

# STUDENT ASSESSMENT HANDBOOK

2011-2012

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

***FOR YOUR INFORMATION***



This handbook contains detailed information on all aspects of examinations/assessments. It should be read in conjunction with Assessment Regulations, Programme Regulations (available online at [insert address](#) and Departmental Handbooks

*For those students who require this Handbook in an alternative format please contact the Assessments Team in the Student Centre*

# ASSESSMENTS HAND BOOK

## METHODS OF ASSESSMENT

### Types of Assessment

Students are assessed by a variety of assessment methods agreed through the approval process to ensure that the learning outcomes for the individual courses and programmes overall have been met successfully.

Assessment methods may include seen or unseen written examinations, coursework, oral examinations, practical examinations, presentations, portfolios, exhibitions, performances, professional practice. For more information on all your assessment requirements you should consult your Programmes Regulations and Departmental Handbook. First year students particularly should ensure they read the section on examination entry (see Assessment Confirmation Forms).

#### Written papers

The following types of written examination papers are used at Goldsmiths College:

- Unseen written examination papers in which no materials are permitted in the Examination Halls (unless specifically noted).
- Unseen written examination papers in which candidates are permitted to refer to a specified book or books, or to use calculators in the Examination Halls.
- Written examination papers which have been read by the candidates in advance of the examination. These are sent to candidates one week or two weeks in advance of the examination, by their Department, depending on the instruction/directions of the examiners.
- Take home papers which are given to candidates on a specified date, to be completed and returned by a specified date (it should be noted that students write the answers to these papers away from the examination hall).

For most programmes the written examination papers take place from the third week of the summer term. This will be Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2012. A provisional examination timetable will be available in the late spring term but the finalised version will be available on the Student Services website, notice boards and displayed in Academic Departments. Please look at the website which contains important examination information as well as the final timetable.

Details regarding the conduct of examinations for students sitting written papers can be found in the Summer Assessments Booklet, which is available on the website IN March and includes the finalised timetable. Please note the following:

- Should students arrive more than 30 minutes late for an examination, they must go directly to the Student Centre (RHB 117), and not to the examination hall
- Students may not leave the examinations hall during the first half hour or the last quarter of an hour of the examination.
- Coats and bags must be left in the designated area within the examination hall. Students are advised to bring in writing materials and a minimum number of personal possessions. A small plastic bag will be provided at the examination hall for small personal items such as keys, wallets and phones, **which must be switched off.**

For information relating to misconduct in examinations please see page thirteen of this booklet.

### Coursework

Course work includes all assessable elements of a course which form part of the requirement of the programme of study other than practical and written examinations e.g. essays, reports, dissertations, projects and portfolios. Please note that these definitions are not exhaustive.

The following are definitions of some of the types of assessed **coursework** used at Goldsmiths:

**Essay**                      The discussion of a topic or a question, presenting an argument and giving evidence for it. Undergraduate essays should be fully referenced, with a bibliography.

**Report**                      An account (normally not exceeding 10,000 words) of the study of a specified topic based on experiments, observations or review of literature. A full relevant bibliography would normally be expected.

**Review**                      An evaluation of student contribution to the learning environment over a given period of time, which may offer the opportunity for formal feedback to the student.

**Dissertation**              An ordered and critical exposition of existing knowledge in any field or part of a field of study. It may vary in length but should not normally exceed 30,000 words unless otherwise stated in the Regulations for a specific degree. There should be evidence that the field has been surveyed thoroughly for the appropriate level. A full bibliography and references would normally be required.

**Portfolio**                    A collected body of work, usually essays or other relevant visual material as defined by the relevant Department.

### **Other forms of assessment**

**Oral Examinations**      A conducted interview which verbally tests a student's knowledge.

*(viva voce)*

**Practical or Performances Examinations**

The examination of a student testing technical, musical, theatrical or other types of knowledge.

**Presentation**

A demonstration by a student, normally to his/her peers of progress on a piece of research or similar work.

**Studio Presentation**

A selected presentation by the student of their studio practice research.

**Exhibition**

A presentation of a student's work indicating his/her position as an artist.

**Professional Practice**

A period spent by a student as a placement or teaching practice as part of a professional programme.

*Legible Work*

It is the candidates' responsibility to ensure that all work is legible and in a state that the Examiners can read without difficulty.

***Valid Attempt***

Candidates should be aware that a blank or worthless script or other piece of assessed work does not constitute a valid attempt.

It is a matter for the professional judgement of individual examiners to decide what constitutes a valid attempt. However an invalid attempt nevertheless counts as one of the permitted attempts and retakes will be penalised.

Candidates who do not submit coursework or absent themselves from written examinations will be recorded as absent. Candidates will have used one of their three permitted attempts but it will not constitute a valid attempt and future retakes will be penalised.

**Late summer retakes will not be offered to students who are absent from an examination, do not submit coursework as required and who do not make a valid attempt at a course unit.**

***Circumstances Affecting the Submission of Coursework or Performance during a Written Examination.***

If you have suffered from any extenuating circumstances (whether they be illness, bereavement, personal issues or **any other** factors which you think may have affected your performance when submitting coursework or taking written examinations) that you wish the Board of Examiners to take into consideration, you must inform the Department or Head of Assessments **immediately** and provide documentary supporting evidence **no later than seven days after the deadline of submission of coursework or the date of a written examination.**

Supporting evidence, e.g. medical certificate or signed statement, should be **obtained at the time of the illness** or when the circumstances occurred. Documentation should indicate the severity of your illness/circumstances and the extent to which it will have affected your ability to study or sit examinations. Students who submit medical evidence, or other substantiated evidence can be offered deferred assessments which take place in late August/September (see below). Regulations do not permit you to re-take a course that you have already passed (no matter how poor the pass mark obtained) and therefore you should seriously consider whether or not to sit an examination if you are severely affected. Standard medical forms (obtainable from the Doctor's Surgery at the New Cross NHS Walk-in centre) should be used if possible. **Only in the most exceptional of cases will late submission of extenuating circumstances be accepted.** Regulations regarding the process of consideration by the Board of Examiners, of mitigating evidence can be found in the Assessment Regulations on the web. The process for considering mitigating evidence is included at the end of this publication (see appendix 2)

### ***Deferred Assessment***

Students may be considered for a deferral of assessment if they have submitted evidence of medical or other exceptional circumstances that are acceptable to the Examiners. – **i.e. either the sitting of an examination or the submission of assessed work.** If you are granted deferred assessment for the current session (this is decided at the meeting of the Examiners in June) you are required to sit the examination/s will commence on **Tuesday 28 August 2012** and the date for submission of deferred assessed coursework will be **Thursday 30 August 2012**. You will be informed in writing in July if you are to be offered deferred assessment. You will be automatically entered for your deferred assessments and students who are unable to undertake the deferred assessment in August, as a result of **continued or new** illness/extenuating circumstances, must submit further medical evidence **no later than seven days** after the absence or non-submission in August/September.

