



# **MSc Respiratory Practice**

**Postgraduate Framework Programme Handbook**

**September 2017**

**Programme Leader – Sue Lillyman**

The University of Hertfordshire is an ambitious and entrepreneurial university. It offers excellence in teaching, learning and research and puts students at the heart of its activities. It is a model of a 21st century university, international, business-facing and business-like in its approach – making it distinctive in an ever changing higher education environment.

The University of Hertfordshire is one of the region's largest employers with over 2,700 staff and a turnover of £205m. With a student community of 23,000, including more than 2,000 international students from over eighty five countries, the University has a global network of over 160,000 alumni.

*For more information, please visit [www.herts.ac.uk](http://www.herts.ac.uk)*

**Education for Health became a collaborative partner with University of Hertfordshire to deliver the MSc in Respiratory Practice from January 2016.**

**Please read this handbook carefully and keep it for future reference. It is a source of important information on many aspects of your studies and provides references where further information specific to your programme, modules and accredited short courses may be found.**

**This handbook should also help you to understand your role and responsibilities as a student as well as provide you with the support and advice that you can expect in return.**

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# **1 Education for Health and the Partnership**

## **1.1 Welcome and introduction to MSc Respiratory Practice**

Welcome to Education for Health and the Postgraduate programme relating to the MSc in Respiratory Practice.

Established in 1987, Education for Health (EFH) provides high quality continuing professional development education and training in the management of Long Term Conditions (LTC). The Charity has grown from delivering asthma courses to the position it now holds: delivering education and training across a wide range of conditions nationally and internationally from its hub in the heart of Warwick.

Education for Health is an accredited partner with the University of Hertfordshire and sit within the School of Health and Social Work. The school is one of 10 academic schools within the university and has established a reputation as being one of the leading education providers for the allied health professions, nursing, midwifery and social work.

Whether studying a module on a stand-alone basis or as part of a structured pathway, the Programme Tutor and Programme Administrator are key people available to support you. The Programme Tutor manages the day to day delivery and organisation of your programme. They facilitate and co-ordinate activities as well as being the main point of contact for you should problems or issues arise relating to teaching, learning and assessment of the programme.

This programme handbook provides information which will assist you in the understanding of the assessment processes utilised (in relation to both theory and practice), the teaching and learning resources available and the academic support provided.

This handbook is also designed to provide information to assist you in your chosen pathway and complements the individual module specific handbooks which will be provided at the commencement of each module.

## **1.2. Framework committees and student voice**

There are opportunities for you to give feedback to us on aspects of your study. These can be either formal or informal. We ask that you speak to your module co-ordinator and/or programme tutor if there are issues of concern. Additionally we would welcome formal feedback submitted through our evaluation process, which includes online and hard copy forms that you will receive during and after your studies.

There is a student representative allocated to you who will represent you at the Programme Committee meeting which occurs twice yearly. The purpose of the board is to:

- Monitor the quality of the programme
- Initiate remedial action if problems are identified
- Discuss programme development including programme delivery, teaching and assessment
- Provide formal communication between you and the staff responsible for the delivery and management of the programme

The student representative can be contacted via:  
[studentsupport@educationforhealth.org](mailto:studentsupport@educationforhealth.org)

If you have any comments then please alert the representative who will bring the issues to the board and provide feedback regarding actions.

### **1.3 Regulations**

In addition to this Education for Health programme handbook there are other regulations which will apply specifically to your programme. These can be found in the Programme Specification, a copy of which can be found on the iLearn programme page. Also see University of Hertfordshire handbook  
[http://www.studynet1.herts.ac.uk/crs/16/7HSK0076-0906.nsf/0/80257FF8004DEA0D80257D3E004DA03B/\\$FILE/HSK%20Programme%20Handbook%20AHP%20PG%20Framework%202016-17%20Final.pdf](http://www.studynet1.herts.ac.uk/crs/16/7HSK0076-0906.nsf/0/80257FF8004DEA0D80257D3E004DA03B/$FILE/HSK%20Programme%20Handbook%20AHP%20PG%20Framework%202016-17%20Final.pdf)

Education for Health specific regulations are specified within this handbook. Additional regulations may also apply which are in addition to the University policies and procedures.

### **1.4 MSc Respiratory Practice: Rationale**

The last decade has seen a sharp increase in activity in the respiratory field. This appears to coincide with advances in technology and treatment that have culminated in more proactive approaches to chronic disorders such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), and an increasing recognition that respiratory care is a specialist area of practice. This is highlighted by the development of new approaches to respiratory practice, such as the use of non-invasive ventilation, or from a less technical but equally clinically important aspect, the development of pulmonary rehabilitation programmes. In addition to these, a further consideration is the developing role of health care professionals alongside the medical profession.

