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1.1 The regulatory framework

UAL Awarding Body, like all nationally recognised awarding bodies, is subject to regulation by Ofqual who undertake regular audits of our activities.

Details of the regulations governing awarding body activity are contained in the following documents available from the Ofqual website: www.gov.uk/ofqual

► **General Conditions of Recognition:** www.gov.uk/government/publications/general-conditions-of-recognition

► **Qualification and Component Levels:** www.gov.uk/government/publications/total-qualification-time-criteria

► **Total Qualification Time Criteria:** www.gov.uk/government/publications/total-qualification-time-criteria

1.2 Obligations for centres

Under the General Conditions of Recognition, section C, centres must fulfil a range of obligations under their Centre Approval agreement including providing the Awarding Body and its representatives with access to premises, people and records, and to cooperate with the awarding organisation's monitoring processes and activities:

- Centres must provide UAL Awarding Body with updated contact details for all staff with responsibility for UAL Awarding Body qualifications annually
- Centres nominate one centre liaison to act as UAL Awarding Body's main point of contact.

1.3 Admissions

UAL Awarding Body expects centres to recruit with integrity on the basis of the student's anticipated ability to successfully complete the requirements of the individual unit(s) or the full qualification.

Applicants to courses should provide suitable evidence of their learning and achievement. Whenever possible, applicants should be invited to attend a personal interview to enable the interviewer(s) to assess their aptitude and potential to benefit from the course.

1.4 The purpose of external moderation

External moderation by representatives of UAL Awarding Body is designed to ensure that:

- Centres maintain and provide accurate and consistent standards of assessment and grading
- Centres maintain and provide accurate and consistent standards when awarding credit and qualifications
- The qualification has been delivered in accordance with the specification and any other documentation provided by UAL Awarding Body
- Certification is agreed in line with published procedures
- Support and guidance is provided to centres to encourage continuous improvement
- A record is maintained of centre performance.

1.5 The external moderator

To meet the requirements set out in section 3 of this handbook, all UAL Awarding Body external moderators will:

- Be appropriately qualified and experienced
- Have detailed knowledge of UAL Awarding Body's policies and procedures
- Have a good understanding of the qualification(s) for which they act as an external moderator
- Act as a representative of UAL Awarding Body visiting allocated centres to ensure that assessment and grading decisions are made on the basis of adequate and appropriate evidence and that assessment decisions are fair, valid, consistent and free from bias
- Sample assessment evidence across subject disciplines and grading levels appropriate to the qualification
- Report to UAL Awarding Body, within an agreed time-frame, their conclusions and recommendations
- Attend standardisation and qualification reviews as required by UAL Awarding Body
- Be subject to quality monitoring by the chief examiner
- Be subject to reallocation to centres every three-years or as deemed appropriate by UAL Awarding Body.

1.6 Internal assessment and internal moderation/verification

Each centre is required to safeguard the validity of its assessment decisions by ensuring that it has a rigorous assessment and internal moderation/verification process which is clear and transparent. Suitable training should be made available to staff involved in the assessment process.

Internal moderation/verification should provide an independent check on the accuracy and consistency of the marks allocated by the original assessor(s) leading to a standardisation of assessment and grading decisions across all subject disciplines and over time.

All assessment evidence should be stored in a secure place until all assessment and internal and external moderation is complete and the period for appeals has elapsed.

Student achievement will be tracked by centres throughout all units and assessment records and evidence made available to external moderators as required. Records should detail the dates and staff involved in all assessment and internal moderation/verification decisions. The precise format of the

assessment and moderation/verification methodology at any particular centre will vary according to circumstance. External moderators are required to make professional judgements as to the effectiveness and rigour of each centre's assessment methodology.

Some examples of good practice are listed below:

- ▶ Assessment judgements are made by relating evidence to published assessment criteria
- ▶ Initial assessment decisions are made by a team of staff to ensure breadth of judgement although the exact number of assessors will be dependent on the availability of staff and course size
- ▶ Assessment teams include staff from subject disciplines who have appropriate experience of the qualification and are adequately informed and supported to fulfil their responsibilities
- ▶ Blind marking, where staff make individual assessment decisions prior to communicating those decisions to other members of the assessment team, may be used to ensure greater objectivity
- ▶ Internal moderation/verification samples assessment decisions across all assessment teams and across a range of achievement to ensure that decisions are standardised

- ▶ The assessment teams have an opportunity to discuss all assessment and moderation/verification decisions
- ▶ All assessment and internal moderation/verification decisions, including all instances of Special Consideration and Aegrotat Awards, are tracked and recorded providing evidence of performance over time
- ▶ The assessment and moderation/verification system is subject to regular review.

