

# Regulations Handbook

## **ION Awards**

Science Access

Certificate in Nutrition Studies

Certificate Diet and Lifestyle Educator

Diploma in Nutritional Therapy (DipION)

## **ION Courses without Credit**

Non-Credit Bearing Short Courses

eScience Refresh

## **UoP Awards** *(to be read in conjunction with the University of Portsmouth Partner Specific Regulations Handbook)*

CertHE Personalised Diet and Health

BSc (Hons) Nutritional Therapy (Pathway 1)

BSc (Hons) Nutritional Therapy (Pathway 2 - Top-up)

Graduate Diploma Integrative Functional Nutrition

Credit Bearing Short Courses including Return to Practice

**2024-25**

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## INTRODUCTION

These regulations apply to all student cohorts on courses leading to the following ION qualifications and ION courses without credit (Non-Credit Bearing Short Courses and eScience Refresh) with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024:

Science Access

Certificate in Nutrition Studies

Certificate in Diet and Lifestyle Educator (Part-time & Full-time (September only))

Diploma in Nutritional Therapy (DipION)

These regulations apply in the most part to all student cohorts on courses leading to the University of Portsmouth (UoP) awards with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024 and must be read in conjunction with the University of Portsmouth Partner Specific Regulations:

CertHE Personalised Diet and Health (Part-time & Full-time (September only))

BSc (Hons) Nutritional Therapy Pathway 1 (Part-time & Full-time (September only))

BSc (Hons) Nutritional Therapy Pathway 2 Top-up (Part-time & Full-time (September only))

Graduate Diploma Integrative Functional Nutrition (Part-time & Full-time)

Credit Bearing Short Courses (including Return to Practice)

<http://regulations.docstore.port.ac.uk/ExamRegION.pdf>

The Institute for Optimum Nutrition (ION) is an alternative Higher Education training provider accredited by the Nutritional Therapy Education Commission (NTEC) for courses leading to the practice of Nutritional Therapy and the British Accreditation Council and is a Collaborative Partner with the University of Portsmouth delivering validated higher education awards.

ION's delivery of qualifications, policies, regulations, and procedures are informed by the QAA's UK Quality Code for Higher Education and the Office for Students (OfS). This sets out expectations for academic standards, academic quality, and information about higher education provision.

For individual students, who are returning to their course of study either after an approved break or are transferring to a new/different course, the regulations of the cohort to which they are returning will apply.

These regulations will be referenced in the documentation for each course of study, together with any specific requirements from professional or regulatory bodies.

In addition to these regulations, each course of study will have a Student Handbook containing procedures and requirements that are specific to that course.

NB: For students registered before the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024, the regulations on classification of award under which they originally registered will continue to apply.

## DIVERSITY & ANTI-DISCRIMINATION

ION recognises that discrimination can take place and that this is unacceptable. ION has an equal opportunities policy to ensure that no student, applicant or member of staff is discriminated against either directly or indirectly on the grounds of age, disability, gender identity or reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, and sex or sexual orientation. Breaches of the policy will lead to disciplinary proceedings and if appropriate, disciplinary action (see student disciplinary procedure in [Section F: Student Conduct](#)). ION will ensure that the policy is circulated to any agencies responsible for recruitment, employees and is made known to all course applicants. ION welcomes ideas on how to facilitate increased diversity in the student, staff and client population and on the avoidance of systemic discrimination.

## FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND ACADEMIC FREEDOM

ION wants every student to have a fulfilling experience of higher education that enriches their lives and careers.

“Freedom of speech and academic freedom are fundamental to higher education. The core mission of universities and colleges is the pursuit of knowledge, and the principles of free speech and academic freedom are fundamental to this purpose. They provide a necessary context for advancing new ideas, encouraging productive debate and challenging conventional wisdom.

All staff and students are entitled to teach, learn and research in a culture that values vigorous debate, including – or perhaps particularly – in relation to difficult or contentious or discomforting topics.

