

# Assessment Board Policy (Taught Programmes)

Policy owner: PVC Education and Student Experience

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# Middlesex University Assessment Board Policy

## Introduction

1. Assessment Boards ensure that academic standards are applied consistently and fairly across programmes and that student outcomes are determined in accordance with the University's Framework and Regulations.
2. They play a critical role in maintaining academic integrity, confirming achievement and ensuring decisions relating to progression and award are robust, transparent and defensible.

## Scope

3. The policy sets out the governance, structure, authority, membership, and conduct requirements for Assessment Boards responsible for:
  - a. confirming module grades
  - b. determining progression
  - c. awarding qualifications.
4. This policy applies to all Assessment Boards considering the progression and achievement of students on taught programmes, including those delivered at Middlesex University campuses and at academic partnerships.
5. Local arrangements at international campuses and partner institutions must align with the principles and standards set out in this policy.

## Types of Assessment Boards

6. The University operates the following Assessment Boards:

| Board type                         | Purpose                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Programme Assessment Boards (PABs) | operate within each Faculty and consider student progression and achievement for a defined cluster of programmes. Overseas campuses may operate local PABs in alignment with this policy. |
| Exchange Grades Panel              | responsible for receiving and converting grades from partner institutions in accordance with approved conversion frameworks for the Middlesex 20 point scale.                             |

## Terms of Reference

7. Assessment Boards are responsible for ensuring that student outcomes are determined fairly, consistently and in accordance with the University's regulations. In fulfilling this role, Assessment Boards will:
  - a. maintain confidentiality until the formal publication of results
  - b. receive and ratify module grades for all students presented for progression and/or award consideration.

- c. determine progression and academic standing in line with approved regulations
- d. confirm awards and classifications in line with the University's regulatory framework.
- e. agree actions arising from decisions, including compensation, reassessment, exit awards, or termination of registration
- f. review patterns and trends in outcomes to support the maintenance of academic standards
- g. consider External Examiner commentary on standards and comparability across the sector
- h. exercise discretion where permitted within the regulatory framework, including consideration of extenuating circumstances
- i. uphold academic judgement in all decisions

## **Membership**

8. Programme Assessment Boards will normally include:
  - a. Head of Department or nominee (Directors of Programmes)
  - b. Directors of Programmes
  - c. Programme Leaders
  - d. Module Leaders
  - e. External Examiners
  - f. Student Journey Administration Officers
  - g. Programme Leaders/Programme Coordinators and Registry/Student Administration staff from the overseas campuses
  - h. Link Tutors (where relevant)
9. Where a member is unable to attend, a substitute may be approved by the Chair. Substitutes must have appropriate knowledge of the assessment process and have been involved in assessment activity.
10. Substitutes may not be appointed solely to achieve quoracy.

## **Quoracy**

11. Assessment Boards are quorate where:
  - a. all External Examiners are present, and
  - b. at least one third of internal members are in attendance
  - c. External Examiners must be present for the confirmation of award decisions for finalists.
12. If exceptional circumstances prevent an External Examiner from attending, they are expected to submit their report in advance of the board.

## **Authority**

13. Assessment Boards derive their authority from the Academic Board.

14. Module grades remain provisional until confirmed by an Assessment Board.

### **Conduct**

15. Members of Assessment Boards are expected to:
- a. attend all scheduled meetings
  - b. act impartially and in accordance with university regulations
  - c. declare any conflicts of interest
  - d. maintain confidentiality of discussions and decisions
  - e. ensure fairness and consistency in decision-making

### **Delegation**

16. Assessment Boards may delegate specific functions to the Chair or to subgroups where appropriate. However, decisions relating to the conferment of awards must include the agreement of External Examiners.

### **Record Keeping**

17. Accurate records must be maintained, including:
- a. confirmation of module grades
  - b. progression and award decisions
  - c. votes, where relevant
  - d. consideration of extenuating circumstances
  - e. rationale for discretionary decisions

### **External Examiner Responsibilities**

18. External Examiners play a key role in assuring academic standards. They will:
- a. attend Assessment Boards
  - b. review assessment processes and outcomes
  - c. provide independent oversight of standards and comparability
  - d. advise on academic standards and regulatory compliance
  - e. submit annual reports

19. All activity must align with the University's External Examining Policy.

### **Faculty Responsibilities**

20. Faculties are responsible for ensuring that:
- a. assessment and marking are completed in line with agreed timelines
  - b. grades are submitted in advance of Assessment Boards
  - c. moderation processes are applied consistently
  - d. staff adhere to the requirements set out in the Moderation Policy [\[link\]](#)

## **Discretion and Interpretation**

21. Assessment Boards may exercise discretion where permitted within the University's regulations.

22. In line with University's regulations, discretion may be applied for the following reasons:

- a. Fail grades of 17 or 18 in modules at FHEQ Level 5 and above may be compensated if overall performance is satisfactory and where the relevant learning outcomes have still been met.
- b. Where the class of Honours indicates borderline or split profiles, discretion may be applied taking into consideration the following:
  - i. Exit velocity: FHEQ Level 6 work or work completed in the final stage of the programme
  - ii. The grade achieved for the final dissertation/project module where these form part of the programme
  - iii. Whether extenuating circumstances exist
  - iv. To be consistent in its policy in the interpretation of classification for all students in a cohort

23. All discretionary decisions must:

- a. be applied consistently
- b. be supported by clear rationale
- c. remain within the scope of the regulatory framework

24. Academic judgement rests with the Assessment Board and is not subject to review except on procedural grounds.