

BISHOP GROSSETESTE UNIVERSITY

Document Administration

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Version Control Table

Version Number	Date Authorised	Summary of Key Changes
1.0	1 May 2020	First Approved

1. Introduction

- 1.1. These Emergency Regulations apply in exceptional circumstances that affect whole / multiple cohorts. These circumstances may also apply to individual cohorts – e.g. if there is an emergency that affects a particular partner organisation or programme area. The Emergency Regulations set out the rules and procedures to ensure that students progress through the stages of each programme and should be read in conjunction with the Regulations for the relevant degree. A core underlying principle is the necessity for awards to be made reliably and fairly using classifications that are based on clear criteria, carefully considered and well founded.
- 1.2. They are designed to ensure that the University meets the requirements of the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) *UK Quality Code for Higher Education*, specifically the core practice that: “The provider ensures that the threshold standards for its qualifications are consistent with the relevant national qualifications frameworks”. In addition, it ensures that the University acts in accordance with the relevant regulatory requirements to: “protect students by developing practical ways to maintain teaching quality and standards [and] enable adequate exams and assessment”.
- 1.3. They will be applied by Boards of Examiners and outline how progression between levels will be confirmed and how degree classifications will be calculated during a period of exceptional circumstances.
- 1.4. The University will make every effort to ensure that the published programme (course) details are complete and up-to-date. However, the University will be entitled to make reasonable changes to the programme (including to the content and syllabus of the programme, or the location of the programme or the method of delivery or assessment of the programme) where necessary. In making such changes, the University will aim to keep the changes to the minimum necessary to achieve the required quality of experience. The Students’ Union will be consulted and involved in the enactment of these Regulations. Students will be notified about the changes in advance of them taking effect (wherever possible and, if not possible due to the speed of external events, as soon as is practical), the reasons for the changes, the impact the changes are likely to have and the options available to students in order for them to avoid the changes without being adversely affected.

2. The Underlying Principles

During a period of exceptional circumstances:

- 2.1. the University will make all reasonable efforts to enable students to complete their studies, for achievement to be reliably assessed and for qualifications to be awarded securely;
- 2.2. the University will review its support systems to ensure that students are given access to academic and well-being support services;
- 2.3. the University will ensure academic standards are maintained across cohorts and academic years whilst seeking to ensure that affected students are not disadvantaged in their assessed outcomes;
- 2.4. only material that has been taught will be assessed and this may require amendments to assessment arrangements;
- 2.5. students will be responsible for engaging with learning resources including accessing and reading learning materials provided on Blackboard and online tutorials and discussion boards;
- 2.6. reasonable adjustments will be made at the marking and moderation phase to address the



potential impact of a period of disruption on student outcomes – University-level mitigation will be put in place where discernible impact remains;

- 2.7. care will be taken to ensure that students do not receive ‘double mitigation’;
- 2.8. adjustments will be subject to an Equality Impact Assessment and revised as required;
- 2.9. these Regulations will be applied consistently and fairly to student cohorts; however, this guidance cannot be applied if it conflicts with Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) requirements; and
- 2.10. in all instances of the application of these Regulations, a record will be kept of all actions taken and any mitigations and adjustments.

3. Role and Responsibilities

3.1. Approval

These Regulations are approved by Senate as per the University’s Schedule of Delegation.

3.2. Implementation.

The University, via the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC) and Registrar and University Secretary, will ordinarily confirm the exceptional circumstances and the need to consider the steps noted below to mitigate the impact on students.

- 3.2.1. The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Students) (PVC) and Dean of Faculty are responsible for the implementation of the of these Regulations as they affect the Learning and Teaching of the University from levels 4 to 7.
- 3.2.2. The DVC and Head of Research are responsible for the implementation of clauses pertaining to research degrees.
- 3.2.3. The Registrar and University Secretary and Head of Quality and Regulatory Compliance will monitor the implementation and academic assurance aspects of these Regulations.
- 3.2.4. The PVC (Students) is responsible for ensuring effective communication with the taught student body. The Head of Research is responsible for effective communication in respect of research students.

4. Taught Programmes

4.1. Implementation Stages

Application of the specific adjustments within each stage detailed below will take into account advice, guidance and requirements from bodies such as QAA, the Office for Students (OfS) and relevant PSRBs.