1.7 External assessment

External assessment is a form of assessment in which question papers, assignment and tasks are specified by the awarding body, then taken under specified conditions (including details of supervision and duration) and marking or assessment judgments are made by the awarding body.

UAL Awarding body provides guidance on external assessment in the qualification specification. Centres are advised to review the external assessment requirements in each specification carefully. Where applicable, centres are also encouraged to review the sample assessment paper(s) to familiarise themselves with UAL Awarding Body's requirements.

UAL Awarding also provides centres with guidance on how to administer the assessment prior to the assessment taking place. Please refer to the qualification specification document and the UAL Awarding Body website for further guidance:

www.arts.ac.uk/awarding

2.1 Grade criteria

Internally assessed and internally moderated units are verified as Pass, Refer or Fail if the referral is not redeemed.

The final graded unit(s) of a qualification provides the evidence submitted by the student to be assessed and graded. All internal assessment and grading decisions are subject to external moderation.

The grades that can be achieved are:

Referral

If a student provides insufficient evidence to meet all of the assessment criteria then they are **Referred**. The student has one further opportunity to redeem the referral by the submission of additional evidence within a time-frame agreed by the centre and confirmed to UAL Awarding Body. (See Section 4.1 for details on the procedure).

Fail

If the student is unable to provide further evidence that meets the assessment criteria then they will receive a **Fail** grade.

Pass

To achieve a **Pass** grade, a student must achieve all of the assessment criteria listed within the final unit.

Merit

To achieve a **Merit** grade, a student must achieve all of the assessment criteria listed within the final unit and must additionally meet the entire Merit grade criteria.

Distinction

To achieve a **Distinction** grade, a student must achieve all of the assessment criteria listed within the final unit and must additionally meet all of the Merit grade criteria and the entire Distinction grade criteria.

All grading decisions are subject to internal moderation/verification and external moderation.

2.2 Grade exemplification

Please refer to the qualification specification for subject specific grading criteria and grade exemplification for the qualification level. These can also be found on the UAL Awarding Body website:

www.arts.ac.uk/awarding

3.1 External moderation

External moderators, in addition to moderating assessment and grading decisions for the final graded unit(s), are required to confirm, through examination of relevant records, that the internal assessment methodology for all preceding units is rigorous and ensures assessment decisions are fair, valid, consistent and free from bias.

Practically, this means that centres should provide external moderators with:

- ▶ An outline of the structure of the course assessment and standardisation process (internal moderation/internal verification)
- ▶ Examples of assessment and standardisation records sufficient to enable the external moderator to confirm that the methodology is working in practice
- ▶ A copy of the proposed grades for all completing students, including their Unique Learner Numbers (ULN), noting any Referrals and including special considerations with supporting documentation (see section 4.4).

It is recognised that different centres use different methodologies and nomenclature specific to their culture.

Section 1.6 of this handbook contains some examples of good practice for the internal moderation of the graded units. However, all centres are required to ensure that their methodologies are suitably robust.

Students undertaking graded units are expected to 'take responsibility for their own learning' but may be supported through the normal tutorial system.

Once internal assessment and moderation have been completed, centres must produce proposed grades for presentation to the external moderator(s).

UAL Awarding Body will agree with each centre the dates for the external moderation visit. The external moderator(s) will be notified of the agreed dates. UAL Awarding Body will notify centres of the appointed external moderator(s). The (lead) external moderator will confirm the arrival time, and any other specific requirements of the external moderation team, to the course leader at least four-weeks prior to the visit.

To facilitate external moderation, centres must ensure that:

- ▶ All students complete a copy of the UAL Awarding Body candidate authentication form
- ▶ All students provide a copy of their project proposal

- ▶ All students display or appropriately present all evidence in support of their project including evidence of critical review and evaluation
- ▶ When students have legitimately worked collaboratively (e.g. performance) then the evidence presented must include indicators of the relative contributions made by each collaborator
- ▶ All documentation produced by the centre in support of the assessment is made available to the moderator, including assessment and internal verification records and feedback to students.

Where students are displaying, for reasons other than assessment, work in addition to their graded unit, that additional work must be clearly labelled to avoid confusion.

It is appropriate for the course leader or other appointed member of staff to show the external moderator(s) the location and extent of the final unit but not, at this stage, to enter into a discussion on the grading decisions.

The centre will provide the external moderator with a list of students and their proposed grades.