Students will not have a high-quality education if that education is not grounded in freedom of speech. That includes freedom of speech for themselves, for fellow students, for those who teach or supervise them and for visiting speakers.”<sup>1</sup>

Reference

<sup>1</sup> Office for Students (2024) Freedom of speech: <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/for-providers/quality-and-standards/freedom-of-speech/>

## ABOUT THESE REGULATIONS

These regulations set out what you must do to become and remain a student of ION, and UoP, whether you are studying a module as a credit bearing short course or as part of an ION delivered award or UoP validated award.

In addition, these regulations set out rules for how academic credit is awarded if you complete a module successfully, how you can count that credit towards a qualification, what you must do to progress through qualification course of studies, and to meet the requirements for the award of a qualification on successful completion of the academic

requirements. These regulations also set out the circumstances in which you will cease to be an ION and/or UoP student. This including when either you or ION or UoP are entitled to end the relationship before you have completed all your intended studies.

If you intend to study for a clinical practice qualification or if you are studying for a clinical practice qualification, you should also refer to the specific regulations governing that qualification e.g., [Fitness to Practise requirements](#) for clinical practice qualifications, which set out the detailed academic requirements that you will have to meet. Please go to the [ION website](#) for more details.

Unless stated otherwise, all the rules, policies and procedures in these regulations are available from the policies section of the [ION website](#). We recommend that you download them and save them to your own computer for reference or for printing your own copy.

This document is amended each academic year for clarification purposes, following feedback from stakeholders.



## GLOSSARY

Term	Description
Accreditation	Accreditation is the formal recognition that an organisation is competent to perform specific processes, activities, or tasks (which are detailed in a scope of accreditation) in a reliable credible and accurate manner.
Advanced Standing	Advanced standing is the award of credit based on previous studies or work experience, similar to recognised prior learning
Assessment or Assessment Component/Artifact	An individual piece of work or a collection of pieces of work that forms a summative assessment (mark counts towards your overall grade). Components/artifacts must be passed.
Award	Qualification given to student following the successful completion of an approved course of study.
Co-Requisite Module	A co-requisite module must be studied simultaneously with, or before, another designated module within a course of study.
Course	A schedule of academic study and assessment which leads to an award.
Course Specification	A document that defines key characteristics of an award, including learning outcomes, models of teaching and learning, assessment schemes, and how individual modules relate to qualification levels and contribute to the classification of awards.
Credit	<p>A means of quantifying and recognising learning expressed as 'numbers of credits' at a specific credit level.</p> <p>Each module is assigned a credit value, which is related to the workload required to successfully complete it.</p> <p>One credit represents about 10 hours of study (including individual study). You will be awarded credits when you successfully complete a module, so if you pass a 20-credit module you will be awarded 20 credits.</p> <p>An aegrotat is a credit that may be awarded posthumously, under certain conditions, or if a student is too ill to complete the assessment for module(s) that comprise up to the final 20 credits required for a qualification. An aegrotat can only be awarded where there is evidence that the student no longer has capacity to study.</p>

Credit accumulation/stacking	Modules, from certain credit bearing short courses can be accumulated/stacked over time and converted to a final award (Graduate Diploma only).
Credit Level	An indicator of the relative complexity, depth and autonomy of learning associated with a module. Please see <a href="#">Credit Level Descriptors for Higher Education</a> for further information.
Defer	Valid Extenuating Circumstances have been accepted. The assessment hand in date is deferred to a choice of two dates – 10 working days after the assessment deadline or the Referral Deadline. Marks are not capped.
Exit award	A lower award than one for which the student is registered. Such an award may be conferred if a student completes part of, but not all, the requirements of the course, meeting the number of credits required for an exit award.
Fitness to Practise	Having the skills, knowledge, and behaviours required to practise the profession safely and effectively. This also applies to students throughout clinical courses.
Learning Outcome	What a learner is expected to know and understand. Also, to be able to demonstrate this after completing a defined element of study. Learning outcomes features within the course specification must align with module descriptors.
Module	A self-contained, formally structured, credit-bearing unit of study with explicit learning outcomes.
Module Specification	A document that defines key characteristics of a module, and includes learning outcomes, models of teaching and learning, and assessment details.
Pre-Requisite Module	A pre-requisite module is one that must be successfully completed before progressing to another designated module or stage within a course of study.
Progression	The advancement (or progress) by a student from one stage of a course to an adjacent higher stage. Such progression is subject to regulations and must be confirmed at a meeting of the Progression and Award Board.

