UNIVERSITY OF BRIGHTON

ACADEMIC SERVICES: QUALITY AND STANDARDS

Procedural Guidance: Virtual Examination Boards

Summary

This advice has been prepared to support the use of the General Examination and Assessment Regulations (GEAR) in managing Examination Board processes, and in particular the use of Virtual Examination Boards.

This guide is intended to provide procedural guidance relating to Virtual Examination Boards, whilst ensuring sound and robust academic standards. The aim of this guidance is to work within existing GEAR principles.

Section 10 of this guidance also includes data management processes related to Virtual Examination Board processes and appendices 1 – 5 include recommended approaches for the conduct of Virtual Examination Boards (pre- and main).

Contact: Academic Services, Quality and Standards, Academic Standards and Assessment: https://staff.brighton.ac.uk/reg/acs/Lists/ASA Staff.

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1. Constitution and Terms of Reference of Examination Boards

1.1 GEAR E1.3 notes that the Constitution and Terms of Reference of each Examination Board is fixed once approved.

1.2 All requests for outstanding membership approval/ changes must be sent to the Quality and Standards Manager, Academic Standards and Assessment, Academic Services.

2. Structure of the Virtual Examination Board Process

2.1 The Virtual Examination Board consists of four (4) main processes:
   i) preparation for the Virtual Examination Board (Section 3);
   ii) the Virtual Examination pre-Board (Section 4);
   iii) preparation between the pre- and main Virtual Examination Boards (Section 5); and
   iv) the main Virtual Examination Board (Section 6).

3. Preparation for the Virtual Examination Board - Documentation (pre- and main, tiered and single-tiered)

3.1 GEAR E6.1.2 recommends that a sub-set of the Area Examination Board [AEB] members meet in advance of the Examination Board (i.e. a pre-Board) to review student results, and to discuss and formulate recommendations regarding reassessment, as well as noting any possible instances of generic mitigation. The aim of this process is to ensure the business of the main Examination Board progresses more efficiently. Given the remote nature of Virtual Examination Boards, it is highly recommended that a pre-Board also be conducted prior to the Course Examination Board [CEB].

3.2 The responsibilities of University staff members in the preparation and conduct of Examination Boards are outlined in GEAR E10.1. For the Secretary, this includes preparation of the standard agenda (GEAR E10.2.1), and additional items (GEAR E10.2.2) such as:
   i) minutes from any meeting of the internal examiners/ markers in advance of the Examination Board;
   ii) statistical reports;
   iii) examination procedures;
   iv) report(s)/ comments of the internal examiner(s)/ Programme/ Course Leader(s);
   v) issues arising from the assessments;
   vi) consideration of any cases of generic mitigation; and
   vii) noting of the procedure for approving the minutes of the meeting.

3.3 GEAR E10.3.2, E10.3.3 and E10.3.4 provide information about the documents which should be available at all Examination Boards (Virtual or not, and including Examination pre-Boards).

3.4 The primary information to be used at Examination Boards should be generated from SITS/ CAMS (GEAR E10.3.1) system-generated
documentation (i.e. AEB/ CEB] profiles or bespoke BI Launch Pad
[InfoView] reports; please note: this may not be possible for Partner
organisations who will need to work within their Institution’s systems).

3.5 All module assessments recorded in SITS should be correct prior to the
generation of Examination Board documentation. The process to be
followed for updating SITS records where module assessment has changed
can be accessed via: https://staff.brighton.ac.uk/reg/sad/Pages/SITS.aspx.

3.6 The Systems and Data Team have produced a guide ‘Area Exam Board
processing on SITS’ (https://staff.brighton.ac.uk/reg/sad/Pages/SITS.aspx)
that outlines the steps to be followed to produce reports to be used in AEBs.
The main reports available are the ‘Module Result Form’ and the ‘Actual
Results and Assessment Report’.

