

## CHAPTER E – ASSESSMENT

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## **E.1 UK Quality Code for Higher Education - Chapter B6: Assessment of Students and the Recognition of Prior Learning**

### **Expectation**

The Quality Code sets out the following Expectation about the assessment of students and the recognition of prior learning, which higher education providers are required to meet.

Higher education providers operate equitable, valid and reliable processes of assessment, including for the recognition of prior learning, which enable every student to demonstrate the extent to which they have achieved the intended learning outcomes for the credit or qualification being sought.

### **Indicator 1**

Higher education providers operate effective policies, regulations and processes which ensure that the academic standard for each award of credit or a qualification is rigorously set and maintained at the appropriate level, and that student performance is equitably judged against this standard.

### **Indicator 2**

Assessment policies, regulations and processes, including those for the recognition of prior learning, are explicit, transparent and accessible to all intended audiences.

### **Indicator 3**

Those who might be eligible for the recognition of prior learning are made aware of the opportunities available, and are supported throughout the process of application and assessment for recognition.

### **Indicator 4**

Higher education providers assure themselves that everyone involved in the assessment of student work, including prior learning, and associated assessment processes is competent to undertake their roles and responsibilities.

### **Indicator 5**

Assessment and feedback practices are informed by reflection, consideration of professional practice, and subject-specific and educational scholarship.

### **Indicator 6**

Staff and students engage in dialogue to promote a shared understanding of the basis on which academic judgements are made.

### **Indicator 7**

Students are provided with opportunities to develop an understanding of, and the necessary skills to demonstrate, good academic practice.

### **Indicator 8**

The volume, timing and nature of assessment enable students to demonstrate the extent to which they have achieved the intended learning outcomes.

### **Indicator 9**

Feedback on assessment is timely, constructive and developmental.

**Indicator 10**

Through inclusive design wherever possible, and through individual reasonable adjustments wherever required, assessment tasks provide every student with an equal opportunity to demonstrate their achievement.

**Indicator 11**

Assessment is carried out securely.

**Indicator 12**

Degree-awarding bodies assure themselves that the standards of their awards are not compromised as a result of conducting assessment in a language other than English.

**Indicator 13**

Processes for marking assessments and for moderating marks are clearly articulated and consistently operated by those involved in the assessment process.

**Indicator 14**

Higher education providers operate processes for preventing, identifying, investigating and responding to unacceptable academic practice.

**Indicator 15**

Degree-awarding bodies specify clearly the membership, procedures, powers and accountability of examination boards and assessment panels, including those dealing with the recognition of prior learning; this information is available to all members of such boards.

**Indicator 16**

Boards of examiners/assessment panels apply fairly and consistently regulations for progression within, and transfer between, programmes and for the award of credits and qualifications.

**Indicator 17**

The decisions of examination boards and assessment panels are recorded accurately, and communicated to students promptly and in accordance with stated timescales.

**Indicator 18**

Degree-awarding bodies systematically evaluate and enhance their assessment policies, regulations and processes.

**E.2 General Principles**

This section on Assessment reflects the Quality Assurance Agency's (QAA) UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Chapter B6: Assessment of students and the recognition of prior learning. The information below should be read in conjunction with the [Assessment Regulations for Taught Degree and Diploma Programmes](#).

### **E.3 Information about Assessment**

The detail of each assessment task is provided to students in a written assessment task specification, compiled by the Module/Component Leader. The specification also outlines:

- the deadline for submission/assessment
- the submission method or method of assessment
- the marking criteria pertaining to the assessment task
- the weighting of the assessment within the component or module

Further details, including how the assessment relates to the Module/Component learning outcomes, are included in the relevant Programme Handbook.

### **E.4 Attendance**

Where attendance is a requirement or part of the requirement to pass a Module/Component/Part of a Programme:

- this is specified in the Programme Handbook;
- this is a pre-requisite for the award of credits in a module/component;
- this does not contribute to the overall award classification.

In accordance with the agreement outlined in the [Statement of Responsibilities](#) students are required to attend all timetabled activities and be present for all practical assessments at the published time.

### **E.5 Arrangements for students with disabilities**

Trinity Laban advocates the inclusive design of assessment and encourages the anticipation of the needs of the range of individuals within the student body when setting assessment tasks. Special arrangements for students with disabilities and long term health conditions are made only when the normal assessment arrangements would disadvantage a student because of their specific needs. The purpose of any special arrangement is to enable the student to demonstrate his/her knowledge and competence in the assessment task notwithstanding his/her disability.

Arrangements are in place to identify students with disabilities during the application process with appropriate support put in place following registration. Where a disability is either diagnosed or disclosed part way through a student's programme of study, support will be made available as soon as possible following the disclosure. Each case must be considered on an individual basis and the student may be asked to supply supporting evidence.

Applications for reasonable adjustments to assessment conditions or tasks should be made in accordance with Trinity Laban's Reasonable Adjustments Policy (Appendix E.20.9). The policy includes provision for the Disability Co-ordinator to propose adjustments on behalf of a student where a student's disability has previously been disclosed to or diagnosed by Trinity Laban and the need for an adjustment to be made to assessment arrangements in order to accommodate a student is apparent. It is the responsibility of the Programme Leader and Head of Department (where applicable) to ensure that any special arrangements are implemented, with support from the Registry. All special arrangements particular to an individual will be documented and recorded in the student's file.

Any Personal Study Plan and/or an alternative assessment task will be approved by the Chair of the Assessment Board and the Registrar as outlined in the Personal Study Plan procedure (Appendix E.20.5).

## **E.6 Extension to Assessment Task Submission/ Presentation Deadline**

The formal mechanism for considering a request from a student for extension to an assessment task submission/presentation deadline is via the Mitigating Circumstances procedure (Appendix E.20.1).

### **6.1 Late or non-submission**

- a Fail grade will automatically be recorded against an assessment task where a student fails to submit/present for assessment
- a late submission (up to 24 hours after the published deadline) or late arrival (up to 15 minutes) for a practical assessment would normally be subject to a mark deduction of 10% or one whole grade (for example A- reduced to B-), provided the reduction does not take the grade below the pass mark;
- where a submission is made more than 24 hours after the published deadline, a fail grade for non-submission will be recorded against the assessment task
- all cases of non-submission will be considered by the final Assessment Board, which has the discretion to decide whether or not a resit opportunity will be granted

### **6.2 Non-submission of resit assessments**

- a student may make a claim for Mitigating Circumstances for a resit assessment, which if accepted, will normally result in a further resit attempt for a capped mark
- in cases of non-submission/non-presentation of a resit assessment not covered by mitigating circumstances, a further resit opportunity will not normally be permitted and the student will not normally proceed on the programme.

## **E.7 Cover Sheet for Assessment Tasks**

All written assessments should be submitted either directly to the Registry, which records the submission date, or on Moodle as required in the assessment specification.

A pro-forma coversheet (available from Registry) or online declaration (for Moodle submissions) must accompany the submission/ presentation of a written assessment task by a student. Both include information on accepted formats and a statement confirming that the student is aware of Trinity Laban's policies and procedures relating to academic misconduct.

## **E.8 Assessment Modes**

The diversity of skills associated with and expected from the music or dance practitioner is reflected in a variety of modes of assessment. These are designed to reflect different learning styles and the intended learning outcomes, and to test different skills acquired and developed by the student through their studies on the relevant Programme.

Assessment Type	Description and Rationale
Written coursework	Essays, critical reviews, reports, case studies. These encourage students to develop skills in research and collation of information, critical evaluation of information, organisation and written presentation, all of which are assessed. Students will additionally acquire skills of personal time management, although these will not be directly assessed.
Practical assessment	These require students to display their knowledge and skills in a performance situation
Seminar/Oral presentation	These require students to develop all the skills listed for written work, but, in addition, students also have the opportunity to display their oral presentation skills, their ability to communicate interactively, and use audio-visual aids as appropriate. All these will be assessed.
Logs, project reports, diaries, etc.	These encourage students to display organisational ability, efficient record-keeping, self-assessment skills, and the capacity to evaluate critically and reflect on their own experiences.
Compositions, arrangements	In addition to encouraging the application of skills and knowledge to a specific set of requirements, These also develop the student's creativity and the attributes of self-critical awareness and reflective analysis.
<i>Viva voce</i> examinations	These require students readily to adapt their thinking to a given situation, and to communicate and interact effectively through the spoken word.
Written examinations	These require students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills, and their ability to apply these to specific tasks, within time constraints.