Qualification Level	One of a series of defined points in the Further and Higher Education Qualification Framework (or Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework in Scotland). They are numbered in ascending order (Levels 3, 4, 5 & 6). Qualifications at the Progression & Awards Board share characteristics and require similar achievement.
Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Credit Transfer	Assessment of prior learning that has occurred in any of a range of contexts including school, college, and university, and/or through life and work experiences. Once recognised through this process, prior learning can be used to gain credit or exemption for qualifications. RPL includes Recognition of Prior Certificated Learning (RPCL) and Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL). Limits and fees apply. We encourage participation in the module claimed.
Refer	To complete part (component)/all of a failed assessment in order to pass a module. Refer of the failed component within an assessment or assessments does not require the student to participate in classes. The refer mark is capped.
Retake	To take assessments or components of assessments again, having failed a referred attempt. Retake of the failed module requires the student to participate in classes to prepare for the second module attempt. Fees will apply. Mark is capped. Only 2 module attempts are allowed.
Student	A student is defined as an individual who studies with ION as a formal learner at access, undergraduate or postgraduate level. Additionally, a student can be an informal learner using our non-credit bearing short/masterclass courses.
Validation	The formal process whereby a course of study is critically appraised by a recognised external body, the University of Portsmouth, to establish that it meets the requirements for approval, including level of delivery.

## SECTION A: FRAMEWORK OF AWARDS

### 1. GENERAL

- 1.1. The awards are defined with reference to the Further and Higher Education Qualification frameworks of England, Wales, and Northern Ireland (FHEQ). Each national qualification framework provides a set of learning outcomes and skills expected of the holders of ION and UoP awards.

### 2. CREDIT

- 2.1. ION, and UoP uses a UK credit-based system for its professional awards, and it defines these awards primarily in terms of the qualification level and volume of credits required for each qualification.
- 2.2. The main determinant for the volume of UK credit is notional learning time. This is defined as the reasonable measure of time it would take a student to achieve the learning outcomes. Total notional student learning time includes all activities required to achieve the learning outcomes of a course, including formal study, assessment, and independent learning.
- 2.3. The notional learning time is intended as a benchmark only, and the actual time students take to achieve the required outcomes may be shorter or longer depending on the knowledge and skills of students at entry and on their rate of progression through the course, and the impact of any reasonable adjustments made for students with the relevant impairment reports.
- 2.4. A UK credit value is twice its European Credit Transfer (ECT) equivalent (e.g., a 20 UK credit module equates to 10 ECT credits). Each module of a course will be assigned a single designated credit level (module assessment is unique to a given credit level).
- 2.5. The assignment of credit to learning should be understood in the following terms:
  - 2.5.1. Credit is allocated to a module's learning activity (assessment/s) based on its stated learning outcomes.
  - 2.5.2. A student will only be assigned credit after demonstration through assessment of the achievement of the stated learning outcomes either through summative assessment or RPL.
  - 2.5.3. Credit cannot be assigned if no assessment or part assessment of the learning outcomes has taken place. This includes Non-Credit Bearing Short Courses and eScience Refresh or if the assessment has not been appropriately conducted.
  - 2.5.4. The number of credit points assigned is independent of the standards (grades awarded). Students achieving higher standards will not be allocated

more credit points. The higher standard will be reflected in the grade and classification of the final award.

