

ASSESSMENT AND MARKING REGULATIONS

INTRODUCTION

The context of the European Higher Education Area and changes in the university have created the need for new assessment and marking regulations. These regulations will replace the existing regulations on examinations, assessment and marking that have been in force up to now and which were approved by the University of Barcelona's Senate on 14 July 1995.

The new regulations are based on a concept of university education that is focussed on the student's learning process. Continuous assessment is seen as a basic resource for helping the teaching staff and the student to take decisions that are aimed at improving learning.

The assessment of student learning, both in terms of the process and the result, should have an instructive aim (i.e. the student should carry out a process of self-regulation to improve their learning: to dedicate more or less time to studying, prioritise certain aspects, go into certain topics in greater depth, seek help from other students, use the tutorial support, etc.). Assessment should also have an educational aim (i.e. it should help teaching staff to understand, analyse and judge how learning is taking place in order to implement measures that improve student progress).

Another aspect of assessment tasks and activities is related to marking: certifying the level of learning that the student has attained. As these regulations are prescriptive, they are aimed at regulating this aspect of assessment. However, teaching staff will have to reflect on how to combine marking with the aforementioned instructive and educational aims.

These regulations will probably have to be periodically revised and adapted to situations that could arise during the process of moving towards a European Higher Education Area. They establish the provisions that have to be followed by University of Barcelona staff when assessing and marking students' progress. Each centre's board can propose additional regulations that are adapted to their specific situation. These additional regulations have to be approved by the Governing Council's Academic Committee.

CHAPTER I. FIELD OF APPLICATION

Art. 1

These regulations affect all University of Barcelona teaching staff and students of the following courses: undergraduate, official postgraduate, diploma (1st cycle), degree (2nd cycle), engineering diploma, engineering degree, graduate diploma and graduate degree.

Art. 2

These regulations shall be applied to the following aspects of academic activity:

- a) Subjects' teaching plans
- b) Assessment and marking procedures and systems
- c) Information about the assessment systems and procedures used
- d) Revising assessment processes
- e) Appeals

Art. 3

3.1 The board of studies for each course or equivalent body (hereafter board of studies) shall ensure that these regulations are observed.

3.2 The board of studies shall inform the Governing Council's Academic Committee of any infringements of these regulations. The Committee will then be able to take action, in accordance with the mechanisms included in the fourth additional provision.

CHAPTER 2. THE TEACHING PLAN AND ASSESSMENT

Art. 4

4.1 The department has to draw up a teaching plan for each subject. Teaching plans have to be revised every academic year and, if necessary, updated. The department board has to approve the teaching plan. The plan will then be sent to the board of studies which will evaluate whether the plan is feasible and in line with these regulations. The board of studies has to give its approval of the plan before 10 July in the same year as the course start date.

4.2 There can only be one teaching plan for each subject. However, plans can be developed into specific syllabuses for each group of students.

4.3 The teaching plan is a basic reference document for students. A teaching plan can be developed into a specific syllabus for one group of students. In such cases, the syllabus has to be consistent with the teaching plan. The syllabus will also be used as a reference document. It has to be made public no more than 15 days after a subject's academic activities have started.

Art. 5

The board of studies has to ensure that the teaching plans are made public before the registration period begins.

Art. 6

6.1 The Governing Council's Academic Committee is responsible for making suggestions on which characteristics and aspects should be included in the teaching plan. These suggestions are passed on to the Governing Council. In any event, the teaching plan has to include the following:

- a) Objectives of the course
- b) Topic modules
- c) Methodology
- d) Basic information sources
- e) Assessment, weighting and marking criteria and systems
- f) If applicable, the deadline for requesting a single assessment instead of continuous assessment has to be specified.

6.2 In the teaching plan, the marks for different tests and other evidence of learning, and the weighting in relation to the final mark awarded for the subject, can be stated in absolute values or using an interval (i.e. by giving the maximum and minimum values). If intervals are used, the absolute values have to be detailed in the group's subject syllabus during the first 15 days of the course.