## E.9 Relationship of Assessment to Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes define the skills and/or knowledge that a student may expect to have achieved on successful completion of a module. All assessed modules have an attached set of 'Learning outcomes' articulated in the Module Specification (see relevant Programme Handbook). The structure and content of the assessment tasks within a Module will be targeted on testing the achievement of these outcomes.

- Assessment within each Programme involves both formative and summative modes
- See the relevant Programme Handbook for full details on assessment modes

## **E.10 Responsibilities of examiners and staff**

### **10.1 Designation of Internal Examiners**

The Programme Leader is responsible for the designation of Internal First and Second Examiners/Moderators, operating in accordance with the following principles:

- normally the Module/Component Leader is the First Examiner; where there is more than one First Examiner these will be drawn from the team of tutors responsible for delivery in the subject area and the Module/Component Leader will be the Lead Examiner
- Second Examiners and Internal Moderators are drawn from the tutors responsible for delivery of the Programme
- allocating examining responsibilities with due regard for staff assessment workloads

### **10.2 Staff responsibilities (Dance)**

a) The Programme Leader or Year Co-ordinator, in liaison with the Module/Component Leader, is responsible for:

- scheduling of assessments in liaison with the Head of Programmes and the Schedule and Curriculum Manager
- approving all assessment tasks
- determining the Internal Examiners for an assessment, operating in accordance with the principles set out below
- briefing of Internal and External Examiners with respect to the role of each Examiner, the conduct of Examiners during assessments, and the assessment criteria and expected level for each assessment to be examined
- overseeing the implementation of special arrangements for students with disabilities as recommended by Student Services

b) The Module/Component Leader is responsible for:

- ensuring that the assessment task has been set and disseminated in due time, normally a minimum of 21 working days prior to the assessment, and that it has been approved by the Programme Leader
- the preparation of all materials required for an assessment
- making arrangements for extended assessment deadlines where these have been approved by a Mitigating Circumstances Panel

c) The Tutor is responsible for:

- where appropriate, setting the assessment in due time and submitting it for the approval of the Programme Leader, normally so that students receive the assessment task a minimum of 21 working days prior to the assessment

d) The Lead Internal Examiner: (studio-based dance assessments/ presentations in performance/ oral presentations). One examiner is nominated as the Lead Internal Examiner for the conduct of the examination. The Lead Internal Examiner will ensure that:

- the assessment room is appropriately equipped and laid out at least 15 minutes before the start of the session
- all assessment materials are collected from the Registry or another designated secure location at least 30 minutes before the start of an assessment, kept in secure conditions, and returned safely at the end of the assessment (or at another time agreed in advance with Registry staff)
- the assessment starts on time
- the student(s) is welcomed to the assessment
- a register is taken and any absences recorded on the register and on the grade sheet for submission to Registry

- assessments run to time; and liaise with the relevant staff/Examiners accordingly in the event of an unavoidable delay to the assessments
  - all Examiners are aware of the relevant expectations in terms of level and criteria for the assessment
  - only those designated as Internal Examiners for the assessment are involved in the award of grades and any discussion of grades awarded
  - where relevant, Internal Examiners sign off the final agreed assessment reports as being fair and representative records of students' achievements and the judgements of the Internal Examiners
  - all assessment judgements are made on merit alone
  - in case the Internal Examiners are made aware of any potential mitigating circumstances, the grading of the assessment is conducted without any compensation, and the student is advised of the procedure for making a mitigating circumstances application
  - if present, the External Examiner is aware of his/her responsibilities with regard to moderation
  - where an infringement of the assessment requirements or regulations occurs but is not such as to necessitate the discontinuation of the assessment, the grading of the assessment is conducted without compensation for that infringement
  - where relevant, any supporting written material is graded and where appropriate Internal Examiners consulted in the determination of the grade
  - grades and reports are submitted to Registry by the methods outlined in the guidance document for processing assessments available on the staff intranet, by the required date/time all rough notes written by Internal Examiners are shredded once the formal report on the piece of work examined has been completed and signed off
  - students receive their results and reports within the prescribed 21 working day time-frame
  - details of any infringement of the assessment requirements or regulations are put in writing at the earliest opportunity and to passed to the Programme Leader, together with any supporting evidence, for consideration by the Assessment Board
- e) Lead Internal Examiner: written assessments/written material in support of studio based assessment
- The First Examiner is normally the Internal Lead Examiner for the purposes of the conduct of a written assessment. This Lead Examiner will ensure that:
    - all Internal Examiners are aware of the relevant expectations in terms of level and criteria for the assessment
    - the turn-around between First and Second Examiners and the Internal Moderators accords with the timeline for return of the work and grade to students
    - only those designated as Internal Examiners for the assessment are involved in the award of grades and any discussion of grades awarded
    - all assessment judgements are made on merit alone
    - if the Internal Examiners are made aware of any potential mitigating circumstances, the grading of the assessment is conducted without any compensation for that, and the student is advised of the provisions of the regulations regarding mitigating circumstances and the proper procedure for making an mitigating circumstances application

- grades and reports are submitted to Registry by the methods outlined in the guidance document for processing assessments available on the staff intranet, by the required date/time
- all rough notes written by Internal Examiners are shredded once the formal report on the piece of work examined has been completed and signed off
- students receive their results and reports within the prescribed 21 working day time-frame

### 10.3 Staff responsibilities (Music)

#### Performance Assessment - staff responsibilities

- a) The Director of Music is responsible for overseeing the training of internal assessment panel members and for monitoring the standard of marking in all assessment panels. This monitoring may include the direct observation of assessment panels at work. To assist in this role, the Director may nominate the Assistant Director, the Programme Leader or the Programme Co-ordinator to serve as deputies.
- b) Heads of Department are responsible for nominating, training and briefing suitably qualified and experienced members of the Institution's professorial staff to serve as panel chairs.
- c) Heads of Department are responsible for ensuring that all printed material necessary for performance assessments, for instance sight reading and quick study pieces, is securely delivered to the Academic Administration Manager (or nominated Registry officer) at least one week before the beginning of the assessment period. Acting on information from the Registry or the Disability Coordinator, Heads of Department may be called upon to devise different materials or formats for students with registered learning difficulties or disabilities.
- d) Heads of Department have the following additional responsibilities:
  - To advise the Academic Administration Manager, at least 2 months in advance of a scheduled assessment period, of any particular requirements relating to rooms or equipment.
  - To nominate, to the Academic Administration Manager, Specialist Advisers (SAs) for each session. They will first ascertain that:
    - the Specialist Advisers have previously been approved by ASQB (via the Music Management Group) and that in the case of long-serving (up to 5 years)
    - appointments have been re-approved
    - profiles of proposed SAs that meet the criteria outlined below are approved by MMG
  - Nominations should be made in writing on the form provided by the Registry.
- e) The Registry will be responsible for collating, and issuing to the Panel Chair, all materials required for each day's session of assessments.
- f) The Registry will be responsible for the timetabling of all assessments, ensuring that any special arrangements are accommodated. The Academic Administration Manager will inform the Panel if the assessment timetable must run late (for instance as a result of the late or non-arrival of a panel member, or disruption to public transport, etc.). In such circumstances s/he will ensure that the students affected have been notified, and that they are assigned to an area or room where they will be permitted to wait.
- g) Personal interest: Every chair, examiner, and specialist adviser must declare an interest to the Registry if called upon to examine a student who is their instrumental/vocal pupil or has been known to them otherwise than in a routine professional capacity within the past five years. Chairs who are in this situation may continue to act as the panel chair, but

should not take a leading role in the marking process. Personal interest of one panel member will not invalidate the mark agreed and awarded by the entire panel, nor will this eventuality be of itself accepted as grounds for an appeal against an assessment mark.

