**Examination board guidance and resources 2019/20**

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1. Introduction and contacts

The information and guidance given here and in the supplementary Appendices are for all those who are involved in the processing of examination results and recommendations for undergraduate **final year students in 2020**, under the Emergency Framework for Assessment and Progression (and other relevant Regulations where applicable for your School/Department). **Please read this pack carefully.**

NB: Students on programmes that have been able to complete all teaching and assessment as normal and have not been impacted by COVID-19 should be considered under the standard University of Birmingham cohort specific Regulations.

Guidance relating to the processing of results for continuing students will be circulated separately at a later date, once this has been considered and agreed.

**Documentation relating to this guidance will be located on the Examination Board information intranet pages, in addition to the copy that has been circulated electronically.**

The information contained in sections 3-6 of this document is taken from the Protocol for UG Boards of Examiners Meetings Summer 2020. Should you wish to view the protocol in its entirety, the full version can be found as Appendix K.

Guidance is provided on:
- *The new process for mark calculations, credits totalling and degree classification calculations*
- *Undergraduate protocols for Boards of Examiners meetings*
- *recommendations made Not Withstanding Emergency Framework for Assessment and Progression Regulations;*
- *extenuating circumstances;*

If you have any questions or require any further information please contact one of the following:

- **Marcelle Cobbold** (Head of Taught Student Administration) (email m.y.cobbold@bham.ac.uk)
- **Vicki Phillips** (Assistant Director, Student Administration) (email v.h.phillips@bham.ac.uk)
- Queries relating to Datasheets - **Matt Wildig** (email m.wildig@bham.ac.uk)
- **Sarah O’Donovan** (Deputy Head of Taught Student Administration) (email s.g.odonovan@bham.ac.uk).
- **Jess Coles** (Deputy Head of Taught Student Administration) (email j.l.coles@bham.ac.uk)
- Queries related to module assessment set up – **Curriculum Management Team** (email curriculummanagement@contacts.bham.ac.uk)
- Appeals: queries to be sent appeals@contacts.bham.ac.uk

If you need to speak to anyone in person please contact **Simon Ells** (Head of Student
Conduct, Complaints & Appeals) (email s.d.ells@bham.ac.uk)

- Discipline, examination irregularities and Fitness to Practise issues: Sara Anderson-Clark (Student Conduct Officer) (email conduct@contacts.bham.ac.uk)

- Plagiarism: Shelley Evans (Student Conduct Officer) (email conduct@contacts.bham.ac.uk)

- Joint, Validated and Collaborative programmes: Sarah O’Donovan (Deputy Head of Taught Student Administration) (email s.g.odonovan@bham.ac.uk)

- Data Protection: Dawn Jeynes (Information Compliance Manager, Legal Services) (email d.jeynes@bham.ac.uk)

2. **Summary of Process for Module mark calculations, credits totalling, and Degree Classification calculations for final year Undergraduate students**

1.1 Due to the changes to the way module marks, partial credits and degree classifications will be calculated in accordance with the Framework for Assessment and Progression, it will not be possible to calculate marks for partially completed modules or degree classifications using the existing Marks Entry and End of Session functionality in BIRMS. It has been confirmed by IT Services that there is insufficient time to complete the IT developments to enable auto-calculation of marks and degree classification in BIRMS.

1.2 It has been agreed that module mark calculations, credits totalling and degree classification calculations will be performed outside BIRMS by College teams. The Board of Examiners will review each student profile and agree the degree classification to be awarded based upon credits achieved, overall weighted means and revised profiling methodology in accordance with the new Framework for Assessment and Progression.

1.3 To support this process, data sheets including component marks from BIRMS and formulas to calculate module marks, partial credits and weighted overall marks will be provided to Colleges by Registry. Step by step instructions on how to activate the formulas in the spreadsheet can be found in Appendix H along with guidance on how to check your data.

1.4 Following Boards of Examiners, data from the spreadsheets will be imported into BIRMS and released to Banner to enable students to view their marks and degree classifications from **Tuesday 30 June**. This will also enable transcripts and certificates to be produced following the formal conferment of degrees by Special Warrant.

1.5 It was requested in a communication circulated early in week commencing 1 June that Colleges enter as many available marks into BIRMS as possible by the end of the day on 5 June. It was recommended that entry of marks that need to be shared with other Schools, e.g. marks for Joint Honours and Liberal Arts and Natural Science students were prioritised. If marks are not available by Friday 5 June, they can be entered directly into the data sheets.

