

# Assessment Policy and Procedures

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# 1 Introduction

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## 1.1 General

- 1.1.1 The policies and procedures set out in this document underpin the regulations which all staff and students are expected to follow. They provide greater details of the principles behind the regulations and the rules and processes that Goldsmiths puts in place to positively impact on the student and staff experience and to ensure compliance with external regulatory frameworks.
- 1.1.2 The relevant regulations appear in text boxes at the start of each section.

## 1.2 Scope

- 1.2.1 The assessment policy and procedures apply to all undergraduate and taught postgraduate assessments at Goldsmiths that contribute to an award or to the award of credit.
- 1.2.2 The purpose of the policy is to set out the expected practices in the development, completion and marking of assessments.
- 1.2.3 It enables Goldsmiths to ensure that the academic standards of its awards meet the requirements of the relevant national qualifications' frameworks and to meet the ongoing conditions of registration with the Office for Students (OfS).
- 1.2.4 The policy aligns with the Goldsmiths Regulations, and its other associated policies, procedures and guidance.
- 1.2.5 It applies equally to all taught programmes irrespective of their level. Where procedures differ between levels those exceptions are noted.
- 1.2.6 The College has an Education Strategy. That strategy will set the College's approach to assessment at Goldsmiths in respect of students' academic learning experience. The provisions for assessments set out in this Policy set the expectations to be followed when assessments are set, marked and moderated.

## 1.3 Key Contacts

Pro Warden (Academic): advice on the Education Strategy

Registry Operations: Advice on the conduct of examinations and assessments and assessment misconduct

Assessments enquiries (Records & Assessments Manager)

Academic Registrar and Director of Student Experience/Deputy Academic Registrar: Advice on Goldsmiths' Regulations and Assessment Policy

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## 2 Methods and Types of Assessment

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3.1.1 All programmes of study must be approved through the Goldsmiths procedures for the approval, amendment and review of programmes and modules must meet the requirements of the Goldsmiths Credit and Qualifications Framework.

### 2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 The development and practice of assessment at Goldsmiths is informed by the Education Strategy and aligns with the expectations of the Office for Students, set out in the conditions of registration for higher education providers and the regulatory framework (conditions B1 – B5).
- 2.1.2 All programmes should be well designed, provide a high-quality academic experience for all students, deliver successful outcomes for all students and enable a student's achievement to be reliably assessed.
- 2.1.3 All new and amended programmes and modules, with their associated methods of assessment must be approved by the Programme Scrutiny Sub-Committee in line with the Goldsmiths Programme Development and Approval and Re-approval Procedures.
- 2.1.4 All summative assessments must be designed to ensure that students are assessed effectively, and each assessment is valid and reliable.
- 2.1.5 The College's regulations must be designed to ensure that relevant awards (including the award of credit) are credible, that there is effective assessment of technical proficiency in the English language appropriate to the level and content of the course, and that the relevant awards granted to students are credible at the point of being granted, and when compared to those granted previously,

### 2.2 Methods of Assessment

- 2.2.1 A variety of assessment methods are used to help students develop, through the provision of constructive feedback and to ensure that the learning

outcomes for individual modules and programmes have been successfully met.

- 2.2.2 Students will be offered formative assessment opportunities and are required to module. Assessment requirements
- 2.2.3 Students will be offered formative assessment opportunities and are required to complete summative assessments for each module. Assessment requirements are set out in published module specifications.
- 2.2.4 *Formative assessments* are an assessment which measures and provides feedback on a student's progress in achievement of the learning outcomes of a module. A formative assessment may include an indicative mark, but it does not contribute to the final mark awarded for the module, though departments may still make it compulsory for students to complete.
- 2.2.5 *Summative assessments* are an assessment which measures a student's achievement of the learning outcomes of a module, and which contributes to the final mark awarded for that module.
- 2.2.6 Modules may have more than one element of assessment which contributes to the final module mark. Where there is more than one assessment element for a module, each element will be weighted.
- 2.2.7 The following is a list of **summative assessments** currently approved for use. Goldsmiths encourages staff to devise innovative and inclusive assessment practices across all disciplines. This may include the use of appropriately cited Artificial Intelligence tools within assessment. Where a summative assessment type is not included on the list below, a proposal should be made (via Student Success) for a new assessment type to be considered and included.

