## Assessment Strategy

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Vision

Through the Assessment Strategy, UCL ensures that:
* assessment contributes to high standards of teaching and learning
* students are provided with an opportunity to demonstrate that they have achieved the learning outcomes of the modules and programmes they have undertaken, benchmarked against specified assessment criteria
* published regulations enable students’ knowledge, skills and abilities to be tested through a wide range of assessment methods

Strategic Context

This Assessment Strategy should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- Supporting documentation for this strategy (in preparation)
- UCL Academic Regulations for Students
- UCL Learning and Teaching Strategy
- UK Quality Assurance Agency Benchmark Statements
- The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (FHEQ)
- UCL’s Teaching and Learning Strategy
- UCL’s International Strategy

Aims

(a) to determine progression of UCL students through their programmes of study
(b) to ensure that adequate academic and/or professional standards, are achieved by UCL graduates through appropriate marking, grading and assessment of their knowledge, abilities and skills
(c) to assist students’ educational development by provision of qualitative feedback and an explanation of the grading of their work in both formative and summative assessments
(d) to ensure UCL students are provided with opportunities to be assessed in a number of different ways
(e) to provide UCL students with documentation which captures information on their studies and the standards of their achievements for the benefit of future employers and other stakeholders in a global labour market
(f) to ensure that students are made aware of the nature of assessment criteria
(g) to develop students’ reflection and self-monitoring of the quality of their own work
(h) to enhance and reward specific qualities which are important to employers
(i) to promote understanding of cultural diversity and to ensure that inclusive and diverse approaches to teaching, learning and assessment are adopted
(j) to challenge, stretch and motivate students at every level of ability
(k) to encourage the development of autonomous learning through a research-based curriculum.

UCL Context – National and International
1. UCL is a leading higher education institution within the UK and is world class university as demonstrated by its position in world rankings of universities. It is committed to excellence and innovation in research and teaching and aims to enrich the intellectual, cultural, scientific, economic, environmental and medical aspects of society.

2. UCL has a clear and progressive vision of how a university education should contribute to individual students and to society. It should equip individuals to be leaders in managing change, inspiring others, advancing the boundaries of knowledge and addressing society's major problems.

3. UCL is a multi-disciplinary institution offering a wide range of programmes within a multi-cultural environment, in which the student learning experience is enhanced by the size and diversity of the university and its international research excellence. It has outstanding staff and students from around the world, who are attracted by UCL as a great metropolitan university, situated in the heart of London, with access to major scientific and cultural institutions.

4. This strategy addresses the needs and characteristics of the UCL student population and recognises that this community is changing. Changes take place incrementally and must influence the delivery of teaching, learning and assessment.

5. As in the whole of the HE sector, UCL must move forward against a background of constrained resources; such constraints require innovation and flexibility in approaches to assessment, especially in the application of the new technologies and the use of examination venues for formal written examinations.

6. UCL approves its degree programmes and the regulations that apply to these (including the content of those programmes, the learning outcomes, the methods of assessment and the requirements for the attainment of a qualification) utilising external expertise to ensure the quality of its provision and the robustness of its decision-making processes in terms of student achievement.

7. UCL utilises UK Quality Assurance Agency Benchmark Statements where these have been agreed for its subject areas. Where these do not exist, UCL benchmarks itself against peer institutions using the nationally-approved external examiner system. External examiners are consulted during assessment processes to ensure that the determination of learning outcomes and the setting of assessment criteria are fair and robust.

**Education for Global Citizenship**

8. UCL’s International Strategy provides the framework within which UCL, in keeping with its radical tradition, offers students a challenging learning environment and recognises its responsibilities for training those who will go on to occupy positions of leadership and management internationally. The student experience, which includes assessment, reflects the international role of UCL and the need to address how major global issues in health, environment and social policy shapes the future curriculum.

9. UCL is working with the corporate/business world in the UK and internationally to develop programmes that address the economic need for research-based skills and competences within the developing global economy.
Guiding Principles which inform this Strategy

10. These are as follows:

a) **Excellence.** UCL is committed to being a knowledge and education provider of the highest quality.

b) **External verification.** UCL strongly believes in the external examiner system, which provides UCL and its students with the assurance that the quality of its provision remains high; is externally audited to ensure that it is reflecting this quality in the assessment of its students; has mechanisms for the improvement of its teaching and learning opportunities and their associated assessment; and has external approval for its regulations and its administrative processes.

c) **Diversification.** UCL should strive to ensure that both the nature and spread of its assessment activity is sufficiently diversified. There should be an awareness of ethical, environmental and social issues in assessment.

d) **Opportunity.** UCL believes that assessment is an opportunity for students to reflect on their achievements and to determine their success in meeting the high standards required to attain the learning outcomes of the modules for which they have registered and of the programmes with which the modules are associated.

e) **Integration.** There must be integration of the assessment strategy with other key UCL strategies and policies.

f) **Use of Technological Advancement.** There is a commitment to using and developing new technologies in assessment, wherever possible.