To ensure objectivity external moderators must not enter into any form of discussion with the student.

3.2 Sampling

The sample for moderation will constitute 10% of the total number of students at the centre.

If the cohort is small, the external moderator(s) will select work so that the sample consists of a minimum of six students' work.

The external moderator(s) will choose the sample that they wish to see ensuring that it contains:

- ▶ Grades in all categories, Pass, Merit and Distinction
- ▶ Sufficient examples of the Referral category, to establish the Pass/Referral boundary (centres should aim to have completed and redeemed Referrals prior to the moderation. It is at the discretion of the moderator to note any actions where Referrals are in excess of 10% of the total number of students)
- ▶ A range of disciplines, reflecting the range of the qualification experience covered at the centre.

If, after reviewing the 10% sample, the external moderator(s) are uncertain that agreed standards are being applied to assessment and grading decisions then they must extend the sample by a further 5% of students. If, after extending the sample they are still uncertain that agreed standards are being applied to assessment and grading decisions then they must use the procedures set out in

Section 4.2, centre failure to apply assessment and grading criteria to agreed standards.

All centres must make all possible efforts to facilitate external moderation. Work must be appropriately displayed and/or presented and clearly labelled.

The external moderator(s) will:

- ▶ View the project proposal and/or over arching assignment brief for each sample student
- ▶ View the project evidence for each sample student
- ▶ Determine if agreed standards have been met or not
- ▶ Extend the sample by 5% if further evidence is required to confirm that agreed standards are being met
- ▶ Confirm provisional grades with the centre where agreed standards have been met
- ▶ Identify action to be taken where agreed standards have not been met
- ▶ Provide feedback to the centre, identifying areas for improvement or of good practice
- ▶ Agree the content of the written report.

If the external moderator(s) agree that the proposed grades meet the assessment and grading criteria then the agreed grades can be submitted to UAL Awarding Body via its online portal, Quartz, to be verified by the moderator. As this procedure represents the culmination of the entire assessment process, due care and attention should be taken to ensure that the correct, agreed grades are entered.

The lead moderator, when more than one moderator is used, will be responsible for coordinating the writing of the external moderation report and submitting it to UAL Awarding Body via its online portal. Once the process is completed the centre will be able to access a copy of the report.

Centres may provide a response to the external moderation report to UAL Awarding Body.

Upon receipt of the agreed grades and verification by the external moderator, certification and awarding will be undertaken by UAL Awarding Body.

Only when the external moderator has verified and signed off the grades may the centre publish the results to students.

4.1 Referral

Non-graded units

Centres that, after assessment and internal moderation of non-graded units, identify a student's failure to meet assessment criteria must refer that student. The centre must identify to the student the assessment criteria which they have failed to meet and provide them with opportunities to work toward meeting those assessment criteria within a suitable period of time. A student will only be allowed one opportunity to redeem a Referral in each unit.

Students must gain credit for all preceding units before starting the final graded unit.

Graded unit

If, when a student's work for the final graded unit is submitted it does not meet the Pass (assessment) criteria, the centre will refer that student using the procedure listed below.

- The centre will inform the student of the assessment criteria they have failed to meet and confirm that they have been referred. Records of all Referrals will be recorded and discussed with the external moderator

- A relevant course tutor will agree an action plan and time-frame for the student to submit the additional work required to meet the assessment criteria. If a student is unable to redeem a Referral prior to the external moderation visit, centres must notify UAL Awarding Body of the final date for the submission of further evidence. The final date for submission of the required work will normally be mid-September, but centres may negotiate appropriate time-frames as necessary
- The centre will assess the student's re-submitted work against the assessment criteria
- If the centre's previous assessment and grading decisions have been agreed as meeting national standards, then no additional visit from an external moderator is necessary. However, where there have been large numbers of referred students or other reasonable concerns, UAL Awarding Body reserves the right to arrange another visit by an external moderator. The cost of any additional visit will be met by the centre
- A candidate will only be allowed one opportunity to redeem a Referral and can **only achieve a Pass grade.**

4.2 Failure to apply assessment and grading criteria to agreed standards

If the centre's proposed grades are found by the external moderator(s) not to meet agreed standards then the following procedure will apply:

- If a small subset of the sample is in question, (e.g. a particular discipline area, or a specific grade band) then the centre team will be required to re-assess and re-submit the grades to the external moderator(s) for confirmation on the day of the moderation visit
- If the external moderator(s) is able to confirm that the re-submitted grades are now in line with the assessment and grading criteria, then the grades can be authorised
- If the re-submitted grades are still not in-line with the assessment and grading criteria, then the grades for the entire cohort cannot be signed. A second visit, within a reasonable time scale, will then be made by a senior external moderator or moderation team. The cost of this additional visit will be met by the centre. If a resolution cannot be reached the centre may appeal against the assessment decision
- If the re-submitted grades are now in line with national standards then the grades can be authorised.