6.3 If intervals are used in the teaching plan instead of absolute values, the board of studies has to assess whether the width of the interval is appropriate, and give its approval.

6.4 The assessment and marking criteria and systems and the characteristics and marks for tests and other evidence of learning that are stated in the teaching plan cannot be changed during the academic year.

6.5 The teaching plan or subject syllabus has to indicate when tests will be given and when continuous assessment work has to be handed in.

CHAPTER 3. WHAT IS ASSESSED

Art. 7

The following is assessed: learning that has led to the student acquiring knowledge, abilities and attitudes that reflect the objectives, contents, or specific topics in the subject's teaching plan.

Art. 8

Assessment may also include an appraisal of cross-disciplinary abilities that are part of other subjects' teaching plans. However, such appraisals can only be carried out if they are mentioned in the subject's teaching plan.

Art. 9

Syllabus permitting, and when stated in the corresponding subjects' teaching plans, two or more subjects, topic modules, units or themes can be assessed together.

CHAPTER 4. ASSESSMENT SYSTEMS AND PROCEDURES

Art. 10

10.1 As a general rule, assessment should be continuous.

10.2 Different assessment systems and tools can be used: participation in activities, practicals, essays on the subject's contents, examinations, compiling a learning record, and others.

Art. 11

Oral tests have to be in line with the programme established by the board of studies. The board has to ensure that mechanisms are in place to protect the student's right to a rigorous assessment. It should also ensure that students can appeal if they disagree with the mark. In addition to other requirements that the board of studies could establish, at least one other lecturer always has to be present in oral tests to witness the process.

Art. 12

12.1 If a student demonstrates that they cannot comply with the requirements of continuous assessment, they shall have the right to a single assessment. When a student chooses the option of a single assessment, this decision has to be put in writing. Both the student and the lecturer should have copies of this written decision.

12.2 The teaching plan has to include the assessment, weighting and marking systems and criteria both for continuous assessment and for single assessment.

12.3 The single assessment could consist of a test and/or presenting pieces of work. Depending on the nature of the subject, specific face-to-face activities (practicals, seminars, etc.) may have to be attended before the student is given the option of the single assessment. These activities are specified in the teaching plan.

12.4 There will be no differences in the maximum marks that can be obtained through continuous assessment or through single assessment.

12.5 Marks for attaining a subject's objectives will be awarded in single assessments in the same way as they are given in continuous assessments.

12.6 Before registration, students will be told that continuous assessment will be used and that the teaching plan should be consulted in order to find out if there is a deadline for opting for a single assessment.

Art. 13

13.1 Degree and postgraduate courses that have been adapted to European Higher Education Area directives will only have one examination period for single assessments and one period for ending continuous assessment.

13.2 Courses or groups that have not yet been adapted to European Higher Education Area directives will continue to have two examination periods.

Art. 14

14.1 Students who register for an academic year needing no more than 10% of their credits to finish the course have the right to a special examination period.

14.2 If students are within this 10% limit, they have the right to the special examination period but will only receive classes during the semester in which the specific subject is taught.

14.3 The characteristics of this special assessment have to be adapted to the criteria used for single assessments, as stated in article 12.

Art. 15

15.1 The board of studies will announce the date for single assessments and the date on which the continuous assessment period ends. This information will be made public before the registration period begins and should be widely disseminated.

15.2 Under special circumstances, the board of studies can make relevant changes to these dates. However, any changes have to be made public at least 20 days before they come into effect. Changes shall never be made during the period of single assessments or at the end of the continuous assessment period.

Art. 16

16.1 Teaching staff can ask to see a student's ID at any time during an assessment. To identify themselves, students have to produce their University of Barcelona student card (CUB), Spanish Identity Card (DNI), passport or any other official document.

16.2 Students have the right to receive certificates of attendance for assessment activities.

16.3 During the period in which marks are reviewed, a student can reach an agreement with a lecturer to reject a mark, so that he/she can try to improve it in the next assessment period. However, this can only be done if a student has obtained at least a pass or equivalent. The rejection should be stated in writing.