Students who do not submit coursework or take the written paper, or submit further mitigating evidence, will be considered absent. They will have used a permitted attempt at the unit.

### ***Late Summer Re-sits***

Students who have failed courses to the value of 45 credits or more, (2 or more course units for those first registered on the course unit degree before 2010) and cannot therefore progress to the next level of study, will be offered late summer retakes for the current session (this is decided at the meeting of the Examiners in June) the examinations will commence on **Tuesday 28 August 2012** and the date for submission of assessed coursework will be **Thursday 30 August 2012**. You will be informed in writing in July if you are to be offered late summer retakes. You will be required to return the entry form by the deadline given and pay the required retake fees. Students who fail courses to the value of 15 or 30 credits (.5 or 1cu on course unit degrees), **will not** be automatically offered a late summer retake, but may, if they so wish, apply in writing by email to the Assessments Team ([assessments@gold.ac.uk](mailto:assessments@gold.ac.uk)). Requests must be submitted by the deadline date detailed in their results letter; late requests will not be accepted as there is not enough time to make appropriate arrangements before the exams take place. **It should be noted that students who fail a unit/s will**

**only be offered late summer retakes, where a valid attempt has been made.** (Please see page 4 for a definition of 'valid attempt').

We will endeavour to convey the results of the deferred assessments and retakes as quickly as possible in order for you to know whether or not you can progress/graduate. It would be appreciated if you could ensure your home address is current and avoid telephoning as this will only hold up the process.

### ***Submission of Assessed Coursework***

Coursework includes all assessable elements of a course which form part of the requirement of the programme of study other than practical and written examinations i.e. essays, reports, dissertations, projects and portfolios.

All programmes will have published deadlines when work must be submitted. Some Departments require work to be submitted directly to the Departments. The work for some programmes is submitted centrally via the Student Centre; please check your Departmental handbook for exact requirements. You are responsible for ensuring that you are aware of the exact date and place of submission. You should ensure you obtain a completed receipt for work submitted and **NEVER** just put work in pigeon holes or under tutors' doors. If you cannot produce a receipt for your work, it will be assumed that the coursework has not been submitted.

All deadlines must be met – **extensions are not normally permitted**. If there are extenuating circumstances which mean you are unable to submit you may be considered for a deferral (see previous section).

Prior to submitting your work you should have signed an Assessment Misconduct Form. In this you undertake to confirm that all work you submit will be your own. You will also be asked each time you submit to confirm that the work is your own. For further information regarding plagiarism, what it is and the penalties imposed for offences of this kind, please read the regulations very carefully from pages 13, in this booklet, also refer to Departmental handbooks for advice.

### ***Progression***

If your programme is more than one academic year long then there will normally be progression requirements you must fulfil before proceeding to the next year. For instance:-

1. Continuing full time students enrolled for undergraduate course unit degrees must pass a minimum of 3 course units, which may include compulsory core units, each year before proceeding.
2. Continuing full time students enrolled for undergraduate credit framework degrees must pass a minimum of 90 credits, which may include compulsory core units, each year before proceeding.

For exact progression requirements for your programme, please consult the programme regulations. Students assessed under the undergraduate credit framework (students registered for the first time from September 2010) who have

failed all three attempts to pass a course will be considered for compensation. A compensated fail can be agreed where a student has met the following criteria.

Students can be compensated for up to 60 credits in total providing:

- a. The failed course to be compensated is not a required core course
- b. All 3 permitted attempts of a course have been made,
- c. A fail mark between 35-39% has been attained
- d. The mean mark of other courses at the same level is at least 45%
- e. No more than 30 credits may be compensated at each level

If students have attempted a course three times, failed to pass the course and do not meet the criteria for compensation, they will have failed the programme and cannot be awarded an honours degree. If they have passed courses to the value of at least 300 credits, they may be awarded a Pass degree (without honours).

### **Results**

Lists of undergraduate finalist (by student number) classifications will be displayed on the Boards outside the Student Centre by the dates shown in the Summer Examinations Booklet and on the Web via the secure student gold link page. During July/August individual transcripts and results will be sent to your home address confirmed by you on the Assessment Confirmation Form (see following section). You should note that if your transcripts indicate that the Examiners require you to retake units/elements these retakes must be taken as indicated, failure to do so will prevent you graduating.

The Assessments Team has to process a very large number of results and cannot give an exact time of when individual programme results will be posted. Please note that results **cannot** be given out over the telephone or sent by email under any circumstances. By telephoning you will be holding up the process of the sending out of results. Please read carefully the information sent with transcripts. Should you be unfortunate enough not to be eligible to proceed to the next year of study, you should ensure that you understand the options open to you and the deadline dates you need to meet. Contact your Department if you have any queries regarding your future submission of work.

Postgraduate student results will be posted within 2-3 weeks following ratification by the Board of Examiners. That is in July for continuing students and November for finalist students. Please ensure that the correct address is used for your results by keeping it up to date with the Student Centre.

### **Other Information**

Further information on results will be available in the Examinations Booklet available on the web and from Departments at the beginning of the summer term. **All students must read this information very carefully.**

### **Assessment Confirmation Forms**

Confirmation of the data on the Assessment Confirmation Form ensures that the information on the Student Record System is correct. The information on this form will have been notified to us by your Department, who will have liaised with you regarding your optional choices. You will be sent, via your Department, the Assessment Confirmation Form, which you will need to check carefully and sign.