Achieving The Key Aims

11. **Aim (a): to determine progression of UCL students through their programmes of study**

Departments/Divisions should:

- publish clear and explicit criteria for progression from one year to the next which ensure that students have attained the required level to study more complex knowledge, procedures, concepts and ideas, set out in terms of modules taken and/or passed.
- design degree programmes, taking into account the development of knowledge attained from one year to the next, and guiding students to follow a coherent body of study, through a considered selection of modules, and assist them in demonstrating their achievement of the requirements for the award of the degree

**Action required:**
- Departments should review their academic programmes and diets to ensure that there is natural progression from one year to the next and that the assessment framework supports this progression
- UCLBE should review progression rules with a view to moving towards greater harmonisation
12. Aim (b): to ensure that adequate academic and/or professional standards are achieved by UCL graduates through appropriate marking, grading and assessment of their knowledge, abilities and skills

Departments/Divisions should:
- design all assessment with a view to enhancing student learning and to test the knowledge, abilities and skills attained against the learning outcomes of the module
- use specified and approved assessment criteria and marking schemes for each assessment component within individual modules
- use external sources in order to benchmark provision at UCL such as nationally approved subject benchmarks, external examiners, external auditors and professional bodies giving accreditation
- use standardised schemes of award with local variations where appropriate to meet the academic and professional requirements of given degree programmes

Action required:
UCLBE should consider using the full range of marks when assessing students in order to identify the highest and lowest levels of achievement

UCLBE should review the schemes of award with a view to moving towards greater harmonisation

13. Aim (c): to assist students' educational development by provision of qualitative feedback and an explanation of the grading of their work in both formative and summative assessments

Departments/Divisions should:
- provide timely feedback on performance
- discuss with students through their Staff Student Consultative Committees whether the level of performance required within assessment components of modules is clear
- ensure that the feedback to students enables them to understand the relation between the actual mark and their perception of their performance
- ensure that there is sufficient tutoring provision to discuss feedback with students and support reflection on their learning based on their assessment outcomes to aid progression

Action required:
- Faculty and Departmental/Divisional Teaching Committees to review and discuss the enhancement of learning through feedback on student work
- Dean of Students (Academic) to ensure that students have the opportunity to discuss the provision of feedback on their work and to ascertain that they have received support as they reflect on their learning as evidenced by their assessment outcomes
- Minimum service standards on student feedback to be implemented across UCL during the 2009/10 session and monitored thereafter.
14. Aim (d): to ensure UCL students are provided with opportunities to be assessed in a number of different ways

Departments/Divisions should:
• use a variety of different assessment methods across a degree programme to enable students to demonstrate knowledge, abilities and skills in diverse ways
• map the assessment criteria against the learning outcomes

Action required:
• UCLBE should review authorised methods of summative assessment and identify within UCL or stimulate development of new approaches to enhance the quality of assessment methodologies and the student experience.

15. Aim (e): to provide UCL students with documentation which captures information on their studies and the standards of their achievements for the benefit of future employers and other stakeholders in a global labour market

UCL should:
• ensure that the transcript provides clear information about the students' achievements in their degree programme and modules, including level of studies and the scheme of award applied
• ensure that information on learning aims and objectives at programme and module level is accessible to students and their prospective employers, as appropriate – clarity of level of assessment; how it fits into the scheme of award; and how it fits with the Higher Education Achievement Record (HEAR) agenda
• address access issues to enable all students to maximise their potential for success regardless of their educational background.