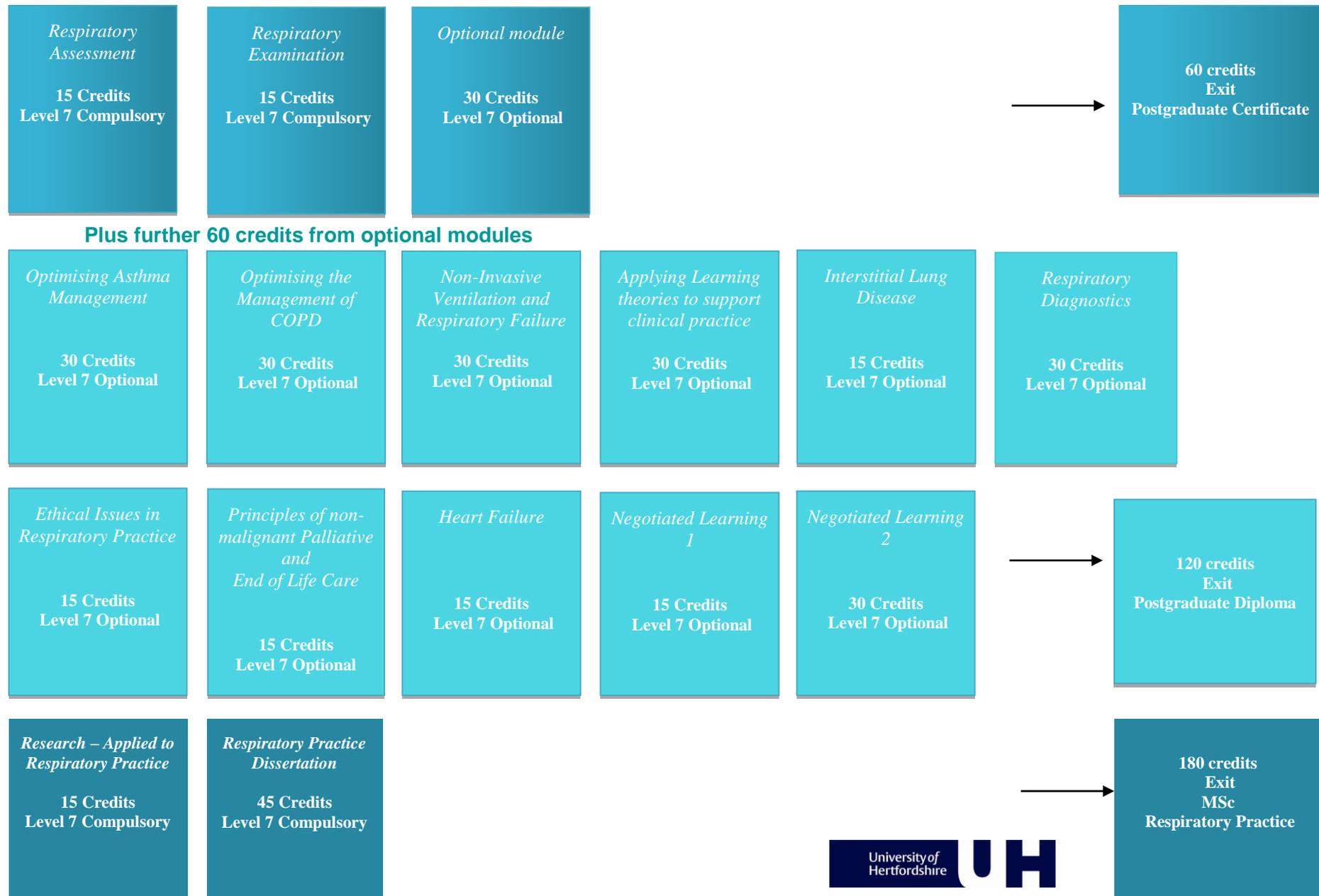
However, despite the improvements in technical aspects, morbidity remains high in a disease such as asthma, where a number of factors contribute to poor control. Some of this is due to poor communication and some to patients' expectations. As with all disease areas, ethical issues abound in many if not all aspects of respiratory care. Even considering these few brief examples, ever-accumulating evidence indicates that there is considerable scope for improvement in the field of respiratory disease management. The merging role of varying disciplines in respiratory disease management referred to above is seen to be crucial to raising the standard of patient care. However, education is essential in this process.

The development of this programme is a response to the need for a flexible, accessible programme that can be applied to the roles of a diverse group of practitioners, and that enables practitioners to work towards the qualification of MSc Respiratory Practice.

The programme on which you have enrolled is one of only three programmes in the UK with a respiratory specific focus. Everyone concerned with this programme, whether they work for Education for Health directly or within the School of Health and Social Care in the University of Hertfordshire, hopes you enjoy the course and wish you every success in your studies.

## MSc Respiratory Practice

### 1.5 The programme



**N.B. Research Applied to Respiratory Practice can be taken as an option module within the PGD but is compulsory within the MSC**

## **2 STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES AND SUPPORT**

Many of the university student support mechanisms can be accessed through iLearn and StudyNet.

### **2.1 Student responsibilities**

All students are responsible for:

- Notifying us of any changes to personal circumstances (this can be done through iLearn);
- Keeping up-to-date with information posted on the programme, module and short course pages on iLearn;
- Checking e-mails regularly;
- Recording attendance when at the University/Education for Health by signing attendance record sheets;
- Keeping in regular contact with Programme Tutors and other appropriate staff;
- Familiarising themselves with and abiding by the University and Education for Health Policies, procedures and regulations and profession-specific Codes of Conduct.

**You are expected to access iLearn regularly as this will be the main channel of communication regarding your studies. Education for Health recommends that you access ilearn within 2 weeks of commencing a module to ensure there are no access issues and to familiarise yourself with the course content. Failure to do this may result in delays as you progress through the module and this time cannot be compensated for at the end of the module.**

Additionally there are other requirements of you as a student as outlined below.

### **2.2 E-mail communication**

Communication from the university will be via the personal e-mail address supplied by the student:

- Personal e-mail addresses for students are collected and stored on the applicant record in the student system
- Students are required to confirm or update their e-mail address at registration as part of the online process

Students are responsible for:

- Ensuring their current contact details are kept up to date through the student portal on student system. This will be accessible from the student's iLearn portal;
- Taking responsibility for regularly checking their communications from the university including e-mail and iLearn.

### **2.3 Attendance requirements for professional programmes**

Students undertaking a professional programme are expected to attend all timetabled sessions. Non-attendance is monitored and failure to attend sessions without a justifiable reason is treated seriously and may be brought to the attention of the Board of Examiners. For students who are funded through an NHS contract, information regarding attendance may be forwarded to the education lead.

### **2.4 Absenteeism**

If you are unable to attend a timetabled session, please contact the module lead or Education for Health administrator who will then inform the relevant personnel.

### **2.5 Professionalism**

You are expected to behave in a manner appropriate for a student on a professional programme. This includes your attitude, behaviour and actions at all times within and outside the University/Education for Health. You therefore need to consider how you communicate with others including when using social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. The student code of conduct identifies that you should uphold the good name of the University and Education for Health in your off-campus activities. Inappropriate comments/communication which can be attributed to a student at the University of Hertfordshire will be dealt with in a serious manner.

Professionalism also relates to issues such as academic misconduct. Where students are found guilty of academic misconduct such as plagiarism, cheating or failure to maintain confidentiality, their Fitness to Practise may be questioned and dealt with appropriately, section 4 of the University of Hertfordshire handbook.

### **2.6 Students with special needs**

Please contact us if you have special needs and we will consider how we can best support you through the services we provide. Please note however that as a part-time postgraduate qualification programme delivered in collaboration with the University, you can also utilise your employer services.

## **2.7 Extra support for learning**

If you are struggling with an aspect of your work, you should in the first instance speak to the module/short course lead or programme tutor who may be able to offer guidance or refer you to where further information and guidance can be found.

Additionally, iLearn and StudyNet are useful if you need to clarify your understanding of an area of study. In this case your queries may be posted on the discussion forum on module/short course pages. Staff will enter into any discussion if they feel extra guidance is needed. They will not rush to answer questions that they feel have either been answered before or explicitly covered in a teaching session/module/short course guide. The expectation is that students will help each other in the first instance by answering questions posed by peers. If, however, staff members feel that a question can only be answered by a member of the programme/module/short course team, new material/ground is being covered or there is confusion in the responses given, they will try to help.