The designated Departmental signatory will confirm your entry is a valid programme of study and ensure that any retakes are indicated. Where a retake is not noted this does not alter the decision of the Examiners and you will still be required to retake any failures as notified to you in the summer. Any subsequent changes to your course options must be notified to the Assessments Team on the appropriate form available from your Department or the Student Services Website. Failure to do so may result in an incomplete programme of study and the possibility of your not being able to progress/graduate.

All the processes involved in submitting coursework, sitting examinations, providing assessment reasonable adjustments, entering results and printing transcripts stem from the information on this form. It is **VITAL** that you carefully check your personal details and course units listed on this form and amend, if appropriate, by the advertised deadline in December. If you fail to meet it you are liable for a late fee charge of **£30**. Those students, who incur the late fee charge and fail to pay it, will become debtors and this will prevent finalists from receiving results and continuing students from enrolling in September 2012.

Finalists should note that their name, including the spelling, as it appears on the Assessment Confirmation Form, is as it will appear on their degree certificate. If it is incorrect, in any way, it must be amended at the Student Centre (RHB 117)

### **Assessment Reasonable Adjustments**

Students with a disability or specific learning difficulty may apply for reasonable adjustments to their assessment arrangements. You should contact the Senior Tutor in your Department to discuss your needs, or if you prefer, the Disabilities Co-ordinator in room RHB 129. All applications for assessment adjustments must be made via the Disabilities Co-ordinator to reach the Assessments Team by 23 March 2012. This will ensure that they are put in place in time for the examinations in May/June; late applications cannot be processed in time for the examinations event. Further information is given overleaf and the application form is available from the Disabilities Co-ordinator.

## **ARA Guidance Notes Assessments Team**

### **Assessments Reasonable Adjustments for Disabled Students (ARA) Guidance Notes 2011-12**

These Guidance Notes explain the procedure for arranging reasonable adjustments. Reasonable Adjustments are made to ensure disabled students (including students with specific learning difficulties and long term health conditions) are given fair access to examinations and assessments without being given an unfair advantage over other students.

#### **Student responsibilities**

1. You are obliged to read these Guidance Notes before making an application.
2. Disabled Students are required to see the Disability Team in order to complete the ARA form. (drop ins are held in RHB 129, Monday to Fridays, 11am - 12noon and 2pm - 3pm).
3. You must provide the Disability Team with supporting evidence of your disability, health condition or specific learning difficulty before any adjustments can be recommended. This should be either:
  - a. A letter / report from an appropriate medical practitioner that indicates the nature of the disability/difficulty. It is helpful if it also outlines the potential effects of the disability in relation to your studies.
  - b. Medical evidence of disability together with an up to date Assessment of Study Needs completed by an accredited Disabled Students Allowance Assessment Centre which makes recommendations regarding the adjustments needed.
  - c. An educational psychologist's report conforming to national guidelines, undertaken when you were at least 16 years of age. If you do not have a full report, or it was undertaken before you were aged 16, you should meet with a Disability Adviser as soon as possible, to organise an assessment by an educational psychologist.

#### **Goldsmiths responsibilities**

1. The Disability Team will discuss in confidence, your adjustment needs with you and then fill out section B of the ARA form indicating the recommended adjustments.
2. The Disability Team will forward your request to the Assessments Team who will inform your Departmental Senior Tutor. The Senior Tutor may request further information about your needs if required.
3. The Assessments Team will implement the arrangements.

4. In cases where the Senior Tutor is unable to agree the adjustment, they will refer to the Chair of the Board of Examiners, who may take further advice in satisfying him/herself that the request would constitute a reasonable adjustment. If the Senior Tutor and Chair of the Departmental Sub-Board are not satisfied that the request is reasonable, the Assessments Team will convene an Adjudication Panel (AP) to decide whether to uphold the request. Due to confidentiality, the panel will be presented with an anonymous report by the Disability Coordinator. The decision of the AP will be final.

5. The Assessments Team will write to you to confirm what adjustments you will receive. In the case of examination arrangements you will be informed no less than 4 weeks before the beginning of the examinations period. It is essential that you keep the Student Centre informed of any changes of address to ensure you receive the information.

**NB. You only have to apply once for Assessments Reasonable Adjustments for the duration of your course; the same arrangements will automatically be made each year. However, if your course changes or you have additional needs you should meet with the Disability Team as soon as possible.**

### **Appeals**

If you are not satisfied with the adjustments made, or think that your application has been handled outside of these guidelines, you can appeal. First, raise the issue informally with the Disability Coordinator, Assessments Team or your Departmental Senior Tutor. If you are not satisfied with the outcome you can put your appeal in writing to the Director of Student Services. She will investigate and respond to you within 2 weeks of receiving your letter.

## **COMPLETING THE ARA FORM**

### **Section A**

#### **Personal Details**

This information allows the Assessments Team to see at a glance what programme you are on and therefore what type of examinations you will be sitting. For correspondence we will use the address you have registered with the Student Centre.

#### **Reason for Adjustment**

In order for us to make an informed decision, you are required to let us know the reason for requesting a reasonable adjustment (i.e. your disability). You will have the opportunity to discuss your requests with the Disability Team.

### **Section B**

#### **Adjustments recommended by the Disability Team**

The following table indicates the range of adjustments that may be appropriate. **Please note:** not all students will be eligible for each adjustment listed. Adjustments will be made with reference to the medical evidence you provide. You may be entitled to other adjustments not listed; this will be explored in your discussion with the Disability Adviser.