1.6 There are two options for recording the mark for the **synoptic assessment**:
The marks will be used where there are missing component marks for modules where the content has been covered by the synoptic assessment. The mark for the synoptic assessment can be used more than once.

The mark for the synoptic assessment will be recorded against a stand-alone synoptic assessment module.

Where it has been agreed that the marks will be recorded against a stand-alone synoptic assessment module, it was advised that students will need to be registered for this module by the end of Friday 5 June. The module codes were disseminated by the members of ASOG (Deputy Director of Operations).

If you have any modules where no assessments have been completed and where the content has not been covered by the synoptic assessment, a mark and module recommendation of N (No Mark Required) can be entered into BIRMS.

1.7 As module marks, credits awarded (including partial credits) and degree classifications will need to be uploaded into BIRMS, it is important that Colleges only use the data sheets provided by Registry as they will be structured in a way that will enable the import of this data into BIRMS. Detailed instructions on how to import the data into BIRMS will follow.

These timescales have been based on the majority of Boards of Examiners meetings taking place during w/c 22 June.

A full timetable for examination processing is located in Appendix A.

3. Role of Boards of Examiners

1.8 The role of Boards of Examiners will need to be moderately different in summer 2020 to reflect the Emergency Frameworks for assessment, progression and graduation.

1.9 The fundamental role of Boards remains the same, i.e. oversight and confirmation of marks, progress decisions and awards, in accordance with QAA guidance:

“For awarding bodies, it is your responsibility to make sound judgements about the circumstances in which credit and qualifications may be awarded. In some circumstances it may be appropriate to make such awards even where students have not completed all planned learning and assessment. Awarding bodies will need 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 courses and students. Where a decision is taken to award credit or qualifications to students who have not completed all planned assessment, the awarding body should record the basis for that decision.”

1.10 Module marks: As normal, the Board should approve all module marks. This year, module marks may incorporate the marks allocated to any additional assessments students have been required to complete in order to meet the minimum credit requirements and the Programme Learning Outcomes. In some instances the marks for additional assessments will instead stand alone and will be allocated to a ‘dummy’ module. The best 80 credits will be made up of completed modules and partial credits
from incomplete modules.

1.11 **Degree classifications and ‘borderline’ students:** The usual profiling system will not apply this year, and every student’s profile of marks will be considered in determining the degree classification. In exceptional cases where a student is on a classification borderline, there is evidence of COVID-related negative impacts on the final year marks profile, and further insights are required to make a judgment, this should include consideration of year 1 marks (not previously taken into consideration at all). In these cases, the 1st year marks can only be considered if they support the judgment of an increase in the classification for that individual student.

1.11.1 It is also important to note that we will not allow a student to lose a particular degree classification on the basis of one or two marks in the final year that are very different from the rest of their profile. We have stated that we will always take the most positive approach to each student when arriving at the final degree classification, and this will happen through individual consideration at Board of Examiners meetings.

1.11.2 See section 3 below for further detail regarding the calculation and determination of degree classifications.

1.12 **Progression Marks for Non-final year students:** In accordance with the Emergency Progression Framework, all non-final year students will be progressed automatically to the next year. The Board will need to approve the pre-calculated Progression Marks for students progressing from year 2 or above. Students who have fails in more than 50% of the modules they have attempted should be provided with tutorial advice so that they can prepare effectively for the following year and/or consider whether it is in their interests to repeat the year or resubmit assessments (either in August (tbc) or in 2020/21 as an external student).

1.13 **Extenuating circumstances:** Boards should consider and approve ECs recommendations as normal, but should be aware that ECs Panels have been advised to balance the need for flexibility regarding availability of evidence with the need to ensure that ECs decisions are taken in the context of maintaining academic standards. ([Extenuating Circumstances](#) guidance). In addition, it is recommended that programme leads highlight any particular COVID-related issues that may have affected student performance more generally.

1.14 **Recommendations ‘Notwithstanding Regulations’ normally referred to Progress & Awards Board (PAB):** The principle of Notwithstanding Regulations is replaced this year with the principle of ‘Notwithstanding Emergency Frameworks’ (where the latter supersede Regulations). PAB will be scheduled to take place virtually to consider any individual cases as appropriate. Advice on individual cases can be sought from Registry as normal (see also 5.2, below).