The advantage of using iLearn is that all students can access the queries and responses; it is highly likely that if one student does not understand something, several others will not either. The same system should be used if there are any queries regarding coursework assignments.

**Please remember to keep your postings professional and courteous at all times.**

**You can access a wealth of support through iLearn and StudyNet, including I-Spy tutorials. A package of study skills support specifically for you on the AHP Postgraduate Framework can also be accessed here and the link is also available on module and programme pages on iLearn. These resources allow you to work at your own pace and provide useful information on a number of issues.**

**Further information can be found in the University of Hertfordshire handbook which can be accessed at:**

**<http://www.studynet2.herts.ac.uk/crb/11/website97.nsf/Teaching+Documents?OpenView&count=9999&restricttcategory=Academic+Skills+Advice>**

## **3 LEARNING AND TEACHING**

### **3.1 Number of contact hours per 15 credits**

The University indicates that each 15 credits of study equates to approximately 150 student effort hours (UPR AS14). This normally includes a blend of face-to-face contact, online activities, independent study and assessment. As a guide, the hours spent face-to-face are in the region of 20-30 hours per 15 credits for theory based module/short courses and 30-40 hours for skills based modules/short courses but this may differ between module/short courses depending on the nature of the content. Some modules and short courses are distance learning where all activities and learning are on line.

### **3.2 Independent study/preparatory reading**

Students are expected to prepare work in advance, both for university based learning and whilst in practice (if appropriate). Wherever possible, students work in small groups to share resources and information. Students are advised that independent study is essential for all aspects of their studies.

### **3.3 Blended learning**

Education for Health adopts a 'blended learning' approach. This is where you undertake traditional types of learning as well as more innovative, electronic learning. iLearn is an integral tool of blended learning. Further details will be discussed during your modules.

## **4 ASSESSMENT**

### **4.1 Purpose of assessment**

The purpose of assessment throughout the programme is to enable the student to demonstrate that they have fulfilled the programme aims and learning outcomes as well as those of each module. A combination of formative and summative assessment methods is utilised, incorporating a variety of assessment tools. This acknowledges the fact that students demonstrate, to the best of their ability, their acquisition of knowledge and skills in different ways. It also recognises that students will have had different experiences prior to their attendance on a postgraduate programme or module.

### **4.2 Assessment regulations**

Prior to sitting any of the University assessments, a copy of the regulations is issued to each student via iLearn. This identifies the mechanisms by which circumstances

that may have affected performance in the assessments may be brought to the attention of the Board of Examiners. There is also a formal mechanism students may use in order to appeal against a decision of the Board of Examiners on certain specific grounds. The policy relating to appeals (UPR AS12) can be accessed through StudyNet/Support/University Rules and Regulations <https://sitem.herts.ac.uk/secreg/upr/AS12.htm>

### 4.3 Board of Examiners

The postgraduate programmes sit under one Board of Examiners. The Board receives and confirms the module and short course assessment results and oversees student progression. Education for Health has two types of Board of Examiners: Module Boards and Programme Boards. Membership of the Boards includes: Chair, Programme Tutors, Module Leads, Link Tutor and External Examiners. It is the Board of Examiners to which you should write if you have a problem that affects your ability to complete an assessment – see Serious adverse circumstances (4.20).

### 4.4 Assessment of module/short courses

The University uses a numerical only scale for marking. Each module must attain a minimum satisfactory standard and have a pass mark of 50%. A student who passes a component of assessment is not allowed to repeat that component purely for the purpose of improving the grade achieved.

### 4.5 Submission of coursework

Written assignments are normally submitted on line only by a specified time on the day of submission. ***If work is late, penalties will be incurred - see Penalty for unauthorised late submission (4.7).*** Specific information relating to hand in dates and times is provided in the relevant module/short course guide. Coursework should be submitted under your student number. See your module/short course guide for details.

If the nature of the assignment requires it to be provided in a paper copy, e.g. portfolio, it must be received prior to the deadline even if it is posted. Proof of postage must be obtained. It is important that you retain an electronic copy of all assignments as you may be required to present another copy.

Electronic detection tools will be used on submission which may identify incidences of academic misconduct such as plagiarism or collusion.

### 4.6 Extensions to hand in dates for coursework

A request for an extension to a hand-in date and/or time **must** be made in writing to your Programme Tutor. Note that you may be required to provide evidence of your reasons from a third party to support this request.

Please note that this is different to serious adverse circumstances – see below.

#### **4.7 Penalty for unauthorised late submission**

The programme will follow the guidelines adopted by the School of Health and Social Work. Any coursework submitted up to one week after the submission date can achieve, as its maximum, 50%. Any coursework submitted after this will achieve a mark of zero and will therefore be considered by the Board of Examiners. If referred work is handed in late without authorisation, it will be considered by the Board of Examiners and will normally receive a fail grade (FREN) which would require you to re-enrol on the module/short course.

#### **4.8 Presentation of coursework**

Unless specified in your module/short course guide, the following points should be adhered to when presenting your coursework:

- Word-processed with text at 1.5 or double spacing;
- Font size should be 12 for main text – larger and smaller font sizes are permissible for headings, titles, labels and text within diagrams;
- Typeface is discretionary but should be easily read (e.g. Arial);
- Page numbers and candidate number OR student registration number to be included on each page;
- Word count clearly indicated;
- You must submit as a word document – if your file cannot be opened, a penalty may be applied.
- When citing references you must follow the Referencing Guidelines. A copy of the guidelines are on the Faculty StudyNet site. You can also access the guidelines by clicking on the following:

<http://www.studynet2.herts.ac.uk/crb/11/website97.nsf/Teaching+Documents/418E75999F5E2B3E80257D47002E8ED6?OpenDocument>

It is very important that your work is properly referenced, i.e. the source of the material used in your assignments is acknowledged. Work submitted without proper referencing will be penalised; if work is unreferenced and passed off as your own, plagiarism software may be used on your work. Evidence of plagiarism within an

assignment is indicative of poor academic writing which will be reflected in the mark awarded. The module/short course lead may report plagiarism as academic misconduct and if proven, you will be charged accordingly (see section on academic misconduct). Please note that plagiarism reported as academic misconduct is a serious offence.

#### **4.9 Coursework word count**

All coursework assignments have a specified word count which students must adhere to. The identified word count will be accepted without penalty with a range of +/- 10% e.g. for a 2000 word essay, the range accepted will be 1800-2200 words.

You must include the word count on the assignment. If you do not do this, the work will be returned to you unmarked and you will be asked to re-submit the work with the word count identified. Please note that this may lead to a delay in receiving back your coursework as assessors may have other marking commitments at this time.