Type of Impairment / Disability	Examples of Reasonable Adjustment
Asperger's or Autism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A varying form of assessment</li> <li>- Separate room</li> <li>- Additional time</li> <li>- Use of a word processor</li> </ul>
Visual Impairment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use of assistive software or supernova for examinations</li> <li>- Amanuensis (scribe)</li> <li>- Reader</li> <li>- Additional time</li> </ul>
D/deaf or Hard of Hearing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use of an interpreter</li> <li>- Appropriate position in room</li> <li>- Portable induction loop</li> </ul>
Manual Dexterity (including RSI) or physical impairments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Amanuensis (scribe)</li> <li>- Use of a word processor</li> <li>- Use of Assistive Technology (Dragon)</li> <li>- Ergonomic seating</li> <li>- Additional Time</li> <li>- Rest breaks</li> </ul>
Long term Medical Conditions (Diabetes, Epilepsy, etc)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Rest breaks</li> <li>- Permission to take in food / medication</li> </ul>
Dyslexia / Dyspraxia / ADD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use of a computer</li> <li>- Additional Time (25%)</li> <li>- Own / smaller room</li> <li>- Cover sheets for assessments</li> </ul>
Mental Health Difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Smaller room</li> <li>- Rest breaks</li> </ul>

### Signature

This confirms that you

- Have read and accept these Guidance Notes.
- Have supplied supporting evidence and,
- Agree to this information being kept in the Disability Office and that it is available for inspection, if required, by the Departmental Senior Tutor or Assessments Team. Your application will not be accepted if it is incomplete, or not signed.

### Section C

To be completed by Goldsmiths staff

For further information please contact:

**Assessments Team-** Room 115 RHB, Tel: 020 7717 2254 **email:** assessments@gold.ac.uk

Disability Team- **Room 129 RHB, Tel: 0207 717 2292 email:** [disability@gold.ac.uk](mailto:disability@gold.ac.uk)

## APPEALS AGAINST ASSESSMENTS AWARDED

The College's Regulation on Appeals is set out below. Both this document and an application form are on the Student Services website and are available from the Academic Caseworker in the Students' Union. They can also be provided in alternative formats on request.

You should be aware that Assessment Regulations instruct Boards of Examiners specifically to consider the results of any student within 2% of a borderline. Any such students' profile of results is therefore carefully scrutinized and all factors taken into account before a decision is reached about a final degree classification. It should be understood that being on a borderline is not a ground for an appeal. Information regarding what is acceptable grounds for appeal and how to lodge one can be found on [http://www.goldsmiths.ac.uk/Student\\_Services/exams/php#appeals](http://www.goldsmiths.ac.uk/Student_Services/exams/php#appeals).

### 12.6 Appeals

#### 12.6.1 Introduction

These regulations apply to all students. Appeals from candidates for the research degrees of MPhil and PhD are considered under University of London procedures, administered by the Graduate School, and appellants should follow the appropriate guidance issued by the University.

#### 12.6.2 Grounds for appeal

Students have the right to appeal on the following grounds:

- 1 that examiners were not aware of circumstances affecting the student's performance,
- 2 that there was some form of administrative error or procedural irregularity in the way in which an examination or assessment was conducted,
- 3 that there is evidence of prejudice or of bias on the part of one or more of the examiners such that the validity of the result of the examination is called into question.

#### 12.6.3 Subject of an appeal

An appeal may be lodged against: an individual assessment result; the classification of award; the requirement to repeat elements prior to progression; failure of the programme; or the decision that a student be required to withdraw from the University because he or she has failed to satisfy the requirements for academic progress.

#### 12.6.4 Where an appeal will not be considered

Appeals may not be based on ignorance of assessment requirements or submission deadlines. There is no right of appeal against the academic or professional judgement of the examiners. The only circumstance in which approved assessments may be reviewed is following a successful appeal on the grounds set out above.

### **12.6.5 How to avoid the need to appeal**

Candidates should make sure that any evidence of medical or other problems which might affect an assessment is notified to their Academic Department, or to the **member of staff of the central administration appointed by the Registrar and Secretary for this role**, no later than seven days after the deadline for submission of coursework or the date of the written examination.

### **12.6.6 How to appeal**

If a student wishes to appeal, he or she must submit a request on the appropriate **form** [download to become available here during the academic year] to the **member of staff appointed by the Registrar and Secretary to assess cases of this kind**, within 21 days of the publication of the results against which the appeal is being made. Appeals received outside this time limit may be accepted at the discretion of the **member of staff appointed by the Registrar and Secretary**. Students considering making an appeal are strongly encouraged - but not required - to seek informal advice from the Students' Union or from their Departmental Senior Tutor.

### **12.6.7 Process for consideration of an appeal**

The completed request will be referred to the Chair of the relevant Examination Board for comment. Following that stage the **member of staff appointed by the Registrar and Secretary** will consider whether there is a prima facie case and either uphold or dismiss the appeal. If appropriate, supplementary information may be sought, for example from the Head of Department.

Students should expect to receive an initial response within four weeks of submitting the pro forma, though the process may take somewhat longer for appeals received out of term. Where the process is likely to take longer than four weeks, students will be notified of that.

In all cases, students will be informed of the stages of consideration to which an appeal has been subject and of the basis upon which the appeal has been granted or denied and of any remedial action.

### **12.6.8 Successful appeals**

The remedy will vary according to the case and may be at the discretion of the Pro-Warden appointed by the Warden to oversee appeals under this Regulation. It is not required to specify the remedy sought through the appeal.

### **12.6.9 Unsuccessful appeals**

If a student has appealed unsuccessfully and is dissatisfied with the outcome, he or she may appeal to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA). The OIA

will only consider a petition once the College's own internal procedures have been exhausted. In order to submit an appeal to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator a student must obtain a letter of completion of procedures from the **office of the central administration responsible for providing this service.**

**Late and Non-Submission of Coursework and Absence from Examinations**

1 The following section details the effect on students' assessment profile when written examinations are missed or coursework is handed in late or not submitted. Students may offer mitigation for their absence from examinations or for late or non-submission of coursework. Consideration of extenuating circumstances may result in an amendment to an individual mark, amendments to a profile of marks or the offer of deferred assessment. The same considerations apply when considering an application for an extension for a deadline for submission of assessed work. If a student's submits work late with mitigation and that work is accepted, good practice dictates that the decision is conveyed to the student as quickly as possible.

