed piece of work. Multipart assessments may be used in some circumstances where there is a clear andragogic reason for doing so. For multipart assessments the final mark is calculated from several connected elements.

4 Pass criteria for an overall award

This Section outlines the rules observed by boards of examiners in determining whether you qualify for an award of the University.^{9 10}

In order to achieve your award, you are required to achieve:

- An overall average mark of $\geq 50\%$;
- An average mark of $\geq 50\%$ across the taught assessment;
- All assessments need to be completed and the minimum mark attained: no more than one failure to complete an assessment (as defined in Section 2.3) will be permitted throughout the course of your studies (Please note that the board of examiners does not have discretion to overrule this limit, but can refer a case to Senate's Education Committee);^{11 12}
- **For Taught Assessments**, the minimum mark for each individual taught assessment on the first attempt for the significant majority of the taught assessments, noting that:
 - if you fail to attain the minimum mark for **up to 30 learning credits**, you will be permitted to re-take all of those assessments (except for circumstances where a resit award capped at 50% would be insufficient to achieve an overall average mark of $\geq 50\%$ across the taught assessments);
 - if, having failed to attain the minimum mark for 30 learning credits, you fail to obtain the minimum mark for **any additional learning credits** over the course of your studies you will be disqualified from the right to re-take the assessments: this will normally result in intended award failure. (Please note the board of examiners may at its discretion overrule this limit, but this is not an automatic right);
 - it is not permissible for you to fail an elective module and then proceed to take a different elective module in its place.
- **For Substantial pieces of assessment** (corresponding to ≥ 40 credits, which are not part of the taught assessment average), the pass mark of $\geq 50\%$ (where they exist);
- **For the thesis**, a mark of $\geq 50\%$ in order to receive a pass (where it exists).

In all cases, the average mark is calculated by taking into account the relative weighting of the associated learning credits, and the proportionality of individual assessments within a module, as outlined in the course specification.

Where you do not qualify for an award (taking into account the discretionary powers of the board of examiners), and the board of examiners decide to support a continuation of studies in order for you to meet the required standards, exceptional permission may be granted by Senate's Education Committee (who may delegate cases to its individual members).

The required credits for the award are outlined in your course handbook.

Further information is provided in Appendix B about how boards of examiners will consider your marks and determine a final outcome.

⁹ This section does not apply to students taking accredited short courses or stand-alone accredited modules, where the pass mark is 50%.

¹⁰ The MBA has separate pass criteria – see Appendix C.

¹¹ For students who were registered before 1 August 2015, the requirement to obtain a minimum mark for a taught assessment will not apply for taught assessment taken before 31 August 2015 (unless the assessment was designated as a "key assessment" under the previous Assessment Rules).

¹² Providing the minimum mark is met, a mark of 40-49% will be automatically compensated if a student's overall average taught assessment mark (including the failed assessment) is greater than or equal to 50%. Students are advised, however, that they retain the right to re-take an assessment with a mark of <40% (but should note that a re-take attempt will be capped at 50%), as long as they haven't failed more than 30 credits. At the discretion of the Board of Examiners or by Board of Examiners Chair's Actions a student may be permitted a re-take attempt of modules in the range of 40-49% only if the average mark of their other taught modules would not allow them to qualify for their award (<50%).

5 Pass criteria for individual assessments¹³

Your course handbook will detail the minimum marks for your assessments.¹⁴ Your course may have modules which contain assessments with both 40% and 50% minimum marks for assessments. The pass mark for all pieces of assessment is 50%.

All pieces of assessed work are marked out of 100 (or are converted to marks out of 100 prior to being confirmed by the board of examiners). Marks are recorded either as integers or to one decimal place but modules will be rounded and recorded as integers on transcripts. The convention of rounding up the decimal place digit of ≥ 5 will apply. For example 57.3 will be rounded to 57, 57.7 will be rounded to 58 and 57.5 will be rounded up to 58.

The mark for any re-sit assessment will be capped at 50%, with no candidate able to attain a higher mark for that re-sit assessment. Re-sit marks of less than 50% will be recorded as your final mark. For example, a re-sit mark of 70% would be capped at and recorded as 50%, a re-sit mark of 44% would be recorded as 44%.

Taught assessments (pieces of assessment corresponding to <40 credits)

- A mark of $\geq 50\%$ is required to pass the assessment, however:
 - the stated minimum mark for each individual assessment must be attained (this is normally 40% but in some cases will be clearly stated as 50%);¹⁵
 - where the stated minimum mark is 40%, an overall mark of 40-49% for the module will be automatically compensated providing that overall your average mark for the taught phase of your course (including the failed assessment(s)) is $\geq 50\%$: a mark of $<40\%$ will require the assessment to be re-taken (subject to the limitations outlined in Section 4)¹⁶;
 - where the stated minimum mark is 50%, a mark of $<50\%$ will require the assessment to be re-taken (subject to the limitations outlined in Section 4).
- The marks of a re-take (or re-submission) of an assessment will be capped at 50%. Providing the minimum mark is met, re-take marks which give an overall module mark within the range of 40-49% will allow the module to be automatically compensated providing that overall your average mark for the taught phase of your course (including the failed assessment(s)) is $\geq 50\%$;
- Any compensation will only be applied if all of the credits required for an award (either the intended award or a lower exit award) are passed or compensable

¹³ The MBA has separate pass criteria – see Appendix C

¹⁴ If you are taking an accredited short course or a stand-alone accredited module, you are expected to pass the short course/module in its own right in order to receive the intended learning credits. If you fail the assessment(s) associated with a stand-alone module or an accredited short course ($<50\%$), you will normally be permitted to re-take the assessment. A re-take assessment would normally be capped at 50%, unless exceptional circumstances have been presented and accepted.

The University would normally advise against you requesting to transfer a failed result, (i.e. $<50\%$) towards a named award (e.g. PgCert, PgDip, MSc).

¹⁵ For students who were registered before 1 August 2015, the requirement to obtain a minimum mark for a taught assessment will not apply for taught assessment taken before 31 August 2015 (unless the assessment was designated as a “key assessment” under the previous Assessment Rules).

¹⁶ You will not be offered the opportunity to re-take any assessment which is compensable provided you have a taught average of $\geq 50\%$; At the discretion of the Board of Examiners or by BoE Chair’s Action you may be permitted a re-take attempt of modules in the range of 40-49% only if the average mark of your other taught modules would not allow you to qualify for your award ($<50\%$).

- Any re-take assessment will be of the same assessment type as the original failed assessment and be either:
 - a new (and different) examination; or
 - i. a new (and different) piece of submitted work;
 - ii. a revision of the work submitted originally.
- A first instance of a failure to submit or attend an assessment would be permitted a further opportunity to submit or attend, but the marks obtained will be capped at 50%. Further instances of failure to attend or submit across the course would not entitle you to any further assessment opportunities and would normally mean that you would not gain the credits and therefore would fail the award.
- Failure to attain the minimum mark or failure to submit on the second attempt would normally mean that you would fail the module and the intended award.

Substantial pieces of assessment (pieces of assessment corresponding to ≥40 credits)

- A mark of ≥50% is required to pass the assessment. A mark of 40-49% cannot be compensated by performance in other modules.
- A mark of <50% will normally result in an opportunity to re-take the assessment or an opportunity to revise and represent the original work (this will be defined in your course handbook), in both cases with the re-take mark capped at 50%. The board of examiners reserve the right to fail a mark of <40% without a second assessment opportunity.
- A first instance of a failure to submit or attend an assessment would be permitted a further opportunity to submit or attend, but the marks obtained will be capped at 50%. Further instances of failure to attend or submit across the course would not entitle you to any further assessment opportunities and would normally mean that you would not gain the credits and therefore would fail the intended award.
- Failure or failure to submit on the second attempt would normally mean that you would fail the intended award.

Thesis (or other outcome from an individual research project)

A mark of ≥50% is required to pass the assessment.

The possible assessment outcomes for taught course theses are:

- An outright pass (≥50%)
- A pass mark subject to corrections
- An opportunity to revise and represent your thesis
- An outright fail

A pass mark subject to corrections

The board of examiners may provide a pass mark subject to corrections of the thesis to be made by you before that mark is confirmed. Any corrections will be provided in a written 'Statement of Corrections'. Corrections should be required in situations in which a thesis has met the required standard for a Masters degree except for unacceptable aspects of presentation which must be improved before a pass can be confirmed.