#### **Calculating word count for coursework**

##### **Figures and illustrations**

Any tables, diagrams or other illustrations presented within the body of the work will normally be included in the word count. For example, if a table /diagram uses up a ½ page it will be allocated the same word count as would a ½ page of text. The relevant module will specify any different requirements for a particular assignment.

##### **References**

References within the text which are within brackets (citations) **are** included in the word count but those in the reference list (or bibliography) **are not** included in the word count.

##### **Appendices**

Appendices are not included in the word count

##### **Penalties for incorrect word count**

If you **exceed** the maximum word count, any text over that word count will not be marked.

If you **fail to meet** the lower limit there is no penalty. However, this could indicate a limited description or discussion in the text which will be therefore be reflected in the overall mark.

#### **4.10 Written exams**

Where exam papers specify that students should answer a specified number of questions from a range of questions, the following regulations apply:

- There is no requirement for students to achieve a pass mark for each individual question but an overall mark of 50% is required for a pass in that element of assessment.
- Where students answer more than the required number of questions e.g. a student answers 6 questions when 5 out of 8 is specified, only five questions may be marked.

#### **4.11 Objective Structured Clinical Exams (OSCEs) and Vivas**

Students must attain a minimum satisfactory pass in all practical examinations and this may include vivas. Specific requirements are outlined in the relevant programme specification and module/short course guide.

#### **4.12 Presentations and interactive oral assessments**

An interactive oral is defined as a verbal examination where the student is able to respond to questions on a piece of work that they have prepared in advance, such as a research poster. This is in contrast to a viva where they have to discuss questions raised by the examiner on a broad body of knowledge, such as an anatomy viva.

#### **4.13 Recording assessments**

Video or MP3 recordings of presentations, vivas or interactive oral assessments may be undertaken for moderation purposes and for the external examiners. Students will normally be advised in advance if this is to be undertaken.

#### **4.14 Non-attendance/late attendance**

Non-attendance/late attendance at OSCEs/vivas or presentations is classed as a referral unless there are serious adverse circumstances. Students who arrive after the examination has begun will not be permitted entry. Details are outlined in the relevant module/short course guides.

Students who miss their assessment slot will have to wait until the next scheduled assessment period to undertake that assessment.

## 4.15 Marking

Marking is undertaken in line with the University policies and procedures. Marks are awarded as percentages against the following assessment and grading criteria. All written work is subject to internal moderation and external examiner scrutiny. In any assessment where there is more than one marker per individual student element of assessment e.g. research dissertation, if the 1st/2nd markers do not agree then a third marker is involved.

### Assessment and Grading Criteria for Coursework

	<b>Outstanding &gt;80</b>	<b>Excellent 79-70</b>	<b>Very Good 69-60</b>	<b>Good/ Satisfactory 59-50</b>	<b>Marginal Fail 49-40</b>	<b>Clear Fail 39-20</b>	<b>Little or nothing of merit 19-0</b>
<b>Knowledge and Application</b>  XX%	Demonstrates an outstanding in depth understanding of specialised /applied knowledge	Demonstrates an excellent understanding of specialised /applied knowledge	Demonstrates a very good understanding of specialised /applied knowledge	Demonstrates a good understanding of specialised /applied knowledge most or all of the time	Demonstrates an insufficient understanding of specialised /applied knowledge	Demonstrates very limited understanding of specialised /applied knowledge	Demonstrates very poor /no understanding of specialised /applied knowledge
<b>Analysis and evaluation</b>  XX%	Demonstrates an outstandingly sophisticated level of analysis. Is perceptive and insightful in judging the appropriateness and quality of the evidence and/or data.	Demonstrates an excellent level of analysis.  Accurately judges the appropriateness and quality of the evidence and/or data.	Demonstrates a very good level of analysis.  Shows very good judgement in the appropriateness and quality of the evidence and/or data.	Demonstrates a good level of analysis most of the time.  Shows sound judgement in the appropriateness and the quality of the evidence and/or data most or all of the time.	Demonstrates a limited level of analysis.  Demonstrates limited ability to judge the appropriateness and quality of the evidence and/or data.	Demonstrates a very limited level of analysis and makes little or no judgement about the appropriateness and the quality of the evidence and/or data.	Demonstrates little or no analysis of evidence/data and makes little or no judgements about the appropriateness and the quality of the evidence and/or data.
<b>Integration and synthesis</b>  XX%	Demonstrates an outstanding level of integration and synthesis of relevant and appropriate evidence, drawing on an extensive range of evidence/ examples	Demonstrates an excellent level of integration and synthesis of relevant and appropriate evidence, drawing on a wide range of evidence /examples	Demonstrates a very good level of integration and synthesis of relevant and appropriate evidence drawing on a good range of evidence/ examples	Demonstrates a good level of integration and some synthesis of relevant and appropriate evidence. Draws on a reasonable range of evidence/ examples	Demonstrates inadequate integration of relevant and appropriate evidence. Draws on limited evidence/ examples.	Demonstrates very limited integration of evidence. Draws on insufficient evidence/ examples	Demonstrates little or no use of appropriate evidence / examples and therefore no integration or synthesis
<b>Criticality</b> XX%	Demonstrates outstanding evidence of critical appraisal/critical thinking/ clinical reasoning	Demonstrates excellent evidence of critical appraisal/ critical thinking/clinical reasoning	Demonstrates very good evidence of critical appraisal/ critical thinking/clinical reasoning	Demonstrates reasonable evidence of critical appraisal/ critical thinking/clinical reasoning	Demonstrates limited evidence of critical appraisal/ critical thinking/clinical reasoning	Demonstrates very limited evidence of critical appraisal/ critical thinking/clinical reasoning	Demonstrates little or no evidence of critical appraisal/ critical thinking/clinical reasoning
	<b>Outstanding &gt;80</b>	<b>Excellent 79-70</b>	<b>Very Good 69-60</b>	<b>Good/ Satisfactory 59-50</b>	<b>Marginal Fail 49-40</b>	<b>Clear Fail 39-20</b>	<b>Little or nothing of merit 19-0</b>
<b>Presentation</b>  XX%	Outstanding presentation. Recommended referencing system used with no inaccuracies or inconsistencies noted.	Excellent presentation. Recommended referencing system used with very few (minor) inaccuracies and/or inconsistencies.	Very good presentation. Recommended referencing system used with few inaccuracies and/or inconsistencies.	Good presentation. Recommended referencing system used but occasional inaccuracies and/or inconsistencies noted.	Weak presentation. An attempt to use the recommended referencing system but many inaccuracies and/or inconsistencies noted.	Very weak presentation. Numerous errors and inconsistencies.	Poor presentation. inaccurate /no referencing

#### **4.16 Feedback**

All programmes have assessment schedules which indicate when feedback will be given to students on their coursework. Results are returned within 5 calendar weeks of the submission date. Individual feedback is provided via Turnitin and general feedback on coursework may also be provided on Turnitin or delivered during timetabled sessions.