Action required:
• UCLBE needs to ensure that the UCL complies with the nationally agreed method of recording achievement (the HEAR agenda)

16. Aim (f): to ensure that students are made aware of the nature of assessment criteria

UCL should:
• ensure that information on assessment criteria at programme and module level is published to students in Student Handbooks and in information provided to students as part of a given module

Action required:
• UCLBE needs to check that information on assessment criteria is provided to students

17. Aim (g): to develop students' reflection and self-monitoring of the quality of their own work

UCL should:
• ensure that students have opportunities to consider their work; the reasons for the grading given to it and how to make improvements in the future
• ensure that students have opportunities to discuss their work with academic staff
Action required:
- UCL needs to ensure that students have the opportunity for self-reflection within the Key Skills development and that it is built into the personal tutoring system
- UCLBE, with CALT, to integrate guidance on the value of peer assessment and on best practice within the range of courses on learning and teaching offered to UCL staff, especially probationary staff, and to provide online documentation, advice and resources on how departments could use peer assessment
- Minimum service standards on student feedback to be implemented across UCL during the 2009/10 session and monitored thereafter

18. Aim (h): to enhance and reward specific qualities which are important to employers

UCL should:
- seek ongoing and publicised discussion with existing and new business partners to
  o clarify the contribution which UCL students should be expected to make to any organisation after graduation
  o explore innovative aspects of employability within the robust and externally-validated academic standards to which UCL is committed
  o develop a mutual understanding of the need for an "education for global citizenship"

19. Aim (i): to promote understanding of cultural diversity and to ensure that inclusive and diverse approaches to teaching, learning and assessment are adopted

UCL should:
- actively celebrate diversity within the existing academic and personal cultures

20. Aim (j): to challenge, stretch and motivate students at every level of ability to encourage the development of autonomous learning through a research-based curriculum

UCL should:
- ensure that students understand all aspects of assessment, and develop knowledge by means of peer assessment, for instance
- develop students’ critical thinking and critiquing skills and introduce them to discussion on the quality of academic writing, literature review and research articles
- ensure assessment modalities are designed to achieve the desires if this aim.

Implementation

This section will have an implementation plan.

The Assessment Strategy should be subject to further Review and revision after a further three years.

June 2009
ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT

This Assessment Strategy should be read together with the following documents:

- UCL Academic Regulations for Students
- UCL Learning and Teaching Strategy
- UK Quality Assurance Agency Benchmark Statements
- The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (FHEQ)

1 GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT

UCL's strategy for the summative assessment of students enrolled on Taught Programmes has three formal objectives:

i to determine progression through a programme of study

ii to assure that adequate academic and/or professional standards are achieved by UCL graduates

iii to rank, grade or classify UCL students according to measurable, demonstrated abilities and achievements

However, summative and formative academic assessment at UCL also aspires to:

iv assist students' educational development by qualitative feedback

v develop and test specific, diverse, defined tasks and skills

vi develop student awareness of the nature of assessment criteria

vii develop reflection and self-monitoring by students of quality in their own work

viii enhance and reward specific qualities of concern to graduate employers in their discipline through UCL practice in the use of assessment

ix promote understanding of cultural diversity and overcome cultural constraints in as much as they may limit approaches to learning

x challenge, stretch and motivate students at every level of ability

xi encourage the development of autonomous learning through a research-based curriculum

2 UCL TAUGHT PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

2.1 UCL Taught Programmes

UCL's Taught Programme Assessment Structure applies to the following undergraduate degrees based on the course unit scheme of award and to Masters Level programmes (programmes with a UCL credit value of 180 credits and 72 ECTS) for students enrolled in and after September 2005.

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1 This document does not include research degrees or specialist doctoral level programmes.
2.2 Higher Education Qualification Levels

UCL Taught Programmes relate to the following higher education qualification levels specified in the Framework for Higher Education Qualification:

**Level 6: Undergraduate Bachelors Degrees with Honours):**
Graduate Diploma; BA; BSc; BSc (Econ); BEng

**Level 6 and 7: Integrated Masters Degrees:**
MSci; MEng

**Level 7: Postgraduate Masters Degrees:**
Postgraduate Certificate; Postgraduate Diploma; MA; MSc; MRes

**Guidance for students and staff:** UCL’s Taught Programme Assessment Structure applies to the following undergraduate degrees based on the course unit scheme of award and to Masters Level programmes (programmes with a UCL credit value of 180 credits and 72 ECTS) for students enrolled in and after September 2005. Further information about the Taught Programmes offered by UCL is available from the on-line prospectus. A full description of student achievement requirements for each higher education qualification level can be found in the Framework for Higher Education Qualification.

**Undergraduate Degrees (Level 6):** Graduate Diploma; BA; BSc; BSc (Econ); BEng. Typically these are three or four year full time study programmes and may include a year in industry or year abroad.

**Integrated Masters Degrees (Levels 6 and 7):** MSci; MEng. Typically these are four or five year full time study programmes. At least three course units in the final year of the programme are at level 7.