**Extenuating circumstances**

2 The object of summative assessment is to measure achievement, not potential: what a candidate has done, not what she/he might have the potential to do (however where candidates submit acceptable extenuating circumstances potential may be considered) (see paragraph 18 below);

NB each candidate is responsible for submitting assessed coursework, portfolios, dissertations, etc., by the deadline published by the department(s), for presenting him/herself for written examinations at the published time and place, and for submitting information on extenuating circumstances.

3 The only extenuating circumstances which should be the concern of the Board of Examiners in relation to assessment or classification for Honours are those that might be considered to have brought into question the validity of a particular assessment as a measure of a candidate's achievement, and are outside the candidate's control.

4 The following shall normally be considered acceptable extenuating circumstances in accordance with these procedures where it can be seen to have been current at the time of the assessment concerned:

1. evidence of medical problems
2. evidence that the student has been the victim of a crime or similar action
3. evidence that the student has been the victim of a natural disaster or similar
4. evidence of severe adverse personal circumstances that have been such as to lead the student to seek professional advice about dealing with the consequences.

The following shall NOT normally be considered acceptable extenuating circumstances:

1. circumstances which have had no direct bearing upon the assessment

2. circumstances which may have affected the assessment, but which are clearly the candidate's responsibility e.g.:
  - (i) the normal pressures of paid employment
  - (ii) financial difficulties
  - (iii) misjudging how much time is needed in order to meet the deadline for submission published by the department
  - (iv) misjudging how much preparation is necessary for a written examination
  - (v) misreading the timetable
  - (vi) underestimating the time necessary to travel from home to the examination hall
  - (vii) delays due to failures on the part of computers or other similar equipment, regardless of the ownership of such equipment
  - (viii) transport difficulties
  - (ix) failure to make alternative travel plans when disruptions are known in advance.

Boards of Examiners should also ignore special pleading based on the timetabling of a candidate's examinations in close succession: this problem is bound to occur given the number of examinations which have to be timetabled over a short period of time.

Chairs of Board of Examiners should ask to see originals of medical certificates, etc. and should feel able to seek further confirmation of the circumstances claimed by the student where there is reason for doubt. Falsification of evidence submitted in support of extenuating circumstances will render a student liable to disciplinary action.

5 Extenuating circumstances must be submitted in writing by the candidate as soon as possible after the assessment. **Students must normally submit mitigating evidence no later than seven days after the deadline for submission of coursework or the date of the written examination.** Submissions by staff or by other students on behalf of a candidate who has not presented a written case him/herself must not be accepted. Submission must be supported by documentary evidence; retrospective medical certificates and notes submitted seven days after the deadline will not normally be considered.

6 Medical certificates/notes to support extenuating circumstances must:

- Relate specifically to the dates and duration of the illness
- Contain a clear medical diagnosis or opinion and not merely report a student's claim to feel unwell. It may therefore be difficult for students

to obtain a medical certificate where one is requested from a doctor after the illness is over.

Students should be aware that:

- Doctors are entitled to charge for any medical certificates or notes they provide
- Doctors do not always provide certificates for short periods of illness
- Doctors might not provide certificates after illness has ended, because after the student has recovered it might be impossible to know that he/she had been ill

Documentary evidence used to support extenuating circumstances are College's property to archive and must be stored on file by the Secretary of the Board of Examiners.

### **Process in Considering Extenuating Circumstances**

7 The assessment must be marked without allowance being made for extenuating circumstances by the Examiners, and the mark (moderated by an External Examiner) reported to the Board of Examiners.

8 The Board must decide whether any allowance for extenuating circumstances should be made. In the first instance the Chair should consider extenuating circumstances in the light of the marks awarded, and

- (a) Identify and reject any submissions which do not fall into the category of bringing into question the validity of a particular assessment as a measure of a candidate's achievement, and are outside the candidate's control (as indicated above) and so need not be referred to the Board;
- (b) Identify those which might have affected the validity of the assessment, and should therefore be considered by the Board.

9 In reaching his/her decision, the Chair will need to consider the submission from the candidate, the supporting evidence, the provisional mark for the course concerned, the performance of the candidate in other units of assessment, the comments of the candidate's personal tutor, etc. A record should be kept of all such submissions, and the decision taken by the Chair in each case.

10 When the Board of Examiners is considering the extenuating circumstances referred to it by the Chair, the Chair may request comments from individual Examiners. The Chair should rule out of order any special circumstances raised by members of the Board which have not been properly documented.

11 In reaching its decision, the Board of Examiners must bear in mind:

- (a) The effect the extenuating circumstances might have had upon the validity of the candidate's assessment(s), and

- (b) The possible cumulative effect of the extenuating circumstances upon the candidate's progression or classification for Honours.

12 However, the candidate's performance must always be seen in the context of the performance of the student cohort as a whole (see below).

### **Circumstances affecting Individual Units of Assessment**

13 The Chair of the Board of Examiners should consider the extenuating circumstances, and make one of the following recommendations to the Board of Examiners in each case:

- (a) The circumstances appear to have had little or no effect upon the candidate's performance, and the mark for the unit of assessment can therefore be confirmed;
- (b) The circumstances appear to have affected the candidate's performance (as evidenced by his/her performance in the particular unit of assessment when compared to his/her performance in other equivalent units of assessment).
- (c) The circumstances appear to have been so significant as to bring into question the validity of the assessment as a measure of the candidate's achievement in the particular unit of assessment.

14 In the first case, no further action is necessary.

15 In the second case, if the marks awarded to the candidate for other units of assessment suggest that performance in the unit(s) of assessment deemed to have been affected by the extenuating circumstances is an aberration, the Board of Examiners, with the agreement of the External examiners, may decide that the candidate should be awarded additional marks.

16 In the third case, where the Board of Examiners is satisfied that a candidate's performance has been so affected by the extenuating circumstances that the assessment is not a valid measure of the student's achievement, it may permit the candidate to set aside the performance, and allow the candidate to take the assessment at the next available opportunity, as if for the first time.

17 The above examples all relate to individual extenuating circumstances. Where the assessment of a whole group of students has been affected by extenuating circumstances (for example, when an examination has been disrupted by a fire alarm), the Pro-Warden appointed by the Warden should be consulted as to the options available to the Board of Examiners.