#### 10.3.1 Composition of Performance Assessment Panels (Music)

- a) All performance assessment panels will have three members: a chair; a specialist adviser (SA); and a generalist examiner (GE).
- b) Chairs: Performance panels will normally be chaired by the relevant Head of Department, or a nominated deputy approved by the Director of Music. The Director of Faculty will ensure that all chairs are trained and keep records of training.
- c) Specialist Advisers (SA) are external specialists in the relevant discipline as performers or composers. They are likely to have had experience of teaching and examining in their specialism at conservatoire or University level. Criteria and procedures for the approval and engagement of specialist advisers are set out below.
- d) Generalist Examiners (GE) are members of Trinity Laban's professorial (teaching) staff nominated by Heads of Department or Programme Leaders and approved by the Director of Music. They may serve on any assessment panels regardless of discipline.

Responding to exceptional circumstances, such as illness, the Director of Music or the Registrar may vary the membership of the panel, taking steps to ensure that students are in no way disadvantaged.

#### 10.3.2 Examiners for music performance assessments

##### 10.3.2.1 Role of the Panel Chair

- a) To brief fully all examiners serving on the panel, with respect to the role of each, the conduct of examiners during assessments, and the assessment criteria and expected level for each module to be examined. To nominate a member of the panel (but not the SA) to write the panel's agreed report. This briefing should take place thirty minutes before the start of each assessment session.
- b) To ensure that all assessment materials are collected from the Registry or other designated secure location at least thirty minutes before the start of each session, kept in secure conditions, and returned safely at the end of each day (or at another time agreed in advance with Registry staff).
- c) To take into the assessment room copies of this section of the Academic Quality Handbook, copies of any tests, quick study pieces, etc., and all relevant module descriptions and programme-specific regulations.
- d) To check that the assessment room is appropriately equipped and laid out at least 15 minutes before the start of the session, that it is at a suitable temperature and well ventilated, and that drinking water is available to the student (especially in the case of wind players and singers), and to inform the Academic Administration Manager of any problems.
- e) To nominate a member of the panel (but not the Specialist Adviser) to administer each assessment (i.e. to welcome the student; to introduce the panel members to the student; to establish programme details, to receive and return any music provided for the examiners' use; to receive any programme notes; to deal with stands or chairs for performers if necessary; to escort any audience into and out of the assessment room, and to operate any recording equipment where appropriate).
- f) To ensure that assessments run to time. To liaise with the Academic Administration Manager in the event of an unavoidable delay to the assessments.
- g) To ensure that, when a failure to fulfil, or infringement of, the assessment requirements or regulations occurs, but is not such as to necessitate the discontinuation of the assessment, the marking of the assessment is conducted

without compensation for that infringement. To detail the infringement in writing at the earliest opportunity on the form provided by the Registry, and to pass it to the Registry, together with any supporting evidence, for consideration by the Assessment Board. The Chair or other examiners should not refer to the infringement directly to the candidate during the assessment itself.

**Timings:** If the timings of the pieces differ significantly (e.g. >10%) from the length stipulated in module documentation, this should be reported in the same way. Students must follow the direction of the Chair of the Panel as to the timing of the performance.

- h) Relevant postgraduate assessments (as indicated in the programme handbook): To co-ordinate and participate in viva voce questioning, ensuring that each member of the panel contributes. NB: Specialist Advisers must be fully briefed as to the nature and purpose of the viva voce element in the examination, and in particular, must not offer advice to the candidate, or comment on their teaching.
- i) To invite each member of the panel to summarise their assessment of the performance (it is customary to invite the Specialist Adviser to speak first) and to suggest the most appropriate descriptors in each column of the Marking Criteria grids, without reference to the numerical marks, and only then to relate these to the marks indicated in the marking scheme. In the event of any divergence of view, the Chair should endeavour to guide a debate aimed at arriving at a consensus. NB: The Chair has the essential function of ensuring evenness of standards of assessment, the accuracy of the final report and its consistency with the agreed mark awarded. The Chair must not pre-empt the panel's decisions, either by suggesting marks, or making remarks, in advance of debate.
- j) To invite the External Examiner, if present, to comment on any aspect of the assessment process if he/she wishes.
- k) To ensure that all assessment judgements are made solely on the basis of the given assessment criteria.
- l) To ensure that, if the panel is made aware of any potential mitigating circumstances (for example, signs of illness during the assessment), the marking of the assessment is conducted without any compensation for that, and the student is advised of the provisions of the regulations regarding mitigating circumstances and the proper procedure for making a mitigating circumstances application.
- m) To ensure that all panel members agree that the assessment reports are fair and representative records of the students' performances and the judgements of the panel on those performances. All panel members should confirm their agreement by signing the report.

#### 10.3.2.2 Generalist Examiners (GE) for music performance assessments

The generalist examiners for performance assessment panels in the Faculty of Music are drawn from professorial staff (instrumental and academic teachers). All such staff are approved for these duties by the Director of Music after a programme of training and briefing. In an emergency, approval for an Internal Examiner may be given by the Director of Music, the Registrar or the Assistant Director of Programmes.

The work of the examiners within the performance assessment panels is monitored by the Director of Music who is assisted in this work by the Assistant Director and the Programme Leaders.

Role of the Generalist Examiner (GE)

- a) To assist the Chair, at the Chair's invitation, in briefing the Specialist Adviser

- b) To assist the Chair, at the Chair's invitation, by administering assessments as set out in the institutional procedures defined in this handbook
- c) To note the start time of each assessment.
- d) To draw the Chair's attention to any irregularity or infringement of the Programme Assessment Regulations of which s/he becomes aware.
- e) To contribute to a balanced assessment of performances and consistency of standards across different instrumental specialisms, by providing a non-specialist view.
- f) To participate in any viva voce examinations.
- g) To mark and provide written feedback on programme notes, following an initial discussion with the panel, and to return marks to the Registry within 72 hours of the performance.
- h) To suggest marks for students' performances that are based on the appropriate marking criteria.
- i) To assist the Chair by writing final reports if so requested.
- j) To sign off the final agreed assessment reports and marks as being fair and representative records of the students' performances, and the judgements of the panel.

#### 10.3.2.2 Specialist Advisers (SAs) for music performance/composition assessments

- a) It is recognised that there is some element of subjectivity in any assessment of performance that is more than purely mechanical, and the composition and conduct of assessment panels is such as to compensate for this
- b) Every undergraduate and postgraduate major performance or Musical Theatre Performance production assessment panel includes a Specialist Adviser, who is active in the profession, but not a member of the institution's regular teaching staff, nor has been so for at least five years preceding their appointment.
- c) The skills or qualifications for the appointment of a Specialist Adviser are as follows:
  - First-hand professional knowledge of the specific instrument, discipline or genre
  - Some experience of teaching and examining in the specialism at conservatoire or university level will normally be required
  - A degree or equivalent qualification in music or performance, will normally be required
  - The paramount requirement, however, is the possession of relevant professional skills and experience.
- d) The Specialist Adviser's role enables the Institution to monitor its standards against current industry and professional standards, as well as contributing directly to the process of arriving at assessment decisions.
- e) Heads of Department are responsible for nominating new Specialist Advisers, for approval by the Music Management Group and confirmation by ASQB and Course Board. A brief written statement, using the form provided by Registry, must support each nomination, outlining the basis of that nomination (i.e. the ways in which the nominee fulfils the criteria).
- f) The Academic Administration Manager (or nominee) is responsible for the assignment of Specialist Advisers from the pool approved by the Music Management Group, based on suggestions received from the Head of Department. S/he will ensure that students are not normally examined by the same SA on consecutive occasions.
- g) The contract issued to Specialist Advisers by the Academic Administration Manager will specify the terms and conditions under which they are asked to act on behalf of the Institution, including rates of payment and length of service. At the same time, s/he will send adequate and appropriate briefing materials to support their role, including module

descriptions, guidance on the assessment process and marking criteria. The induction and final briefing of the SA is the responsibility of the Panel Chair.

- h) The pool of Specialist Advisers is normally drawn from the Greater London area. Where there are compelling reasons to do so, Heads of Department may nominate particular SAs who live outside the Greater London area as a priority appointment for assessments. The contracts issued to SAs will confirm the expenses available in such circumstances.
- i) Specialist Adviser appointments will be reviewed after five years of service to assure the Institution of the currency of each adviser's skills and experience. The Music Management Group will conduct the review process, which will be overseen by ASQB.
- j) For emergencies, such as illness, the Director of Music or Registrar may approve the temporary use of a specialist adviser who has not been formally approved by ASQB, but who meets the criteria specified above.