Type	Format
<b>Examinations</b>  formal, time-limited, written assessments that take place at a specified date, time and location (usually scheduled centrally)	Unseen written examinations "Open-book" examinations Seen written examinations Multiple Choice examinations
<b>Oral Examinations</b>	Viva Voce Modern foreign language test

Type	Format
Other	Coursework Coursework Essay Coursework Exhibition Coursework Journal Coursework Portfolio Coursework Project Coursework Report Coursework Take Home Exam Practice Work placement Dissertation Performance Presentation

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### 3 Scheduling of Assessments

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3.9.4 Goldsmiths provides guidance for students concerned about the scheduling of assessments during religious festivals or other periods of observance.

#### 3.1 Submission Deadlines

- 3.1.1 Where coursework forms part of the summative assessment of a programme of study, this must be clearly stated in the information provided to students. Details of the work required, and the date and time of submission, must be communicated to the students at the beginning of the academic year (usually via the VLE). Academic Departments are responsible for setting assessments and deadlines and for communicating this to students.
- 3.1.2 Academic Departments should, as far as is possible, schedule assessments to avoid placing students under undue pressure and to permit timely feedback in accordance with the Assessment Feedback Policy.
- 3.1.3 Academic Departments should also ensure in setting assessment deadlines that the date/time of the deadline allows students to access academic and other support from the College that might be needed. They should also ensure that in setting deadlines there is sufficient time for the marking and moderation process to be completed in advance of the Board of Examiners and publishing results to students. Timeframes are set out in the Guidance to Board of Examiners.
- 3.1.4 Other than assessments involving group work, presentations, exhibitions or performances, a single assessment deadline will be set for all students, regardless of whether those students are taking the assessment for the first time or taking it as a

repeat attempt. Adjustments to deadlines for individual students as a result of an adjustment in a RASA or from an approved Extenuating Circumstances application will be applied to those students in the set-up of assessment submission areas.

- 3.1.5 The College (usually the Registry Operations team) will be responsible for holding all summative assessment deadlines to be used across related processes (including but not limited to the Extenuating Circumstances application process and the setting up of assessment submission areas). Academic Departments are responsible for ensuring they provide accurate data for all summative assessment deadlines in accordance with the requirements set out by the College.
- 3.1.6 On occasion it may be necessary for an assessment deadline to be adjusted for a cohort or group of students within a cohort, for example if there is a college wide system outage or a temporary campus closure that impacts students' ability to engage with and submit that assessment by the published deadline. Where this occurs, the academic department should contact the Academic Registrar or Deputy Academic Registrar to determine the impact on students of the disruption, the students impacted and what adjustments, including to the assessment deadline are needed. The Academic Registrar/Deputy Academic Registrar will be responsible for ensuring any agreed deadline adjustment is implemented. Academic Departments will be responsible for updating assessment information on the VLE.

## **3.2 Setting of alternative assessments**

- 3.2.1 Students repeating assessments would normally do so at the next available assessment point and in the same format/requirements as the original attempt. On occasion it might be necessary for an alternative assessment to be set for students repeating an assessment. This might be due to the nature of the assessment such as group performance-based assessments to accommodate a student needing to repeat an assessment during the Late Summer Resit period. Where alternative assessments are in operation this should be clearly stated in the module specification. Individual students may have an alternative assessment where this is set out as a reasonable adjustment in a RASA.

### **3.3 Examination Timetable**

- 3.3.1 There are three annual examination sessions at Goldsmiths: Spring, Summer, and late Summer. Not all Academic Departments schedule examinations in the Spring session. Goldsmiths publishes an examination timetable at least one month before each session.
- 3.3.2 The Records & Assessments Manager is responsible for the creation and publication of the examination timetable.
- 3.3.3 Academic Departments may sometimes schedule additional examinations outside of the normal examination sessions. When this occurs, Academic Departments are responsible for notifying students of the dates of the examinations and for the organisation of these.
- 3.3.4 Students are responsible for ensuring that they know the date, time and location of each paper they are registered to take and that they are available to sit all scheduled examinations.
- 3.3.5 Students must notify their Academic Department of any timetabling issues at the earliest possible time.