Corrections may be required to:

- amend tables, references, figures, graphs, usually to make things more clear or to correct an error or omission (e.g. units in a table or sourcing errors);
- reword sentences/paragraphs to make the meaning clear or to correct an erroneous or misleading statement;
- preserve anonymity of individuals and companies if inappropriately revealed.

Corrections should not be used to improve the general quality of theses which have achieved a pass mark. The assignment of corrections would not be expected to be the norm. The required work will require little or no input from the student's thesis supervisor other than to confirm the corrections have been completed satisfactorily.

An opportunity to revise and represent your thesis

If not awarded a pass (either outright or subject to corrections) you will normally be offered an opportunity to revise and represent your thesis, in line with a written 'Statement of Deficiencies' provided to you. The second opportunity will be assessed in line with this Statement and the final mark capped at 50%. The board of examiners reserves the right to fail a mark of <40% without a second assessment opportunity.

An outright fail

Failure to submit your thesis by the stated thesis-handing-in-date (or within a week, where the mark will be capped at 50%) will normally result in an award failure, with no opportunity for your thesis to be examined, unless you have requested in advance an additional 'writing up period' or extension to registration through your Course Director or SAS Lead.

Failure to submit corrections or revisions to your original thesis by the stated thesis-handing-in-date will also normally result in an intended award failure. There is no one-week grace period for the submission of Corrections or theses that have been referred for Revise and Represent outcome.

6 Re-take opportunities for assessments¹⁷

This section relates to circumstances where a second opportunity to take a taught assessment has been granted, and the specific rules that apply in those circumstances.

Your course team will monitor your progression throughout the course and as such you may not be offered a re-take if it is clear that you will be unable to qualify for your intended award, whatever your performance in a re-take assessment might be. In such circumstances your SAS Lead or Course Director will outline where you are failing to make academic progress, the likelihood of you failing the course and may advise what options are available to you to exit with a lower award.¹⁸ Your SAS Lead or Course Director may recommend that you withdraw from the course. Further information on withdrawal is available in the Student Handbook on Changes to Registration.

Re-sat assessments will be marked using the marking criteria in place when the module was originally attended.

Re-take criteria

Students will normally only be offered a re-take opportunity in the following circumstances:

Taught Assessments (<40 credits):

- Where you fail to achieve the minimum mark at the first attempt, providing that you have not failed to achieve the minimum mark for >30 credits across your course.
- At the discretion of the Board of Examiners or by Board of Examiners Chair's Action, where the minimum mark is 40%, and at a first attempt you have a score of 40-49% which is not compensable (if your overall taught mark is <50%).
- Where you fail to submit or complete an assessment at the first attempt, providing this is the only occurrence of this during your course.
- In all cases, you are only able to re-take a maximum of 30 credits across the taught element of your course.

Substantial pieces of Assessment (≥40 credits):

- Where you fail to achieve the pass mark (50%) at the first attempt.
- Where you fail to submit or complete an assessment at the first attempt, providing this is the only occurrence of this during your course.

Thesis (≥60 credits):

- As detailed in section 5, there is no formal re-take opportunity for theses. However examiners are able to ask that you revise and represent your thesis if they feel it has the potential to meet the pass mark (50%).

Failure to complete an assessment on the first occasion

If you fail to attend an examination or fail to submit an assignment without prior consent, this will be recorded as a 'failure to complete the assessment'.

'Failure to complete the assessment' means that you will not receive the learning credits for that assessment/module. If you fail to complete the assessment on one occasion, you will normally have a further assessment opportunity classed as a second attempt and capped at 50%. If you subsequently "fail to complete the assessment" on a second occasion, you will not receive the learning credits and accordingly will not be eligible for your intended award.

¹⁷ The MBA has separate pass criteria – see Appendix C

¹⁸ You are permitted to retake up to 30 credits in total towards either your intended or exit award

This does not apply to your thesis: if you fail to submit your thesis, you will not be provided with a second attempt at the individual research project.

Number of attempts

For any one assessment, you are permitted no more than two assessment opportunities (unless exceptional circumstances are agreed). You may not automatically be given a second assessment opportunity if your performance in other modules means that you will be unable to complete your intended award. The re-take will normally be scheduled within the same academic year but may take place in the following academic year or later depending on the mode of study and course schedule.

If you have passed a particular assessment, you are not permitted to re-take it to improve your mark, unless you have been required to do so following a formal appeal.

Where you are permitted a re-sit due to exceptional circumstances, this will be classed as a further first attempt.

Nature of the second attempt

All second attempts at taught assessments (including those granted as a result of failure to complete the assessment on the first occasion) are automatically capped at 50% (i.e. in essence, the second attempt is restricted to a pass/fail outcome).

Boards of examiners reserve the right to award >50% for a re-taken assessment, but only if information not previously disclosed has been agreed.

Where you have made more than one attempt at the same taught assessment, the final mark obtained will always be the higher of the two assessment opportunities (subject to any cap).

Modules with more than one assessment or element

Modules with more than one assessment instance may be categorised as either independent assessments or a single multi-part assessment consisting of two or more elements. The following table outlines how either a failure to achieve the minimum mark or failure to complete the assessment is treated in these circumstances¹⁹:

Independent assessments	Multi-part assessment
e.g. three separate assessments, outlined in the module descriptor (10 credits) as: A assignment 25% B assignment 25% C assignment 50%	e.g. three elements forming one assessment, but outlined in the module descriptor (10 credits) as: assignment 100%
<u>Example 1:</u> marks obtained 45% 20% 55% outcome: overall mark of 44%. minimum mark for overall assessment attained – but assessment B must be re-sat. The mark for assessment B will be capped at 50%.	<u>Example 1:</u> marks obtained 11/25 5/25 27/50 outcome: overall mark of 43%. minimum mark for assessment attained: element 2 does not need to be re-sat.
<u>Example 2:</u> marks obtained 45% 20% 42% outcome: overall mark of 37%. minimum mark for overall assessment not attained – but only assessment B must be re-sat. The mark for assessment B will be capped at 50%.	<u>Example 2:</u> marks obtained 11/25 5/25 21/50 outcome: overall mark of 37%. minimum mark for overall assessment not attained – and all elements must be re-sat, with the overall re-sit mark capped at 50%. The re-sit mark for each element, and therefore the overall re-sit mark, would be considered as the student's final mark, even if it were lower than the previous score.
Failure to submit on time ²⁰ one or more of the three assignments would count as one instance of a failure to complete the assessment, and the one opportunity to be allowed to re-sit the assessment(s) (capped at 50%).	Failure to submit or complete on time ²¹ one or more of the three elements would not require remedial action if the absence of the marks for that assignment still result in meeting the minimum mark for the overall assessment (whether 40% or 50% as appropriate), but the whole assessment would be capped at 50% . Should failure to submit or complete one element result in a student not meeting the minimum mark all elements must be re-sat (capped at 50%).
The failure above (highlighted in red) corresponds to 2.5 learning credits (for the purposes of the stated 30 credit limit on re-take opportunities).	The failure in example 2 above (highlighted in red) corresponds to 10 learning credits (for the purposes of the stated 30 credit limit on re-take opportunities).

¹⁹ In the examples given the assessments have a minimum mark of 40%.

²⁰, ²¹ Or within any applicable grace period as outlined in section 2.3

7 Assessment conventions and standards

7.1 Anonymity

Where practicable, the University implements mechanisms to allow for the anonymity of candidates during the marking process. This anonymity is not extended to consideration at boards of examiners (where exceptional circumstances recommendations may be considered) although there is the facility to do so.

Across the University, it is common for written examination scripts to be identified by the University's student number (rather than candidate name) in order to provide a reasonable barrier to unintended consideration of the candidate other than the quality of the completed assessment.

Mechanisms for anonymity of assignments vary in view of the need to balance the benefits of providing assurance of objective assessment against the effectiveness of providing formative feedback and support to students. In order to ensure that examiners are applying assessment criteria consistently, the University has a robust moderation process.