#### 10.3.2.3 Role of the Specialist Adviser (SA)

- a) To ensure that s/he is thoroughly briefed on the requirements and level expectations of each assessment.
- b) To provide comments on performances (and viva voce or programme notes, where they are assessed) for discussion and agreement by the panel. These comments may be included in the final report of the assessment insofar as they relate to the appropriate assessment criteria.
- c) To suggest appropriate descriptors for students' performances that are based on the relevant marking criteria, for discussion by the panel.
- d) To ensure fairness in the application of the standards and criteria employed by the Institution in the assessment of the performance elements of its programmes.
- e) To sign off the final agreed assessment reports and marks as being fair and representative records of the students' performances and the judgements of the panel on those performances.

#### 10.3.3 General notes for all examiners on the conduct of performance assessments (Music)

Assessments should be positive experiences, perceived as contributing to the process of a student's learning and development, even for candidates who may not achieve high marks.

- a) All examiners, including Specialist Advisers, should be aware that they are representing Trinity Laban in their actions, words, and appearance.
- b) In administering the assessment, examiners should try to strike a balance between being welcoming and reassuring on the one hand (e.g. by using the student's name, establishing eye contact, ensuring that the student is happy with the arrangements, and so forth), and maintaining a sense of the dignity and formality of the occasion.
- c) When an audience is present, the Chair or examiner responsible for administering the assessment should request that all mobile communication devices are turned off, and remind the audience that no photography or unauthorised recording is permitted during the assessment. The examiners should join in the applause. The audience should be requested to leave as soon as possible at the end of the assessment, so that the examiners may begin their discussion without delay.
- d) Examiners should take care to give no sign, intentionally or otherwise, in word or gesture, that might be taken to indicate their judgement of the performance. Examiners should also be careful not to do anything during the performance that might distract the candidate.
- e) It is important that an assessment does not become a lesson or master class. Examiners must not make suggestions for improvements to students, nor refer to their teachers or accompanists, even after the formal part of the assessment is complete (specialist advisers in particular must be made aware of this). When guidance is required, the Head

of Department should make a note to speak to the student or teacher on a subsequent occasion.

- f) The Chair may permit one page-turner to be present when there is a need that cannot otherwise be overcome. Examiners should politely decline requests to turn pages themselves.
- g) In the event of the late arrival (more than 15 minutes) of a candidate, the Chair will decide whether to proceed with the assessment or to ask the Academic Administration Manager to reschedule. The Chair may, only with the candidate's express agreement, curtail some or all of the pieces, as noted in the panel report. Any such cuts should be decided before the assessment begins.
- h) An assessment may only be allowed to begin before its allotted time (e.g. in the case of the absence of a previous candidate), with the express agreement of the student as noted in the panel report. The Chair must not begin the assessment early if this means dispensing with the briefing of one or more of the examiners.
- i) Accompanists should be present in the assessment room only when accompanying (unless there is an audience present). Examiners should acknowledge the services of accompanists in a neutral manner, whether they are good, bad, or indifferent. Examiners should not act as accompanists themselves. If the examiners have serious concerns about the adequacy of an accompanist, they should report this to the Academic Administration Manager, but not comment on it to the candidate.
- j) If situations arise which are not covered in the following sections, panel chairs should take responsibility for dealing with them as best they can, and report the circumstances in writing to the Assessments Co-ordinator at the earliest possible opportunity, as well as drawing attention to the matter on the panel report form provided by the Registry (i.e. not on the Assessment Report itself).

#### 10.3.3 Students' responsibilities regarding performance assessments (Music)

- a) It is the students' responsibility to ensure that they are familiar with, and observe strictly, the regulations on performance assessments (including timings) published in the relevant departmental syllabus and module description in the Programme Handbook.
- b) Special Requests: requests for the provision of instruments (e.g. harps, harpsichords, etc.) will only be considered if included on the Special Requests for Performance Assessments form distributed by the Registry to students in advance of the assessment and submitted by the published deadline. Such provision only applies to students taking Final Recital assessments or in other designated assessments. Students may only request the use of special instruments already in the possession of the Institution. It is the student's responsibility to cover the cost and arrange for the hire of additional instruments.
- c) It is the students' responsibility to provide a minimum of one copy of the score(s) of all music performed for the Performance Assessment Panel. This must be the same edition(s) as that being used by the candidate. Any breach of this ruling will incur a 5 mark reduction in the overall recital mark.
- d) Photocopies provided for the examination panel must be accompanied by documentation confirming they have been legally produced.
- e) The presentation of photocopies of works no longer in copyright must be accompanied by a pro-forma confirming this status, provided and signed by a member of Library staff.
- f) Standard guidance on compliance with copyright legislation is available from the Library and through Moodle.
- g) Recital Programme Details: all students must complete a Recital Programme Details form for their end of year recitals. These forms may be obtained from the Registry and must be approved by the student's Principal Study staff member and Head of Department prior to

submission. Students are required to include the titles, composers, dates of the works, the timing of each piece, and the total time including breaks.

**NB:** *Students must ensure that the same work is not submitted for assessment on more than one occasion except in the case of a re-assessment, or where specifically approved by their Head of Department or Programme Leader. Submission of the same material for assessment without permission will be considered under the guidelines for academic misconduct and action taken in accordance with the relevant section of the [student disciplinary procedure](#).*

The Registry will set a suitable deadline for completion of the Recital Programme Details form. Students must keep a copy of the form and its receipt will be logged. Heads of Department are not obliged to sign-off forms beyond this date.

It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that all repertoire and timings listed on the recital programme and presented at the assessment are correct and comply with the requirements stated in the relevant Principal Study module description. **Any programmes that exceed or are less than the stated timings will incur a 5 mark reduction in the overall recital mark.**

- h) Programme notes are an important and informative guide to the recital programme, giving for example the historical context of the work(s) and relevant information about the composer(s). They are not the same as Recital Programme Details (outlined above).

Candidates must provide their own programme notes for the following assessments: BMus (Hons) Performance Year 4 Semester 2; MMus (Final Recital); and the Postgraduate Artist Diploma.

Three copies of the programme notes for all programmes should be submitted to the Performance Assessment Panel immediately prior to the recital. **Any breach of this ruling will incur a 5 mark reduction in the overall recital mark.**

**Non-submission of programme notes will be deemed as non-completion and therefore failure of the module on all programmes.**

- i) Accompanists: the following arrangements will apply for BMus and M-Level major performance assessments:-

Accompanists are a necessary part of these examinations, all of which involve substantial recitals. Students are expected either to use their regular accompanist, or to make every effort to find another suitable accompanist from amongst the student pianists in the Faculty of Music. External accompanists (student or otherwise) may be used **but under no circumstances will the Institution contribute to the payment of fees or expenses.** Candidates who experience extreme difficulty finding an accompanist should contact the Academic Administration Manager immediately (and no later than 6 weeks before the date of the examination). The Academic Administration Manager may, as a last resort, endeavour to provide an official accompanist, when it is clear that the student has made a sustained and reasonable attempt to resolve the matter first. The accompanist will be provided strictly on the basis of 2 hours' rehearsal together with the examination session. For all examinations other than BMus and MMus major assessments, candidates must make their own arrangements for an accompanist if the examination requires one.

- j) It is the responsibility of the student to arrive in good time for performance assessments. Any student arriving more than 15 minutes after the timetabled start of their assessment will, at the discretion of the Chair of the Assessment Panel, be required to re-schedule the time and/or date of their assessment. This arrangement will apply only to students who have notified the panel in advance of the delay through the Registry. A student who arrives more than 15 minutes late without prior notification will be deemed to have failed to attend the assessment. Non-attendance at assessments will be deemed as a failure of the module element.
- k) Recordings: A sample of major performance assessments will normally be recorded for monitoring purposes only. The recordings may be used by the External Examiner for the

process of the quality assurance of assessment procedures. The recordings may not be used for the purpose of appeal against the judgement of the examiners and will not be made available to students. Appeals cannot be lodged on the grounds of procedure on the basis that a recording has not been made. The recording is the property of the Institution.