It is not usual University practice to give individual feedback on written examinations.

#### **4.17 Release of marks**

Marks awarded for each element of assessment will normally be released on the module/short course site on iLearn by the module/short course lead once the marking has been completed. Please note that any marks published prior to the Module/Short Course Board are provisional marks. Marks may go up or down when being considered at the Exam Board.

#### **4.18 Compensation**

Intramodular compensation is not permitted between elements within the same module/short course. If there is more than one piece of coursework for assessment of a module, each component must receive 50% or greater.

#### **4.19 Referral**

Within a master's degree programme, Module Boards of Examiners have the authority and discretion to allow a student the opportunity to be referred (indicated by the award of FRefC or FRefE for coursework or examination) in examination and / or in-course assessment (UPR AS14). It is the responsibility of the student to choose which referral opportunities to accept, with the benefit of advice and counsel from the programme team and in accordance to University and programme regulations. Where a student has 60 credits of referral the Programme Board will not allow further study other than that relevant to the referrals. Students who are successful in their referred assessments will be awarded a P(50) for the entire module/short course(s) in which the reassessment has been undertaken.

If you fail a module on referral you may be permitted to re-enrol on the module again. You will normally be expected to repeat all the elements of assessment regardless of whether elements of assessment had been previously passed.

#### 4.20 Serious adverse circumstances

For a full explanation of serious adverse circumstances please see Appendix 1.

If, for valid and acceptable reasons, you have not attempted one or more assessments you may submit serious adverse circumstances which **MUST** be submitted within the appointed timeframe. **There is a formal procedure that you must follow closely as failure to complete the paperwork correctly and supply the required evidence will lead to your mitigation being rejected.** Note that there are some problems and issues which are NOT permissible as serious adverse circumstances; further information can be found either in Appendix 1 of this handbook or in the Student A-Z which is accessed through student support on StudyNet. Help is available from your Programme Tutor and you should seek their guidance if you are unsure about the process or whether you have grounds for claiming serious adverse circumstances.

Students who sit an assessment will not be able to then submit serious adverse circumstances for consideration. There are two exceptions to this which are documented in the information and guidance provided by the University.

Please note that it is your responsibility to submit your mitigation as soon as possible, normally before or at the time of the deadline date for the assessment. As stated in the procedure regarding serious adverse circumstances, submission must be made at least 10 days before the Module/Short Course Board. Any late submission of the form will not be considered unless you have serious adverse circumstances that have led to the form being submitted late.

Your serious adverse circumstances are reviewed by a School Assessment Panel who, using the recommended guidelines and evidence you present, decide whether to uphold your application or not. If the panel decide that valid reasons with appropriate evidence are proven, then a deferral will be awarded. If it is not upheld then the assessment result stands. If you are awarded a deferral for an assignment, you will be given an opportunity to take the assessment as if for the first time. Further information on mitigation and serious adverse circumstances can be found in the Student A-Z.

#### 4.21 Confidentiality

When the BoE considers extenuating circumstances, all the members of the School Assessment Panel normally discuss the application. If, however, the circumstances are particularly sensitive and a student would not wish the discussion to involve the whole Board, the student can ask the Chair to discuss their application with the External Examiners only. In such cases, they make a recommendation to the full Board whether or not the application should be upheld.

For full details of the University Policy, please see UPR AS14 [confidentiality policy](#).

#### **4.22 Referred/deferred assignments**

The question set for referral/deferral assignments may be different to the original question. A coursework question may be changed if a student is granted an extension beyond 4 weeks of the original submission date. The University schedules referral/deferral assessments during January, May and September and students are expected to be available if offered referral/deferral assessments. Referral/deferral opportunities may also be offered at other times during the year for some postgraduate modules.

#### **4.23 Number of referrals permitted**

Students will have an automatic right to referral as per the University regulations identified within UPR AS14 provided you have received a FRef grade i.e. that you have not received a grade of FRen or FNFA for the module. Any student who achieves a mark of 19% or less for a module will not be allowed a referral opportunity, even if this is their first attempt at the module.

FRen means Fail, re-enrol – this means you have to repeat the module with attendance the next time it runs. FNFA means fail no further attempts – this means that you are not allowed to take the module again. If you need further clarification on this please contact your Programme Tutor.

#### **4.24 Deferrals**

Students may submit serious adverse circumstances for consideration by the School Assessment Panel. If your circumstances are upheld you will be offered a deferral opportunity. For more detailed changes consult the University Academic Structure and Assessment Regulations, UPR AS14 (<http://sitem.herts.ac.uk/secreg/upr/AS14.htm>).

#### **4.25 Publication of results**

Ratified results are made available to you in writing normally within 3 days after the sitting of the Boards of Examiners. Students studying a module on a stand-alone basis will be provided with a formal letter notifying them of the result relating to that specific module. This will be issued from the University following the sitting of the Board of Examiners. For individuals studying on a full programme, a transcript will only be made available once you have completed the full pathway. If you require a certificate for your PDP or CV then one can be made available to you on request from The University of Hertfordshire. If you have any questions regarding your results you must contact your Programme Tutor or module/short course lead within 5 working days of the results publication.

#### **4.26 Appeals process**

All programmes of study are assessed either by examination or the submission of coursework or a mixture of both. A student attending/attempting an assessment is deemed to have declared themselves fit for that assessment (with only very rare exceptions). A student not attempting/attending an assessment must submit to the Board of Examiners (and before the board meets) an explanation of the serious adverse circumstances that caused to student to miss the assessment. The explanation must be backed with appropriate evidence. For further guidance see Appendix 1.

If a Board of Examiners does not accept these serious adverse circumstances then the student will fail the assessment. If that does happen then there are a limited number of circumstances under which the student can appeal firstly to the Dean of School and subsequently to the Vice Chancellor.

Appeals of this nature must be submitted on the appropriate Appeal Pro-Forma. Appeals in any other format will not be accepted. Please see link to StudyNet pages below for more information.