4.1.1. *Stage 1- advance warning and adequate time for planning and preparation*

- 4.1.1.1. An Academic Business Continuity Group will be convened by the PVC (Students). The group will include the Dean of Faculty, Registrar and University Secretary, Students’ Union and Head of Centre for Enhancement in Learning and Teaching (CELT) or nominees plus other invited colleagues to review how teaching and assessment will be affected.
- 4.1.1.2. In consultation with the Students’ Union and student representatives / student



cohorts where possible, the Academic Business Continuity Group will develop mitigation actions (e.g. changes to mode of study, training of staff and students in new mode of study, extensions to assessment deadlines, changes to assessment criteria, revision of teaching calendar, increased access to personal tutors). The PVC (Students) will work within these Regulations to develop a range of appropriate adapted learning and teaching.

- 4.1.1.3. Changes to be validated through the University's quality assurance processes and implemented.

4.1.2. *Stage 2 – limited advance warning resulting in rapid changes to mode of delivery where the University is able to work with the students to complete the academic year*

- 4.1.2.1. A Business Continuity Group (BCG) will be convened by the DVC (including the PVC (Students), Dean of Faculty and Registrar and University Secretary or nominee) to review business continuity at the University and how teaching and assessment will be affected.
- 4.1.2.2. The PVC (Students) will work with the Dean of Faculty and team to develop an appropriate range of learning, teaching and assessment opportunities. These opportunities will be subject to the quality assurance processes detailed below.

4.1.3. *Stage 3 - limited advance warning resulting in rapid changes to mode of delivery where the University is unable to work with the students to complete the relevant assessments for that academic year*

- 4.1.3.1. A Business Continuity Group (BCG) will be convened by the DVC (including the PVC (Students), Dean of Faculty and Registrar and University Secretary or nominee) to review business continuity at the University and how teaching and assessment will be affected.
- 4.1.3.2. The DVC, PVC (Students), Dean of Faculty and Registrar and University Secretary will convene a Board of Examiners with appropriate academic/ external input to consider the level of completion per student, evidence of learning available to it per student per cohort and develop a proposal for approval by Senate. It will be Senate's responsibility to judge the extent to which there is sufficient evidence to determine that outcomes at the appropriate level have been achieved and this may be different for different programmes and students.

4.2. Degree Classification

The University will, at Stage 2, calculate the average mark of assessments contributing to the degree classification completed before the implementation of the Force Majeure period (hereinafter called the 'average mark'). The cut-off date for completed assessments to be used in this calculation will be determined by the DVC and Registrar and University Secretary (or their nominees). Marks (hereinafter called the 'original mark') achieved at first attempt in a Force Majeure period will be compared to the average mark. Where the original mark achieves the relevant pass mark but falls below the average mark, the average mark will be used in place of the original mark when calculating the overall degree classification.



The uplift criteria used for Foundation and Undergraduate degrees will be based on the module marks used to calculate the overall degree classification (see the relevant Regulations).

For Undergraduate degrees, 50% of the weighting will be on final year modules used to calculate the degree.

For Postgraduate degrees, the award classification for Master's degrees will be based on an average of the module grades. Where this average would enable an award classification of merit or distinction, this classification will be awarded if the dissertation is at the level concerned or the award classification below (e.g. if the average grade equates to an award classification of distinction and the dissertation grade should be at the level of merit or distinction).

4.3. Treatment of Failed Modules

All students who attempt the assessment and do not demonstrate the required learning outcomes (through gaining a mark at a compensatable or pass level) will have an automatic right to a first resit of any assessment with no penalty applied.

Students who are unable to submit should:

- contact the University in advance of the assessment date to discuss their individual circumstances and an appropriate Support to Study Plan; or
- submit an individual extenuating circumstances request.

Failure to submit without an appropriate Support to Study Plan being in place, or exceptional circumstances accepted by the University, may result in the appropriate mark cap being applied. Resit fees will, however, be waived.

Undergraduate students will be able to compensate up to 30 credits of whole modules (e.g. 3 x 10 credit modules, 2 x 15 credit modules or 1 x 30 credit module) using the compensation rubrics as set out in the relevant Regulations for the awards concerned.

4.4. Deferment in year

Students may opt to take a break in study in line with the University's *Code of Practice for Intercalation (Suspension of Studies)*. For instance, where a student opts to defer studies in a dissertation module (at level 6 or level 7), the University will confer with the student on the appropriate length of the deferment. Students may be enabled to return to studies outside of the normal timetable for the research module concerned where appropriate.

4.5. Placements.

Students on non-PSRB mandated placements who cannot complete their placement will be assessed on placement activity to date and any remaining coursework related to the placement. Alternative assessments will be developed as required and agreed through the



University's quality assurance processes. PSRB mandated placements will be discussed with the PSRB concerned.