**Masters Degrees (Level 7):** Postgraduate Certificate; Postgraduate Diploma; MA; MSc; MRes

**The assessment requirements for the following programmes are available by following the links below:**

**Undergraduate:** English: (English, English and German); Fine Art; LLB; Intercalated Degrees; MBBS; Philosophy; LLM.

**Masters Level:** MFA; MArch; MclinDent; MPA.

2.3 Undergraduate Programme Course Units

2 IBID
UCL undergraduate programmes consist of four course units in an academic session. Undergraduate Programmes of study are constructed of a combination of full (1.0) and half (0.5) course units. Full course units require 375 learning hours and have a value of 15 ECTS upon successful completion. Each course unit has discrete summative assessment requirements.

**Guidance for students and staff:** Further information about the selection and assessment of course units, including re-sits, can be found in the Academic Regulations for Students.

**NB** For a specific programme of study, some course units may be compulsory for all students enrolled on that programme.

### Compulsory Course units for a Programme

Students registered on a programme must enrol on course units deemed compulsory for that programme of study. These course units are identified by the letter ‘C’ in the programme diet on PORTICO. Students should select and confirm all compulsory course units as well as any available optional and electives course units. Students registered for programmes where all course units are compulsory are also required to confirm the course units for their programme of study, unless otherwise specified.

### Optional Course units for a Programme

Optional course units provide students with a choice of specified course unit options for their programme and are identified by the letter ‘O’ in the programme diet on PORTICO, UCL’s student records system. Student selection of the optional course units is subject to the overarching rules for course units governing the programme.

### Elective Course units for a Programme

Elective course units are not specified on a programme diet and are identified by the letter ‘E’ on PORTICO. Student selection of elective course units is subject to the overarching rules for course units governing the programme.

#### 2.4 Postgraduate Modules

UCL postgraduate programmes consist of modules with prescribed learning hours and ECTS values. Each module has discrete summative assessment requirements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>Learning Hours</th>
<th>UCL Credits</th>
<th>ECTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.4.1 Postgraduate Certificate</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.2 Postgraduate Diploma</td>
<td>1200</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.3 Masters</td>
<td>1800</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Guidance for students and staff:** Further information about specific programme requirements and the selection and assessment of modules, including re-sits, can be found in the Academic Regulations for Students.

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3 IBID  
4 IBID
As noted in the guidance for item 2.3, postgraduate modules can be compulsory, optional or elective.

3 FORMS OF ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT

Assessment is a general term used to describe the mechanism to measure student achievement. A variety of assessment methods may be applied to reflect an integrated curriculum design. At UCL there is an expectation that a mixture of formative and summative assessment methodologies will be applied to test different skills and to enable students to achieve the intended learning outcomes. Formative assessment can also provide experience of a programme’s summative assessment.

Summative academic assessment provides a clear statement of achievement or failure that can be made in respect of an individual student’s performance. The outcome of summative assessment is used to classify a degree award and is recorded on student transcripts.

Formative academic assessment provides feedback to individual students about their progress towards achieving the intended learning outcomes for specified course units and modules. In addition, innovative formative assessment methodologies make an important contribution to the overall development of student skills and transferable knowledge.

Assessment is core to the UCL student experience and, as well as measuring student performance, assessment also provides, amongst others, the following opportunities:

For students:
To have feedback on their individual performance and quality of learning.
To progress through a programme of study leading to the award of a degree.

For academic staff:
To evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching and learning strategies.
To provide a measure to compare student achievement.

For UCL:
To evaluate the effectiveness of teaching and learning across the institution.
To provide a measure for consistent practice and identify areas for further development.

Guidance for students and staff: Guidance on curriculum development including assessment is available from UCL’s Centre for the Advancement and Learning (CALT).

3.1 Summative Academic Assessment Overarching Principles

Summative academic assessment is employed by UCL in order to:

i determine progression through a programmes of study

ii assure that adequate academic and/or professional standards are achieved by UCL graduates

iii rank, grade or classify UCL students according to measurable, demonstrated abilities and achievements

3.2 Types of Summative Academic Assessment
3.2.1 **Unseen Written Examination**

Unseen written examinations, whether administered by UCL Registry or by Departments/Divisions, should be conducted over an appropriate period of time and be appropriate to the level of study. The examination should provide the opportunity for students to demonstrate the extent to which they have achieved the stated learning outcomes of the assessed component.

The purpose, weighting and format of an unseen written examination must be specified in the student literature, i.e. in the course/programme handbook or equivalent.