### **Matters affecting a Candidate's Overall Degree Classification**

18 If a candidate's extenuating circumstances have been considered in the context of individual units of assessment, there should be no outstanding issues for the Board of Examiners to resolve. Chairs of Boards of Examiners should take care not to 'double count' extenuating circumstances, i.e. by compensating the candidate by raising the mark for an individual unit of assessment, and then by compensating the candidate a second time when determining which degree

classification to award. If the candidate's final weighted average mark for undergraduate degrees falls within the discretionary range between two classes of degree or on the pass/fail borderline, the Board of Examiners may take into account the candidate's unfulfilled potential if this is deemed to have been affected by extenuating circumstances during the course of the programme of study, provided that this is clearly evidenced by the candidate's performance in the majority of units of assessment, ***but only where that unfulfilled potential has not already been compensated for elsewhere.***

## Regulations Governing Misconduct in Assessments

### Introduction

19 This section of the regulations outlines the College's definition of misconduct in assessment. It also outlines procedures to determine whether misconduct has occurred and what sanctions may be imposed where misconduct has been established. These regulations seek to protect the academic standing and integrity of the awards of Goldsmiths College.

### Academic Integrity and Responsibilities

20 Core values of academic integrity (honesty and trust) lie at the heart of our academic enterprise, and they underpin all activities within Goldsmiths College. The College values a culture of honesty and mutual trust, and expects all members of the College (staff and students) to respect and uphold these core values at all times.

21 One of the most frequent forms of misconduct in assessment is the act of plagiarism. For the purposes of these Regulations, **Plagiarism** is defined as the representation of another person's work, without acknowledgement of the source, as the student's own for the purposes of satisfying formal assessment requirements. Some students who plagiarise do so deliberately, with intent to deceive. This conscious, pre-meditated form of cheating is regarded as a particularly serious breach of the core values of academic integrity and one of the worst forms of cheating. Other students may plagiarise inadvertently as they do not fully understand the conventions of academic referencing and citation.

22 However, ignorance of proper procedures or good practice in academic writing is no excuse, particularly if a student has previously been accused of plagiarism, advised to seek study skills help, and fails to learn the lessons.

23 It is essential therefore that all students:

- (a) *Familiarise themselves with these regulations;*
- (b) *Familiarise themselves with the academic conventions and practices applicable to the programme on which they are enrolled.*

24 Plagiarism is literary theft as well as breach of copyright. It yields a false grade to the students who plagiarise and prevents them from knowing how well they have performed. It also effectively penalises and can demoralise those students who do not plagiarise.

**Any student in doubt about what might constitute plagiarism or any form of academic misconduct MUST seek clarification from an academic member of staff, the Head of Assessments, or should seek specialist study skills assistance through the College Language Studies Centre.**

## Definitions of Academic Misconduct

25 Academic misconduct is defined by Goldsmiths as any attempt by a student to gain an unfair advantage in any assessment. The term academic misconduct includes all forms of cheating, plagiarism, and collusion.

26 The following is an indicative list of forms of misconduct but should not be considered exhaustive:

- **Aiding and abetting** a student in any form of dishonest practice.
- **Bribery** is paying or offering inducements to another person to obtain an advance copy of an unseen examination or test paper or to obtain a copy of a coursework assignment in advance of its distribution to the students concerned.
- **Collusion** is where two or more students collaborate to produce a piece of work which is then submitted as though it was an individual student's own work. Where students in a class are instructed or encouraged to work together in the pursuit of an assignment, such a group activity is regarded as approved collaboration. Where there is a requirement for the submitted work to be solely that of the individual, collaboration is not permitted. Students who improperly work collectively in these circumstances will be regarded as being guilty of collusion.
- **Commissioning** another person or persons to complete an assignment, which is then submitted as your own work. This includes the use of the services of 'ghost-writing' agencies (for example in the preparation of essays or reports). Professional word processing services, which offer 'correction/improvement of English', should not be used. (Candidates are strongly advised to retain copies of any drafts produced while preparing assessed work, as this will be of assistance in demonstrating that the work is their own).
- **Computer fraud** is the use of the material of another person located on the internet, USB storage device, or stored on a hard or floppy disk as if it were your own (also see **plagiarism**).
- **Duplication** is the inclusion of coursework of any material, which is identical or similar to material, which has already been submitted for any other assessment within the University or elsewhere e.g. submitting the same piece of coursework for two different modules.
- **False declarations** in order to receive special consideration by Examination Boards.
- **Falsification of data** is the presentation of data in projects, laboratory reports etc. based on work purported to have been carried out by the students which have been invented by the student or altered or copied or obtained by other unfair means.
- **Misconduct in examinations or tests such as:**
  - taking crib notes or other unauthorised material concealed in any manner into an examination or test;
  - taking into an examination or test an unauthorised computer disk containing pre-coded data;
  - the use of an unauthorised dictionary;
  - the use of unauthorised material stored in the memory of a pre-programmable calculator, watch, organiser, mobile telephone or pager;

- obtaining or attempting to obtain an advance copy of an 'unseen' written examination or test paper;
- attempting to persuade another member of the University (staff, student or invigilator) to participate in any way in actions that would breach the College assessment regulations;
- communicating or trying to communicate in any way with another student during an examination or test
- copying or attempting to copy from another student sitting the same examination or test
- being party to impersonation where another person sits an examination or test in the place of the actual student or a student is knowingly impersonated by another
- leaving the examination or test venue to refer to concealed notes
- taking rough notes, stationery, scripts or examination or test papers which indicate that they are not to be removed from the examination or test venue
- failure to follow instructions of the Invigilators or other designated College officers.
- **Plagiarism** is an attempt (deliberate or inadvertent) to gain advantage by the representation of another person's work, without acknowledgement of the source, as the student's own for the purposes of satisfying formal assessment requirements.