7.2 Moderation of marking

All elements of assessment are moderated; the University uses two forms of moderation:

- **Sampling moderation** applies for most assessments (e.g. examination scripts and assignments). A sample of at least 10% of the total number of assessments for the piece of work or 5 pieces of work, whichever is the larger is moderated. In addition, normally all pieces of work receiving 52% or less by the first marker are moderated to ensure that there is full scrutiny of borderline assessments. The moderator will review the marks, range of marks and comments by the first marker to ensure that they reflect the outputs as measured against the model answer and/ or marking scheme.
- **Double marking** applies to all theses and normally for pieces of assessment >20 credits and/or alternative pieces of assessed work. Double marking means that at least two examiners or markers will independently review and mark the work.

7.3 External examiners

External examiners are appointed for all taught courses in order to provide confidence that the quality and standards of the degree are appropriate and consistent across the UK.

External examiners work alongside the other examiners to ensure fairness and conformity to the published assessment criteria. In the course of the assessment, students may be asked to meet the external examiners, to help them understand both the individual's performance and the provision as a whole. External examiners have the right to see all assessments and will be provided with a representative sample in the first instance to enable them to determine that internal marking and classifications are of an appropriate standard and are consistent.

As part of their duties, all external examiners produce an annual report for the University, outlining their views on the standards and quality of the course and its assessment. These reports are available on request to students from the Course Director or from Education Services. Please note that these reports are not written directly to benefit the students and that reports held will usually relate to previous years of the course, and not to your own year of provision.

7.4 Assessment feedback

You should receive an appropriate level of general and/or individual feedback on all assessed work to promote learning and facilitate improvement.

For taught and substantial summative assessments, feedback is provided to you within 20 working days of the submission date. However, where an extension to an assessment has been requested it is not always possible to provide feedback within the 20 working day period and therefore feedback will be provided no later than 40 working days after the agreed submission date.

The type of feedback you will receive will depend on the type of assessment²² and will be defined by your course team. Feedback can include:

- **Marks for the work** provided in accordance with the qualitative descriptors detailed below
- **Individual written feedback**, outlining strengths and weaknesses of the assessed work; this may be provided on a feedback form, a written report, or via email
- **Group written feedback**, provided as reflective feedback on the assessed work
- **Provision of exemplars**, so that you can reflect on how to improve your own work
- **Individual oral feedback**, particularly for small cohorts or individual presentations
- **Group oral feedback**, such as revision lectures or post-assessment workshops

In addition, each module should include an element of formative feedback to students (as detailed in that module's Assessment and Feedback Schedule), which should enhance your learning and help prepare you for your final assessment. Formative feedback is usually:

- restricted to comments on non-assessed work and other forms of qualitative feedback undertaken during a course or module
- not part of the formal assessment of the course or module.

Formative feedback may:

- help you improve aspects of work such as style/ structure/ referencing etc.
- be useful to confirm levels of understanding of new concepts before the formal assessment is submitted
- useful for giving constructive feedback to a group of students to ensure that they understand requirements for a formal assessment.

7.5 Errors in assessment

Where an assessment has failed to take place or has not taken place properly, and the University is liable for the errors, all affected candidates will be offered an additional assessment opportunity of the same type, as if the assessment with the error had not taken place (i.e. the erroneous assessment will not count as an assessment opportunity).

In very exceptional circumstances, the examiners may, in consultation with the Director of Education, agree instead to condone this piece of assessment. This means that the mark for this assessment will not be used to calculate the intended award but the credits will be awarded.

7.6 Alternative assessments

Assessments are generally prepared for cohorts of students. A re-take is normally prepared at the same time as the original assessment and reviewed by the external examiner; this helps ensure

²² Feedback on examinations will normally be limited to the mark but your Course Team can provide advice on improving examination techniques.

that, even where the re-take has to be delayed for some time, it should cover only those topics that were included at the time that you took the course. Alternative assessments (e.g. coursework instead of an examination) can only be approved in exceptional circumstances, including (but not limited to):

- **learning support reasons** following the creation of a Learning Support Agreement with a Learning Support Officer
- **disruption to group project assessments** where alternative assessments are required for either individual candidates or a group of individual candidates to enable the assessment of a module to be completed.

A case for alternative assessments for individual students should be made by the relevant Course Director to the Director of Education. The Director of Education will then either forward the request to Senate's Education Committee for formal approval, or reject the request.

7.7 Appeals against decisions of boards of examiners (academic appeals)

Academic appeals relate either to the decisions of the board of examiners about awards, or the decisions of markers about individual modules, and the processes by which they have come to those decisions. Appeals which are based on claims of inadequate or insufficient teaching or learning support will not be considered, and should be addressed through the student complaints procedure.

Failure to achieve your intended academic award does not grant you an automatic appeal. You must provide a written statement within 20 working days of the notification of the result, emailed to appeals@cranfield.ac.uk (or posting it to the Academic Registrar, Building 45, Cranfield campus) outlining the reasons you believe the assessment process has not been appropriate, and clearly stating which grounds your appeal relates to. Details of the permissible grounds, the appeals process and contacts who can offer support and advice are available from the Senate Handbook: Student Handbook Academic Appeals (Taught Courses).

8 Qualitative assessment criteria

Marks for all assessments are awarded in accordance with the qualitative assessment criteria:

Mark Range & Standard	Criteria / Descriptors (N.B. not all may apply for each piece of work or type of assessment)
80% - 100% Excellent	Demonstrating a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the subject and subfields. All stated intended learning outcomes exceeded. High capacity for critical evaluation. Novel application of the subject matter to a specific context. Requiring a student to have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertaken extensive further reading. • Produced a well-structured piece of work. • Demonstrated excellent communication skills. • Exercised a high level of original thought.
70% - 79% Very Good	Demonstrating an extensive knowledge and understanding of the subject and subfields. All stated intended learning outcomes met, with many exceeded. Very good capacity for critical evaluation. Effective application of the subject matter to a specific context. Requiring a student to have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertaken substantial further reading. • Produced a well-structured piece of work. • Demonstrated very good communication skills. • Exercised a significant level of original thought.
60% - 69% Good	Demonstrating a good knowledge and understanding of the subject and subfields. All stated intended learning outcomes met, with some exceeded. Good capacity for critical evaluation. Competent application of the subject matter to a specific context. Requiring a student to have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertaken some further reading. • Produced a well-structured piece of work. • Demonstrated good communication skills.
50% - 59% Satisfactory	Demonstrating a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the subject and subfields. All stated intended learning outcomes met. Standard critique of the subject matter. Adequate application of the subject matter to a specific context. Requiring a student to have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertaken adequate further reading. • Produced an adequately-structured piece of work. • Demonstrated basic but satisfactory communication skills.
40% - 49% Poor	Demonstrating an inadequate knowledge and understanding of the subject and subfields. Most stated intended learning outcomes met. Lacking critique of the subject matter. Limited application of the subject matter to a specific context. Requiring a student to have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertaken some relevant reading. • Produced a piece of work with a simple structure. • Demonstrated marginal communication skills.
0% - 39% Very Poor	Demonstrating a lack of knowledge and understanding of the subject and subfields. Many stated intended learning outcomes not met. Absence of critique of the subject matter. Lacking application of the subject matter to a specific context. Requiring a student to have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertaken inadequate reading. • Produced a poorly-structured piece of work. • Demonstrated poor communication skills.

PART B ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS

This Part of the Handbook outlines the procedures you are expected to follow for each category of assessment.

9 Examination procedures

Examination dates are set in advance and published in your course handbook.

Cranfield

- Examination dates are published on the VLE and at on the intranet under Students/Academic Matters/ Exams and Assessments

Shrivenham

- Examination dates are published on the VLE under the section entitled 'Assessment'

It is your responsibility to check the timetable and ensure that you are aware of the examination dates and locations.

9.1 Types of examination

- **Closed Book Examinations:** You may not take books or notes into the examination.
- **Open Book Examinations:** You may take any books you wish into the examination but no hand written notes or official handouts.
- **Open Note Examinations:** You may take official hand-outs and personal notes taken during lectures into the examination but no books.

Examinations can be both 'Open Note' and 'Open Book' and limitations may be placed on the number of books/notes per student as stipulated by the examiner in the examination instructions. The same categories can apply to both oral and written examinations.