4.3 Reasonable adjustments

Reasonable adjustments are adjustments made to the delivery or assessment of a qualification. This enables a student with an identified need or learning disability to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and understanding to the level of attainment required for the qualification, by levelling the playing field. Assessment arrangements can be altered and adapted to reduce the impact of an identified special need that puts the student at a disadvantage. Permission must be sought from UAL Awarding Body for certain adjustments, please refer to the policy for further details.

Given the nature of assessment in creative subjects, it would be expected that arrangements might be altered and adapted for a given student from the outset of delivery. Adjustments to assessments must uphold the assessment requirements of the qualification, reflect the student's normal way of working and be based on the individual needs of the student. The student must not be unfairly advantaged or disadvantaged.

What is 'reasonable' is determined by a student's individual circumstances, the impact of the identified special need, and the cost and effectiveness of the proposed adjustments. The adjustment(s) used will depend on the nature of the student's specific learning needs. Any applications for reasonable adjustments are treated in the strictest of confidence in compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

The assessment evidence produced by that student will be marked against the assessment and/or grading criteria in the same way as all other students.

Reasonable adjustments will not be considered if the student's assessment has been seen and the grades already endorsed by our External Moderators and/or a certificate claim has been made.

Please refer to the reasonable adjustments policy for further details.

Some examples of these two categories are shown below:

Reasonable adjustments for formative assessments permitted at the discretion of the centre	Reasonable adjustments for summative assessments requiring permission from UAL Awarding Body
Change in the organisation of assessment rooms	Language modified assessment material
Use of coloured overlays, low visual aids	Assessment material in BSL
Use of bilingual translation dictionaries	Responses in BSL
Assessment material in a large format	Responses in braille
Assessment material on coloured paper	BSL/English interpreter
Use of ICT	Other: contact UAL Awarding Body for guidance
Responses using electronic devices	Summative extensions (maximum of 6 weeks dependant on circumstances)
	Deferrals

The assessment evidence produced by that student will be marked against the assessment and/or grading criteria in the same way as all other students.

4.4 Special consideration

Special consideration given to a student allows for the extension of the original agreed time-frame for the completion of the assessment. Special consideration is given when circumstances impact on a student's ability to take an assessment or demonstrate their level of attainment in an assessment. If a student is disadvantaged during assessment they might be eligible for special consideration.

Examples of circumstances for which special consideration may be considered include:

- Unanticipated personal illness, injury, accident or circumstances beyond their control which prohibits the student from submitting their assessments in time
- Bereavement or other forms of emotional shock.

Please refer to our special consideration policy for further details.

Examples of circumstances for which special consideration would not generally be eligible include:

- Pre-existing medical conditions or illness that could have been addressed by reasonable adjustments
- Where preparation for the assessment is affected by environmental factors within the centre such as building works or staff shortages.

Special consideration requests are reviewed on a case by case

basis depending on the specific circumstances and the evidence is provided. Any applications for special consideration are treated confidentially in compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

Responsibility for identifying the need for special consideration is devolved to centres. Centres must submit a request for special consideration by completing the special consideration form (available on our website) as soon as possible after their internal assessment process and at least 30 working days prior to the external moderation date.

UAL Awarding Body considers all requests and will confirm the outcome to the centre in writing. Details will be recorded and used to ensure a fair and consistent approach over time. Guidelines from national disability organisations will inform decisions where appropriate. UAL Awarding Body will inform External Moderators of all approved special considerations to ensure requirements are accommodated. External Moderators are not permitted to approve new or additional special considerations; all must be agreed with UAL Awarding Body ahead of the external moderation visit.

Special consideration will not be considered if achievement has already been claimed and certificated.

Please refer to the special consideration policy for further details.

4.5 Aegrotat award

Aegrotat awards may be awarded in exceptional circumstances, which may include chronic incapacitating illness or death. Aegrotat awards should only be considered where there is no prospect of the student ever being able to be reassessed.

Centres who wish to apply for an Aegrotat award, on behalf of a student, must do so in writing giving a full explanation for their request. This must include:

- That the centre has read and understood the Awarding Body's definition of Aegrotat awards as set out here
- The name of the student
- The ULN of the student
- Evidence to support the request for an Aegrotat award.