### 3. AWARDS DELIVERED BY THE INSTITUTE FOR OPTIMUM NUTRITION

**Table 1: Awards offered by ION, and the University of Portsmouth**

Award title	FHEQ qualification level	Overall number of credits required	Levels of credit required
ION Science Access Chemistry	NA	NA	1 module at L3
ION Science Access Biology	NA	NA	1 module at L3
ION Science Access Anatomy & Physiology (A&P)	NA	NA	1 module at L3
ION Science Access Cert Chemistry, Biology, A&P	NA	NA	3 modules at L3
ION Certificate Nutrition Studies (Exit award for DipION) (non-practicing)	NA	180	120 at L4 40 at L5 20 at L6
ION Certificate Diet and Lifestyle Educator	NA	120	120 at L4
ION Diploma in Nutritional Therapy (DipION)	6	240	120 at L4 80 at L5 60 at L6
CertHE Personalised Diet and Health UoP	4	120	120 at L4
BSc (Hons) Nutritional Therapy Pathway 1 UoP	6	360	120 at L4 120 at L5 120 at L6
BSc (Hons) Nutritional Therapy Pathway 2 UoP	6	360	120 at L6 RPL 240 L4 & L5 <b>or</b> 100 at L6, 20 at L5 RPL 120 L4, RPL 100 at L5, RPL 20 at L6
Graduate Diploma Integrative Functional Nutrition UoP*	6	120	120 at L6
Graduate Diploma Integrative Functional Nutrition* with Clinical Practice (CBSC) UoP	6	140	140 at L6

Credit Bearing Short Courses containing 1 module	4 <u>OR</u> 6	20 <u>OR</u> 20 and 40	20 at L4 <u>OR</u> 20 or 40 at L6
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\*The Graduate Diploma may also be obtained through Credit Accumulation/Stacking of Credit Bearing Short Courses comprising of modules from the said course.

- 3.1. Students must meet all requirements set out in the course specification before a qualification is awarded.
- 3.2. The title of an award will accord with the normal expectations of higher education/awarding/validating bodies, relevant professional bodies, regulators, students, and employers about the level of knowledge and skills to be expected from a person holding such a qualification.

#### **4. ADMISSIONS POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

- 4.1. Click here to view [Policy for Student Admissions](#). This policy should also be read in conjunction with guidance contained in Section C, article 24 covering the [Recognition of Prior Learning](#).

#### **5. APPEALS AND COMPLAINTS REGARDING THE ADMISSION DECISION**

- 5.1. Appeals against a decision not to admit an applicant to a course of study leading to an ION, or UoP award are restricted to those that cite irregularity in the decision-making process (for example failure to make a reasonable adjustment relating to a disability). Such appeals must be initiated within 10 working days of the date of the original decision.

See [Section H: Academic Appeals and Complaints](#)

## SECTION B: MATTERS RELATING TO REGISTRATION

A student who is admitted for study on an ION non-credit bearing or credit bearing course or UoP award must be fully enrolled (fees paid) for that course within the stated deadline.

ION will record student name and contact details solely for the purposes of recording student details and progression information. By registering with ION for a course leading to an award or non-credit bearing course the student agrees to the sharing of their information with ION for this purpose. ION will also share data with its partner, the University of Portsmouth, for those students enrolled on to validated courses. ION will not make any contact with students unless there is a specific need in relation to their studies. It is the student's responsibility to keep their personal information up to date and to notify ION of any changes or errors.

### 6. REASONABLE ADJUSTMENT

We do our best to make reasonable adjustments and provide support to students with Specific Learning Difference (SpLD) on courses leading to awards. However, students should be aware that we are not able to provide formal diagnostic assessments. This is a matter for a professional who holds a current Assessment Practicing Certificate. Please see:

<https://www.patoss-dyslexia.org/assessment-practising-certificate-apc>

Students requiring specific support for an identified learning difference (dyslexia, dyspraxia etc.) must supply a report from a qualified assessor that contains specific recommendations appropriate to their circumstances. Adjustments may include additional preparation time for clinic, extra time for exams etc. No extra time is given for coursework submission. Where reports are not specific, we can discuss individual needs and reasonable adjustments but are unable to award additional exam time.

For students who require an assessment service for dyslexia and ADHD please see advice given in the Academic and Study Skills RelION pages.

Some forms of SpLD can impact on written and verbal communication. Students are encouraged to maintain communication with level leaders and module coordinators to discuss how they will manage their needs and to use the services of the Academic Support team. No dispensation is given for English grammar and spelling in assessments.