9.2 Calculators in examinations

The use of programmable calculators in formal examinations is not permitted. You are required to buy the University-recommended calculator, Casio FX 83 or Casio FX 85 range. These are the only models which will be permitted in the examination room. You should have your calculator out on the examination desk for inspection. Calculators other than the prescribed model will be confiscated, and you will have to sit the examination without the benefit of a calculator. You should also note that you are responsible for the condition of your calculator and ensuring that the batteries are fully charged.

9.3 Use of dictionaries

The use of printed non-specialist English and/or foreign language dictionaries is permitted. Electronic dictionaries or a personal organiser containing such a dictionary will not be permitted.

Dictionaries, pencil cases and calculators will be subject to spot checks by the invigilator and/or the examination administrator. Unless otherwise advised, no personal electronic devices (including mobile phones and smart watches) will be allowed into the examination room.

9.4 Arrival at an examination

- You must arrive at the examination room at least ten minutes before the scheduled start time of the examination.
- A seating plan will be displayed outside the examination room and you should sit at the allocated desk.
- You should display your photographic identification on the top left corner of your desk for checking by the invigilator.
- As all formal written examinations will be marked on an anonymous basis, you should note your student number for use on your answer book.
- You may only bring with you approved items necessary for the examination and previously agreed with the examiners. No mobile telephones or other personal electronic devices are permitted. All overcoats, briefcases and other bags must be left at the place set aside for that purpose.

9.5 During an examination

- Smoking is not allowed in the examination room. You may bring a small tube or packet of sweets, and a small transparent bottle of water, but no other food or drink, into the examination room.
- The following will be supplied: question paper, answer book, graph paper and scrap paper (if required) and any additional materials agreed by the examiners beforehand.
- You are responsible for checking that you have been issued with the correct examination paper.
- You should write your student number on the cover of answer books and additional sheets. You should also write your name on the right hand side of the exam booklet and fold and seal the edge as indicated. Correction fluid should not be used on the answer books.
- You must obey the instructions set out on the cover of your answer books and any instructions given by the invigilators.
- You should read through the question paper in its entirety during the allocated reading time prior to the commencement of the examination and should raise any questions that arise from the question paper (by attracting the attention of the invigilator). The allocated reading time is the only opportunity to ask questions.
- You must not write on any paper other than that provided.
- If you wish to attract the attention of the invigilator, you should raise your hand. In no circumstances should you borrow anything from other candidates or leave your place without permission.
- You must be silent except when asked to speak by the invigilator or by an examiner.
- You can be admitted up to 30 minutes after the start of the examination, but if you are late you will not be allowed additional time and will be required to complete the examination at the same time as the other students. If you arrive late, you should report to the invigilator.
- If you arrive more than 30 minutes late, you will not normally be admitted to the examination room. The invigilator may in exceptional circumstances allow you to be admitted to the examination; however, in such cases the relevant examination board will have to approve the inclusion of the marks from this examination in your academic record. If you are late you will not be allowed additional time and will be required to complete the examination at the same time as the other students.
- You will not be allowed to permanently leave the examination room until 30 minutes has elapsed from the start of the examination. You are not allowed to leave the examination room during the first 30 minutes or last 15 minutes of an examination, in view of the disturbance caused to other candidates. Where two or more examinations are taking place in one examination room, candidates may be advised that they cannot leave the examination room early in view of the disturbance caused to other candidates.

- If you leave the examination room temporarily you must be accompanied by an invigilator or nominee. You will not be re-admitted unless throughout the period of your absence you have been under the supervision of a person appointed by the invigilators.

9.6 At the end of an examination

- At the end of the examination you must stop writing immediately when instructed to do so by the invigilator.
- If an examination script is found to be missing, and it appears the fault lies with the University, the assessment may be condoned, at the discretion of the board of examiners. This means you will be awarded no specific marks for the work, but your overall performance will not be affected by the missing material. You retain the right, if you so choose, to re-take the examination as if for the first time at the next sitting of the examination.
- If an examination script is found to be missing, and it appears the fault lies with you, the Chair of the Board of Examiners, in consultation with the Academic Registrar, will exercise his or her discretion in dealing with the issue. This discretion may include requiring you to undertake a re-sit examination as for the first attempt.
- You may not remove any papers, used or unused from the examination room, including the question paper (unless it has been marked to the contrary).
- You must not remove any paper from an examination book.

9.7 Failure to follow assessment instructions

If you fail to follow the instructions on an examination paper, the board of examiners may at its discretion award a mark of zero, discount one or more answers or apply any penalty outlined by the course team in advance in order for the examination to be considered valid.

In order to receive the credits for an assessment, you will be required to demonstrate that you have made an attempt to follow the assessment instructions.

Failure to follow assessment instructions is not eligible grounds for an academic appeal.

9.8 Academic misconduct in examinations

- You must not, directly or indirectly, give assistance to any other candidate, or permit any other candidate to copy or otherwise read your papers.
- You must not, directly or indirectly, accept assistance from any other candidate or use any other candidate's papers.
- If you are suspected of cheating, receiving assistance or assisting other candidates a note will be made of the circumstances by the invigilator and the matter will be reported to the Course Director and to the Chair of the board of examiners. You will normally be allowed to continue with the examination, but the matter will be reported to the examiners and to the relevant Academic Conduct Officer. Disciplinary action may subsequently be taken in accordance with the Senate Handbook on Academic Misconduct.

9.9 Exceptional circumstances and alternative arrangements in examinations

- If you are absent from an examination due to illness you must follow the exceptional circumstances procedure detailed in Part C of this Handbook.
- The examiners have full discretion to modify the usual arrangements for examination and assessment to take account of a candidate's particular requirements (e.g. additional time for those with dyslexia, coloured examination papers, use of computers or a personal scribe)

(amanuensis) in examinations if necessary, etc.). Any candidate wishing to seek approval for such an arrangement should contact their Learning Support Officer in the first instance, normally at least two months in advance of the examination (unless exceptional medical circumstances prevent such prior notice) to ensure that sufficient time is available to make the appropriate modifications.

NOTE: It is University policy that students with dyslexia shall be given 25% additional time in formal examinations i.e. an extra 15 minutes per hour in addition to any other recommendations made by an appropriately qualified educational psychologist.

9.10 Retention of examination scripts

Examination scripts will be retained for at least the duration of your period of registration. Examination scripts will not be returned to you but you can request access to the comments and marks of the examiners. Such comments will normally be communicated through your course team. Access to, or return of copies of, examination scripts to students is at the discretion of individual course teams, taking into account the potential formative learning opportunities this may provide.

10 Assignment procedures

10.1 Assignment specifications and deadlines

Your course team will provide you with a coursework or assignment specification for each piece of assessed work which will outline the assignment question, deadline date and mark scheme and will also outline the method of submission and reassessment. You are required to ensure that the assignment is submitted in accordance with the requirements of the assignment specification by the deadline date or to submit an exceptional circumstances request.

Assignment dates will normally be published in advance in your course handbooks.

10.2 Turnitin and assignment submission

You are expected to submit written assessments through a non-originality detection system called Turnitin UK, except where expressly advised otherwise by staff. The extent to which Turnitin UK should be used will vary from course to course, and staff will confirm how many pieces of work prior to the thesis students are expected to submit to Turnitin UK.

Note: In exceptional cases, for example if public access to a thesis is restricted, an assessment may be exempt from submission to Turnitin UK. Staff will instead check for occurrences of academic misconduct manually.

Multiple submissions of assessments and theses can be made to Turnitin UK. On each occasion staff and students both have the opportunity to view a report that provides an Overall Similarity Index (OSI) and shows where similarities to other texts appear in the written work. Some staff may limit the number of submissions you can make per assessment. Turnitin UK will remain open after the deadline for an assignment has passed, therefore even though a student submitting after the deadline will receive notification that they have successfully submitted to Turnitin, any work submitted after the deadline has passed will be recorded as late, with any relevant penalty applied.

Please note, Turnitin will only generate three Overall Similarity Index reports per 24 hours. Students are permitted to make as many submissions to Turnitin as they wish up to the submission deadline. Where no submission has been made prior to the submission deadline the first submission received after the deadline will be considered the final, submitted assignment and classed as a late submission.

Some Schools require you to submit your work directly to Turnitin UK, whereas others will ask you to submit via the VLE (Blackboard or Moodle). Details should be in your course handbook or will be available from the course team.