1.15 **Programme sign-off forms (‘Determination of Students’ Eligibility to Graduate Spring 2020’):** Completed forms should be received and ratified by the Board, and confirmed as such in the minutes. There is no need for approval of these forms by other School or College committees.

1.16 **Chair’s Statement:** The Chair (and external examiner) will need to sign off a statement as normal to confirm that the Board has operated appropriately and all degree
classifications have been agreed by the external examiner. A revised statement will be provided by Registry to reflect the current arrangements.

4. Calculation and Determination of Degree Classifications at the Board of Examiners

4.1 Marks will be calculated based on the Emergency Framework and process set out below to determine an initial overall weighted mean mark that will be used to determine the final degree classification.

4.2 Each UG/Integrated Masters finalist student to be graduated will be required to have (in addition to marks from previous years) marks for at least the equivalent of 80 credits of successfully completed work from the final year of their programme, including the dissertation/project, and sufficient evidence that they have met the overall Programme Learning Outcomes. Their degree classification and overall weighted mean mark will use their best final year marks to make up the 80 credits of successfully completed work (which must include the project/dissertation marks).

4.3 The module marks profile will need to be reviewed for each (anonymised) student, including final year marks (and Stage 3 for MSci students), second year marks, and first year marks (if appropriate), to determine:

(i) whether there is evidence of a negative impact on final year marks gained for work submitted after the COVID-19 disruption (i.e. from 20 March 2020, when the University moved to Restricted Campus Operations) compared to marks gained for work submitted pre-disruption;
(ii) whether there is evidence of a negative difference between the final year marks awarded post-COVID-19 disruption and the marks from previous years;
(iii) whether there is evidence of a negative difference in the mark for a dissertation submitted post-COVID-19 disruption compared to the rest of the year 2 and 3 (or stage 3) marks profile;

4.4 This information will then be used to inform decisions on degree classifications, particularly for those students who fall into borderline categories.

4.5 For students on a 3- or 4-year BSc/BA/BEng (4 year degrees include a year abroad or a placement): The final degree classification is based on marks that are weighted at 75% from the final year (the marks of the best 80 credits including the dissertation/project) and 25% from stage 2 (i.e. year 2 for students on a 3 year degree and years 2 and 3 if a student has undertaken a year abroad in their 3rd year).

For students on a 4-year MSci/MEng: The final degree classification is based on marks that are weighted at 40% from the final year (the marks of the best 80 credits including the dissertation/project), 40% from the 3rd year and 20% from the 2nd year.

4.6 The Board of Examiners will apply the following principles and criteria to decide on the degree classification of individual students as follows (note: this example is for the award of a 1st class honours degree for a BSc/BA/BEng); the same principles apply to the other degree classifications (apart from a 3rd Class degree, in which case only ‘Notwithstanding the Emergency Framework’ should be used for students with <39.49% overall). and these are detailed in Appendix K.1). These principles and criteria have been designed to ensure that there is consistency in the determination of degree
classifications for individual students in a cohort and between different cohorts.

(i) If a student has obtained an overall weighted mean mark of at least 70% they will be awarded a 1st Class Honours.

(ii) If a student achieves <70% (68.0-69.49%), in order to take into consideration that some marks in the final year may have been affected by the COVID-19 situation, an award of a 1st Class Honours will be made if all of the following conditions are met:

- at least 68% has been achieved overall (and not just in the final year);
- at least 50% of the module marks in the final year (based on the best 80 credits, i.e. completed modules and partial credits; note that these 80 credits must include the dissertation/project) are 1st class standard;
- the remainder of the module marks in the final year are 2.1 standard;
- at least 80 credits of marks from Stage 2 are 1st class standard.

(iii) Alternatively, if a student achieves <70% (65.0-<69.49%) overall, and in order to take into consideration that some of the work in the final year (e.g. the project/dissertation) may have been particularly adversely affected by the COVID-19 situation, and are out of line with the other marks, a 1st Class Honours will also be awarded if all of the following conditions are met:

- at least 65% has been achieved overall (and not just in the final year)
- at least 50% of the module marks in the final year (based on the best 80 credits, i.e. completed modules and partial credits; note that these 80 credits must include the dissertation/project) are 1st class standard;
- all other module marks in the final year (pertaining to the best 80 credits) are at least 2.2 standard;
- at least 100 credits from stage 2 are 1st class standard OR at least 80 credits from stage 2 and 60 credits from stage 1 are 1st class standard.