CHAPTER 5. MARKS, INFORMATION, REVIEWS, APPEALS AND CHALLENGES

Art. 17

Students shall be assessed and given a mark, in accordance with the provisions established in the teaching plan and in the valid regulations.

Art. 18

18.1 On the day of the test or on the deadline for handing in assessed essays, teaching staff will tell the students when the results will be published. Marks for tests and for pieces of work that contribute towards the final assessment will be announced no more than 20 calendar days after taking the test or handing in the piece of work, except when other criteria are stated in the subject syllabus. The final mark has to be made public no more than 20 calendar days after the official date referred to in article 15.1 of these regulations. Under special circumstances, the board of studies can establish other deadlines.

18.2 When teaching staff announce the final marks for a subject, they will give students a date and a time for reviewing marks. They will also indicate when essays and practical reports will be given back to the students, in accordance with the provisions in article 20.3. The date or dates for reviews have to be within 3 to 10 working days of the publication of the results.

18.3 The assessment results will be published in a list in which students are identified by their NIUB only (the identification number that is given to each student when they register at the University of Barcelona).

18.4 Information about final marks has to be provided via telecommunications and posted in the designated area in the centre. The provisions in article 18.3 apply in both cases. Posted results have to be signed by the teaching staff.

Art. 19

If a student cheats on an test or an assessed piece of work for a subject, they will be given a fail in the corresponding official examination session. If the student considers that such a decision is unjustified, they may lodge a complaint with the head of studies.

Art. 20

20.1 Teaching staff will keep all evidence of assessment (tests, essays, exercises, observations, etc.) for at least three months from the date on which the certificate is signed.

20.2 If an appeal is made, any evidence will be kept until the appeal has been resolved.

20.3 Once the period mentioned in section 20.1 or 20.2 has ended, essays and practical reports will be given back to the student on request. Such documents shall be returned within the period indicated by the lecturer when the assessment results were announced. The author's (or authors') permission has to be sought before publishing part or all of any piece of work, or before using students' work for any other purpose.

Art. 21

The student has the right to review all tests, essays and other evidence of assessment with the subject's lecturer, regardless of whether the assessments are partial or final. The criteria used in the assessment and the mark given are examined in the reviews. Reviews have to be undertaken on the day and at the time announced by the subject's lecturer when the results are published. Once the review has been carried out, the lecturer has to publish affected students' definitive results, in accordance with the provisions in article 18.4.

Art. 22

22.1 The qualification certificate for the subject will be signed by the subject's lecturer no more than 30 calendar days after the date of the single assessment and once the continuous assessment period has ended. The certificate will then be signed by the department head and the centre's secretary.

22.2 This certificate will be left with the centre's teaching secretary, or the unit in charge of such certificates, if applicable.

22.3 The only marks that are valid for all purposes are those that are included in the certificate signed by the teaching staff.

Art. 23

23.1 If the wrong mark is shown on a certificate, the signatures of the following staff are needed to rectify the error: the lecturer of the subject; the department head; the centre's secretary. Students shall be informed of any changes to the certificate by any means that ensure that this notification is received no more than 10 days after the alterations are made.

23.2 When a change to the certificate is detrimental to the student, the corresponding procedure for reviewing provisions and void certificates has to be applied. This procedure has to be in accordance with the regulations established in article 102 and the Law 30/1992, of the 26 November, in the legal regime of public administrations and the common administrative procedure.

Art. 24

Student members of the board of studies may ask the head of studies for information about the percentage of students who passed in each group and/or subject (out of the total number of registered students and students sitting the exam). This information may be requested once the lecturer has signed the corresponding certificates.