Cranfield

- Submission information will be available from your Course Team or in your course handbook.

Shrivenham

- All assignments must be submitted on the VLE and through Turnitin unless commercially sensitive or classed as official-sensitive and above.
- Assignments with mathematical equations should be scanned and the resulting PDF document submitted to Turnitin.
- Commercially sensitive or official-sensitive and above assignments should be submitted to your SAS Lead on an appropriate Protectively Marked CD.

10.3 Failure to follow assessment instructions

If you fail to follow the instructions for a piece of work submitted for assessment, the board of examiners may at its discretion award a mark of zero, or apply any penalty outlined by the course team in advance.

In order to receive the credits for an assessment, you will be required to demonstrate that you have made an attempt to follow the assignment specification. The board of examiners may at its discretion award a mark of zero or apply any penalty outlined by the course team in advance. The examiners will use their academic judgment to determine whether you have made sufficient attempt to be awarded the credit in order for your marks to be compensated by marks in other modules. Failure to follow assessment instructions is not eligible grounds for an academic appeal.

10.4 Exceptional circumstances and alternative arrangements for assignments

If you are unable to submit an assessment you must follow the exceptional circumstances procedure detailed in Part C of this Handbook.

The examiners have full discretion to modify the usual arrangements for assessment to take account of a candidate's particular requirements (e.g. additional time, requiring a personal scribe (amanuensis) etc.). Any candidate wishing to seek approval for such an arrangement should contact their Learning Support Officer in the first instance in advance of the assessment to ensure that sufficient time is available to make the appropriate modifications.

10.5 Retention of assignments

Assignments will be returned to students with feedback either through the VLE or in hard copy. Copies of assignments submitted electronically will be retained indefinitely.

11 Thesis procedures

11.1 Prescribed form for the presentation of taught theses

Details of the “Prescribed Form for the Presentation of Taught Theses” is available on the intranet and provides guidance on the submission and presentation of taught thesis.

Supervisors may advise on the quality of early drafts but may not assist to the extent that the work becomes at least in part, that of the supervisor. The supervisor is not in a position to give a definitive judgment on the overall acceptability of a thesis, as the thesis will be subject to the University's double marking procedures and the final mark will be agreed by the examiners.

11.2 Thesis submission

Cranfield

- You should submit your thesis as directed by your Course Director.
- Final submission of your thesis must include a thesis cover sheet which is generated through a task on the EVE portal.
- When you have passed your MSc a final clean version of your thesis must be submitted electronically to the Course Director and/or SAS Lead who will arrange for it to be submitted electronically to the Library.

Shrivenham

- All theses must be submitted on the VLE and through Turnitin, except for theses classified as official-sensitive or above.
- If following the examination of your thesis you are required to make corrections, the revised thesis must be resubmitted on the VLE.
- Commercially sensitive and official-sensitive or above theses (and such revised theses) should be submitted to SAS in the Slim Building on an appropriate Protectively Marked CD.

If your thesis requires restricted access, you should also complete the template form for restriction of public access to thesis available on the intranet.

As with assignments, you will be given a deadline for submission of your thesis. Should you require an extension to this deadline you should request an extension using the Exceptional Circumstances form available on the Education Services section of the intranet. Any extension will only be approved if the grounds for the extension meet the University's definition of exceptional circumstances as detailed in section 12 of this Handbook.

Course Directors may approve requests to extend the deadline for thesis submission, provided that:

- The extension is for **two weeks or less**
- The request is supported by your supervisor
- The request was submitted to your supervisor **two weeks, or more, prior to your submission date**, using the correct Exceptional Circumstances form
- The grounds for the request meet the University's definition of exceptional circumstances as detailed in section 12

The Student Casework Team will consider extension requests in all other circumstances, namely:

- The extension is for more than two weeks, and / or
- The request was submitted to your supervisor less than two weeks prior to your submission date

In all cases, you must provide the rationale for the request, with supporting evidence.

11.3 Retention of theses

Most theses will be stored and published in one of the University's libraries and made available to others through the inter-library loan service. Exceptions to this are where a restriction has been placed for commercial or security reasons, where the thesis has not achieved the pass mark (50%), or at the discretion of the board of examiners, for theses achieving <60%.

PART C EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

The University encourages you to take full responsibility for your learning and permits you to take control of your studies and assessment in advance. This Part of the Handbook outlines the processes and procedures you need to follow to:

- (a) request a 'deferral' of an assessment due to exceptional circumstances (i.e. to sit an examination or to request the completion of a different assignment at the next available opportunity);
- (b) request a short extension to the submission deadline of a current assignment, in advance of the scheduled date;
- (c) present 'exceptional circumstances' to explain your failure to attend an examination;
- (d) present 'exceptional circumstances' to explain your failure to submit an assignment on the scheduled deadline (including either a late submission or a failure to submit).

In all of the situations outlined above ((a) to (d)) the University requires you to provide evidence of 'exceptional circumstances' (as defined in section 12) to explain your inability to complete the assessment(s) at the scheduled time: failure to provide acceptable exceptional circumstances and/or supporting evidence will result in academic penalties being applied as outlined in Section 14.

In all cases, you should complete either a **deferral form** (relating to (a) above) or an **exceptional circumstances form** (relating to (b)-(d) above) available on the VLE and intranet.

12 Definition of exceptional circumstances

Exceptional circumstances are defined as those which are:

- **Relevant:** the circumstances directly affect the learning and or preparation for the assessment (i.e. occur within the timeframe of the assessment); **and**
- **Unexpected:** the circumstances were unforeseen prior to the request (i.e. the circumstances should be submitted as soon as they are known); **and**
- **External:** the circumstances were outside of your control and that you could not have reasonably been expected to take action to mitigate the impact of the circumstances.

Exceptional circumstances cannot be used to replace or invalidate academic performance. Acceptance of exceptional circumstances may result in an extension or you being able to re-take the form of assessment again as a first attempt but will not result in individual marks being raised.

Third party corroborative evidence should be provided to support extension requests and deferrals. Acceptable exceptional circumstances include (but are not necessarily limited to):

- serious unexpected illness or injury (usually a short-term condition or accident);
- death or serious illness of a close relative or significant other person;
- long-term illness or health condition worsening;
- significant and unexpected adverse personal or family circumstances, including (but not limited to) being a victim of crime, or having to travel away from the University;
- unexpected travel disruption (e.g. road traffic/rail accident);
- for part-time students, significant and unexpected pressure from your employer;
- for examinations, religious commitments or observances.

Examples of circumstances which would not be considered exceptional include (but are not limited to):

- Aspects of the learning environment which you have reasonable control over (e.g. availability of learning resources, deadline conflicts, misreading or misunderstanding assessment requirements/dates; personal computer/printer problems including loss of computer data, submitting the wrong work (or version of the work));
- Aspects of your personal life which are not short-term or unexpected (e.g. change of address or employment, personal holidays or travel plans, self-inflicted illnesses (e.g. from substance abuse or sleep deprivation), weddings or similar family events);
- Financial issues;
- Poor time management;
- Foreseeable travel disruption (e.g. short train delays, travel strikes, road-works etc.);
- Routine full- or part-time employment activities;
- Personal conditions that were not disclosed in time for special examination arrangements to be made, but could have been;
- Circumstances where it is more appropriate to consider a suspension from studies (e.g. long-term illness, maternity/ paternity leave, major changes in personal or financial circumstances).

Claims may not be accepted if:

- The circumstances described are not deemed exceptional as outlined above
- The evidence does not cover the relevant period
- The evidence is not supplied by an independent third party
- The evidence does not support the suggested impact of the circumstances
- The evidence does not support your claim.

13 Requests for adjustments to assessment scheduling due to exceptional circumstances

Requests should be made **in advance** of the assessment date and you may request:

- (a) a **deferral** of an examination or an assignment due to exceptional circumstances (i.e. sit an examination or complete a different assignment at the next available opportunity);
- (b) **exceptional circumstances** to be taken into account, to modify your completion of an existing assessment (including pre-submission requests for short extensions, and post-assessment presentation of circumstances which prevented you from completing an assessment on time).

Requests relating to the submission of your thesis should be managed through consideration of an extension to registration and/or an application for a writing up period: these are requested instead through your SAS Lead.