(iv) There might be situations in which a student has clearly been adversely affected by the COVID-19 situation and has an overall mark of <70%, but is not awarded a 1st class degree because the above criteria are not fulfilled. For example a student may have obtained all 1st class marks in the final year, but just misses out on a 1st because of a poorer 2nd year performance; or a student just fails to obtain the required number of credits at 1st class standard in years 1 or 2. In such cases, if the Board of Examiners decides that a student should be awarded a 1st Class Honours, based on the full profile of marks across all years of study, including module marks (completed or partial) in the final year outside of those comprising the best 80 credits (that includes the dissertation/project), an award can be made (without recourse to PAB) Notwithstanding the Emergency Framework as long as the external examiner is supportive. The decision and rationale must be clearly minuted.

5. Role of External Examiners

5.1 While the external examiner role remains broadly the same in principle (i.e. they scrutinise and endorse outcomes of assessment processes, confirming results and progress decisions), there are some important differences this year.

5.2 Framework arrangements: External examiners are not asked to give retrospective approval to the emergency Frameworks. They have been informed of the broad approach, and their role this year, as in all years, is to quality assure the application
of the Regulations (i.e. Frameworks) rather than approve the University’s legislation.

5.3 **Moderation**: External examiners will be required to moderate samples of work in accordance with their normal duties. This should include samples of additional coursework undertaken by final year students so that there is external oversight, as normal, of all summative assessment. There is no need for externals to review samples of Bridging Coursework completed by non-final year students, given that this coursework is formative rather than summative. External Examiners should not normally be expected to adjudicate between internal markers. Disagreements between internal markers should be resolved before a sample of work is seen by the External Examiner. This may be through the use of a third marker, or consultation with senior colleagues within the School. In all cases it should be transparent to the External Examiner how the final mark was decided. If, in exceptional cases, a mark has not been agreed internally, the views of the External Examiner can be taken into account in determining the final mark. External Examiners are not permitted to alter the mark of any student.

5.4 **Meetings with students**: External Examiners should be provided with the opportunity to meet with students, as normal, and meetings should be arranged virtually by Skype or similar.

5.5 **Attendance at Board of Examiners meetings**: As normal, an external examiner should attend all Board meetings (virtually) or, if this is not possible, a consulting mechanism should be in place before marks and decisions are released. If there are any difficulties with securing external examiner input, please consult with the DPVC (Education).

5.6 **Confirmation of module marks, checking standards and determination of degree classifications (including ‘borderline’ students) (see 2.4 and 3)**: External examiners should check on standards by scrutinising module marks statistics and degree statistics to confirm that they are not seriously out of line with previous years and that standards have been maintained. The external examiner should be asked to endorse all degree classification decisions, following a review of each student’s mark distribution at the Board of Examiners meeting. This is essential in order to evidence the maintenance of academic standards and that students have been treated fairly and not disadvantaged by the situation. We may need to produce this evidence in response to academic appeals or complaints from students.

5.7 **Annual report**: External examiners will still be required to complete an annual report, but the questions will be adapted by Registry and submission deadlines postponed to reflect the Emergency Frameworks and later Boards of Examiners meetings.

6. **Practical Arrangements for Virtual Board of Examiners Meetings**

6.1 **Virtual meetings**: Meetings should be held virtually using Skype for Business, Zoom, Teams, Canvas Conferencing or similar. If holding a virtual meeting is problematic for any reason, Schools may wish to consider email circulation (but should be aware of data protection and confidentiality considerations if discussion is effectively on record through email correspondence).

6.2 **Number and timing of meetings**: As indicated in the timescales above, Schools may wish to hold separate Board meetings for non-final year students given that these
are less urgent. However, beyond this, it is not envisaged that there will need to be an increase in meetings. Holding an earlier ‘internal Board’, without the external examiner, is strongly advised in order to agree provisional outcomes for each student (in particular those relating to borderline cases) and to save time at Board meetings.

6.3 **Quoracy**: The normal quoracy arrangements apply, i.e. a minimum of three academic staff plus an external examiner (see above regarding the role of the external examiner). If this is not possible for any reason, please consult with the DPVC (Education).