### **3.4 Religious Observance**

- 3.4.1 Goldsmiths recognises religion and belief as a protected equality characteristic and offers support to all staff and students, including while examinations take place.
- 3.4.2 If a student considers that religious observance has had a significant adverse impact on their performance in assessments, they may apply for mitigation under the procedures for extenuating circumstances.

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## **4 Preparation of Examinations**

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3.7.3 Boards of Examiners are responsible for the approval of the content of examination papers.

- 4.1.1 Examination papers must be written for January, May and Late Summer Resit examination periods in the autumn term. Academic Departments are responsible for producing written examination papers in accordance with the published procedure.



- 4.1.2 External Examiners must be asked to approve the form and the content of examination papers.
- 4.1.3 Students required to re-sit an examination must be provided with a paper based on the syllabus studied in the former session. If a unique paper is set for one or more individuals (e.g. retakes), the rubric must include the student ID number/s of those sitting, to ensure the correct paper is made available to the correct student in the halls.

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## 5 Completion of Assessments

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3.2.1 Students must follow all specific instructions for assessments. Failure to do so may result in a penalty or non-valid attempt. This includes submitting work for assessment by the published deadline and presenting themselves for examinations at the published time and place.

3.2.10 Except where a student presents extenuating circumstances which are deemed acceptable by the Board of Examiners, failed assessments will be capped at the relevant pass mark for subsequent attempts.

N.B under the Exception Academic Regulations in force in 2019/20, any assessment failed at the first attempt will have no cap applied to the remaining two attempts. For all other resit attempts, this regulation remains in force

3.2.2 All assessments should be conducted in English unless the purpose of the assessment is to test the ability of students in another language.

### 5.1 Submission Requirements

- 5.1.1 Students must submit assessments by the deadline published and present themselves for examinations at the published time and place.
- 5.1.2 Students with a disability may have been granted a reasonable adjustment for an assessment. The Reasonable Adjustments Support Agreement (RASA) Guidance and Procedures set out the process for applying for a RASA and its implementation.

- 5.1.3 Students who do not have an approved Extenuating Circumstances application in respect of an absence from examination or late submission of an assessment will be recorded as having made an attempt and being absent for that element of the assessment. A mark of zero will be awarded for the assessment and the subsequent attempt will be capped at the relevant pass mark.
- 5.1.4 Academic Departments can require students to submit work for assessment in a specific format (for example using an essay template Word document). Submitted work which does not conform to these requirements may not be considered for marking.
- 5.1.5 Students are responsible for ensuring they submit the correct assessment to the correct submission area. Where a student has made a genuine error in submitting an assessment, this should be discussed between the student and personal tutor. If the student's department determines the error was genuine, and this is identified in sufficient time prior to the relevant programme board, they will report this to the School Hub who will be instructed to reopen the submission area. The student will be given 48 hours from the point of the submission area being re-opened to submit the correct assessment to the correct submission area. The assessment will be marked with no penalty applied.

## **5.2 Legibility of Written Work**

- 5.2.1 Students must ensure that work submitted for assessment is legible and coherent, normally they will only receive marks for work that can be read.
- 5.2.2 If Examiners are unable to read a student's work, the Records & Assessments Manager should be informed as they may be able to arrange for work to be transcribed. The costs incurred for a scribe shall be charged to the student.
- 5.2.3 If work has to be transcribed the student will dictate the completed work to a scribe under supervision. This typed (or hand-written) version should correspond line for line and page for page with the original; both the original work and the transcription shall then be returned to the Examiners for marking.

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## 6 Reasonable Adjustments / Extenuating Circumstance

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3.9.1 Goldsmiths has a legal responsibility and an ethical commitment to provide fair access to education and equality of opportunity in teaching, learning and assessment for all students. In some cases, teaching and assessment methods must be adapted to meet an individual's needs, in accordance with the institution's legal responsibility to make reasonable adjustments.