3.7 The ‘Student Award Profile Report’ will provide the primary information
required for CEBs. The Systems and Data Team have produced a guide
‘CEB Processing on SITS’ (‘How to prepare for and document Course
Examination Board [CEB]’;
https://staff.brighton.ac.uk/reg/sad/Pages/SITS.aspx) that outlines the steps
to be followed to produce documentation. The guide ‘Course Examination
Board Student Award Profile Report: A User guide’ is available via:
https://staff.brighton.ac.uk/reg/acs/Pages/Examination-Boards.aspx to aid
with the generation and review of this report.

3.8 Information regarding the statistical reports to be prepared and used in the
AEB is available at: https://staff.brighton.ac.uk/reg/acs/Pages/Examination-
Boards.aspx. Standard statistical reports can be accessed through BI
Launch Pad (InfoView). Two user guides are available to aid with generating
and downloading statistical reports:

- ‘Statistical Report on Modules’ - the recommended standard
  statistical module report to be used in AEBs;

- ‘Historical Module Trend Data’ - a report used to review historical
  module trend data (recommended to span at least three [3] academic years) in conjunction with current module marks
distribution in AEBs. The recommended report to be used is the
one that excludes zero/ null marks from the statistical arrays.
  Please see the guide for further information.

3.9 Virtual Examination Board documentation should be available to
Examination Board members (including External Examiner/s) in a secured
electronic format (i.e. SharePoint Online or MyDepartment, or if a Partner
institution a similar secure system) with time-restricted limited access.
Documentation should be stored in SharePoint Online or MyDepartment in
existing document libraries and not in the default ‘Files’ store in Microsoft
Teams. Information regarding how to connect to a SharePoint Online or
MyDepartment document library from Microsoft Teams is available via:
http://blogs.brighton.ac.uk/remoteworking/microsoft-teams/connecting-your-
sharepoint-sites-to-teams/.
3.10 During the COVID-19 pandemic, an Individual Performance Benchmark should be calculated for each student and applied to unratified module marks prior to the Virtual Examination pre-board. Further information can be accessed via:
https://staff.brighton.ac.uk/reg/acs/docs/Individual_Student_Benchmarking_Diagram_No%20Detriment.pdf.

4. Virtual Examination pre-Board (tiered and single-tiered)

4.1 A Virtual Examination pre-Board should be conducted for all scheduled main Virtual Examination Boards, the membership of which is in keeping with the approved Constitution and Terms of Reference. Whilst no numerical quorum is required for Examination Boards (GEAR E2.4), it is the Chair’s responsibility to determine whether or not there is sufficient representative of the membership to assure the security of the Examination Board’s decisions (GEAR E2.1).

4.2 The Virtual Examination pre-Board should be conducted off-line (i.e. not in a Microsoft Teams meeting) as described in Section 4.3 below (i.e. individual members access and annotate the Examination Board documentation which is subsequently uploaded to a secure SharePoint site).

4.3 Members should annotate the AEB and/or CEB documentation with comments/recommendations as detailed in Sections 4.3.1 and 4.3.2.

4.3.1 **The role of the AEB** (Appendices 1, 3) - outlined in detail in GEAR E6.3 and E6.4.

Members should:

i) determine the results for each student registered for each module;

ii) consider/agree arrangements for re-assessment (as applicable), consider/agree generic mitigating circumstances (as applicable - please refer to information available at:
https://staff.brighton.ac.uk/reg/acs/Pages/Regulations.aspx and
https://staff.brighton.ac.uk/reg/acs/docs/GEAR1920_Application_of_existing_regulations_COVID19.pdf (the latter relevant during the COVID-19 pandemic); and

iii) make recommendations for individual mitigating circumstances.

4.3.2 **The role of the CEB** (Appendices 2, 4, 5) - further details are provided in detail in GEAR E4.3 (single tier), and E7.2 and E7.3 (tiered).

Members should:

i) determine the results for each student registered for each module (single tier CEB only);

ii) consider the overall profile of each student registered on a course and makes decisions about the eligibility of the students to progress and for final and intermediate awards;
iii) consider/ agree compensation and identify/ consider students in borderline zones;
iv) note generic mitigation applied at the AEB/ single tier CEB and apply/ make (the latter single tier only) mitigating circumstances recommendations agreed at the AEB; and
v) note agreed extensions/ held marks/ intermission.