6.4 **Agenda**: For the benefit of the external examiner, agenda items should include a brief summary of the Emergency Frameworks. A template for the Agenda as well as a summary document will be provided by Registry, either for circulation to members in advance, or to be read out by the Chair. The summary will emphasise that the key principle is to ensure that students are not disadvantaged by the situation while ensuring that academic standards are maintained.

6.5 **Student batches**: Schools may wish to separate students into ‘batches’ to aid efficient consideration at Board meetings, although the Boards need to look at each student to ensure no detriment; for example:

- non-borderline final year students who have met minimum credit requirements and PLOs;
- non-borderline final year students who have undertaken additional coursework and have met the minimum credit requirements and PLOs;
- borderline final year students who have met minimum credit requirements and PLOs;
- borderline final year students who have undertaken additional coursework and have met the minimum credit requirements and PLOs.

6.6 **Minutes**: It is important to ensure that Board decisions are minuted clearly and accurately, and that minutes are returned to Registry to form part of the formal record of the exceptional arrangements this year. Minutes may need to be used as evidence should students appeal or complain, or should the QAA or OfS decide to scrutinise the University’s arrangements (note: a template for the Minutes will be provided by Registry).

6.7 **Support available**: Once agreed, the various sections of this document will form part of Registry’s ‘End of Session’ guidance pack that is issued annually at this time of year. For this year only, in order to provide additional support for colleagues and emphasise the University’s commitment to Quality Assurance, each College’s Academic Policy Partner (or delegate) will be available to attend Boards of Examiners in an advisory capacity should there be any queries in relation to the application of the Emergency Frameworks.

7. **Support and Training**

7.1 In order to provide support for colleagues and emphasise the University’s commitment to Quality Assurance, members of Registry staff will be available to attend Boards of Examiners in an advisory capacity should there be any queries in
relation to the application of the Emergency Frameworks.

7.2 A summary of the Emergency Framework has been provided by Registry and is located in Appendix G, either for circulation to Boards in advance or tabled and read out at the start of the meeting. This will help to provide the context for the decisions that the Board will make.

7.3 Please visit the BIRMS Examination Board information web page to access resources.

7.4 Registry will aim to provide training via Zoom on the new data import to BIRMS from the data sheets. Details will be circulated by email once finalised.

7.5 In terms of general support during the pre and post Exam Board periods, please contact your TSA administrator in the first instance, or the BIRMS Team, Head of TSA or Deputy Heads. To enable effective query handling during remote working, please contact the staff member by email or Skype for Business messenger in advance if you wish to have a face to face Skype for Business or Zoom call, so that this can be arranged. Please note that TSA are unable to take telephone calls during remote working.

8. Documentation to be returned to Taught Student Administration

Please send documentation by email to eos-tsa@contacts.bham.ac.uk and cc m.y.cobbold@bham.ac.uk.

8.1 A copy of the following should be submitted by noon on Monday 29 June 2020 (for main summer processing) for final year graduating cohorts.

8.1.1 Data sheets for each student considered at the Board, confirming their award.

8.1.2 The minutes (in paper or electronic format) from the main meeting of the Board of Examiners (with all recommendations notwithstanding Emergency Framework for Assessment and Progression Regulations or Notwithstanding Regulations clearly identified) Minutes should include programme and module codes and student ID numbers for ease of reference. Minutes should be anonymised in accordance with paragraph 6.1.1 of the Code of Practice on the Assessment of Taught Programmes and Modules and Academic Feedback. (A useful sample template for recording minutes can be found in Appendix B.)

8.1.3 Copies of pass lists that have been published following the meeting of the Board of Examiners. Pass lists should include student names to facilitate checking of Special Warrant proofs. Pass lists should be carefully checked before submission to Taught Student Administration to ensure that all students are included with the correct degree classifications.

8.1.4 The signed Chair of Board of Examiners Statement. The Chair of the Board of Examiners should complete the Chair’s statement (Appendix C) to confirm that all decisions have been taken in accordance with the relevant Regulations and that appropriate information on exceptional cases is provided for consideration by the Progress and Awards Board. Please note
that this form requires the External Examiner’s signature.

8.1.5. **A summary of extenuating circumstances cases that resulted in a change of award.** A proforma for return of this information is in Appendix D.