The assessment report must be sent to [academicadmin@ion.ac.uk](mailto:academicadmin@ion.ac.uk) who will make a note on the student's record and advise the Academic Support Team who will then liaise with colleagues and the student regarding adjustments. If the student has been recommended to use specific learning aids (e.g., screen tints, special highlighters etc.), the student will be expected to provide these.

## 7. PERIOD OF REGISTRATION FOR ION AWARDS

- 7.1. The period of registration will commence on the date the student registers on a course. The minimum and maximum periods within which a student will be expected to complete the course of study and associated assessment, including the time for any defer, refer and retake assessments is stated in the box below and in the University of Portsmouth Collaborative Partners - Examination & Assessment Regulations <http://regulations.docstore.port.ac.uk/ExamRegION.pdf>

**Table 1: Maximum and minimum number of years required to complete ION awards**

Award Title	Minimum No. Years	Maximum No. Years
Science Access Cert Chemistry, Biology & A&P	6 months	2
Certificate Nutrition Studies Exit award for DiplON (non-practicing)	3 (w/t RPL)	6
Certificate Diet and Lifestyle Educator Part-time	1.5	4
Certificate Diet and Lifestyle Educator Full-time	1	2
Diploma in Nutritional Therapy (DiplON)	3	6

**Table 2: Maximum and minimum number of years required to complete UoP awards**

Award Title	Minimum No. Years	Maximum No. Years
BSc (Hons) Nutritional Therapy Pathway 1 Part-time	4.5	8
BSc (Hons) Nutritional Therapy Pathway 1 Full-time	3	8
BSc (Hons) Nutritional Therapy Pathway 2 Part-time	1.5 (with 240 RPL)	4
BSc (Hons) Nutritional Therapy Pathway 2 Full-time	1 (with 240 RPL)	2
CertHE Personalised Diet and Health Part-time	1.5	4
CertHE Personalised Diet and Health Full-time	1	2
Graduate Diploma Integrative Functional Nutrition Part-time	2	4
Graduate Diploma Integrative Functional Nutrition Full-time	1	2
Graduate Diploma Integrative Functional Nutrition (credit accumulation)	1	5



Credit Bearing Short Courses 20 credits	1	2
Credit Bearing Short Courses 40 credits	1	2

**Table 3: Courses without credit**

Course or module	Minimum	Maximum
Non-Credit Bearing Short Courses 1 semester* 1 trimester**	N/A	1 semester* 1 trimester**
Non-Credit Bearing Short Courses 2 semesters*	N/A	2 semesters*
eScience Refresh	N/A	1 year

\*Semesters are modules from the degree or Cert HE

\*\*Trimesters are modules from the Graduate Diploma

- 7.2. Subject to clause 7.5 below, a student will remain registered for the maximum period of the award or until they have achieved the award, or the registration has been terminated, whichever comes first.
- 7.3. The period of registration may be extended if:
- 7.3.1 The student has had to re-sit or retake parts of their course of study, see [Section C, article 20](#).
  - 7.3.2 The student has been unable to study or complete a year of study due to extenuating circumstances, see [Section D: Extenuating Circumstances \(ECs\)](#) and/or [Section E: Change of Studies](#).
  - 7.3.3 The student has been given permission to take a study break.
- 7.4. A student's registration may be terminated if the student has:
- 7.4.1. Committed a serious disciplinary offence or be deemed as unfit to study/practice.
  - 7.4.2. Exhausted all opportunities to remedy failure or has made insufficient progress through their course of study at the required stage.
  - 7.4.3. Formally notified ION that they wish to discontinue (withdraw) their studies and so discontinue their course.
  - 7.4.4. Failed to comply with their financial commitment.
- 7.5. The date of termination recognised by ION will be taken as the date on which the student's registration was terminated.

## **8. INTERRUPTION OF STUDIES**

- 8.1. A student may apply, or be required, to take a study break for a maximum period of twelve consecutive months under the agreed procedure for reasons of ill health (including not being fit to practice) or other extenuating circumstances. This may be extended with documented exceptional circumstances.