Students are permitted to make their own recordings of their recitals for their own personal use only. Students may be asked to discontinue recording at the discretion of the Chair of the Performance Assessment Panel if the recording in any way interferes with the assessment process. The recordings may not be used for the purpose of appeal against the judgement of the examiners.

## E.11 Marking and Grading of Work

### 11.1 Marking and moderation policy

Definitions:

- **Marking** is the process used to assess a student's achievement of learning outcomes and the academic standards in a given assessment component.
- **Double marking** is a process where an assessment is independently assessed by more than one marker and the marks from the first marker are not made known to the second marker.
- **Second marking** is a process where an assessment is independently assessed by more than one marker and the marks from the first marker are known to the second marker. **Panel marking** is marking where a number of assessors, normally more than two, consider practical aspects of performance in assessment. This approach is most commonly found in arts performance.
- **Moderation** is a process intended to assure that an assessment outcome is fair and reliable and that assessment criteria have been applied consistently. Forms of moderation include:
  - sampling, either by an internal or external examiner
  - additional marking, for example of borderlines, firsts and fails, or where there is significant difference between the marks of different markers that cannot be resolved without the opinion of another marker
  - review of marks: where there is a significant difference between several assessment marks, within or between parts of a programme, which indicate the marks may need to be reconsidered.
  - Moderation is subsequent to the process of marking. In the case of practice-based assessment tasks, the moderator may be in the examination room at the same time as the other Internal Examiners but the moderation will take place subsequent to the Internal Examiner(s) having determined the marks for each student.

### 11.2 Marking procedures

Number of examiners/markings practice:

- More than one tutor must normally be involved in the marking and moderation processes for all Modules/Components that count towards a final award. This is in addition to the external examining arrangements. No Module mark can be finalised on the basis of one Internal Examiner's decision alone.
- Module Leaders are responsible for identifying the members of staff who will sample the work in their modules. Samplers will normally be module teaching staff.
- If a second assessor is not available at the time of a practical assessment, a recording shall be made using the most appropriate medium, to be viewed later by the second assessor.

- All 'dissertations' – Independent/Creative Research Projects (Undergraduate Programmes) and Projects (Taught Postgraduate Programmes) - are subject to second marking/moderation (i.e. rather than by structured sample).

### 11.3 Efficacy of marking procedures

The Head of Programmes is responsible for ensuring the efficacy of marking procedures and for instigating review of marking practices where appropriate e.g. the distribution of marks for a Module/Component and between Modules/Components; significant deviation from the 'mean' of student achievement within Modules/Components.

### 11.4 Internal Examiners: procedure for the award of a mark

When awarding a grade to a student's assessment, Internal Examiners must consider the Grading Descriptors in the Programme Handbook given for each grade category within the scale. Within each band, levels of achievement are defined by the mark awarded according to the level of achievement within the category.

### 11.5 Marks resolution

Where the marking processes identify a difference of opinion between Internal Examiners, a process of discussion must commence between the Internal Examiners with a view to agreeing the mark for each student. Where agreement cannot be reached, discrepancies must be addressed as follows:

**Small discrepancy:** where there is a difference between the Internal Examiners of less than 5 percent within the same grade band the higher of the grades proposed must be taken as the agreed mark.

**Wider discrepancy:** if the second examining is by structured sample, the second examiner must view a larger sample of student work (where the assessment is practical/oral presentation, this will be on video) and the Internal Examiners must reconsider the mark(s) awarded in the light of this.

Or

If the second examining is of all students' work, or, if there is still no agreement having followed the procedure outlined at b) i) above, a third internal examiner will review with the two Internal Examiners the basis of their marking against the criteria with a view to agreeing the mark for each student.

Where agreement between the Internal Examiners cannot be reached, the matter is advised to the External Examiner(s) and referred to the Chair of the Assessment Board, or his/her nominee, for consideration and resolution. The Chair may request a further examiner to consider the work and/or consult with the External Examiner(s). Ultimately, the decision of the Assessment Board is final in agreeing the marks.

For performance assessments (Music)

- In the event that the Panel cannot agree on an assessment result, each member should separately forward their written comments and proposed mark to the Academic Administration Manager.
- The Academic Administration Manager will copy all the relevant materials to the External Examiner for the programme, and the other members of the Assessment Board as necessary
- The Assessment Board will consider the issue, in the presence of the External Examiner, or with his/her written comments to hand, and decide on a course of action.
- The Specialist Adviser may be consulted further, if the External Examiner, the Director of Music, or the Registrar, deems it necessary.

#### 11.6 Award of grades: provisional

The grade awarded by the Internal Examiners at assessment is provisional until confirmed by the Assessment Board. The written communication advising the student of the grade states that any grade awarded is provisional and subject to confirmation by the Assessment Board.

#### 11.7 Award of grades: confirmed: Transcript of Results

The award of a grade for an assessment task is confirmed by the Assessment Board, subsequent to which a Transcript of Results will be issued to the student confirming grades awarded.

### **E.12 Selection of Work for External Moderation**

#### 12.1 Taught postgraduate programmes

- a structured sample of assessment task(s) from all modules to include work from across the spectrum of grades awarded, plus fails;
- a structured sample of Projects and attendance at practical assessments where applicable

#### 12.2 Undergraduate programmes

- a structured sample of assessment tasks from modules/components, (where the number of assessment components is large, selected components may be identified for sampling each year by rotation to include work from across the spectrum of grades awarded, plus fails;
- a structured sample of Year 3 Independent Projects (Dance) and attendance at practical assessments where applicable.

#### 12.3 Graduate Diploma in Dance Studies and ISP

- a structured sample of assessment tasks from core and elective modules/components designated each year by rotation, to include work from across the spectrum of grades awarded, plus fails.
- Where applicable, the normal sample size is 10-15% of the number of students assessed: to include grades at the top, middle and bottom of the spectrum, including Fails. In the case of small cohorts, the sample will normally be 25%-50% depending on the size of cohort.

External Examiners have the right to view all assessment material.

### **E.13 Assessment Criteria**

#### 13.1 Relationship of assessment criteria to learning outcomes

All assessed Modules (which may include separate Components) have an attached set of 'Intended Learning Outcomes' articulated in the Module Specifications (see relevant Programme Handbook).

The structure of the assessment task(s) within a Module, and therefore the assessment criteria for the assessment task(s), requires that the student evidence that they have met the learning outcomes that the assessment task(s) is designed to fulfil.

In the case of assessment of Components within a Module, all the Module learning outcomes would not necessarily be met within each Component, but rather across the total of the assessment tasks within the Module.

#### 13.2 Assessment and marking criteria

Assessment criteria act as the basis for communication between the student and the Internal and External Examiners. They are explanations of how marks are allocated to reflect students' achievement as evidenced in the assessment task.

Marking criteria are descriptors which define the standard of the work in relation to the assessment criteria. Further guidance on the application of marking criteria will be found within the programme handbooks.

### 13.3 Marking Criteria

The Institutional Generic Marking Criteria are outlined in appendices E.20.7 and E.20.8. Each programme may have more detailed grading criteria constructed on the basis of these generic criteria, as outlined in the relevant programme handbook.

### 13.4 Standard basis for assessing student work

The 'general assessment criteria' and the 'assessment criteria specific to each assessment task', and/or any student/tutor negotiated criteria (where designated in the *Programme Handbook*) form the standard basis for assessing the work of students against the Marking Criteria and may not be varied by Examiners. These should be applied consistently to ensure comparability.