4.4 Care should be taken to ensure decisions from AEBs of shared modules (within and external to the School) are also considered.

5. Preparation Between Board Meetings (tiered and single-tiered)

5.1 The Secretary and Chair (or Deputy Chair) work collaboratively to collate the comments/ feedback of the Members and the Chair seeks clarification as required.

5.2 The deliberations of the Virtual Examination pre-Board should be retained in one coherent document (i.e. written minutes; GEAR E10.4.3), such that it provides a formal confidential record of the Virtual (off-line) meeting.

5.3 The written minutes from the Virtual Examination pre-Board are finalised and the Secretary pre-populates the draft written minutes for the main AEB/ CEB in consultation with the Chair (or Deputy Chair).

5.4 The Secretary uploads amended documentation (AEB and single tier only, if applicable) to the secure SharePoint Online or MyDepartment document library (or if a Partner institution a similar secure system; as described in Section 3.9) in readiness for the main Virtual Examination Board.

6. Main Virtual Examination Board (tiered and single-tiered)

6.1 Whilst it is normally a requirement that all members of an Examination Board are present (GEAR E2.4.1), if the Chair is satisfied that the Virtual Examination pre-Board was conducted in such a way that the Board made fair and appropriate decisions and that there was sufficient representative of the membership, the main Virtual Examination Board should be conducted securely with fewer internal members.

6.2 GEAR E8.1 outlines the membership requirements of a sub-group within the approved membership of the main Examination Board that should be convened, as per Section 4.1, and include the following criteria:
   • the Chair or Deputy Chair of the main Virtual Examination Board;
   • a course or subject leader;
   • two further members of academic staff;
   • at least one External Examiner.

6.3 The main Virtual Examination Board proceeds using Microsoft Teams (or if a Partner institution a similar system) and the Chair confirms pre-board decisions and complex student cases are discussed as necessary.

6.4 The deliberations of the main Virtual Examination Board should be retained in one coherent document (i.e. written minutes) so that they provide a formal confidential record of the meeting (GEAR E10.4.3), and the result for each
student and any features of the results (e.g. minutes) should be recorded in the students’ SITS records.

7. Recording the Proceedings of a Virtual Examination Board

7.1 To ensure the accuracy of the minutes of a Virtual Examination Board, the proceedings of the meeting may be audio or video recorded. The Chair should seek agreeance with all participants before the recording commences.

7.2 The recording, storage and deletion of audio or video recordings should be in keeping with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) principles ([https://staff.brighton.ac.uk/reg/legal/Pages/GDPR.aspx](https://staff.brighton.ac.uk/reg/legal/Pages/GDPR.aspx)).

8. Results Notification to Students

8.1 Students should receive the notification of their results by **email (i.e. no paper-based letters should be sent)** within 5 working days of the main Virtual Examination Board as outlined here: [https://staff.brighton.ac.uk/reg/eca/docs/Guide_for_processing_outcomes.pdf](https://staff.brighton.ac.uk/reg/eca/docs/Guide_for_processing_outcomes.pdf)

8.2 Standard email templates have been set up using SRL in SITS and these should be used to notify students of their results. Any queries about using SRLs in SITS should be directed to the Systems and Data Team ([SystemsandData@brighton.ac.uk](mailto:SystemsandData@brighton.ac.uk)).

9. Confirmation of the Written Minutes of the Virtual Examination Board

9.1 The minutes of main Virtual Examination Board should be confirmed and approved by the Chair within at most three weeks of the meeting (GEAR E10.4.5).

10. Data Management Processes

10.1 **Marks/ Results Input in SITS (remotely)**

10.1.1 Using the export/ imports marks function should not present issues with mark/ results input. Further information and resources regarding ‘Preparing to record assessments in CAMS using Excel and studentcentral Grade Centre is available at: [https://staff.brighton.ac.uk/is/training/Pages/Excel/CAMS.aspx](https://staff.brighton.ac.uk/is/training/Pages/Excel/CAMS.aspx).