3.2.2 **Oral Examinations and Oral Presentations**

**Oral Examinations**

For programmes that are assessed by 100% coursework, an oral examination must be conducted as part of the summative assessment.

Oral Examinations (formerly referred to as ‘Vivas’) can be used as part of the formal assessment methods of a course unit or module.

The purpose, weighting and format of an oral examination must be specified in the student literature, i.e. in the course/programme handbook or equivalent.

**Oral Presentations**

Oral Presentations can be used as part of the formal assessment methods of a course unit or module.

The purpose, weighting and format of an oral presentation must be specified in the student literature, i.e. in the course/programme handbook or equivalent.

**Guidance for students and staff:** In the interests of students, UCL expects that oral examinations or presentations will be conducted in a professional and open manner. Students should be made aware of the purpose, format and assessment criteria, including any prescribed length of time, for an oral examination or presentation in advance of the assessment taking place. The examiners should discuss the strategy they propose to adopt during the oral examination/presentation, and, at its outset, outline this to students being assessed.

All oral examinations should be conducted in UCL in a room that is fit for purpose, i.e. sufficiently large enough to be comfortable for the duration of the examination(s), affording privacy and not overly affected by noise from the outside.

**NB** Oral examinations and presentations must be directly examined by two examiners. An external examiner can be invited to attend oral examinations, but in such a case it is expected that all oral examinations for the course unit or module would have an external examiner present.

Further information about the contribution of Taught Programme examiners to the summative assessment process, including receiving representative samples of student work, are set out in the Regulations for Taught Programme Examiners.

3.2.3 **Coursework**

Coursework that contributes to the summative assessment of students’ work can be essays, reports, assignments such as diary keeping or logs, laboratory books or other forms of written work that is completed in a student's own time.
The purpose, weighting and format of coursework must be specified in the student literature, i.e. in the course/programme handbook or equivalent.

**Guidance for students and staff:** Students should be made aware of UCL policies for the detection of plagiarism the procedures required to submit coursework in the student literature, i.e. in the course/programme handbook or equivalent.

### 3.2.4 E-Assessment

Summative e-assessment must be conducted in a planned and controlled manner, with arrangements made for pre-testing of assessments, invigilation, and technical support in accordance with the regulations for e-assessment.

The purpose, weighting and format of an e-examination must be specified in the student literature, i.e. in the course/programme handbook or equivalent.

**Guidance for students and staff:** Further guidance upon the use of summative e-examination is available here.

### 3.2.5 Departmental/Divisional Tests

Summative assessments administered by Departments/Divisions that are not coursework (see item 3.2.3) may be activities such as unseen written examinations (see item 3.2.1) or multiple choice questionnaires (see item 3.2.6). The tests must be invigilated in accordance with the standards set out in the UCL Examination Regulations for both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes.

The purpose, weighting and format of a Departmental/Divisional Test must be specified in the student literature, i.e. in the course/programme handbook or equivalent.

### 3.2.6 Multiple Choice Questionnaires (MCQ)

MCQs included as summative assessment can be administered as coursework or Departmental/Divisional tests.

The purpose, weighting and format of MCQs must be specified in the student literature, i.e. in the course/programme handbook or equivalent.

### 3.2.7 Take Home Papers

A take home paper is normally an unseen written examination that students complete in their own time.

The purpose, weighting and format of take home papers must be specified in the student literature, i.e. in the course/programme handbook or equivalent.

**Guidance for students and staff:** Students should be made aware of UCL policies for the detection of plagiarism the procedures required to submit take home papers in the student literature, i.e. in the course/programme handbook or equivalent.

### 3.2.8 Practical Examinations

Practical examinations must be conducted in a planned and controlled manner, with arrangements for invigilation in accordance with the standards set out in the UCL Examination Regulations for both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes.
The purpose, weighting and format of practical examinations must be specified in the student literature, i.e. in the course/programme handbook or equivalent

3.2.9 Exhibitions of Student Work

**Guidance for Students and Staff:** NB Exhibitions must be directly examined by two examiners. An external examiner can be invited to attend, but in such a case it is expected that all oral examinations for the course unit or module would have an external examiner present. Further information about the contribution of Taught Programme examiners to the summative assessment process, including receiving representative samples of student work, are set out in the Regulations for Boards of Examiners for Taught Programmes.

3.2.10 Group or Collaborative Work

For group or collaborative work that contributes to summative assessment, the criteria for the identification of the contribution of individuals must be clearly stated in the assessment task.