#### 13.4.1 Written report on an assessment task

- a) The written report, which may be scrutinised in detail by students, teachers, External Examiners, Assessment Boards, appeals panels, and other interested parties. The report is primarily a summative document (i.e. for a practical assessment, it records what took place and the judgements that were made; for both practical and written, it offers critique of the student's response to the assessment task).
- b) The Internal Examiner(s) feedback comments/reports should reflect their judgement about the degree to which - against the Marking Criteria - the student has satisfied both the 'general assessment criteria' and the 'assessment criteria specific to each assessment task'.
- c) A panel report should reflect a consensus of the views of the examining panel. The report may be drafted during the panel's discussion, but it can only be completed after agreement has been reached. In certain circumstances, it may be impossible to complete the writing of all reports before the end of a session when all members of the panel are still present: in these cases the Component/Module Leader must ensure that the completed reports are signed by each of the Internal Examiners.
- d) Tutors should award a provisional grade or percentage mark which should be recorded on the report form or feedback sheet, as well as on the grade sheet provided by the Registry for record purposes. The provisional status of the mark should be stressed, since marks can only be confirmed by the Assessment Board.
- e) Comments and grades should be word-processed wherever possible. Handwritten comments should be legible, tidy, and written in ink/black ballpoint pen. Comments should:
  - be phrased objectively and be as full as possible in respect of all sections of the assessment
  - refer only to the requirements demanded of the particular assessment task i.e. the skills, knowledge, values and attitudes
  - be related to the assessment criteria, with comment against each criterion
  - match and justify the grade, balancing positive and negative comments in proportion to the grade awarded
  - be candid, but not cruel, about weaknesses

- not play down faults and inadequacies to the extent that the comments no longer match the grade
  - not attempt to be humorous about failings
  - not make comments of a personal nature
- f) Annotation of scripts: annotation of the script itself should be minimal (with the exception of Labanotation), reserved primarily for indications of where spelling, grammar, syntax need attention. Tutors should ensure that written feedback is consistent with requirements stipulated for the assessment task.
- g) Tutors should insist on presentation and format in line with the published guidelines. This applies particularly to bibliographies (see the [Citation Guidelines](#) on the Moodle Student Services page).
- h) The Registry will retain copies of all reports and assessment feedback in accordance with the Institution's Records Retention Policy. These will provide a reference point to ensure the maintenance of marking standards over the course of time, and may (anonymised where appropriate) be used in staff development programmes.

#### 13.4.2 Tutorial on an assessment task

The tutor should require the student to write notes of the tutorial in situ, to be signed off by the tutor. Comments should:

- be phrased objectively and be as full as possible in respect of all sections of the assessment
- refer only to the requirements demanded of the particular assessment task i.e. the skills, knowledge, values and attitudes
- be related to the assessment criteria, with comment against each criterion
- match and justify the grade, balancing positive and negative comments in proportion to the grade awarded
- be candid, but not cruel, about weaknesses
- not play down faults and inadequacies to the extent that the comments no longer match the grade
- not attempt to be humorous about failings
- not make comments of a personal nature

### **E.14 Academic Misconduct**

Academic misconduct is a breach of the Assessment Regulations and includes any action by a student or students that produces or is intended to produce an improper advantage for the candidate in assessment or that deliberately or unnecessarily disadvantages other students. Where Internal Examiners suspect academic misconduct (e.g. plagiarism, impersonation, collusion, disruption) or other assessment offence, they should refer in the first instance to the Procedure of Handling Academic Misconduct (see appendix E.20.10) where clear definitions of academic misconduct are articulated.

### **E.15 Action on Failure in an Assessment Task**

15.1 Procedures for the resit of an assessment task during the year, prior to the assessment board.

The resit of an assessment task must be agreed by an Interim Assessment Panel, having due regard for the student's continuing workload and any Institutional constraints. All assessment tasks 'redeemed' (satisfied), for which the marked obtained will be capped at the minimum pass mark, will be subject to confirmation by the Assessment Board.

Any resits that are not satisfied by the time of the Assessment Board will subject to approval by the Assessment Board.

The Module/Component Leader will make the arrangements for the resit of the assessment task. For full details of resit provision, please refer to the relevant Programme Handbook.

- 15.2 Resit provision during the year will be notified to the student in writing by the Registry following the meeting of an Interim Assessment Panel.
- 15.3 In cases where the Assessment Board determines the resit provision for a student (normally for all assessments that take place after the mid-point in the Summer Term and any special cases) this will be notified to the student in the letter from Registry which accompanies the student's *Transcript of Results*.

## **E.16 Notification of Results**

### **16.1 Provisional Grades and Feedback**

The Module/Component Leader or the Registry will notify students of their provisional grade and provide written feedback no later than 21 working days after presentation/submission of an assessment task. Exceptions to the 21 working day rule may be made in agreement with the Programme Leader. In all such cases the expected return date will be published in the Assessment Schedule at the start of the academic year. Where practical assessments take place over a number of days involving the same assessment panel, the 21 working days start from the last date of assessment.

Policies on feedback on assessed work for staff and students can be found on Moodle <http://moodle.trinitylaban.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=432>.

### **16.2 Final Results**

Internal Examiners may not give any indication to the student of the outcomes, **even in the most general terms, before the results have been published by the Registry.**

- A result letter outlining the decision of the Assessment Board and a transcript of results will be sent to the student by the Registry following the Assessment Board.

## **E.17 Submission of Assignments: Deadlines and Procedure**

Module Leaders and tutors should exercise due economy in the setting of assessment tasks, and should allow sufficient time for students to absorb and reflect upon learning before embarking on an assessment task. The sequence of assessments should reflect the organisation of the curriculum, so that each assessment represents an identifiable stage in the development of the aims and outcomes of the module.

A schedule of submission dates, (including in-module assessments, seminar presentations, etc.) will be published on Moodle by the Academic Administration Manager in each Faculty for each module/component within 2 weeks of the beginning of the teaching period (normally the start of the academic year). This schedule will be based on information provided by the Programme Leader and/or Head of Studies. In the case of large modules with teaching teams, the dates may vary from class to class, in which case the information should be collated by the Module Leader before being passed to the Programme Leader.

The quantity and type of assessments must conform exactly to information published (under 'Assessment methods and weightings') in the module specification in the Programme

Handbook. Where portfolios are indicated, the make-up of these (including the weighting of individual pieces of work) should be stated in the assessment task specification.

All work must be submitted by the agreed deadlines as indicated in the Assessment Schedule. All written assignments must either be submitted in hard copy to the Registry accompanied by a completed cover sheet, or via the relevant assessment task link on Moodle, as required by the assessment specification. Where assignments are submitted to the Registry, the date will be recorded and in the case of 'dissertations' a receipt will be issued.

#### 17.1 Recording of grades on programme-specific results spreadsheets

When grades are received by Registry, the process will be as follows:

- grades will be entered as soon as possible on the programme-specific results spreadsheets;
- grades will be cross-checked by Registry staff;
- originals will be retained by the Registry for reference for a period of six years after the Assessment Board;
- designated staff in the Registry will liaise with the relevant Head of Programmes/Programme Leader/Year Co-ordinator regarding any matters relating to grades for assessment tasks.

#### 17.2 Shredding of rough notes

Internal Examiners will ensure that their rough notes are shredded on production of the final report, so that the only notes on file in relation to any student assessment shall be those that constitute the formal report on the piece of work examined.

#### 17.3 Filing of reports

All formal reports on a student's assessment tasks will be retained with the student's official record.

Programme Administrators in Registry will liaise with the relevant teaching staff regarding any matters relating to reports received.

#### 17.4 Retaining copy of transcript of results

The student's Transcript of Results will be permanently retained by the Registry.

### **E.18 Recognition of Prior Learning**

Assessment processes for the recognition of prior learning normally take place during the admissions stage. Where credits are awarded through the RPL process, exemptions to Modules or Parts of programmes are made for the purpose of progression and award.

#### 18.1 General principles

- The RPL processes will be conducted in a rigorous and fair manner and in accordance with the [Trinity Laban Equality and Diversity Policy](#)
- The RPL processes will ensure that the student's programme of study builds upon prior learning in a coherent way
- It is the responsibility of the student to make a claim for the recognition of prior learning on the form provided (appendix [E.20.6](#)) and to provide evidence to the Programme Leader's satisfaction
- Acceptance of a claim for the recognition of prior learning is at the discretion of the RPL Panel, co-ordinated by the Deputy Registrar.

- Guidance for framing a claim in RPL and for compiling appropriate evidence to support a claim will be provided by the Programme Leader.

#### 18.2 Criteria for award of RPL

Prior Learning will be judged in terms of the criteria set out in Chapter B6 of the Quality Code.