13.1 Deferral requests due to exceptional circumstances

For all modules, if you have not attended the module, you may request that you defer attendance and assessment until the next opportunity. For Taught and Substantial pieces of assessment, if you have attended the related module, you may request that the related assessment is deferred until the next opportunity (which may be in the following academic year). Students may not defer a thesis assessment once they have commenced the related module.

Requests will only be accepted if all three of the criteria for exceptional circumstances are met (as outlined in Section 12 above – i.e. relevant, unexpected and external), and supported with relevant evidence.

For each individual piece of assessment you are only permitted one deferral opportunity. If a deferral is permitted, you will normally be expected to take that piece of assessment at the next available opportunity.

In both cases, a deferral results in the re-scheduled assessment being considered as your first attempt (unless you are already taking the assessment as a second attempt).

Requests for deferrals require the provision of evidence to support the circumstances behind your request, which must meet the definition of 'exceptional circumstances as set out in section 12. All requests **must** be made prior to the examination date or assignment submission date. You should not assume at the point of the request that a deferral will be approved, as there may be circumstances where the University cannot practically accommodate the request or where the request does not meet the University's definition of 'exceptional circumstances' (see section 12). Deferred assessments will be marked using the marking criteria in place when the module was originally attended.

Deferral requests should clearly state:

- whether the module or the assessment or both are being deferred
- which assessments the request relates to
- confirmation of the dates for deferral and confirmation of understanding of the impact on registration period
- The exceptional circumstances related to the request, and the evidence to support these (examples of possible evidence for a number of exceptional circumstances requests is given at 13.2)

Deferral requests are considered against the following criteria:

- Whether the circumstances meet the criteria set out in Section 12, and
- The impact on your ability to complete the award including, but not restricted to, consideration of:
 - whether the module will continue in its current format;
 - whether the deferral dates will impact on other taught modules;
 - whether deferral will impact on the thesis;
 - whether deferral will impact on your registration period;
 - whether a suspension is more appropriate, given your personal circumstances;
 - whether the module is a pre-requisite;
 - whether there have been any previous deferrals.

You should note that if the next opportunity is outside of your registration period, this may incur an additional tuition fee (extension fee) or have implications for your visa.

13.2 Exceptional circumstances requests: criteria, evidence and eligibility

Requests to have exceptional circumstances taken into consideration should clearly state:

- which assessments the request relates to. It is expected that exceptional circumstances will be short-term and as such the requests will only apply to specified assessments. If future assessments are affected, a new request should be submitted.
- a description of the circumstances and (ideally) which category it fits into (see table below).
- evidence to support the circumstances you are describing (see table below). In all cases, evidence from a third party should normally be provided to support the exceptional circumstances described, taking into account where necessary the ability of the culture, systems and infrastructure in other countries to provide such evidence.

Requests will only be accepted if all three of the criteria for exceptional circumstances are met (as outlined in Section 12 above – i.e. relevant, unexpected and external), and supported with relevant evidence.

You may not submit exceptional circumstances on the grounds of poor performance. In attending an examination or submitting work you are declaring yourself fit to sit.

Some examples of exceptional circumstances, and the evidence required are:

Exceptional circumstance	Example of Evidence
Serious unexpected illness or injury (usually a short-term condition or accident)	Doctor or hospital note Police incident record University or company health and safety incident form
Death or serious illness of a close relative or significant other person	Death certificate Doctor or hospital note
Long-term illness or health condition worsening	Doctor or hospital note
Significant and unexpected adverse personal or family circumstances, including (but not limited to) being a victim of crime, or having to travel away from the University	Police incident record Letter of support from third party
Unexpected travel disruption (e.g. road traffic/ rail accident)	News report Police incident record
For part-time students, significant and	Letter of support from current employer

unexpected pressure from your employer	(where this cannot be provided, the contact details of the employer should be provided to enable the University to establish contact)
Religious commitments or observances	Letter of support from religious leader

There are circumstances, however, where the University will take action to accommodate examination incidents and irregularities without your intervention, including:

- **Examination incident** – e.g. you are taken ill during an examination (this will be reported through the Invigilator report or Examinations Team);
- **Shortcomings in provision and/or assessment** – e.g. sub-standard teaching and/or support for an assessment for the whole cohort (this is raised through the Director of Education)
- **Serious long-term medical incapacity** – e.g. you have a long-term absence from the University but have not pre-arranged the implications for your assessment (this will be raised through the School Assistant Registrar).

Otherwise, all exceptional circumstances requests should be submitted by you. You should not wait to gather your evidence in order to submit a request. The University will consider requests, and make decisions, subject to the evidence being provided at a later date. All evidence, including subsequently requested evidence, should be provided as soon as possible, and by no later than 20 working days after the submission of your exceptional circumstances request.

It is your responsibility to ensure that the evidence is provided as soon as possible: the University will not normally obtain evidence on your behalf.²³

Evidence must be original.²⁴ Electronic evidence will be accepted but the original must be available on request. Evidence must be in English. Where evidence is not in English it must be accompanied by a translation certified by a Public Notary, accredited translator (member of the Association of Translation Companies) or a member of Cranfield University Staff (as approved by the Student Casework Team or the Head of Registry Services).

You may make exceptional circumstances requests after the deadline date but should be aware that the barrier for accepting circumstances after the assessment date is higher and you will be required to provide a full explanation as to why the circumstances were not raised before. Cases relating to poor time management will not be accepted. You are therefore encouraged to ensure that exceptional circumstances requests are made before the assessment date.

13.3 Deferral and exceptional circumstances requests: procedures

All requests should be submitted by you on the appropriate form, as provided by the SAS Lead or available on the VLE and intranet.

Appendix A provides a summary of how requests are considered.

Requests made prior to examination date or assignment submission deadline

All requests prior to the assessment date must be submitted through the SAS Lead. The SAS Lead will coordinate the consideration of requests with the Course Director. Once a decision has been made, the SAS Lead will liaise with Registry to ensure that the request and outcome are recorded.

²³ Exceptionally, where employers will not provide evidence in writing, Education Services will contact the employer to obtain verbal confirmation of the circumstances described.

²⁴ Submitting a false claim or fraudulent evidence is a serious matter and will be dealt with under the procedures in the Senate Handbook on Disciplinary Procedures.

Failure to make requests through the SAS Lead may result in your assessment record being incorrect.

The SAS Lead in agreement with the Course Director will review the form and submitted evidence and will:

Deferrals	Exceptional Circumstances (short extension request)
a) approve a module deferral; or b) approve an assessment deferral; or c) return the form where the impact of deferral would not enable you to successfully complete your award and provide advice on options available.	a) approve an extension of normally 10 working days up to a maximum of 15 working days, depending on the schedule for the return of marked work; or b) return the form where the grounds for exceptional circumstances have not been met.

The appropriate staff in Education Services will be advised of the outcome, to ensure your student record is kept up to date. SAS Leads, in agreement with Course Directors, can at their discretion approve extension requests pending receipt of evidence and in all cases, the SAS Lead will check that evidence has been received and that it confirms the impact and timeliness of the circumstances on your studies. Decisions can be reversed if evidence is insufficient.

Until such evidence is received, your marks will reflect the fact that exceptional circumstances have not yet been approved. This evidence should be provided as soon as possible, and by no later than 20 working days after the submission of your exceptional circumstances request. If evidence has not been received at this point or is insufficient then the mark penalties shall stand and your exceptional circumstances will be rejected.

Requests made after the examination date or assignment submission deadline

All requests should be submitted by you to your SAS Lead and include in the subject heading: ExCircs and your name. Your SAS Lead will liaise with you and your Course Director in order for all documentation to be completed and submitted to the Student Casework Team.

Your Course Director will be asked to provide a statement (to support your request or otherwise). This will be provided to you.

Cases must be submitted with:

- third party corroborative evidence, as outlined in Section 12 and provided by you;
- a clear and appropriate reason why the exceptional circumstances were not submitted prior to the assessment date, provided by you.

Requests must be made prior to the release of marks for that assessment, **and** within 20 working days of the assessment date: later requests will not be considered, except in the case of serious long-term medical incapacity reported through the School Assistant Registrar. The decision to reject late requests should be considered the final decision of the University. You are therefore strongly advised to submit the request as soon as possible after the assessment deadline to strengthen the case for consideration.