The purpose, weighting and format of group or collaborative work must be specified in the student literature, i.e. in the course/programme handbook or equivalent

**Guidance for Students and Staff:** Further guidance for best practice in designing summative assessment can be obtained from UCL’s Centre for Learning and Teaching (CALT).

3.2.11 Open Book Examination

Departments will inform students about permitted materials that may or may not be brought into the hall for each open book exam in advance of an open book examination.

**Guidance for Students and Staff:** Departments should inform students about what materials may or may not be brought into the hall for each open book exam in advance of an open book examination. Ideally students should be informed in writing, preferably in the module literature. The size of the desks and space between desks may be a limiting factor for the permissible materials. Examiners are responsible for ensuring that students do not bring any unauthorised materials into the hall or that any highlighting or tabs in texts/notes brought into the hall meet any criteria specified prior to the exam.

3.2.12 Prior Disclosure Examinations

The term 'prior disclosure examination' is used for any academically assessed work which is issued to students either in advance of a timed examination or to be worked on in the students' own time for handing in on a specified date no later than fourteen days from the issue of the examination paper or other form of examination.

**Guidance for Students and Staff:** Once the paper for a prior disclosure examination has been issued, all students, whether or not they are present at the time of issue, shall be regarded as having access to the paper in exactly the same way as for an unseen examination paper.

Students who are absent at the time that the paper is issued shall be given the choice of either sitting/handing in the paper at the specified time or of re-entering for the examination on the next normal occasion if they have not been awarded a degree or used all of their attempts. They must notify their choice in writing to the Chair of the Board of Examiners concerned.

Students for prior disclosure examinations may exceptionally and for good reason, with the
permission of the Board of Examiners in question, sit for or hand in the paper, up to twenty-four hours in advance or twenty-four hours in arrears of the due date. No further extension of the due date will be permitted.

Students who fail to sit for or hand in a prior disclosure examination paper by the due date (or exceptionally, an approved extended date) shall be considered as absent and awarded a mark of zero. Students will have the right to re-enter the examination on the next normal occasion.

3.3 Formative Academic Assessment Overarching Principles

At UCL formative assessment is employed to help students achieve the intended learning outcomes for specified course units and modules by providing feedback to individual students about their performance and can also provide experience of a programme’s summative assessment. Formative assessment should also be designed to:

i. assist students’ educational development by qualitative feedback

ii. develop and test specific, diverse, defined tasks and skills

iii. develop student awareness of the nature of assessment criteria

iv. develop reflection and self-monitoring by students of quality in their own work

v. enhance and reward specific qualities of concern to graduate employers in their discipline through UCL practice in the use of assessment

vi. promote understanding of cultural diversity and overcome cultural constraints in as much as they may limit approaches to learning

vii. challenge, stretch and motivate students at every level of ability

viii. encourage the development of autonomous learning through a research-based curriculum.

3.4 Types of Formative Academic Assessment

Formative assessment can be innovate and include other methods of assessment as well as providing experience of the summative assessments set out in items 3.2.1 – 3.2.10.

The purpose and format of formative assessments must be specified in the student literature, i.e. in the course/programme handbook or equivalent.

Guidance for Students and Staff: Further guidance for best practice in designing formative assessment can be obtained from UCL’s Centre for Learning and Teaching (CALT)

4 ADMINISTRATION OF ASSESSMENT

4.1 Summative Assessment Administered by UCL Departments/Divisions

UCL Departments/Divisions are responsible for the design and balance of assessment for programmes, course units and modules delivered by their academic members of staff. They are also required to ensure that all summative assessment are set, administered, marked and moderated in accordance with UCL’s Academic Regulations for Students.

Guidance for Students and Staff: Further guidance for best practice in designing formative assessment can be obtained from UCL’s Centre for Learning and Teaching (CALT). Guidance on examination arrangements can be obtained by the Registry Examinations Section.
4.2 **Summative Assessment Administered by UCL Registry**

Upon request by Departments/Divisions, the Examinations Section, Registry, are responsible for the provision of examination papers, timetable, accommodation, invigilation and return of completed examination scripts to Departments/Divisions for marking.

**Guidance for Students and Staff:** Departments/Divisions should refer to the timetable published by the Examinations Section for the provision of examination papers and examination timetable.

4.3 **Assessment and Special Provision**

Special Examination Provision on Grounds of Dyslexia, Disability or Ill Health will be accommodated by UCL. Students with a disability or ill health can apply for special assessment arrangements in their examinations or assessments administered by UCL Examinations Section.

**Guidance for students and staff:** Application for special examination provision should be made to the Examinations Section and forms are available from the Examinations Section, Disability Services in UCL Registry and from Departments.