- Relevance - is there an appropriate match between the evidence presented and the learning claimed?
- Sufficiency - is there sufficient evidence to demonstrate the achievement of the learning claimed?
- Authenticity - is the evidence clearly related to the applicants' own efforts and achievements?
- Currency - does evidence relate to current learning?

#### 18.3 Currency

In case the prior certificated or experiential learning relates to a period which ended more than five years before the date of the claim, the student must show to the satisfaction of the Panel how the learning has been developed or updated during the intervening time span.

#### 18.4 Format of evidence

Certified learning should be evidenced by copies of qualifications, detailed programme outlines indicating subjects studied and assessments undertaken and references from relevant programme leaders, tutors, and assessors. All information should be submitted in English, or supported by certified translations

The format of other evidence submitted in support of a claim will be confirmed by the Secretary to the RPL Panel as appropriate to the programme element(s) to which the claim relates. Possible formats include: written reports or essays, a portfolio of visual work, oral testing, viva voce or presentations, observation of performances, etc.

#### 18.5 Quality Assurance

Decisions are made by the RPL Panel with delegated authority from the Assessment Board. An External Examiner may decide to scrutinise the evidence supporting a claim as part of the Assessment Board process.

Normally no more than two thirds of credits for undergraduate and one half of credits for postgraduate programmes may be obtained by the recognition of prior learning.

Credit awarded in response to an application for RPL represents a judgement that a particular learning experience equates in quality and level with a general higher education experience. Credit does not relate to a specific component or components

#### 18.6 Timescales

Applications for RPL will only be accepted prior to enrolment on a programme of study.

During normal term time, applicants can expect to receive notification of the outcome of the RPL panel within 10 working days of submission. At all other times, notification of the outcome of RPL applications may take up to 28 days.

#### 18.7 Feedback and Right of Review

Applicants are entitled to written feedback on request. The Secretary to the RPL panel will aim to provide this within 10 working days during normal term time (28 days at all other times).

Requests for a review of the outcome of an RPL application may be made in writing to the RPL Panel Secretary within 28 days of the panel meeting. Complaints about the conduct or administration of the RPL Panel should be raised through the Institutional [Student Complaints Procedure](#).

#### 18.8 Calculation of final awards for direct entry students

On completion of a RPL assessment during the admissions process, students may be permitted to enter directly into the second or third year of a programme. In such cases credit will be awarded for the parts of the programme that have been exempted and the award classification will be based on the parts of the programme completed, as outlined in the Assessment Regulations.

#### 18.9 Exemption from specific modules

The grade for any credits gained through RPL will not be transferred for the purpose of the award. Where RPL is granted for specific modules within a programme, the overall aggregate will be calculated from the modules completed at Trinity Laban, weighted according to the number of credits for which a grade has been awarded within each part of that programme. A note of 'RPL' will be recorded against exempted modules on the transcript of results.

The same principles will apply for students taking part in an ERASMUS exchange as part of their programme of study.

### **E.19 Mitigating Circumstances**

#### **19.1 Definition**

19.1.1 Mitigating Circumstances are serious, unforeseen, or unavoidable circumstances that significantly disrupt assessment performance, resulting in:

- late or non-submission of an assessment task(s)
- non-attendance/participation in an assessment(s)<sup>1</sup>

19.1.2 Mitigating circumstances are:

- unforeseeable in that the student could have no prior knowledge of the event concerned, and/or
- unavoidable in that the student could not reasonably have done anything to prevent such an event

#### **19.2 Student responsibilities**

19.2.1 It is the student's responsibility to read and understand the regulations, along with other information supplied in the standard handbooks. Further information and guidance are available from the Registry/Student Services. A student's misinterpretation or lack of awareness of the regulations will not be considered a valid reason for non-compliance.

19.2.2 Students are expected to plan their work in order to meet assessment deadlines. The mitigating circumstances system is only for students who experience significant, unforeseen disruption to their studies over which they have no control.

19.2.3 Students wishing to make claims are responsible for providing full documentation as required.

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<sup>1</sup> Including non-attendance of or participation in classes where there is a compulsory attendance requirement

## **19.3 Guidance on criteria for mitigating circumstances and sources of evidence**

### **19.3.1 Chronic and long term conditions and specific learning difficulties**

Students with a long term or chronic condition<sup>2</sup> or specific learning difficulties are normally supported through special arrangements agreed through Student Services and mitigating circumstances claims will not normally be granted in relation to such conditions, other than when evidence from a medical practitioner indicates that the chronic condition became acute during the relevant period. Where additional time or other special arrangements are required, a plan of adjustment should be agreed with the Disability Coordinator at the start of the year or in the period following diagnosis (where this occurs mid-year).

The Institution is sympathetic to students with chronic illnesses. Students must, nevertheless, determine whether they can comply with the requirements of their chosen programmes. The integrity of the academic awards is established through the validated assessment requirements for each programme, which cannot be varied to suit the circumstances of individual students.

### **19.3.2 Illness or injury or serious personal or psychological issues**

Medical conditions and injuries that prevent a student attending an assessment should be substantiated by written evidence from a medical practitioner. A letter from a doctor stating only that the student had said s/he was unwell would not be acceptable.

A police crime number report may be used to help substantiate an incident in which the student is a victim of crime

Counsellors employed by the Institution; the Head of Student Services; psychiatrists and counsellors with a recognised professional qualification may make confidential statements to accompany claims. Written evidence from complementary therapists will only be accepted when the Institution is satisfied that the therapist is a member of a recognised professional body.

### **19.3.3 Death of a close family member or friend:**

The Institution will normally require a copy of the death certificate for mitigating circumstances claimed on the grounds of bereavement. Where a student has been affected by the death of someone other than a partner, parent, child or a close family member, the MC claim should include an explanation of the relationship of the student to the deceased.

Bereavement will normally be taken to cover the assessments within the term when the death occurred, although the panel may use discretion to vary this timescale. In case a student feels s/he has been affected beyond this point, there will be a need for evidence to indicate the effects e.g. a doctor's certificate.

### **19.3.4 Paid employment/professional engagements**

The Institution appreciates that some students work to finance their studies. It is, however, the student's responsibility to evaluate whether s/he can comply with the requirements of the programme before enrolment. Exceptions may be made for part-time students who are in employment and who are prevented by the employer's own action from attending assessments or completing work within the published deadline, subject to the presentation of documentary evidence from the employer detailing the unforeseen circumstances that

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<sup>2</sup> 2. Long term or chronic conditions are defined as those that are expected last beyond the end of the current term on the basis of the available documentary evidence.

created the situation. Evidence should be submitted on company letterhead or emailed directly to the Registry from a company email address.

#### 19.3.5 Communication & IT issues

Students are responsible for backing up their work on a separate drive and for ensuring that they have sufficient time and access to printing facilities before the submission deadlines. Failures of equipment, including IT systems and computer viruses, will only be accepted where they occur across the Faculty, the Institution, nationally or internationally and are verified to the Registry by the Head of the IT Services department or a representative. Exceptionally, documentary evidence need not be presented in respect of claims for computer and information technology problems since the evidence will come directly from IT Services through the Registry.

#### 19.3.6 Group assessment issues

Where a performance-based assessment is unavoidably delayed or cancelled due to the mitigating circumstances of one group member, other group members may submit a claim for mitigating circumstances on this basis. Other group members should refer to the affected student's mitigating circumstances claim in their personal statement as an alternative to providing the evidence themselves. The directly affected group member should submit evidence and include the names of the other affected group members in his/her claim.

In other circumstances, the failure of one member of the group to submit work or undertake the tasks assigned by a group will not normally be accepted.

#### 19.3.7 Working with performers

In cases where a student is working with an unassessed performer (for example a postgraduate choreographer working with an undergraduate dancer) who is unable to perform due to unforeseen circumstances, the student being assessed should make every effort to obtain supporting evidence from the performer.

#### 19.3.8 Religious observance

Students who miss part of their studies because they are required to attend a recognised religious pilgrimage may use the mitigating circumstances system to request deferrals in any assessments they have missed. Students who make claims in this category must produce independent documentary evidence demonstrating that they were required to attend at that point and the reasons why they could not attend on a different occasion, thereby avoiding a conflict with their studies.