<http://www.studynet2.herts.ac.uk/ptl/common/studentcentre.nsf/Teaching+Documents?Openview&count=9999&restricttocategory=Personal+Life/Dean+of+Students>

## 5 APPENDIX 1: SERIOUS ADVERSE CIRCUMSTANCES

### University of Hertfordshire Academic Services Guidelines to Students, Module Boards of Examiners and School Assessment Panels on Dealing with Students' Serious Adverse Circumstances

#### 1. What are 'serious adverse circumstances'?

'Serious adverse circumstances' are significant circumstances beyond a student's control that would have affected the student's ability to perform to their full potential if they were to submit or attend assessments at the appointed time. The table below sets out guidance to be followed by Assessment Panels and Module Boards. It provides as many examples as possible of the types of circumstance that the University considers to be sufficiently serious, along with some examples of what would not be sufficient.

Associated guidance is issued to all students, through either student handbooks or the A-Z Guide on StudyNet

<http://www.studynet2.herts.ac.uk/crb/11/website97.nsf/Teaching+Documents?OpenView&count=9999&restrictcategory=Academic+Skills+Advice>

#### 2. Principles

(a) The University allows students to draw to its attention any significant circumstances beyond the student's control that mean their performance would have been prejudiced if they were to submit or sit an assessment at the appointed time in the academic session. However, **if a student, despite such circumstances, decides to sit/submit an assessment, the University will not accept a claim that the student has serious adverse circumstances in respect of the assessment.** This principle is in line with the University's aim of making its students fit for the world of employment; one such skill involves taking responsibility for one's own decision making. This principle operates subject to two **highly exceptional** circumstances set out in paragraph 7 below.

(b) Programme staff will *advise* students on what an Assessment Panel/Module Board is likely to regard as a serious adverse circumstance, but the *decision* whether to sit/submit or not to sit/submit will lie with the student alone.

(c) Where a claim of serious adverse circumstances is submitted by a student, the following principles will be adhered to by the Assessment Panels and Module Boards:

(i) Academic awards and grades are decided on the basis of level of performance, and achievement of the learning outcomes. Even if students have serious adverse circumstances which are accepted, they will not substitute for evidence of academic achievement, but they will allow the

University to grant more time, or repeated opportunities, in order for the student to demonstrate their knowledge and abilities.

(ii) The University will treat information about a student's serious adverse circumstances with sensitivity and respect regardless of the level of perceived severity.

(iii) The University will treat a student's reported circumstances with as much confidentiality as practically reasonable. In very sensitive circumstances, a student may request that the circumstances are only disclosed to the Chair of the Assessment Panel, the Chair of the Module Board and the external examiners (UPR AS 14 C2.7.6).

### **3. Process for submission of serious adverse circumstances in relation to assessed work**

If there is a serious adverse circumstance that has affected an assessment(s) of a student, the student must communicate details to the University, using the form provided by the School, with appropriate evidence. All Faculties/Schools should have a system of recording the receipt of such forms and evidence, and acknowledging receipt to the student. The details must be submitted to the Module Board, normally through the designated programme administrative office or Programme Administrator, prior to any meeting of the Board as described in the University's Policies and Regulations (UPR AS14 paragraph C2.7; AS12 Appendix I, paragraph 5.4.2; and AS/C/6.1 Appendix II). Students are informed that submission should be no later than **10** working days before the meeting of the Board, but where the relevant assessment is within **12** working days of the Module Board, any serious adverse circumstances must be notified no later than **2** working days after the assessment.

### **4. Serious adverse circumstances and attendance at lectures/seminars etc.**

If students are *required* to attend a lecture, seminar, practical or other types of timetabled class and they are unable to do so due to illness, they must self-certify to this effect. If, however, the illness extends beyond *7 successive* working days and attendance is required, students should obtain a medical certificate verifying that they are not fit to attend.

### **5. Serious adverse circumstances and non-attendance at an examination/in class test**

If a student is not sufficiently fit to attend an examination/in class test they should notify the appropriate staff in their School before the scheduled start time, and their doctor or other registered medical professional/counsellor (where appropriate) as soon as possible. It is important to note that the University Medical Practice is not prepared to give retrospective certification after the date of the examination/in class

test. Certification can only be provided if a doctor or nurse has actively consulted a person during their illness.

## **6. Serious adverse circumstances and failure to submit coursework by the due date**

If a student is unable to submit coursework by the due date, in the first instance, they should apply to the designated member of staff for the programme, for an extension (if available). Once the period for extensions has expired, students must complete a serious adverse circumstances form following the procedure set out above.

## **7. Serious adverse circumstances and attendance at an examination/in class test or the submission of coursework**

Except in the two circumstances outlined below, students who sit/submit an assessment deem themselves to be sufficiently able to undertake the assessment and cannot later claim to have suffered 'serious adverse circumstances' that explain poor performance.

### **Exceptions:**

(i) where at the time of sitting/submitting the relevant assessment, it is established that the student is not capable of understanding that their performance was likely to be affected seriously by ill health and/or its treatment and this view is supported by a doctor or psychiatric practitioner.

**This ground will be a very rare occurrence** as in most circumstances students will be in a position to decide whether their serious adverse circumstances are likely to affect their performance in assessments. Examples may include: death of a close family member within a day or so of the examination/in class test etc., being involved in a serious car accident on the way to an examination and suffering post-traumatic stress, or being unaware of the likely effect of a serious mental illness on assessment performance.

The student will be required to lodge a claim of serious adverse circumstances using the normal procedures.

If the claim is upheld **the original mark will be null and void**. If the claim is not upheld the mark recorded will stand.

(ii) where a student suddenly becomes unwell during an examination or in-class test and they decide to leave without completing the assessment. In this event, they must notify the invigilator before leaving the examination room of the serious adverse circumstances which necessitate their leaving unless it is impractical to do so e.g. the student is unconscious, being violently sick, etc.

If, having left the examination room, the student decides to rely on serious adverse circumstances and they submit a form requesting a deferral, and their circumstances are approved, **the original mark will be null and void**. If the claim is not upheld the mark recorded will stand.