Students who require special examination arrangements as a result of dyslexia should be advised to register with Disability Services and are required to arrange an assessment appointment as soon as possible and no later than the end of the second term for the main summer term examination period, or six weeks before any examinations or tests, for which special arrangements are sought, outside that period.

4.4 **Exeuntaining Circumstances**

The policy for procedures for the consideration of extenuating circumstances is available in Appendix 13 of the Academic Regulations for Student.

4.5 **Religious, Cultural and Disability Considerations**

UCL will accommodate reasonable adjustments to the examination timetable for students who have Religious, Cultural and Disability Considerations that affect their attendance.

**Guidance for students and staff:** In accordance with UCL’s policy for cultural and religious inclusiveness, account will be taken of any constraints for the assessment of students owing to cultural or religious observance. Reasonable adjustments will be made where possible.

4.6 **The Academic Assessment Process**

4.6.1 **The Marking Process**

UCL has an overarching comprehensive moderation of marking policy that informs the procedures for marking students' work adopted by Faculties and Departments/Divisions.

The procedures applied by Departments/Divisions for marking student work must be specified in the student literature, i.e. in the course/programme handbook or equivalent.
4.6.2 **Marking Anonymity**

The marking of all student academic assessment should be conducted anonymously and marks entered against candidate numbers.

**Guidance for students and staff:** There are some circumstances when anonymity is not possible for example oral examinations, exhibitions, marking clinical work with patients, portfolios of work etc. However UCL’s policy is that anonymity must be exercised when possible and must apply for progression and classification of awards.

4.6.3 **Assessment Criteria**

For both summative and formative assessment the assessment criteria should be designed to help students know what they are expected to achieve and the demonstrated knowledge and skills that will be taken into account in awarding marks.

The assessment criteria applied for all assessed work must be specified in the student literature, i.e. in the course/programme handbook or equivalent.

**Guidance for Students and Staff:** Further guidance for best practice in designing assessment criteria, including the identification of the key skills and knowledge being tested can be obtained from UCL’s Centre for Learning and Teaching (CALT).

4.6.4 **Service Standards for Feedback on Assessed Work**

The service standards for the provision of feedback on academically assessed work are set out in Appendix 26 of the Academic Regulations for Students.

4.6.5 **Formative Feedback Overarching Principles**

Formative feedback should be:

1. received by students in good time
2. focused on helping students to develop the skills, knowledge and understanding required
3. helpful in identifying areas for improvement
4. appropriate for the type of assessment

**Guidance for Students and Staff:** Students and staff should note any Departmental/Divisional and Faculty guidelines for providing feedback to students.

*In the interests of students, UCL expects that oral examinations or presentations will be conducted in a professional and open manner. Students should be made aware of the purpose, format and assessment criteria, including any prescribed length of time, for an oral examination or presentation in advance of the assessment taking place. The examiners should discuss the strategy they propose to adopt during the oral examination/presentation, and, at its outset, outline this to students being assessed.*

*All oral examinations should be conducted in UCL in a room that is fit for purpose, i.e. sufficiently large enough to be comfortable for the duration of the examination(s), affording privacy and not overly affected by noise from the outside.*

*Further guidance for best practice in providing formative feedback, can be obtained from UCL’s Centre for Learning and Teaching (CALT).*
4.7 Outcomes for Summative Academic Assessment

Undergraduate Programmes
The pass mark for undergraduate course units is 40% for all undergraduate students.

Integrated Masters Programmes (MSci and MEng Degree Programme)
In years one, two and three of MSci and MEng programmes, the pass mark is 40%. In year four students must select a minimum of three course units at Masters level for which the pass mark is 50%.

Postgraduate Programmes (Masters Level)
The pass mark for Masters Level programmes is 50% for all postgraduate students.

5 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT

5.1 Students
UCL expects students to engage and comply with the assessment requirements of their programmes.

5.2 Departments/Divisions
Departments/Divisions are responsible for setting an appropriately balanced set of assessments for the degree progress they deliver and to ensure that the administration of the assessment procedures are managed in accordance with UCL the regulations set out in the Regulations for Boards of Examiners for Taught Programmes. This responsibility includes the identification of Examination Liaison Officers, management of Boards of Examiners and suitably qualified External Examiners.

5.3 Faculties
UCL Faculties are responsible for overseeing that assessment procedures are managed in accordance with UCL the regulations set out in the Regulations for Boards of Examiners for Taught Programmes. This responsibility includes the management of a Faculty Board of Examiners and annual reporting mechanisms to the UCL Board of Examiners and feedback to academic staff and students.