#### 19.3.9 Personal statements in support of MC claims

The Mitigating Circumstances Panel will not normally accept:

- personal statements, or statements from family or friends, for which there is no independent documentary evidence
- supporting statements from tutors or other TL staff members – although such statements may be useful in articulating a claim they do not in themselves constitute independent documentary evidence.
- **where there are subject-specific technical issues affecting a student that have been identified by the teaching staff, such as a change of embouchure for wind players, an exception may be made to the use of supporting statements from staff members.** The student would need to demonstrate that the issue could not reasonably have been identified at an earlier stage and must provide evidence of

support from their teacher and also their Head of Department or Head of Programmes, as appropriate.

## **19.4 Procedure for making a claim of Mitigating Circumstances**

### 19.4.1 Mitigating Circumstances Form

In order to make a claim of Mitigating Circumstances students should complete, in full, a Mitigating Circumstances Form. The form is available on Moodle and appended to these Regulations (see Appendix 1). Students are strongly advised to use the forms since they will help guide submission of the claim. Submissions will, however, be accepted in any written hardcopy form. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that all relevant information and supporting documentary evidence is presented within the deadline.

### 19.4.2 Submission of claims

Claims of mitigating circumstances together with independent documentary evidence should be submitted to the Registry. Claims should be submitted as close as possible to the time when the circumstances occur and will only be accepted up to 10 working days after the assessment affected.

Dates of Mitigating Circumstances Panel meetings will be published on Moodle at the start of each academic year.

### 19.4.3 Confidentiality

Evidence of a particularly sensitive nature may be submitted in a sealed envelope marked 'Strictly Confidential' for the consideration of the Chair and Secretary of the Mitigating Circumstances Panel only.

Mitigating Circumstances Forms and evidence will be received by the Mitigating Circumstances Panel solely for the purpose of considering the validity of claims and recommending appropriate outcomes to the Assessment Boards. Information provided by students will be treated in confidence and in accordance with TL's Data Protection Policy.

### 19.4.4 Independent Documentary Evidence

In addition to completing a Mitigating Circumstances Form, students must provide independent documentary evidence substantiating their claim. Documentation must be from an official source (e.g. a signed letter on headed paper) and include details of the dates during which the mitigating circumstances applied.

19.4.4.1 Documentation must be presented in English, or as an authorised translation.

19.4.4.2 Copies of documentary evidence may be submitted, however the Institution may check the authenticity of any documentation presented in support of a mitigating circumstances claim and reserves the right to request sight of original documentation in all cases.

19.4.4.3 Any student who presents documentation that is not authentic will be subject to academic misconduct procedures and may be liable to criminal charges.

## **19.5 Consideration of claims**

### 19.5.1 Mitigating Circumstances Panel

The Panel – which reports to the Assessment Board - will receive claims of mitigating circumstances. The Panel considers the validity of claims of mitigating circumstances and recommends appropriate outcomes for confirmation by the Assessment Board. The panel has a responsibility to act in a fair, consistent and objective manner. The Assessment Board will

make decisions on progression and awards based on the whole academic profile of the student.

#### 19.5.2 Membership

Membership will consist of:

- Chair: A Senior Academic from the relevant Faculty
- Secretary: Registrar's Representative
- Clerk: Nominated by the Secretary
- Members of Faculty Teaching Staff/Senior Support Staff: From an approved list

19.5.2.1 The quorum comprises of the Chair, the Secretary and one other member.

19.5.2.2 To ensure consistency of approach, the same member of staff will normally act as Chair for the full academic year.

#### 19.5.2.3 Membership information

The Chairs will be nominated by the Registrar and the Director of the Faculty, drawn from the membership of the Faculty Management groups.

The other members will be chosen from a panel annually nominated by the Registrar and the Directors of the Faculty. Members must receive a briefing on the mitigating circumstances regulations before participating in panel meetings.

The Registrar's representative will serve as a full member of the Panel and as Secretary, acting as a source of guidance for the panel on the mitigating circumstances regulations. The Registrar's representative may be assisted by a clerk who will act as administrator and minute secretary to the panel.

#### 19.5.6 Mitigating Circumstances Panel recommendations

Mitigating Circumstances are not a substitute for academic performance. Where Mitigating Circumstances are accepted the Panel can recommend the following outcomes:

**Extension** (or condoned late submission) for an uncapped mark (i.e. as a 1<sup>st</sup> attempt).

A maximum extension period of 10 working days from the original assessment date or submission deadline will normally be permitted. The Module or Component Leader will be responsible for setting the new deadline, which may be before the two week extension period has expired. Students seeking a condoned late submission (i.e. where the Mitigating Circumstances Panel grants an extension retrospectively) should ensure that they submit within 10 working days of the original deadline.

Where scheduling issues exist and it is not possible for the assessment to take place within this period, students may exceptionally obtain written confirmation from the Module/Component leader and submit this to the Secretary of the Mitigating Circumstances panel for consideration. All extensions should be completed within 20 working days and where this is not possible, students should request a deferral of assessment to a future point.

**Deferral** of assessment to a future assessment point. Where possible the assessment (or an approved alternative assessment) will be scheduled before the next academic year. Where it is not possible to undertake re/assessment within the same academic year, the Panel may recommend to the Assessment Board that the assessment is deferred to the next iteration of

a module/component. This will usually necessitate a change of status to abeyance with study.

**Condonement of absence** (currently BA (Hons) Contemporary Dance only), where the absence contravenes a professional conduct regulation. Students dropping below the permitted level of absence will be contacted by the Registry prior to the Mitigating Circumstances Panel meeting and invited to submit a claim where legitimate mitigating circumstances apply.

**Resubmission for a capped mark** (usually within 10 working days of the original deadline or before return of feedback to peers). This outcome will only be the result of a mitigating circumstances claim for a missed resit.

**Interruption of Study** (abeyance). Suspension of the whole programme of study for a period of time, normally the remainder of the academic year.

19.5.7 In circumstances in which it is not possible to grant an extension or deferral due to the nature of the assessment, the matter should be referred to an Interim Assessment Board for consideration and possible provision of an alternative assessment task.

19.5.8 Where Mitigating Circumstances are rejected the original assessment mark(s) will stand and the normal reassessment regulations/late submission penalties will apply. Students will be notified of the reasons for rejection and given one opportunity to resubmit claims substantiated by additional evidence.

19.5.9 Consideration of MC claims by Chair's Action

Claims may be considered by Chair's Action in urgent cases where the outcome of an MC claim:

- may allow a student to receive an award in time for the graduation ceremony
- may result in a student who had previously been excluded being allowed to re-enrol (via the Appeals procedure).

All claims considered by Chair's Action should be countersigned by the Secretary to the MC Panel, in order to confirm that the case has been considered by two members of the panel. Cases of Chair's Action should be reported formally to the next available meeting of the MC panel.

19.5.10 Conflicts of interest

When a student is known to a member of staff other than in a professional capacity, the member of staff must declare an interest to the Chair of the Panel prior to the assessment of the student's application and must not participate in the discussion. The declaration of interest must be noted in the record of the proceedings of the panel.

## **19.6 Notification and Records**

19.6.1 Summary minutes (see template for agenda and minutes in Appendix [E.20.2](#)) of all Mitigating Circumstances Panel meetings will be made maintained along with the Outcome Record sheets (see Appendix [E.20.3](#)), which will be used to record the outcomes of individual claims, with the Assessment Board informed of the outcomes. In addition, a summary spreadsheet will be maintained for notification to relevant Assessment Boards and to relevant teaching staff, in order to allow the rescheduling of assessments, adjustments to teaching arrangements etc.

19.6.2 Students will be notified of Mitigating Circumstances Panel outcomes by the Secretary or Clerk to the Mitigating Circumstances Panel via TL email. Copies of claims and evidence will be placed in student files.

**19.7 Interpretation of regulations**

The Registrar has authority to interpret the regulations relating to Mitigating Circumstances.

**19.8 Appeals against material irregularity**

Students may only submit an appeal based on material irregularity in the conduct of a Mitigating Circumstances Panel. This should be sent in writing to the Secretary to the Panel. Any academic appeals relating to the operation or conduct of individual assessments must follow the Student Appeals procedure, published on Moodle.