8.1.6. A summary of Recommendations made Not Withstanding Emergency Framework for Assessment and Progression or Notwithstanding Regulations which are to be considered by the Progress and Award Board should be reported on the Recommendations Not Withstanding Regulations (NWR) pro-forma (Appendix E) as required. A detailed summary of each case must be included to enable PAB to make an informed decision.

8.1.7. Determination of Students’ Eligibility to Graduate Programme Sign-off Form (Appendix F) This statement should be signed off by the Head of School and Director of Education to confirm that decisions have been made in accordance with the Framework for Assessment and Progression of Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught Graduating Cohorts.

9. **Extenuating Circumstances**

9.1 The overall principles and framework set out in the Regulations and Code of Practice on Extenuating Circumstances (ECs) will continue to apply during the COVID-19 pandemic. The University’s Emergency Framework for Assessment and Progression is designed to address the situation in a broad sense for all students, but it is recognised that individual students will experience a variety of different circumstances – both related and unrelated to the pandemic – for which they will wish to submit ECs.

9.2 The following points therefore take precedence over the legislation in order to ensure that ECs can be handled fairly and as simply as possible, both for students and staff, during this unprecedented time. These points are based upon the same underlying principles as the Emergency Framework for Assessment and Progression; i.e. no detriment, reduced pressure, inclusivity and academic integrity.

a. **Deadlines:** Schools are advised to adjust local deadlines to take account of any new or amended assessment deadlines and/or dates of Boards of Examiners meetings. Schools should be flexible if individual students are unable to meet deadlines.

b. **Forms:** The University’s standard Notification of Extenuating Circumstances form has been amended to recognise the exceptional circumstances and the relaxed requirements for evidence (see below). It does not matter if students submit the original version of the form – either version is entirely acceptable.

c. **Evidence:** It is accepted that students may not be able to provide evidence of circumstances that have impacted upon their assessment, whether related or unrelated to the current situation. The normal evidence requirements are therefore suspended and Schools will need to balance the need for flexibility regarding availability of evidence with the need to ensure that ECs decisions are taken in the context of maintaining academic standards.
• It is expected that colleagues will exercise judgement as to whether it is reasonable and proportionate to require evidence on a case by case basis. Students have been advised that ‘... should follow your School's normal processes and deadlines for requesting extensions/deferrals or submitting **Extenuating Circumstances**. However, we appreciate that you may not be able to provide evidence that you have been advised to self-isolate (for example, if NHS 111 have provided you with advice over the phone). Please do not worry about this. You can submit extension/deferral requests and Extenuating Circumstances without evidence, as long as you explain clearly why you have been advised to self-isolate.’

d. **ECs Panels:** Panels are advised to meet using video conferencing software such as Skype for Business or other University approved system. If this is not possible for any reason, meetings may be held via email, with due regard to the sensitive information being discussed and data protection considerations, including the potential for subject access requests. Appropriate records of meetings and decisions should be kept, as normal.

e. **Confidentiality:** When using video conferencing facilities, Panel members must ensure that they are able to work in a space which will allow for confidentiality when discussing student cases. This is due to the sensitive nature of the information which may be presented or discussed, to avoid any exposure to vulnerable members of the same household e.g. children, and because the information discussed may constitute special category personal data in accordance with GDPR if the student in question is identifiable.

f. **Decision on a student’s request to repeat a final year:** Some students may prefer to defer all final examinations or remaining assessments, or indeed request to repeat the year (Note that in this instance, students would be required to repeat the coursework).

Given the uncertainty over the timelines of this crisis and the potential impact on the next academic year, it is unclear when an alternative campus-based examination period could be scheduled. For most students therefore, the emergency approach outlined in the Framework for Assessment and Progression of Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught Graduating Cohorts - Summer 2020 document is likely to be the most advantageous.

If a student wishes to exercise their consumer right to repeat their final year, the ECs panel must refer this decision to the PVC (Education), or their nominee, for approval. The PVC’s nominees are Dr Celia Greenway and Professor Jonathan Green.

### Further advice:

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<td>ACCESS / SOFTWARE</td>
<td>All staff with access to a University of Birmingham laptop or PC should also have access to Skype for Business or other University approved system. Staff are able to login to these platforms using their University email address.</td>
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Wellbeing Officers should confirm that all panel meeting attendees have access to the agreed platform prior to the meeting and it is recommended that attendees test their equipment in advance of the meeting.