3.9.2 Recommendations for adjustments may be made through Reasonable Adjustments Student Agreement (RASA) are where a student has a 'protected characteristic' (as defined within the Equality Act 2010) that impacts their ability to learn and perform under specific teaching conditions, or in particular types of assessment tasks. RASAs will be provided by Student Services.

### 6.1 Reasonable Adjustments Student Agreement (RASA)

- 6.1.1 Reasonable adjustments to assessments may include, but are not limited to, provision of alternative examination rooms; additional time to complete assessments and examinations; the use of alternative methods of assessment and the use of assistive technology in examinations.
- 6.1.2 Once a RASA is completed, adjustments to assessments will be put in place automatically.
- 6.1.3 The RASA Guidance and Procedures set out the process for applying for a RASA and its implementation.

## 6.2 Extenuating Circumstances

3.9.3 Extenuating circumstances should not be used as an alternative to a RASA. However, there may be occasions where exceptional and unforeseeable factors present themselves which mean that a RASA is unable to provide adequate reasonable adjustments for a situation.

3.3.1 Students may experience exceptional circumstances that temporarily make it impossible for them to participate in their studies, submit assessments or attend examinations. Goldsmiths considers applications from students who believe that their work and assessments have been affected by these circumstances.

**3.3.2 Before a submission or deadline:** When a student knows before a submission or other deadline that an illness, the worsening of a chronic illness, or an otherwise unforeseen event is beginning, or about to begin, they should notify the College in accordance with the requirements set out in the published extenuating circumstances policy.

**3.3.3 After a submission or deadline:** Where there is a request for the recognition of extenuating circumstances after the deadline for an assessment has passed or after an examination, the student is required to notify the College in accordance with the requirements set out in the published extenuating circumstances policy.

- 6.2.1 Students who are absent from examinations; do not submit coursework; submit work after the deadline or believe that the standard of the work submitted has been affected by exceptional circumstances, may apply for extenuating circumstances to be considered.
- 6.2.2 The procedures to be followed are detailed separately in the Extenuating Circumstances Policy and Procedures.

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## **7 Academic Integrity / Plagiarism**

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3.8.1 It is a disciplinary offence for a student to cheat or attempt to cheat in an assessment. Goldsmiths maintains procedures for defining and dealing with poor academic practice or academic misconduct.

3.8.2 Academic integrity is defined as a commitment to the values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility and courage within teaching, learning and scholarship. Students must not act in any way that may put at risk the academic integrity of themselves, any other member of the college or Goldsmiths itself. Poor academic practice or academic misconduct by a student will be considered as undermining academic integrity.

3.8.3 Goldsmiths has the power to take action, up to and including termination of registration, against any student who is found to have undertaken poor academic practice or committed academic misconduct.

3.8.4 Students who are dissatisfied with action taken against them under this regulation may challenge that decision through academic appeal.

### **7.1 Academic Misconduct**

7.1.1 Goldsmiths policy relating to academic misconduct is detailed separately in the Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedures.

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## 8 Marking

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3.2.4 All assessments contributing to the award are marked in accordance with Goldsmiths policy on marking and moderation.

3.2.5 The pass mark is 40% for all undergraduate programmes and 50% for taught postgraduate programmes. Undergraduate programmes that include a foundation year may use separate pass mark and grading criteria for that year. Refer to individual programme specifications for this information.

3.2.7 Marks are awarded for all attempts at assessment contributing to the award.

3.2.6 Goldsmiths publishes full marking criteria for all of its awards.

3.11.1 Marking criteria must be made readily available and accessible to students in advance of the assessment to which it applies

3.11.2 All summative work must be subject to some form of moderation. Moderation is not required for formative work but may still be used. The form of moderation used in assessments should be appropriate for the nature and method of the assessment itself.

3.11.3 Feedback must be provided on all assessed work, with the exception of final assessments where this is discretionary, in line with the requirements of the Goldsmiths Feedback Policy.

### 8.1 Grading and Marking Criteria

8.1.1 Each programme of study has its own approved marking scheme and students should check the programme specification or departmental VLE page to familiarise themselves with these marking schemes.

8.1.2 Marking of students' work will include an effective assessment of the student's technical proficiency in the English language, appropriate to the level and content of the work<sup>1</sup>.