10.1.2 The most common problem reported is not being able to find the file when working remotely. This is resolved by saving all files to an individual’s OneDrive which has been mapped to Drive O: for all users accessing applications via secure remote access.

10.1.3 Assessment alteration in SITS should be performed as detailed in Section 3.4.

10.1.4 Changes to award eligibility rules or classification algorithms such as number and type of module credits, levels or weightings should be sent to: [SystemsandData@brighton.ac.uk](mailto:SystemsandData@brighton.ac.uk).
10.2 **Production of Examination Board Reports (remotely)**

10.2.1 No issues using the ‘print to pdf’ function if accessing the reports via remote access, i.e. by using the [remote.brighton.ac.uk](http://remote.brighton.ac.uk) URL, opening the Chrome browser and pasting in the usual BI Launchpad (InfoView) URL.

10.3 **Production of Pass Lists (remotely)**

10.3.1 Award pass lists should be uploaded to the Examinations, Ceremonies and Awards team’s dedicated pass list repository (link accessible via: [https://staff.brighton.ac.uk/reg/eca/Pages/Exam-Boards-Processing-and-Outputs.aspx](https://staff.brighton.ac.uk/reg/eca/Pages/Exam-Boards-Processing-and-Outputs.aspx)) within 48 hours of the main Virtual Examination Board.

10.3.2 Guidance on ‘Creating a Pass List Remotely and Signing with Adobe Fill & Sign’ can be accessed via: [https://staff.brighton.ac.uk/reg/eca/Pages/Exam-Boards-Processing-and-Outputs.aspx](https://staff.brighton.ac.uk/reg/eca/Pages/Exam-Boards-Processing-and-Outputs.aspx).
AEB paperwork uploaded to secure SharePoint site by Secretary for review.

Chair (OR Deputy Chair).

Members (Course/Area Leader/s & recommended 3-10 internal markers).

VIRTUAL PRE-BOARD: AEB
SharePoint

WITHIN 10 DAYS OF RETURN OF LAST ASSESSMENT;
OVER 2 DAYS

Members’ comments/recommendations added to paperwork & uploaded to secure SharePoint site.

Generic mitigation (post 5th March 2020) considered/agreed. Review of statistical reports and moderation of module marks if appropriate. Pre 5th March 2020 mitigating circumstances recommendations made.

Chair (OR Deputy Chair).

Amended (if applicable) AEB paperwork uploaded to secure SharePoint site by Secretary for review by members prior to the main-AEB.

VIRTUAL: AEB
SharePoint then Microsoft Teams

Chair (OR Deputy Chair).

Course OR Subject Leader & Members (2 Academic staff).

External Examiner/s.

Board proceeds: Chair confirms pre-board decisions & complex student cases discussed as necessary.

Secretary amends/finalises pre-populated written minutes which are signed off by Chair (OR Deputy Chair) within 3 weeks.

University of Brighton
VIRTUAL EXAMINATION BOARD: AREA EXAMINATION BOARD

Preparation between pre- and main AEBs

OVER 3 DAYS

Members’ comments/recommendations collated by Secretary.

Chair (OR Deputy Chair) reviews comments/recommendations & contacts members with queries.

Secretary finalises pre-Board written minutes & pre-populates draft written minutes for main-AEB in consultation with Chair (OR Deputy Chair).

VIRTUAL PRE-BOARD: AEB
SharePoint

OVER 2 DAYS

AEB paperwork uploaded to secure SharePoint site by Secretary for review.

Adjustments made to module marks relating to *IPB during COVID-19 (if applicable). Arrangements for re-assessment considered/agreed.

Secretary finalises pre-Board written minutes & pre-populates draft written minutes for main-AEB in consultation with Chair (OR Deputy Chair).

*IPB = Individual Performance Benchmark

APPENDIX 1

WITHIN 10 DAYS OF RETURN OF LAST ASSESSMENT;
OVER 2 DAYS

OVER 3 DAYS

OVER 2 DAYS

VIRTUAL: AEB
SharePoint then Microsoft Teams
AEB paperwork uploaded to secure SharePoint site (OR similar secure system) by Secretary for review.