Where a student believes that there is further information that was not previously disclosed within 20 working days of the assessment date, that may impact the previous decision made by the Student Casework Team, they may supply this to the Student Casework Team at least 5 working days prior to the formal Board of Examiners meeting; any received thereafter will usually not be permitted.

This new evidence will be considered by the Student Casework Team alongside the original case, with a new recommendation provided to the Board of Examiners.

14 Possible outcomes of exceptional circumstances requests

14.1 Initial consideration of the request

You should not assume that exceptional circumstances requests will be accepted. Non-submission or non-attendance is at your own risk.

Formal notification of the acceptance or rejection of requests will come from staff in Education Services, and may include recommendations for you in response to the decision.

The impact of the acceptance or non-acceptance of requests for deferrals or exceptional circumstances is outlined in the table below:

Exceptional circumstance request	Result of <u>acceptance</u> of request	Result of <u>non-acceptance</u> of request
<p>Deferral of examination</p> <p>Retrospectively- authorised absence from examination</p>	<p>You would attend the next scheduled sitting of the examination.</p> <p>Your rescheduled examination would be treated as a first attempt unless the examination in question was already deemed a second attempt.</p>	<p>A failure to complete the assessment would be recorded.</p> <p>A re-take capped at 50% would only be permitted for the first instance of failure to complete the assessment. Subsequent instances would result in the credits not being awarded and award failure.</p>
<p>Deferral of an assignment</p> <p>Retrospectively- authorised failure to submit the assignment</p>	<p>You would take a new and different assessment at the next available occasion as your first attempt, unless the assignment in question was already deemed as a second attempt.</p>	<p>A failure to complete the assessment would be recorded.</p> <p>A re-take capped at 50% would only be permitted for the first instance of failure to complete the assessment. Subsequent instances would result in the credits not being awarded and award failure.</p>
<p>Extension of assignment submission deadline</p> <p>Retrospectively- authorised late submission of assignment</p>	<p>For requests prior to the submission date, you would be allowed to submit the assessment up to 15 working days later (the revised deadline will be communicated to you).</p> <p>For requests after the submission date, the late submission penalty would be removed. This would only apply if the work had been submitted (albeit late).</p>	<p>If the work was submitted within a week of the deadline, the mark would be capped at 50%.</p> <p>If the work was submitted after the one-week grace period, a mark of zero would be recorded.</p> <p>If the work was not submitted, a failure to complete the assessment and mark of zero would be recorded.</p> <p>A re-take capped at 50% would only be permitted for the first instance of failure to complete the assessment. Subsequent instances would result in the credits not being awarded and award failure.</p>

Where it is agreed that you can take the assessment at the next available occasion, this could be at the next scheduled re-take opportunity or the following academic year. You would be expected to meet the costs of returning to the University to attend the assessment if required and to commit to the re-assessment date. Your Course Director may also be required to request an extension to registration which may result in an additional tuition fee.

14.2 Appeal against the initial decision

Where requests are not agreed to, you will be provided with the reasons for the decision. You have the right to appeal to Senate's Education Committee against the initial decision but only under specific circumstances. These are limited to:

- A. that the evidence you provided was incomplete or inaccurate, to the extent where it is reasonable to conclude that the outcome may have been substantially different;
- B. that the person making the initial decision had summarily dismissed significant pieces of evidence in coming to his or her or their decision;
- C. that the criteria relating to the decision were not applied correctly by the person making the decision.

You may not appeal because you do not like the outcome, or because you disagree with the reasons you were given.

Appeals must be made within 20 working days of the date of the original decision, and should be sent in writing to appeals@cranfield.ac.uk, clearly marked in the subject header as "Exceptional circumstances appeal". You should include (or attach):

- the original decision with your appeal email;
- your statement, including clearly under which reason you are appealing (A, B or C); and
- evidence to support your statement.

Failure to provide all three items above may result in your appeal being rejected by the Secretary to Senate's Education Committee on its behalf.

The decision of Education Committee will be the final decision of the University: there is no further right of appeal (although students retain the right to complain to an external body as outlined in the Student Complaints procedures).

15 Confidentiality of exceptional circumstances requests

By submitting an exceptional circumstances form you are agreeing to the University holding this personal data for the purposes of processing your claim. The University holds this data in accordance with its notification under the Data Protection Act.

You are not required to give detailed personal information unless you feel it is relevant to your claim. You do not for example need to provide detailed information about a medical condition and can ask your doctor to provide evidence that outlines the impact that the condition has on your ability to study rather than providing detail on the condition itself.

Your exceptional circumstances request will only be provided to a limited number of people to allow your claim to be processed.

For claims made before the assessment date or deadline:

- your Course Director (or proxy in his/her absence);
- your SAS Lead and other relevant staff in Education Services (in order to record the outcome);
- the Director of Education (in an advisory capacity).

The following may also be consulted by the Course Director:

- the relevant Module Leader;
- an Assistant Registrar, or the Academic Registrar;
- third party evidence provider (to confirm authenticity).

In addition, claims after the assessment deadline or date will be considered by the Student Casework Team and the outcomes recorded by staff in Education Services.

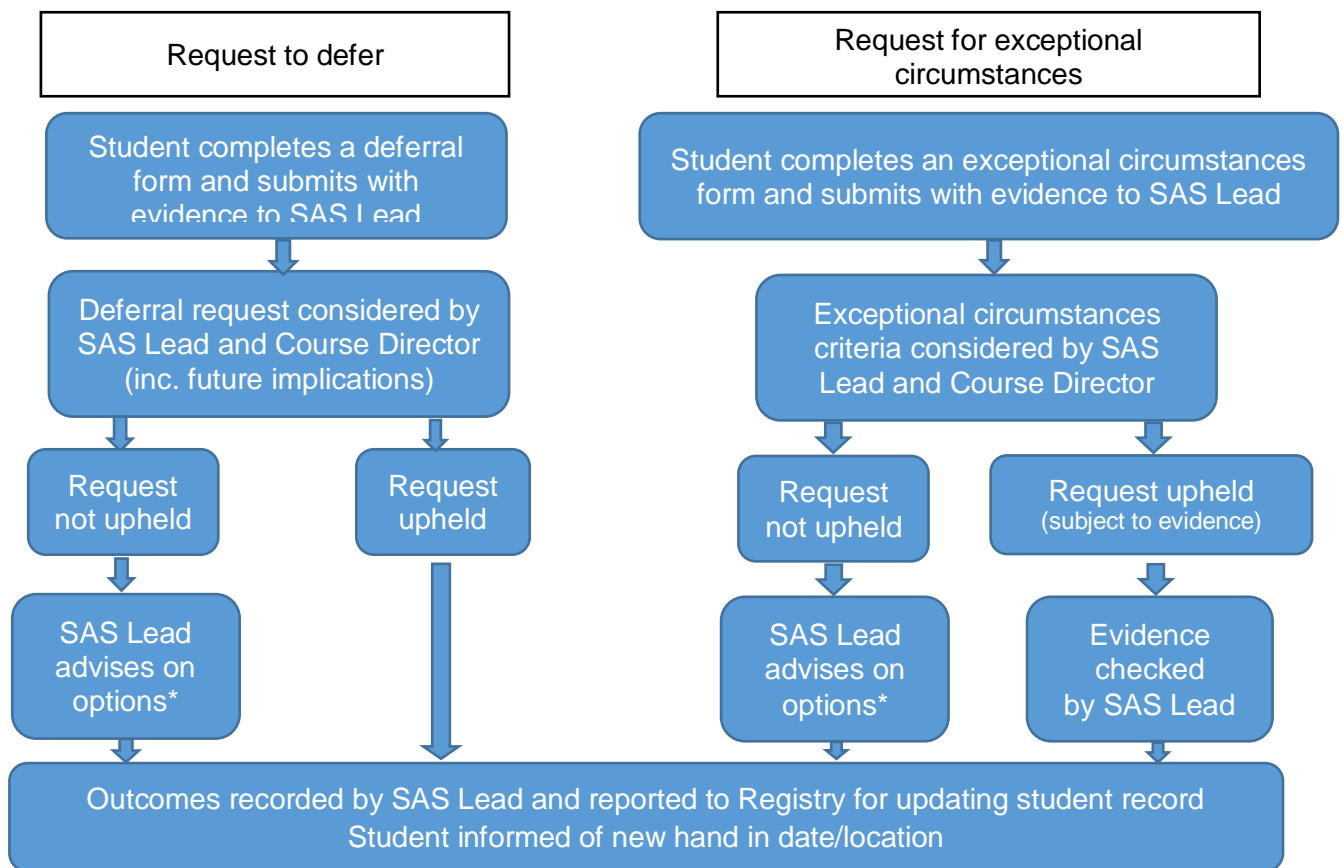
The outcomes but not the circumstances will be provided to the board of examiners with the Student Casework Team decision and/or recommended course of action.