8.1.3 Goldsmiths also has approved generic grading criteria for students. These are as follows:

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<sup>1</sup> Unless in doing so would amount to a form of discrimination for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010, for example in cases where a student has disclosed a learning disability such as dyslexia.

## Undergraduate Degrees

Mark	Descriptor	Generic Grading Criteria	Specific Marking Criteria
90-100%	Exceptional I: First	Represents the overall achievement of the appropriate learning outcomes to an <b>exceptionally accomplished</b> level.	Departments should list specific grading criteria in each generic grading band to allow an assessment of the level of achievement of the appropriate learning outcomes
80-90%	Outstanding I: First	Represents the overall achievement of the appropriate learning outcomes to an <b>outstanding</b> level.	As above
70-79%	Excellent I: First	Represents the overall achievement of the appropriate learning outcomes to an <b>excellent</b> level	As above
60-69%	Very Good Iii: Upper Second	Represents the overall achievement of the appropriate learning	As above
		outcomes to a <b>very good</b> level.	
50-59%	Good Iiii: Lower Second	Represents the overall achievement of the appropriate learning outcomes to a <b>good</b> level.	As above
40-49%	Threshold III: Third	Represents the overall achievement of the appropriate learning outcomes to a <b>threshold</b> level	As above

<b>Mark</b>	<b>Descriptor</b>	<b>Generic Grading Criteria</b>	<b>Specific Marking Criteria</b>
<b>25-39%</b>	Fail	Represents an overall failure to achieve the appropriate learning outcomes (shall be deemed a valid attempt and a re-sit must be taken unless all three permitted attempts have been used). Work achieving a mark of between 35-39% may be compensated in certain circumstances set out within the Goldsmiths policy and procedures for the progression and award of students on taught programmes	As above
<b>10-24%</b>	Bad Fail	Represents a significant overall failure to achieve the appropriate learning outcomes (shall be deemed a valid attempt and a re-sit must be taken unless all three permitted attempts have been used).	As above
<b>1-9%</b>	Very Bad Fail	A submission that does not even attempt to address the specified learning outcomes (shall be deemed a non-valid attempt and module must be re-sat).	N/A
<b>0%</b>	Non-Submission or plagiarised assessment	A categorical mark representing either the failure to submit an assessment or a mark assigned for a plagiarised assessment	N/A



## Masters Degrees

Mark	Descriptor	Generic Grading Criteria	Specific Marking Criteria
<b>90-100%</b>	Distinction	Represents the overall achievement of the appropriate learning outcomes to an <b>exceptionally accomplished</b> level.	Departments should list specific grading criteria in each generic grading band to allow an assessment of the level of achievement of the appropriate learning outcomes
<b>80-90%</b>	Distinction	Represents the overall achievement of the appropriate learning outcomes to an <b>outstanding</b> level.	As above
<b>70-79%</b>	Distinction	Represents the overall achievement of the appropriate learning outcomes to an <b>excellent</b> level	As above
<b>60-69%</b>	Merit	Represents the overall achievement of the appropriate learning outcomes to a <b>very good</b> level.	As above
<b>50-59%</b>	Pass	Represents the overall achievement of the appropriate learning outcomes to a <b>threshold</b> level.	As above
<b>30-49%</b>	Fail	Represents an overall failure to achieve the appropriate learning outcomes (shall be deemed a valid attempt and must be resat unless all three permitted attempts have been used).	As above

<b>10-29%</b>	Bad Fail	Represents a significant overall failure to achieve the appropriate learning outcomes (shall be deemed a valid attempt and must be resat unless all three permitted attempts have been used).	As above
<b>1-9%</b>	Very Bad Fail	A submission that does not even attempt to address the specified learning outcomes (shall be deemed a non-valid attempt and module must be retaken).	N/A
<b>0%</b>	Non-Submission or plagiarised assessment	A categorical mark representing either the failure to submit an assessment or a mark assigned for a plagiarised assessment	N/A

## 8.2 Anonymity

- 8.2.1 The practice of anonymity minimises the potential for bias in the assessment process and is a central element of the College's procedures for ensuring the integrity and fairness of the marking system.
- 8.2.2 Where it is possible, all summatively assessed work should be marked anonymously and care should be taken to ensure that this is observed throughout all stages of the assessment process including during the deliberations of the Board of Examiners.
- 8.2.3 To ensure anonymity, students should use only their student number when submitting assessments.
- 8.2.4 The nature of some assessments (such as performances, studio practice, placements, practical work or presentations) may make it impossible to maintain anonymity. However, this should occur only when absolutely necessary and appropriate.