## **9. ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENT**

Please refer to the Student Handbook for your course for specific attendance requirements relative to your course.

- 9.1. At ION, while our courses are distance learning (online) we do offer various in-person workshops and learning events, which are optional for students to attend. It is important to note that the material covered at these events, where possible, are also available as online resources on the virtual learning environment, these in-person events are not recorded. Please note that to run these in-person events, we do require a minimum number of attendees, which varies depending on the type of event. At the start of each course and semester students receive a booking link to register their place to attend, and this is how we gauge interest for events and whether we will be able to run them.

## **10. CONTRACTUAL INFORMATION**

- 10.1. All our students are required to sign an Acceptance and Student Agreement form to complete their student registration.
- 10.2. Please see your student agreement for all information regarding non-payment of fees.
- 10.3. Students are required to show evidence of their identity and maintain a working email address and telephone contact number while at ION. In addition, students must provide a current postal address and bank details if making regular payments. Should changes occur, it is the student's responsibility to inform the administration department in writing of the new details. A change of name requires documentary evidence e.g., a copy of a marriage or divorce certificate. A name cannot be changed without this evidence.
- 10.4. Students enrolled on clinical training modules and on modules with presentations and Vivas's consent to being recorded including in Training Clinic for marking and moderation purposes. Recordings will be stored securely on ION servers for up-to two years, as a reference for marking, moderation, and the appeal procedures. Please note, should ION require to use a recording as an exemplar, the student, and client will be contacted for consent to do so.

- 10.5. All students are bound by the Policy to Support the Prevention of Extremism and Radicalisation (PREVENT). [Click here to view](#). This policy can also be found on the [ION website](#).

## **SECTION C: ASSESSMENT, PROGRESSION AND AWARD OF CREDIT**

### **11. ASSESSMENT**

- 11.1. The forms of assessment and its weighting and timing, and the ways in which the learning outcomes are to be demonstrated through assessment, are set out in the module and course specifications.
- 11.2. Each module handbook contains comprehensive details of the assessment scheme.

### **12. MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR PASS**

- 12.1. To obtain an award, students are required to complete all parts of the course approved assessment and comply with all regulations relating to their course of study.
- 12.2. The minimum aggregate pass marks for awards are:
  - 12.2.1. 50% for science access courses and science access standalone modules.
  - 12.2.2. 40% for undergraduate (UG) courses and undergraduate standalone modules, including credit bearing short course modules.
  - 12.2.3. 50% for postgraduate (PG) courses and postgraduate standalone modules, including credit bearing short course modules.
  - 12.2.4. These minima apply to assessments, modules, stages, and qualifications.

### **13. IDENTIFICATION OF REQUIREMENTS FROM PROFESSIONAL AND REGULATORY BODIES**

- 13.1. Additional academic regulations required by any professional, and or recognised regulatory body will be set out in the relevant course specification and approved by the Academic Review Board (ION awards) or for validated awards, the UoP. Compensation is not allowed. All component parts must be passed.

### **14. SUBMISSION OF ASSESSED WORK**

- 14.1. It is the responsibility of students with acknowledged (reported) learning difficulties to check with Module Coordinators, at the beginning of modules, how reasonable adjustments will be made to meet their learning and assessment needs.
- 14.2. Work submitted for a summative assessment component cannot be amended after the submission deadline or re-submitted. Drafts can be submitted to the Turnitin

check box on the Academic and Study Skills ReIIION pages to view similarity scores and matches to resources.

- 14.3. Student requests for extensions to assessment deadlines will not be approved unless made in accordance with the relevant [Extenuating Circumstances](#) regulation. **Note rules are different for ION awards and UoP awards.**
- 14.4. Where coursework is submitted late and there are no accepted extenuating circumstances it will be marked in line with the following tariff:
- 14.5. Submission within 10 working days without valid ECs: a cap of 40% for UG and 50% for Science Access and PG modules.
- 14.6. Students who fail to submit work for assessments or attend examinations/practicals (including clinic consultations) /compulsory activities shall be deemed to have failed the assessment component/s concerned and will be marked as 0.
- 14.7. ION and UoP operate a 'fit-to-sit policy'. If the student believes that their academic performance will be affected by personal or health circumstances, they must submit an online extenuating circumstance form with valid evidence and must not sit the exam or complete/attend, /submit the assessment. If a student sits an exam or complete/attends (including clinical consultations)/submit an assessment, this will normally be taken as a declaration that they consider themselves fit to do so. See [Section D, clause 25.2](#).