Chair (OR Deputy Chair).

Members (Course/Area Leader/s & recommended 3-10 internal markers).

University Link staff/Head of School (Partner) OR Higher Education Manager/University Consortium Programme Leader (Partner Further Education College).

- Adjustments made to module marks relating to *IPB during COVID-19 (if applicable).
- Arrangements for re-assessment considered/agreed.

Generic mitigation (post 5th March 2020) considered/agreed. Review of statistical reports and moderation of module marks if appropriate. Pre 5th March 2020 mitigating circumstances recommendations made.

Members' comments/recommendations added to paperwork & uploaded to secure SharePoint site (OR similar secure system).

Members' comments/recommendations collated by Secretary.

Members' comments/recommendations added to paperwork & uploaded to secure SharePoint site (OR similar secure system) by Secretary for review by members prior to the main-AEB.

Chair (OR Deputy Chair) reviews comments/recommendations & contacts members with queries.

Secretary finalises Pre-Board written minutes & pre-populates draft written minutes for main-AEB in consultation with Chair (OR Deputy Chair).

Amended (if applicable) AEB paperwork uploaded to secure SharePoint site (OR similar secure system) by Secretary for review by members prior to the main-AEB.

Secretary finalises Pre-Board written minutes & pre-populates draft written minutes for main-AEB in consultation with Chair (OR Deputy Chair).

Board proceeds: Chair confirms pre-board decisions & complex student cases discussed as necessary.

Secretary amends/finalises pre-populated written minutes which are signed off by Chair (OR Deputy Chair) within 3 weeks.

*IPB = Individual Performance Benchmark
University of Brighton Partner Institutions/ Partner Further Education Colleges
VIRTUAL EXAMINATION BOARD: COURSE EXAMINATION BOARD

VIRTUAL PRE-BOARD: CEB
SharePoint (OR similar secure system)
VIRTUAL PRE-BOARD: CEB
SharePoint (OR similar secure system)

WITHIN 10 DAYS OF RETURN OF LAST ASSESSMENT;
OVER 2 DAYS

- CEB paperwork uploaded to secure SharePoint site (OR similar secure system) by Secretary for review.
- Chair (OR Deputy Chair).
- Members (Course/Area Leader/s & recommended 3-10 internal markers).
- University Link staff/Head of School (Partner) OR Higher Education Manager/University Consortium Programme Leader (Partner Further Education College).
- Generic mitigation (post 5th March 2020) considered/agreed. Review of statistical reports and moderation of module marks if appropriate. Pre 5th March 2020 mitigating circumstances recommendations made/applied. Agreed extensions/ held marks/intermission noted.

OVER 3 DAYS

- Adjustments made to module marks relating to *IPB during COVID-19 (if applicable). Arrangements for re-assessment considered/agreed. Compensation/ progression/awards considered. Students in borderline zones identified/considered.
- Members' comments/recommendations added to paperwork & uploaded to secure SharePoint site (OR similar secure system).
- Members' comments/recommendations collated by Secretary.
- Secretary finalises pre-Board written minutes & pre-populates draft written minutes for CEB in consultation with Chair (OR Deputy Chair).
- Chair (OR Deputy Chair) reviews comments/recommendations & contacts members with queries.

OVER 2 DAYS

- Original CEB paperwork still available in SharePoint site (OR similar secure system) for review by members prior to the main CEB.
- Chair (OR Deputy Chair).
- Course OR Subject Leader & Members (2 Academic staff).
- External Examiner/s.
- University Link staff/Head of School (Partner) OR Higher Education Manager/University Consortium Programme Leader (Further Education College).
- Secretary amends/finalises pre-populated written minutes which are signed off by Chair (OR Deputy Chair) within 3 weeks.
- Board proceeds: Chair confirms pre-board decisions & complex student cases discussed as necessary.
- Schools email results notification to students within 5 working days of CEB.

*IPB = Individual Performance Benchmark