Recognised forms of plagiarism include:

- the use in a student's own work of more than a single phrase from another person's work without the use of quotation marks and acknowledgement of the source;
- the summarising of another person's work by simply changing a few words or altering the order of presentation, without acknowledgement;
- the use of ideas or intellectual data of another person without acknowledgement of the source, or the submission or presentation of work as if it were the student's own, which are substantially the ideas or intellectual data of another person;
- copying the work of another person;
- the submission of work, as if it were the student's own, which has been obtained from the internet or any other form of information technology;
- the submission of coursework making significant use of unattributed digital images such as graphs, tables, photographs, etc. taken from books/articles, the internet or from the work of another person;
- the submission of a piece of work which has previously been assessed for a different award or module or at a different institution as if it were new work;

- a student who allows or is involved in allowing, either knowingly or unknowingly, another student to copy another's work including physical or digital images would be deemed to be guilty of plagiarism.

27 If plagiarism is suspected students will be required to supply an electronic copy of the work in question so that it may be subjected to electronic plagiarism detection testing. Therefore students are required to keep work electronically until after they receive their results as electronic detection may be part of the investigative process.

## **Detailed procedures for the identification of incidences of academic misconduct and associated penalties**

### Introduction

28 The remainder of these regulations set out how the College undertakes an investigation of an alleged case of academic misconduct.

29 These regulations apply to candidates registered for undergraduate and taught postgraduate degrees and for diplomas and certificates at Goldsmiths College.

30 Candidates taking any examination, or subject to any academic assessment conducted by the College or the University of London, are required to abide by the relevant general and specific regulations issued from time to time by the Head of Academic Services and to observe all instructions given to them by the Examiners, Invigilators or Officers of the College responsible for the conduct of examinations or academic assessments.

31 Any failure to observe any of the regulations or instructions mentioned in the above paragraph shall constitute misconduct in assessment and shall be dealt with in accordance with these regulations, as will any case of alleged cheating, plagiarism or other similar examination or assessment irregularity, including conduct affecting the security of an examination.

32 In the interpretation of these regulations, unless the context otherwise requires, words and phrases which appear in the Statutes shall have the meaning assigned to them in the Statutes. Any dispute as to the interpretation of these regulations shall be referred to the Warden of the College, whose decision in the matter shall be final.

33 In these regulations, reference to the Chair of the Board of Examiners may be taken to refer to the Deputy Chair of the Board of Examiners where the Chair is the Examiner who suspects a candidate of an assessment misconduct, or where the Chair is indisposed or otherwise unable to act.

34 All communications from the College to the person accused of an examination offence shall be sent by first class mail and recorded delivery to his or her last known term time and/or home address as notified by the student to the Enrolments & Records Office.

35 Should a student against whom an allegation of assessment misconduct is lodged fail to respond, within a period of 14 days following notification of the allegation, the proceedings under these regulations shall continue and shall not be invalidated thereby.

36 Heads of Department shall be kept informed, in respect of students in their Department, at all stages of procedures under these regulations.

#### Presumption of Innocence

37 In any proceedings under these regulations the person against whom allegations have been made shall be presumed to be innocent until the contrary is established beyond all reasonable doubt.

38 In the event that an allegation of assessment misconduct by a student is under consideration and has not been resolved when a Board of Examiners meets to consider the result(s) of that student, the Board of Examiners, shall not consider that student's results until the allegation has been upheld or dismissed. When the allegation has been investigated in accordance with these regulations, the Board of Examiners, in consultation with the appropriate External examiners(s), will determine how to proceed.

#### Where misconduct is suspected – See Appendix I – Flow Chart

39 If a member of staff suspects that assessment misconduct has been committed, he/she shall immediately inform the Chair of the relevant Board of Examiners. (In the case of postgraduate research, the examiner/s shall immediately inform the Chair of the Departmental Postgraduate Research Committee who shall assume the role of the Chair of the Board of Examiners). The member of staff is required to submit a written report of the incident to the Chair of the Board of Examiners. The Chair of the Board of Examiners shall arrange for the allegation to be investigated as soon as possible. Initially the Chair of the Board of Examiners, as part of the investigation, shall provide the candidate with a written statement of the allegation making it clear what type of misconduct is alleged and shall give the candidate an opportunity to make a response to it. The candidate will be given 14 days to respond. If the response is satisfactory and the Chair of the Board of Examiners investigation concludes that there is no case to answer; he/she shall notify the candidate in writing that the matter is closed and shall send a copy of that letter to the Head of Assessments. If the candidate fails to respond, the Chair of the Board of Examiners proceeds with the investigation. Candidates should be made aware that as a part of any such investigation, a viva-voce examination may be arranged for the purpose of establishing the original source of any work submitted. Failure to attend a viva voce, without giving adequate reason, shall be treated as non-completion of the assessment, and will be classified as a failure

40 Where the investigation reveals prima facie evidence of an offence of a minor or technical nature that would not, in the opinion of the Chair of the Board of Examiners, warrant any of the penalties set out in (6) below, the Chair of the

Board of Examiners, after consultation with the Head of Assessments may decide that no further action shall be taken. The candidate shall be notified in writing by the Chair of the Board of Examiners that no further action is to be taken with regard to this specific case. The Chair of the Board of Examiners shall, however, send a record of the facts of the investigation to the Head of Assessments who shall place the record on the candidate's Personal file and who shall notify the candidate that it could be taken into consideration in the event of a future offence. If the candidate wishes to contest the evidence he or she may supply a written statement to the Head of Assessments and provide evidence to refute the allegation, which shall be kept together with the Chair of the Board of Examiners report of the matter. The candidate shall be supplied with a copy of the relevant record.

- 1 Where the investigation reveals prima facie evidence of an assessment misconduct, that would, in the opinion of the Chair of the Board of Examiners, warrant any of the penalties set out in regulation (6) below, the Chair of the Board of Examiners shall proceed to deal with the matter and inform the Head of Assessments.
- 2 The Chair of the Board of Examiners shall give the candidate a written statement of the allegation and an opportunity to respond to the allegation and to present any evidence at a Hearing. Mitigating circumstances e.g. (medical) are not normally considered to be an acceptable excuse for assessment misconduct.
- 3 If a candidate fails to attend a Hearing other than for a reason acceptable to the Chair of the Board of Examiners, notified in advance, its proceedings shall not be invalidated thereby. A candidate unable to attend a Hearing for good reason may seek a postponement of that Hearing.
- 4 The candidate may be accompanied by a member of staff or a student of the College; a candidate who is so accompanied must submit to the Chair of the Board of Examiners, not less than two days before the date appointed for the Hearing, the name, address and description of the person concerned.
- 5 A senior member of the academic staff of the relevant Department shall attend at the Hearing and the member of staff who has reported the alleged offence shall also be present. However if that member of staff has left the institution and cannot attend the Hearing, another member of staff in that field of study, who has been fully briefed, can deputise and attend the Hearing.
- 6 Following the Hearing the Chair of the Board of Examiners shall impose one of the following penalties: The penalty should be based on grid shown.