Your exceptional circumstances, deferral or extension form and evidence will be retained by the University for your period of registration to enable the outcome to be implemented.

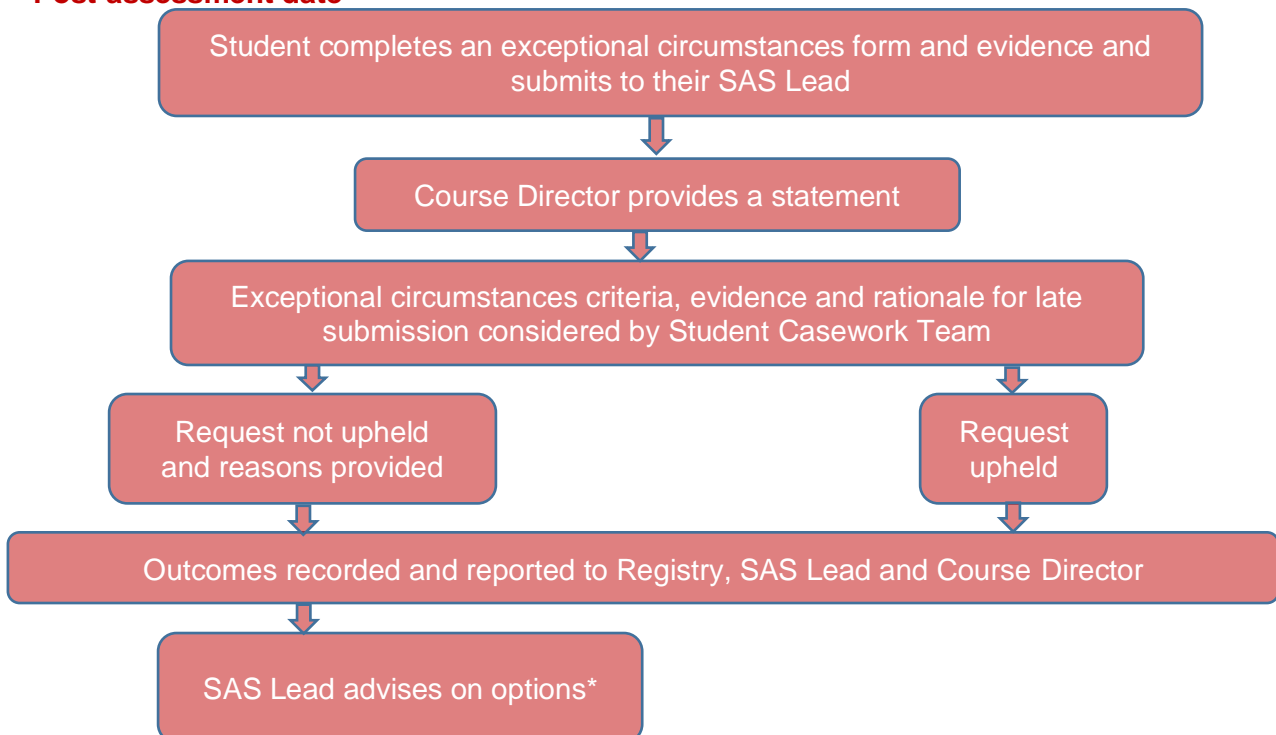
SAS Leads may retain a skeleton database of outcomes but will not retain personal details or information relating to the exceptional circumstances once a student's period of study is complete.

APPENDIX A: Flow diagram: assessment adjustment requests

Pre-assessment date



Post-assessment date



*Including the right to appeal to Education Committee

APPENDIX B: Formal outcomes of examination boards

All candidates for a degree or other academic distinction of the University must have examiners formally appointed for them. A “Board of Examiners” will include internal examiners (i.e. members of academic staff) and one or more external examiners who are independent of the University. Boards of examiners approve candidates for awards providing that students have demonstrated that they have met the associated learning outcomes, the appropriate number of learning credits and the approved requirements of the course within the University pass criteria.

Boards of examiners can choose to:

- a) confirm a relevant academic award (Masters, Postgraduate Diploma or Certificate); or
- b) defer a decision on the outcome of assessment, requiring you to undertake further work to demonstrate that you have met the learning outcomes of the course; or
- c) agree to fail you for an award.

If the board of examiners decides to defer a decision on the taught element of a course, this may result in you:

- a) re-sitting the necessary examination or re-submitting an assessment
- b) returning to studies, repeating the learning associated with the course.

In both cases marks would be capped at 50%

If the board of examiners decides to defer a decision on the research element of a course, this may result in you:

- a) completing corrections to your thesis, in which case you would be given a statement of corrections to complete within a set period of no more than 6 months. The original mark given to the thesis will stand but failure to submit your corrections by the deadline would result in a fail. In such cases, you would have continued remote access to learning facilities and it would be expected that you would require minimal guidance to be provided by your supervisor.
- b) Revising and representing your thesis, in which case you would be given a statement of deficiencies to complete within a set period of no more than 12 months. The examiners would then re-examine the thesis according to the statement of deficiencies following the revision of the thesis. The mark would be capped at 50%. In such cases you would continue to have access to learning facilities and your supervisor would provide continued supervision.

You will only be given one revise and represent opportunity in accordance with the two permissible assessment opportunities for taught modules.

APPENDIX C: MBA Pass Criteria

Pass Criteria

Each assessment is awarded a mark out of 100 per cent. Where a module is assessed with more than one assessment e.g., a group project and an examination, marks are awarded separately for each assessment and then weighted together to determine the mark for the module. A student will be deemed to have passed a module if he/she achieves a mark of 50 per cent or more. Each module carries a number of credits which are used as the weightings to calculate an overall weighted average mark for each part of the Programme. Part I and Part II of the Programme are assessed separately and a student will be regarded as having failed either if he/she:

- (1) achieves an overall weighted average of less than 50 per cent;
- or (2) achieves a mark of less than 50 per cent on more than 30 credits
- or (3) achieves a mark of less than 30 per cent on more than 10 credits.

These conditions apply separately to Part I and Part II of the Programme.

In any **compulsory** module a mark of less than 40 per cent for the individual assessment – it may be an exam or a project – will result in the module receiving a maximum mark of 49 per cent irrespective of the marks gained in any assessed group work. In short you will be deemed to have failed the module

MBA (Chilean Collaboration) The pass criteria is the same as for the MBA; however in Part I a student will be regarded as having failed if he/she achieves a mark of less than 50 per cent on more than 20 credits. The Chilean students join at the start of Term 2 and are awarded 80 credits for prior learning providing they pass their Masters in Global Management programme at the University of Chile (UoC). In order to meet these criteria the students must return to the UoC, when they finish their Cranfield MBA studies.

Resit Policy

If the mark for Part I indicates failure students will have the opportunity to resit examinations or individual assessments up to a maximum of 30 credits (Chilean students resit up to 20 credits) in Part I. If the individual element of the module failed was an examination the resit will be an examination and if it was an individual written project, the student will be required to resubmit a project. However, in both cases the module leader can (with the permission of the Academic Programme Director) change the nature of the resit. Resits will be scheduled early in Term 3. The main purpose of resits is to give students who would otherwise fail Part I a final opportunity to pass it but in a manner that does not create an unfair opportunity for students to increase their overall module average. Therefore:

- students will only be allowed to take resits if they are deemed to have failed Part I due to one of the three criteria set above; and
- all resit marks will be capped at 50 per cent; and
- students can only resit an examination once.

In determining whether or not having taken resits a student is deemed to have passed Part I, the highest of the following will stand, subject to a **maximum** mark of 50 per cent:

- the resit exam mark;
- the overall module mark with the resit exam mark substituted for, and given the same weighting as, the **original** individual assessment mark;
- the **original overall module mark**.

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