Art. 25

Students may contest their final marks by means of the following procedure:

- I. Present a request for a review within the established period. This request should be made to the lecturer who was responsible for the subject and for awarding the mark.
- II. Make a complaint about the lecturer's decision. This must be addressed to the head of studies no more than 12 calendar days after the publication of the definitive marks. The head of studies will immediately pass this complaint on to the head of the respective department. The following procedure shall then be followed:
 - a) The department head will appoint a tribunal of three members. At least two of these members will be permanent teaching staff, and none of them will have taken

part in the first assessment. This tribunal will meet no more than 12 working days after the complaint is received by the department head.

b) This tribunal has to review the student's evidence of assessment and ask the lecturer for a written report. The report has to be handed in within three days.

c) Once the documents have been analysed, and - if necessary - the student's arguments heard, the tribunal can decide to alter the mark. It has to come to an agreement, which the chairperson will announce to the department head. The tribunal has to make a decision within 6 working days of being formed.

d) The department head has to inform the student in writing of the tribunal's decision. Copies of this letter shall be sent to the head of studies and to the lecturer responsible for this subject, within 3 working days of the tribunal's decision.

e) If the mark is changed, the tribunal's chairperson has to include the new mark in an additional certificate, which shall be signed by all the tribunal members.

Art. 26

In the case of repeated failure to comply with these regulations, a student can present a well-reasoned complaint to the corresponding course's board of studies. The following procedure will be followed when such a complaint is received:

a) The board of studies will ask the lecturer and/or the department for any information it might need. If necessary, the board of studies will warn the lecturer/department about the breach in the regulations, and make suggestions on how to resolve the complaint.

b) The head of studies has to submit a report to the centre's academic committee. The centre's committee will then send a proposal on how to resolve the problem to the Governing Council's Academic Committee. This Committee will devise the measures that are needed to reestablish the infringed regulations. It will also inform the individual concerned that he/she has failed to comply with the regulations and tell him/her about any possible penalties.

ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS

FIRST ADDITIONAL PROVISION

At the suggestion of the board of studies and of the centre's academic committee, the centre's board can propose additional regulations for the marking and assessment process. These additional provisions can be specific to one or more courses in the centre. Such proposals have to be approved by the Governing Council's Academic Committee.

SECOND ADDITIONAL PROVISION

The application of these regulations has to be adapted as required to the specific conditions of students who have special education needs. Proof of such needs has to be provided. Guidelines for these cases will be proposed by the vice-rector with authority in this area and will then be approved by the Governing Council's Academic Committee.

THIRD ADDITIONAL PROVISION

At the end of each semester, the board of studies has to compile a report of all incidents related to the application of and compliance with these regulations. This report will be sent to the centre's academic committee. This committee then has to draw up an overall report on all the courses in the centre and send it to the Governing Council's Academic Committee so that it can be assessed and any action taken, if required.

FOURTH ADDITIONAL PROVISION

The Governing Council's Academic Committee shall suggest measures that can be taken in the case of repeated failure to comply with these regulations. Such proposals will be made to the Governing Council.

FIFTH ADDITIONAL PROVISION

These regulations shall be available in Spanish, Catalan and English on the University of Barcelona website.

TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS

FIRST TRANSITIONAL PROVISION

Regarding the provisions established in article 13.1, which establish that graduate and postgraduate courses adapted to the European Higher Education Area directives shall only have one examination session for single assessments and one period for ending continuous assessment, in the first period that a subject is taught there will be two examination sessions. The board of studies could also agree to maintain these two examination sessions during the second period in which a subject is taught. This transitional provision will apply until the academic year 2008-2009 for postgraduate courses and until the academic year 2011-2012 for graduate courses.

SECOND TRANSITIONAL PROVISION

If there is a second examination period, the teaching plan has to detail the assessment procedure that will be used in this second session.

THIRD TRANSITIONAL PROVISION

Until the qualifications of diploma (1st cycle), degree (2nd cycle), engineering diploma, engineering degree, graduate diploma and graduate degree are eliminated, the previous regulations will apply for all aspects that are not included in these present regulations.

REPEALING PROVISION

All provisions that have the same scope as these regulations or less, and that are incompatible with their contents, are repealed.

FINAL PROVISION

If the centre's board agrees, these regulations can be implemented in the academic year 2006-2007. They will come into force throughout the university in the academic year 2007 - 2008.