	<b>Main types of Serious Adverse Circumstance (SAC) reported</b>	<b>Evidence required</b>	<b>Action (levels 0,4,5)</b>	<b>Action (levels 6, 7)</b> (if level 6 referral is allowed, the Board can use advice for levels 0,4 and 5)
<b>1</b>	<p>Medical (serious – not a recognised disability). Examples: broken limb, problem with eyesight, influenza, vomiting or migraine at time of assessment, infectious condition.</p> <p><b>Notes:</b></p> <p>a. Influenza ('flu') does not refer to the common cold or conditions with similar symptoms.</p> <p>b. Some conditions may be able to be accommodated by School arrangements (e.g. the use of an amanuensis for those with broken arms)</p>	<p>Medical certificate (self-certification for the first 7 days of illness only of the policy of the GP practice is not to issue medical certificates), or evidence from the Invigilator's log.</p>	Deferral	<p>Deferral.</p> <p>If, however, the student has acceptable serious adverse circumstances which prevent him/her from sitting the deferral until the same time in the following academic session, the Programme Board has discretion to offer Final Compensatory Credit with or without penalty (for a total of 30 credits) subject to the limitations set out in UPR <b>AS14 D.4.1</b>. NB the option of awarding Final Compensatory Credit does not apply to the award of a University Certificate.</p>
<b>2</b>	<p>Medical (minor). The following conditions are considered to be minor (<b>unless, in the case of an examination/in class test, the symptoms are so bad on the relevant day that the student is too unwell to attend</b> when the condition will be treated as serious as in 1 above):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Self-limiting respiratory infections, e.g. Cold, sore throat, earache, cough, sinusitis.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Other short term infections, e.g. Cystitis, gastroenteritis.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Asthma.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Mechanical pain such as low back pain, sprains and tendonitis e.g. Writer's cramp / RSI</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Tension type headaches.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Period pains.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Irritable bowel syndrome.</li> </ul>	Not applicable	Not an acceptable SAC	

	<input type="checkbox"/> Hay fever. <input type="checkbox"/> Stress or anxiety when this is exclusively related to examinations.			
<b>3</b>	<p>Disabled students</p> <p>(i) A reasonable adjustment, agreed through a Study Needs Agreement (SNA) more than 4 weeks prior to the exam period is not an acceptable SAC.</p> <p>(ii) Late disclosure of a disability with valid reason /request for disability adjustment (in the 4 weeks prior to an exam period). Adjustments will only be made if failure to do so would disturb other candidates and/or endanger themselves if left in the main exam room. Extra time will not be given.</p> <p><b>The student has the choice of whether or not to sit/submit; but if they decide to sit/submit they cannot claim to have serious adverse circumstances.</b></p> <p>(iii) Unforeseen effect of a disability – when the effect of a disability is not anticipated or a reasonable adjustment agreed through a SNA e.g. an epileptic seizure, unexpected episode of ill mental health</p>	<p>(i) Not applicable</p> <p>(ii) Faculty's DSC (Disabled Students Co-ordinator) or University's Disability Officer report, confirming that the SAC is valid.</p> <p>(iii) Faculty's DSC or University's Disability Officer report, confirming that the SAC is valid.</p>	<p>(i) Not an acceptable SAC</p> <p>(ii) Deferral</p> <p>(iii) Deferral</p>	<p>(i) Not an acceptable SAC</p> <p>(ii) As circumstance 1; the Module/Programme Board will consider the seriousness of the condition and the extent of the student's control.</p> <p>(iii) As circumstance 1; the Module/Programme Board will consider the seriousness of the condition and the extent of the student's control.</p>
<b>4</b>	<p>Death in immediate family (grandparent, parent, sibling, child, grandchild, first cousin, aunt, uncle, spouse, partner, parent-in-law) or close friend within the semester (or for an extended time period in exceptional circumstances).</p>	<p>Death certificate, additional information (location of funeral, any religious observance requirements for mourning, etc.)</p>	<p>Deferral</p>	<p>As circumstance 1; the Module/Programme Board will consider the timing of the death, the responsibilities of the student and the closeness of the relationship.</p>

<b>5</b>	Attendance at a funeral at the time of the assessment.	Death certificate, additional information (location of funeral, any religious observance requirements for mourning, etc.)	Deferral	As circumstance 1; the Module/Programme Board will consider the timing of the death, the responsibilities of the student and the closeness of the relationship.
<b>6</b>	Death of a relative or friend outside the semester, or the funeral is not at same time of assessment.	Not applicable	Not an acceptable SAC.	
<b>7</b>	Serious illness in family (particularly where the student has duty of care, "family" defined as circumstance 4)	Medical certificate	Deferral	As circumstance 1; the Module/Programme Board will consider the timing of the illness, the responsibilities of the student and the closeness of the relationship.
<b>8</b>	Commitment outside of the student's control (e.g. emergencies, including unexpected loss of child care) on the date when the student is required to attend for an assessment.	As appropriate, (e.g. letter from employer or nursery).	Deferral	As circumstance 1; the Module/Programme Board will consider the seriousness of the event and the extent of the student's control.
<b>9</b>	Work commitments (part-time students only) (e.g. heavy workload at the time that an assessment is due)	As appropriate, (e.g. letter from employer).	Deferral	
<b>10</b>	Serious transport problem (i.e. exceptional circumstance such as a serious rail delay or road traffic accident)	As appropriate, (e.g. copy of ticket, compensation slip from rail company)	Deferral	As circumstance 1; the Module/Programme Board will consider the severity of the transport incident and the extent of the student's control.
<b>11</b>	Routine type, predictable or partly predictable transport problem (e.g. traffic jams, a late train or bus, tyre puncture etc.)	Not applicable	Not an acceptable SAC	

<b>12</b>	Misunderstood examination timetable	Not applicable	Not an acceptable SAC	
<b>13</b>	Overslept	Not applicable	Not an acceptable SAC	
<b>14</b>	Religious reasons, where not working is a requirement (UPR GEN/A/5)	Requests must be notified to the University at least 2 weeks in advance, with appropriate evidence, or by the deadline published by the Examinations Office in the case of examinations.	The University will make reasonable attempts to make adjustments to the assessment timetable. Deferral is an option where work is proscribed on a particular day for a particular Faith Group. If there is doubt as to whether work is proscribed then the University will be guided by information given by the East of England Faiths Council and the current Festivals appendix to Multicultural Matters. In all cases the University's decision is final. Boards of Examiners should consult the University Chaplaincy for guidance on acceptable religious circumstances (Chaplain@herts.ac.uk). For the 2011/12 academic session, a calendar of recognised proscribed days has been issued.	
<b>15</b>	Serious personal problems not medical (e.g. separation from spouse/partner, victims of crime) within the semester.	As appropriate (letter from counsellor, landlord, crime reference number, etc.)	Deferral	Deferral. If, however, the student has further acceptable serious adverse circumstances which prevent him/her from sitting the deferral until the same time in the following academic session, the Programme Board has discretion to offer Final Compensatory Credit without or without penalty (for a total of 30 credits). NB the option of awarding Final Compensatory Credit does not apply to the award of a University Certificate.
<b>16</b>	Financial	Not applicable	Not an acceptable SAC	
<b>17</b>	Holidays	Booking information	Deferral. Only acceptable if the booking is made prior to acceptance of the UH offer	
<b>18</b>	Computer problems	As appropriate (e.g. memo from IH)	Not acceptable, unless experienced by a sufficiently large group of	As circumstance 1; the Module/Programme Board will consider

		explaining the nature of the problem)	students	the seriousness of the event and the extent of the student's control.
<b>19</b>	Complaints about UH staff (e.g. supervision)	Various (diary of missed meetings or classes etc.)	Dealt with as appeals procedure.	