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

As laid out in the University’s Extenuating Circumstances Code of Practice, confidentiality of the ECs panel is ‘paramount’. Ensuring confidentiality in a virtual meeting presents a new set of challenges.

Maintaining a confidential environment for this type of meeting means ensuring all panel participants are in a secure location without other individuals present. The volume of attendees’ devices should be appropriate, so that they can hear and participate on the meeting, but not so loud that the meeting may be heard elsewhere. Where a participant may have vulnerable family members within the same household, steps must be taken to ensure that sensitive topics are discussed without exposing family members to such subjects. The meeting should not be digitally recorded in any way. Panel members should also be able to ensure these conditions will be maintained for the duration of the meeting.

EC Panel attendees should be advised of these required conditions prior to the meeting and should be encouraged to raise any issues at the earliest opportunity prior to the meeting taking place.

If at any point during the meeting attendees encounter issues with maintaining confidentiality, they should halt the meeting until this can be addressed.

10. **Academic Transcripts under the Emergency Framework for Assessment and Progression**

10.1 Please refer to Appendix I to view a sample academic transcript.

10.2 The ‘Credits’ column has been renamed to ‘Credits Studied’ and a new ‘Credits Awarded’ column has been added. This will reflect that in some cases, students will have been awarded partial credits for modules. Where a student has not attempted a module and a mark of ‘N’ was entered for the module, this will reflect on the transcript as a mark of ‘-’ a result of ‘AUDITED’ and number of attempts ‘0’.

11. **Data protection, student debtors and feedback to students**

11.1 Operations Managers or nominees are regularly provided with lists of students excluded from the University due to outstanding tuition fee debt. Until the debt is cleared, marks for these students should not be confirmed at a Board of Examiners meeting (although their work may be assessed and given a provisional, unconfirmed mark).

11.2 If you are unsure which students still have a financial or other Hold, please contact your named School contact in Taught Student Administration who will be able to provide you with the information. A BOXI report is also available which will provide this information (Banner Documents > Students > Students Records (General) > Students with an Active Hold).
11.3 If students have a financial hold, the validation within BIRMS will prevent these students’ marks and progress and award decisions from being released to Banner.

11.4 If an excluded student does undertake an assessment and requests feedback, this must be provided by the School, as this is personal information held under the Data Protection Act and therefore potentially liable to inclusion under a Subject Access Request. The student should be informed that any marks are not approved or ratified by the University until the tuition fee debt is cleared. Only Registry may produce transcripts for these students, which will have the words “Marks not approved” stamped across it.

11.5 Once the debt is cleared, Registry will ask the School to take Chair’s Action and confirm the student’s marks and progress or award decision. The marks and decision may then be released into the student portal.

11.6 If you are unsure which students have had their financial or other hold recently released, a BOXI report is available which will provide this information (*Banner Documents/Students/Students Records (General)/Students with a Released Hold*).

12. **Useful Web Links**

- **End of Session Resources:**
  [https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/registry/eos/index.aspx](https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/registry/eos/index.aspx)

- **Information about accessing BIRMS:**
  [https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/registry/birms/access/Index.aspx](https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/registry/birms/access/Index.aspx)
  *(you will need your adf username and password to log-in)*
  Alternatively the BIRMS intranet can be accessed via the BIRMS channel link on the ‘staff.home’ tab in the *my.bham portal*

- **Cohort Legislation:**
  [https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/registry/legislation/index.aspx](https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/registry/legislation/index.aspx)
  This provides cohort specific links to Codes of Practice that you may find useful such as the Code of Practice on Student Attendance and Reasonable Diligence.

- **GPA:**
  [https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/registry/GPA-Cum-Laude/GPA-FAQs.aspx](https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/registry/GPA-Cum-Laude/GPA-FAQs.aspx)

- **Extenuating Circumstances procedure:**
  [https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/registry/policy/extcircs/index.aspx](https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/registry/policy/extcircs/index.aspx)

- **Academic Integrity (Including Plagiarism and Conduct in Examinations and Class Tests):**
  [https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/registry/policy/conduct/plagiarism/index.aspx](https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/registry/policy/conduct/plagiarism/index.aspx)

- **Academic Appeals:**
  [https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/registry/policy/complaint-appeal/appeals/index.aspx](https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/registry/policy/complaint-appeal/appeals/index.aspx)