5. Degree Assurance Protocols

5.1. Changes to programme content

Changes to programmes in terms of order of delivery of modules, mode of delivery or assessment alternatives will be agreed through the University's quality assurance processes, coordinated by the Registrar and University Secretary and PVC (Students). Consultation will be undertaken with the Students' Union (as a minimum).

Amendments will be sent to the External Examiner(s), although there is no requirement under these Regulations to obtain External Examiner approval.

5.2. Conduct of Board of Examiners

The Board of Examiners will seek to maintain the academic standards across cohorts and academic years and ensure that learning outcomes have been met in full.

However, in recognition of difficulties which may arise the following adjustments may be made:

- 5.2.1. late changes to examination papers to take account of material which has not been delivered do not have to be sent to the External Examiner for prior approval;
- 5.2.2. where the dates of Boards have to change to accommodate later assessment outcomes being available, External Examiners may join Boards of Examiners remotely via appropriate technology;
- 5.2.3. where a programme has more than one External Examiner and one of that group is unavailable it will be sufficient to have the confirmation of standards of the other External Examiner(s); and
- 5.2.4. where a programme has only one External Examiner and they cannot attend the Board or participate in moderation the Chair of the Board of Examiners will be advised of the circumstances. These will include the extent to which the External Examiner has already been involved, and how internal moderation of marks has been affected and they will advise accordingly, in consultation with the Registrar and University Secretary. If available, a written report will be made available to the Board of Examiners. Consideration will be taken of previous External Examiner comments relating to the programme concerned and the module mark profiles.

6. Research Degrees

- 6.1. Research degrees will be dealt with as outlined in Appendix A below.

Appendix A

Emergency Regulations for Research Degree Programmes – April 2020

1. Background and Context

- 1.1. Bishop Grosseteste University (BGU) has oversight for the delivery of two sets of doctoral programmes awarded by the University of Leicester (UoL):
 - Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) and Master of Philosophy (MPhil);
 - Doctor of Education (EdD) and intermediate awards.
- 1.2. The extant regulations are:
 - UoL – Senate Regulation 9: Regulations governing Research Degree Programmes (January 2019);
 - BGU – Regulations Governing Research Degree Programmes Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) and Doctor of Education (EdD) – Version 2.20 (March 2017).
- 1.3. Emergency Regulations for these awards have been informed by communications from the UoL:
 - A message from the Chief Operating Officer on 13 March 2020 signposting advice to students and others ([here](#));
 - A message from the Information received from Student Records Administrator (Postgraduate Research) confirming arrangements;
 - Information for Students ([here](#));
 - Additional clarification provided by the Student Records & Operations Officer on 31 March 2020.
- 1.4. A meeting of BGU's Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee convened on 3 April 2020 agreed in principle to endorse Emergency Regulations in 2.1 to 2.4 below.

2. Emergency Regulations – Principles and Procedures

- 2.1. The Emergency Regulations are based on the following key principles:
 - 2.1.1. Candidates continue to study remotely during the temporary closure of the University's campus and LORIC.
 - 2.1.2. Candidates in the taught element of the EdD benefit from the same changed arrangements as the undergraduate and taught postgraduate students in the transition to remote / online study.
 - 2.1.3. Only if candidates are unable to study remotely should a suspension of studies be sought.
 - 2.1.4. Extension requests may be submitted in the usual way for extenuating circumstances that have affected progress before submission of a thesis and/or impacted on post-examination amendments and/or resubmission. They will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.



2.2. There are four sets of Procedures that follow from these:

2.2.1. EdD Stage 1 - taught modules

- For all assessments that are pending for semester 2 of the 2019/20 academic session, the deadline for submission is reset to provide an additional two working weeks to accommodate the transition to online study.

2.2.2. Probation and Progression

- Where possible, probation reviews and progression meetings will proceed in the usual way but using video conferencing arrangements (e.g., Skype, Microsoft Teams).

2.2.3. Submission of Theses

- Candidates will submit a PDF e-version of the thesis accompanied by the First Submission form.
- Following examination, if necessary, candidates will submit a PDF e-version of amendments and/or a resubmitted thesis accompanied by the Submission form.
- Candidates who have completed all requirements for the award and have been invited to submit their thesis to the David Wilson Library at the University of Leicester will submit the final e-version of their thesis for printing and binding to Print Services as normal [here](#). This version will also be submitted accompanied by the Final Submission of Thesis form [here](#).

2.2.4. Examination of theses

- Where possible, and if all parties are in agreement, the examination of theses will proceed in the usual way but using video conferencing arrangements (e.g., Skype, Microsoft Teams). ¹

¹ Though not a regulation *per se*, appropriate consideration will be given to the welfare of candidates at a time of possible 'self-isolation' when conducting *viva voce* examinations remotely.