## **6 APPENDIX 2: DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES**

### **ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT**

Any mechanism used that attempts to gain an unfair, improper or dishonest advantage in an assessment is considered to be a serious offence (UPR AS14).

Examples of academic misconduct include:

Cheating (e.g. unauthorised material being taken into an exam, making false statements in an attempt to gain special consideration at Exam Boards); resubmitting sections of coursework that have been previously submitted for other assessments - this is known as double counting and is not permitted;

Plagiarism (where you intentionally or unintentionally pass off someone else's work as your own). Where plagiarism is deemed to be unintentional this may be considered as poor academic writing and an appropriate penalty will be applied by the marker. In serious cases of plagiarism including where plagiarism was intentional, this will be dealt with either by a School Academic Conduct Officer or by Student Discipline;

Collusion (where a student has passed work off as their own which they have done jointly with another person). There may be occasions when you share data for the same assignment; unless you are specifically asked to submit one piece of work on behalf of a group (this will be clearly specified in the module/short course assessment guidelines), you must submit your work as your own and must not work with another person to produce your assignment. If sections of your work, including structure and layout of the essay, are identical (or very similar) to that of another student there will be an allegation of collusion and it will be investigated;

Breach of confidentiality – see below under fitness to practise.

Electronic detection tools for plagiarism can be used to monitor that work produced is of your own creation.

If you are suspected of academic misconduct, you may be required to attend a panel hearing that will determine whether the case against you is proven or not. The outcome of the panel hearing will be forwarded to the appropriate Board of Examiners who will then decide an appropriate penalty if you have been proven guilty of the offence.

If academic misconduct is proven, this is a serious issue and calls into question your 'professionalism'; depending on the nature and severity of the offence you may be referred to the Fitness to Practise panel for further consideration of your actions. Further information about academic misconduct can be found under 'Support' on StudyNet [www.studynet2.herts.ac.uk](http://www.studynet2.herts.ac.uk).

### **FITNESS TO PRACTISE**

Examples of behaviour that call in to question your professional suitability include:

- Inappropriate boundaries in relationships with patients, clients and staff;
- Falsification of documents, e.g. travel claims;
- Attitudinal or ethical shortcomings;
- Failure to disclose any contact with the police;
- Failure to furnish evidence of fitness to practise (physical and mental health);
- Failure to protect confidential information – maintaining the confidentiality of information about personnel and / or organisations is an important part of professional practice. Details of information gained in a practice placement must not be disclosed to others who are not involved in the practice situation. All students need to familiarise themselves with the Confidentiality Policy which you will find on your Programme Page on StudyNet;**
- Dishonesty;
- Repeated departure from good practice;
- Any behaviour or omission that puts the student, patients, clients or members of the public at risk;
- Inappropriate comments on social networking sites which can be attributed to a student at the University.

Any allegation of Fitness to Practise is serious; a student found guilty may be asked to leave the programme. The Fitness to Practise policy can be found on your Programme Page on StudyNet.

[http://www.studynet1.herts.ac.uk/crb/11/website97.nsf/Teaching+Documents/A26075C45EE1C28580257B520039C5A1/\\$FILE/Fitness%20to%20Practise%20Policy%202013.pdf](http://www.studynet1.herts.ac.uk/crb/11/website97.nsf/Teaching+Documents/A26075C45EE1C28580257B520039C5A1/$FILE/Fitness%20to%20Practise%20Policy%202013.pdf) .

## 7 APPENDIX 3: STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

1 Our University is a student-focussed, multi-ethnic community of students and staff who work and study together closely and it is important that they are able to do so without disruption. The student community includes those enrolled on undergraduate, taught postgraduate and Continuing Professional Development programmes and those registered for research degrees.

2 The University has a fair admissions policy and aims to be responsive to all applicants and to provide pre-entry information that is appropriate. All students are able to use the high quality learning, teaching and support services and facilities that we provide and are encouraged to participate actively in the work of the University through committee membership. There are well-established processes through which students may raise queries and complaints. Full information is given in the Statement of Responsibilities and Commitments (Appendix I, UPR SA01, refers).

3 This Code of Conduct is intended to clarify the standard of behaviour that the University expects from students when they are at the University and when they go out into the wider community.

4. As a student we expect you to:

- i) commit to all elements of your programme of study, recognising that a full time course requires the equivalent of a minimum 40 hours per week study time
- ii) be punctual in your attendance and meet deadlines (persistent, unexplained, late arrival at, or early departure from, lectures seminars and practicals is not acceptable)
- iii) be attentive in class (electronic devices other than those necessary for the session must be switched off for the entire period of the lecture, seminar or practical – in particular, using your mobile telephone or texting is not acceptable; any other form of behaviour which could reasonably be regarded as disruptive or offensive is not acceptable)
- iv) ensure that you do not behave in a disruptive manner either on or off campus (the University considers disruptive, inconsiderate or offensive behaviour to be a breach of discipline)
- v) be responsible for the good behaviour of any guests that you invite to the University (children are not permitted to attend timetabled learning and teaching activities, including lectures, seminars and other teaching activities unless you have obtained permission beforehand, you are not allowed to bring visitors to timetabled learning and teaching activities, including lectures, seminars and other teaching activities)
- vi) be respectful and polite to fellow students, staff and others visiting or working on campus
- vii) recognise the cultural diversity of the University and take no action that might undermine the principles of cultural tolerance within our community

viii) uphold the good name of the University in your off-campus activities, exercising respect and tolerance in the wider community

ix) carry your University Identity Card at all times when you are on campus (individuals without cards will be asked to leave campus)

x) comply with all University Regulations, including this Code of Conduct (the University may take disciplinary action should you fail to do so)

xi) comply with the law at all times and report to the relevant authorities any incidents that you may witness.

### **Treating everyone with respect**

Students, staff and visitors are all entitled to be treated with respect, and the University expects all students to meet the standards laid out in the Code of Conduct. Anyone not behaving in an appropriate way is at risk of disciplinary action.

In return you become a welcome member of our community, entitled to all of the rights and privileges associated with that membership which are summarised in the Statement of Responsibilities and Commitments.