The timings of such requests will be dependent on the qualification but must be made before any formal claim for certification is made.

UAL Awarding Body will confirm to the centre, in writing, that their request for an Aegrotat award has been considered, accepted and recorded. If necessary, UAL Awarding Body will request further information.

UAL Awarding Body will monitor the number of Aegrotat awards over time and will investigate their use within individual centres where necessary.

Aegrotat awards can only be made if the student has generated sufficient evidence of achievement upon which to base the Aegrotat assessment decision.

4.6 Advisory visits

All new centres, and existing centres commencing delivery of a new qualification, are required to have an advisory visit. An advisory visit involves a member of UAL Awarding Body team visiting the centre to provide guidance on the delivery and assessment of the qualification(s). Existing centres highlighted as being 'at risk' during moderation will also be required to have an advisory visit. Any additional visits made at the request of a centre may incur a fee.

Qualification advisors will be familiar with the delivery of the qualification across a range of centres and will have detailed knowledge of assessment methodology.

The advisor may be requested by the centre to address specific issues or may be requested to provide a broad overview of the performance of the course, measured against the norm.

A written report will be provided, as appropriate, detailing the advice and guidance. Centres may wish to make use of this external analysis of their performance when making their own internal course self-evaluation returns.

Whilst a centre may request an advisory visit at any time, experience has shown that advisory visits are often most useful in the early stages of the course when any issues identified can still be resolved within the time span of the current cohort.

4.7 Glossary

Aegrotat award

An award made in exceptional circumstances where there is no prospect of the student ever being able to be reassessed.

Appeal

A process through which an awarding body may be challenged on the outcome of an enquiry about results or, where appropriate, other procedural decisions affecting a centre or individual.

Assessment

The process of making judgements about the extent to which a candidate's work meets the assessment criteria for a qualification or unit.

Assessment criteria

The requirements that candidates need to meet in order to successfully complete the learning outcomes for a unit or qualification.

Authentication

Confirmation that evidence was produced by the candidate who is putting it forward for assessment in the form of a declaration of authenticity by the candidate.

Candidate

A person who is registered with an awarding body for a qualification or unit.

Centre

An organisation or consortium accountable to an awarding body for the assessment arrangements leading to a qualification or units.

Certificate

The record of attainment in a unit or qualification issued by the Awarding Body.

External moderator

An individual appointed by the Awarding Body to ensure accurate and consistent standards of assessment across Centres and over time.

External moderation final visit report form

Records details of students sampled for the external moderation and a commentary on the conduct of the internal assessment and grading methodology at each centre.

Grade

A point on a scale of performance used to differentiate achievement within a qualification.

Internal assessment

Assessment where candidate's work is assessed wholly within the candidate's centre, subject, where appropriate, to external moderation.

Internal moderator/verifier

An individual(s) appointed by the centre to ensure accurate and consistent standards of assessment across assessors.

Qualification

An award made to a student for the achievement of the specified combination of credits.

Reasonable adjustment

Adjustments made to the delivery or assessment of a qualification. This enables a student with an identified need or learning disability to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and understanding to the level of attainment required for the qualification, by levelling the playing field. Assessment arrangements can be altered and adapted to reduce the impact of an identified special need that puts the student at a disadvantage.

Special consideration

Special consideration given to a student allows for the extension of the original agreed time-frame for the completion of the assessment. Special consideration is given when circumstances impact on a student's ability to take an assessment or demonstrate their level of attainment in an assessment. If a student is disadvantaged during assessment they might be eligible for special consideration.

Standardisation of assessment

A process to ensure that the assessment criteria for a qualification or unit are applied consistently by assessors. Standardisation can be carried out within centres, (internal moderation) as well as by awarding bodies across their centres.

Unit

The smallest part of a qualification that is capable of certification in its own right.

UAL Awarding Body believes in transformative education. We design and award creative qualifications that empower and inspire educators to help students reach their potential.

UAL Awarding Body is regulated by Ofqual and currently offers accredited qualifications in art and design, fashion, creative media, music and performing and production arts. We are also the UK's leading provider of the Diploma in Art & Design - Foundation Studies. Our qualifications have high retention and achievement rates because they are flexible, responsive and relevant to industry needs, and facilitate student progression.

University of the Arts London (UAL) is Europe's largest specialist art and design university, comprising six renowned Colleges: Camberwell College of Arts, Central Saint Martins, Chelsea College of Arts, London College of Communication, London College of Fashion and Wimbledon College of Arts.

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