5.4 Internal Examiners
UCL internal examiners are responsible for assuring that the assessment of student work has been conducted fairly and consistently in accordance with UCL the regulations set out in the Regulations for Boards of Examiners for Taught Programmes.

5.5 External Examiners
The role and responsibility of UCL appointed External Examiners are set out in the Regulations for Boards of Examiners for Taught Programmes.

External Examiners help to ensure that:
i UCL academic standards are maintained and student performance is properly judged
ii the assessment process measures student performance against the intended learning outcomes
iii the regulations governing the assessment of students have been rigorously and consistently applied.

6 **BOARDS OF EXAMINERS**

6.1 **Department/Division Boards of Examiners**

Departments/Divisions are responsible to ensure that programme or subject Boards of Examiners are set up and constituted in accordance with the Regulations for Boards of Examiners for Taught Programmes.

6.2 **Faculty Board of Examiners**

UCL Faculties are responsible to ensure that the Faculty Board of Examiners is set up and constituted in accordance with the Regulations for Boards of Examiners for Taught Programmes.

6.3 **UCL Board of Examiners (UCLBE)**

UCLBE is responsible for overseeing the assessment, annual monitoring procedures and maintenance of academic standards in accordance with the Regulations for Boards of Examiners for Taught Programmes.

7 **ANNUAL REPORTING AND QUALITY ENHANCEMENT MECHANISMS**

External Examiners submit an annual report to UCL providing qualitative annual monitoring for taught programme examinations awards and standards.

All reports are scrutinised on behalf of UCLBE and inform the enhancement of teaching and learning for UCL Departments/Divisions.

Examiners reports are subject to a feedback and analysis process that informs Faculty teaching and learning strategies.

7 **Guidance for Students and Staff:** Examiners’ reports are submitted to the Chair of UCLBE.

8 **ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT INFORMATION PROVIDED TO STUDENTS**

8.1 On behalf of the Head of Department, academic staff in UCL Departments/Divisions are responsible for the provision of assessment information to students. The information provided to students must include:

i an accurate description of the assessment task
ii clear instructions about the assessment methodology
iii the criteria against which student knowledge and skills will be tested
iv if applicable, clear instructions for the identification of collaborative work and what is original
v coursework submission deadlines and information about penalties for late submission
vi Information about UCL’s plagiarism policies and penalties.

8 **Guidance for Students and Staff:** UCL Departments/Divisions may provide information to
students in a number of formats including published course literature in handbooks and on the UCL intranet. Academic staff must ensure that the information is accurate and up to date.

8.2 Programme Specifications

All programmes offering places to students must maintain an accurate Programme Specification that is published on their website and available to students and other stakeholders.

9 Student Records Database (PORTICO)

9.1 Module Selection

Student module selection is conducted via Portico. On behalf of the Head of Department, academic staff in UCL Departments/Divisions are responsible for ensuring that the requirements of the annual academic review of modules and programmes diets is accurate including the summative assessment information that students must satisfy in order to be awarded a degree by UCL.

Guidance for Students and Staff: UCL Departments/Divisions must ensure that the module details and programme diets are accurate. Further information about the annual academic review is available from modules@ucl.ac.uk

9.2 Examination Timetable

Individual student examination timetables are managed by the Examinations Section. The relevant Departmental/Divisional academic staff are responsible for ensuring that examination materials and format are accurate.

Students are responsible for checking their individual timetables, via Portico, and notifying their Departments/Divisions of any inaccuracies at the earliest possible time.

Guidance for Students and Staff: UCL Departments/Divisions must ensure that the module assessment details are accurate and notify examinations@ucl.ac.uk of any inaccuracies at the earliest possible time.

9.3 Release of Marks

The Examinations Section publish the dates for the release of marks that have been approved by Board of Examiners. All awards are subject to ratification by the UCL Board of Examiners and only then are they finally confirmed.

Guidance for Students and Staff: Academic staff must ensure that all marks are entered into Portico in good time for consideration by Boards of Examiners.

9.4 Release of Marks Prior to Formal Ratification by a Board of Examiners

Department/Divisions may provide students with information about their results before confirmation by a Board of Examiners. However, it must be made clear that the information is provisional and unconfirmed.

Guidance for Students and Staff: Students and Staff should note that any marks released before confirmation by the relevant Board of Examiners is provisional. If an error in calculating a result is discovered, the actual result achieved (not the one erroneously calculated) will prevail.