Tariff for those awarding penalties for students found guilty of academic misconduct:-

1. a requirement that the candidate re-submit the relevant piece(s) of work by a specific deadline, or
2. the minimum pass mark for the relevant piece(s) of work may be assigned, or
3. a mark of '0' for the relevant piece(s) of work may be assigned, or
4. a mark of '0' for all coursework components of the relevant course may be assigned.
5. (For undergraduates only) Degree class to be reduced by one class (unless by doing so a 'pass' would be turned into a 'fail')
6. Degree class to be 'capped' at a certain level
7. Suspension from the College for a period of not more than two years
8. dismissal from College

ii) Circumstances of offence and 'default' penalty suggested. The figure in each cell on the grid refers to the default penalty from the list above:-

<b>YEAR ONE</b>	INTENT DEMONSTRATED	INTENT DEMONSTRATED	POOR ACADEMIC PRACTICE	POOR ACADEMIC PRACTICE
	FIRST OFFENCE	REPEATED OFFENCE	FIRST OFFENCE	REPEATED OFFENCE
MINOR	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>
MODERATE	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
EXTENSIVE	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>

<b>YEAR TWO</b>	INTENT DEMONSTRATED	INTENT DEMONSTRATED	POOR ACADEMIC PRACTICE	POOR ACADEMIC PRACTICE
	FIRST OFFENCE	REPEATED OFFENCE	FIRST OFFENCE	REPEATED OFFENCE
MINOR	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>
MODERATE	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
EXTENSIVE	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>

<b>YEAR THREE</b>	INTENT DEMONSTRATED	INTENT DEMONSTRATED	POOR ACADEMIC PRACTICE	POOR ACADEMIC PRACTICE
	FIRST OFFENCE	REPEATED OFFENCE	FIRST OFFENCE	REPEATED OFFENCE
MINOR	4	5	3	4
MODERATE	6	8	4	6
EXTENSIVE	8	8	4	6

<b>PGT</b>	INTENT DEMONSTRATED	INTENT DEMONSTRATED	POOR ACADEMIC PRACTICE	POOR ACADEMIC PRACTICE
	FIRST OFFENCE	REPEATED OFFENCE	FIRST OFFENCE	REPEATED OFFENCE
MINOR	4	7	3	4
MODERATE	4	8	3	4
EXTENSIVE	8	8	3	4

<b>PGR</b>	INTENT DEMONSTRATED	INTENT DEMONSTRATED	POOR ACADEMIC PRACTICE	POOR ACADEMIC PRACTICE
	FIRST OFFENCE	REPEATED OFFENCE	FIRST OFFENCE	REPEATED OFFENCE
MINOR	7	7	) "final	7
MODERATE	7	8	) warning"	7
EXTENSIVE	8	8	)	7

- 7 A written note of the penalty shall be sent to the candidate by the Chair of the Board of Examiners with a copy to the Head of Assessments. The note shall include a statement that the candidate may appeal against the decision of the Chair of the Board of Examiners within fourteen days of notification of that decision.

#### Challenges to a penalty imposed by the Chair of a Board of Examiners

A candidate shall have the right to challenge a penalty imposed by the Chair of a Board of Examiners following a Hearing on one or more of the following grounds:

1. That the proceedings of the Hearing conducted by the Chair of the Board of Examiners were not carried out in accordance with the regulations;

2. That relevant fresh evidence can be presented which was not, or could not reasonably have been, made available to the Hearing conducted by the Chair of the Board of Examiners; **NB: Mitigating circumstances e.g. (Medical) are not normally considered as grounds for a challenge.**

3. That there is evidence of prejudice or bias on the part of the person conducting the hearing.

If a student wishes to challenge the penalty imposed, he or she must submit a request on the appropriate form to the member of staff appointed by the Registrar and Secretary to assess cases of this kind, **within 14 days** of notification of the decision of the Chair of the Board of Examiners. Students shall set out the grounds for challenge and be accompanied by copies of any documentary evidence in support of the challenge.

Where the challenge is based on the presentation of fresh evidence, the student shall normally forward the evidence in question or a summary of it, with the challenge.

#### Process for consideration of a challenge (with additional evidence) to the Chair's decision

The completed request will be referred to the Chair of the relevant Examination Board for comment. Following that stage the member of staff appointed by the Registrar and Secretary will consider whether there is a prima facie case and either uphold or dismiss the challenge. If appropriate, supplementary information may be sought, for example from the Head of Department.

Students should expect to receive an initial response within **four to six** weeks of submitting the proforma, though the process may take some what longer for challenges received out of term. Where the process is likely to take longer than four weeks, students will be notified of that.

In all cases, students will be informed of the stages of consideration to which a challenge has been subject and of the basis upon which the challenge has been granted or denied and of any remedial action.

#### Successful challenge

The remedy will vary according to the case and may be at the discretion of the Pro-Warden appointed by the Warden to oversee challenges under this Regulation. It is not required to specify the remedy sought through the challenge.

#### Unsuccessful challenge

If a student has challenged unsuccessfully and is dissatisfied with the outcome, he or she may petition the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA). The OIA will only consider a petition once the College's own internal procedures have been exhausted. In order to submit a petition to the Office of the Independent

Adjudicator a student must obtain a letter of completion from the office of the central administration responsible for providing this service.

### Reports

The Director of Student Services (or designated representative) shall report to the Academic Board on all cases considered under these Regulations.

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## Procedures for Allegations of Misconduct

**BE – Board of Examiners**  
**HoA – Head of Assessments**

