

Guidance for Staff on Trailing of Credit into Stage P

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Policy Summary

This guidance, approved by the University's Regulation Sub-Committee, seeks to provide staff with the options available to Boards of Examiners when students are set to trail various volumes of credit into their Placement Stage (Stage P).

This guidance includes:

- When Boards of Examiners have the discretion to consider the trailing of credit into Stage P, and up to what limits for both referred and repeat assessments.
- The effect of exceptional circumstances may have on trailing limits.
- The options available when students have already left on an approved placement at the point the Board of Examiners takes place and failure is confirmed.
- The timing of referred and repeat opportunities in all cases.

Related Regulations, Policies, and Guidance

This guidance should be read in conjunction with the University's [General Regulations for Undergraduate and Integrated Master's Programmes](#). The [General Regulations for the Conduct of Boards of Examiners](#) provides further details on the powers of Boards.

The [Student Guide to Exceptional Circumstances](#) provides more information on what are typically considered exceptional circumstances, when to submit them, and the weighting of acceptable evidence.

Version Control

Ref No	Version	Responsible Officer	Approved by	Approval Date	Effective Date
AU-RSC-19-2532	A	Adam Hewitt	ULTC	Jun 2020	Sep 2020
AU-RSC-22-5457	A	Adam Hewitt	ULTC	Jun 2023	Aug 2023
AU-RSC-24-6420	A	Head of Quality Assurance	ULTC	Jun 2024	Aug 2024

Introduction

This guidance seeks to provide clarity on the options available when, for a variety of reasons, students that have failed assessments at either a normal or referred attempt at Stage 2, just prior to progression to Stage P. The placement year, and particularly the securing of approved overseas or early starting placements, can cause a number of issues around the timings of referral and repeat assessments, and overall progression decisions.

There is a fine line to be drawn between allowing these students to continue with their secured placements and setting them up to fail. There are also potential reputational risks and adverse effects on our relationships with placement providers when students enter Stage P without the level of readiness and development required to succeed. Therefore, whilst Boards of Examiners need to exercise flexibility and discretion around the progression of students into Stage P, there are upper limits to flexibility that should be observed.

This guidance will take the existing regulations around progression to Stage P, and will demonstrate how they translate into the various Stage 2 student progression situations in which students may find themselves.

Regulation Guidance

There are a number of sections in the General Regulations for Undergraduate & Integrated Master's Programmes that cover the trailing of credit, progression between Stages, and referral and repeat assessment being trailed into Stage P:

Regulation 1.17 – Definition of Progression

To progress from one Stage to the next of a programme, students are expected to achieve 120 credits for the appropriate Stage and to have satisfied all module prerequisites for the next Stage specified in the Programme Specification. A Stage Examination Board may, at its discretion, recommend progression with a minimum of 100 credits at that Stage, or a minimum of 90 credits, if the trailed credit constitutes a single 30 credit module. In such cases the credits associated with the trailed modules shall be added to the progression or award requirements of the subsequent Stage, including for purposes of eligibility for referral. For purposes of condonement, trailed credits remain subject to the maximum condonement volume of their original Stage.

Regulation 1.25 – Definition of Trailed Modules

A trailed module is a module which forms part of a preceding Stage of study and has not yet been passed. At the discretion of the Stage Examination Board the credits associated with the module are added to the progression or award requirements of the subsequent Stage, including for purposes of eligibility for referral. For the purposes of condonement, trailed credits remain subject to the maximum condonement volume of their original Stage.

Regulation 6.2.8 – Proceeding to Stage-P Prior to completing Referred/Repeat Assessments

Sandwich or Language students who are required to undertake up to 30 credits of referred or repeat assessment(s) at the Stage prior to placement may, subject to the

approval of the Board of Examiners and the organisation(s) involved, proceed to their approved placement before taking the referred or repeat assessment(s). In cases of exceptional circumstances, Boards of Examiners have the discretion to increase the 30 credit limit where appropriate.

Progression to Stage P

Following the end of Stage Programme Board of Examiners, students who have passed all Stage 2 credit may be progressed to Stage P to begin their placement.

In all other cases, the Board of Examiners need to decide whether the student may be allowed to progress to Stage P, based on a number of factors.

Trailing is not an automatic right – Boards of Examiners may always choose to require the full completion of Stage 2 prior to placement, and to require the return of students who have started placements early but have not passed all Stage 2 credit. This may be particularly appropriate where the credit failed is integral to the overall understanding of the programme, or where an accrediting body requires all modules to be passed prior to progression to the placement Stage.

Trailing Limits

Progression to Stage P is beholden to the same limits as other Stages i.e. 20 credits, or 30 credits if made up of a single 30 credit module. This credit can be made up of any combination of referred, deferred or repeat assessments, based on individual student circumstances.

Exceptionally, and dependent upon the demands of the placement, Boards of Examiners may allow students to progress to Stage P trailing 30 credits made up of any number of modules.

Boards of Examiners have the discretion to increase the threshold on trailed credit into Stage P where exceptional circumstances are approved and deemed appropriate.

Referrals and Deferrals

Students should usually be expected to take their referred or deferred assessments from Stage 2 prior to leaving for placement. Where these are failed, the Board of Examiners may still progress the student to Stage P, trailing repeat assessments up to the standard trailing limits outlined above. The student will then take these repeat assessments alongside their study of Stage F.

In some cases, students may have missed the assessment opportunity in the referred assessment period, often due to starting their placement early. Where return from placement is not viable i.e. due to distance and/or financial commitment, the student should normally be allowed to remain on Stage P, taking their referred assessment(s) in the referred period following the completion of their placement.

Timing of Reassessments

Students trailing up to 30 credits of referred, deferred or repeat assessments should typically be entered for reassessment at the next opportunity whilst they are on placement. Where this is not viable, due to the location of the student's placement for example, the reassessment should take place in the referred period following the completion of their placement.

Students repeating over 30 credits should not be given the opportunity for reassessment during the placement, and should usually be required to undertake a repeat Stage prior to beginning their placement. However, in exceptional cases, such as students starting distant placements prior to the referred Board of Examiners taking place, to which they have made a significant commitment, the Board of Examiners may allow the student to progress to Stage P. On completion of the placement, the student would return to Stage 2 to complete their repeat assessments.

Exceptional Circumstances

In all cases, exceptional circumstances should be taken into account. The 30-credit threshold on trailed credit may be raised by the Board of Examiners where they feel the exceptional circumstances involved are appropriate, and they are giving students the best chance of a successful outcome by doing so. For students with unresolved reassessment due to take place during the placement, care should be taken to ensure that their overall workload remains viable.

Further Guidance

If you require any further information, or have any queries regarding the above guidance, please contact the Quality Team, quality_team@aston.ac.uk.