8.2.5 Where it is not possible to maintain anonymity, departments must ensure that effective second marking and moderation processes are employed to ensure the fairness, consistency and reliability of the assessment.

### **8.3 Marking and Moderation**

8.3.1 The purpose of moderation and double marking is to ensure consistency in the application of assessment criteria.

8.3.2 All forms of summative assessment must be subject to some form of double marking or moderation, irrespective of their academic level or credit value.

8.3.3 Double Marking involves the marking of all pieces of student work for a particular assessment by two or more examiners. It may be “seen” or “blind”.

8.3.4 Seen double marking means that a piece of assessed work is marked independently by two examiners and the marks and comments of the first examiner are visible to the second examiner.

8.3.5 Blind double marking means that a piece of assessed work is marked independently by two Examiners and the marks and comments of the first examiner are not seen by the second examiner.

8.3.6 Where an assessment is double blind marked and differences in the marks awarded emerge between examiners, a final mark should not simply be an average of the two marks. Rather, examiners should agree a final mark by reference to the original work, learning outcomes and grading criteria, and if appropriate by employing an internal moderator.

8.3.7 Moderation means that a second Examiner reviews the marks awarded by the first Examiner, including reviewing only a sample of papers. A moderator may not change an individual mark: in the event of concern by the moderator about marks or patterns of marking the Board of Examiners may determine to amend on a consistent basis the marks for all students who have taken the assessment or to remark it in its entirety.

8.3.8 When work is moderated, the moderator must consider all firsts/distinctions, borderlines and fails and a sample of other scripts totaling at least twenty per cent of the cohort.

8.3.9 When assessments which are marked “live” (such as oral examinations, presentations, exhibitions, performances or group work) and comprise more than 20% of the overall assessment for a module, this element should be conducted by not less than two Examiners. Where an oral examination is 20% or less of the overall assessment and it is conducted by one examiner, a recorded copy of the work must be made available for the External or Second Examiner to scrutinise.

- 8.3.10 Marking and moderation takes place on the VLE irrespective of where the assessment is submitted. This ensures a record is maintained and that module convenors are able to confirm that marking and moderation requirements for the assessment has been completed before the provisional mark and feedback is published to students. Where due to the nature of the assessment (such as oral examinations, presentation, exhibitions, performances of group work) elements of the marking and moderation process take place outside of the VLE, the agreed mark from the moderation process will be entered into the VLE and act as the record in this instance.

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## 9 Appeals

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3.10.1 Students are entitled to challenge the outcome of any academic assessment or decision to terminate their registration on academic grounds, by lodging an academic appeal on one or more of the following grounds:

- Administrative error or procedural irregularity in the way in which the assessment was conducted.
- There is evidence of prejudice or of bias such that the validity of the result of examination is called into question.
- Their performance was adversely impacted by extenuating circumstances which they could not disclose to examiners within 7 days of the assessment affected.

3.10.2 Academic appeals cannot be submitted on the following grounds:

- Ignorance of assessment requirements and assessment regulations
- Challenge of academic judgement
- Appeals based on extenuating circumstances which do not provide evidence to explain why those circumstances could not have been brought to the attention of the examiners within 7-days of the assessment.

3.10.3 Academic appeals must be received in accordance with the appeals procedure. Academic appeals received which do not follow the appeals procedure may not be considered.

3.10.4 Once the academic appeals procedure has been completed, where a student is dissatisfied with the final decision, they may refer matters for external review to the Office for the Independent Adjudicator.

## **9.1 Procedures and Guidelines for Academic Appeals**

- 9.1.1 Full details of the appeals procedure are published separately in the Procedures and Guidelines for Academic Appeals.