## 15. ASSESSMENT SCORES

- 15.1. All undergraduate assessment (non-competency based – marked pass/fail) will be marked on a percentage scale of 0-100 and may include pass, merit, or distinction classifications.
- 15.2. All postgraduate assessment will be marked on a percentage scale of 0-100 and include pass, merit, or distinction classification.
- 15.3. The final grade for an individual assessment component will be determined after completion of a quality assurance process (e.g., moderation, remarking) as detailed in the policy for moderation (see [Policy for Assessment Moderation](#)).
- 15.4. Individual assessments. If the result of assessment calculation creates a mark of 0.5% or greater, this will be rounded up to the next full percentage point (e.g., 69.5% is rounded to 70; 59.5% to 60%; and so on). Where the calculation creates a mark below 0.5%, this will be rounded down to the next full percentage point (e.g., 69.4% is rounded to 69%; 59.4% to 59%; and so on). For the purposes of rounding up or down, only the first decimal place is used.
- 15.5. Final module marks are not rounded up or down.

**Table 1: Performance required to achieve grades for assessments**

% Scale Score, Performance Standard	Science Access, Postgraduate Modules	DipION Cert Nutrition Studies ION Cert Diet and Lifestyle Educator UoP Awards inc. Cert.HE, Dip.HE	Credit Bearing Short Courses – undergraduate
Distinction (Excellent Pass)	80+	70+	-
Merit (Very Good Pass)	65-79	60-69	-
Pass	50-64	50-59	-
Pass	-	40-49	40-100
Fail	0-49	0-39	0-39

Please see the Academic and Study Skills RelION pages for more information on grade descriptors.

## 16. DETERMINING MODULE OUTCOMES

- 16.1. Module marks are internally verified through a moderation process and externally verified by external examiners who are education and subject specialists. The award of credit is finalised at the ION Progression and Awards Board or the UoP Module Assessment Board, and Board of Examiners.
- 16.2. The overall module mark shall be determined as per the assessment strategy detailed in module specifications and published in Module Handbooks.
- 16.3. A student who passes a module shall initially be awarded provisional credit for that module subject to conferment at the ION Progression and Awards Board or the UoP Module Assessment Board, and Board of Examiners. The amount of credit for each module shall be set out in the course specification and published in Module Handbooks.
- 16.4. To pass a module a student must achieve the requirements of the module as set out in the module specification and as published in the Module Handbook.
- 16.5. Where a student is registered only for a module/Credit Bearing Short Course (rather than a qualification) the resit/retake provisions set out in [article 20](#) will apply.

## 17. PROVISION FOR VIVA VOCE EXAMINATION

- 17.1. Exceptionally, viva voce examinations may be required by the Academic Review Board (ION awards) or Academic Integrity Panel (ION or UoP awards):
  - 17.1.1. To determine the result status of unusual or borderline cases.

- 17.1.2. When there is conflicting evidence from the various assessment components.
- 17.1.3. Where the inappropriate use of Artificial Intelligence is suspected or indicated by a Turnitin report.
- 17.1.4. To determine the submitted work is the student's own.

## **18. DETERMINING PROGRESSION AND QUALIFICATION OUTCOMES**

### **18.1. Module prerequisites and co-requisites:**

- 18.1.1. The diet of modules through which students are required to progress through the course to obtain an award, and the elements identified as compulsory or optional, are set out in the course specification and approved by the Academic Review Board (ION awards) or UoP.
- 18.1.2. Progression through any course may require students to complete prerequisite or co-requisite modules which are set out in the course specification and approved by the Academic Review Board (ION) or UoP.

### **18.2. Stage requirements:**

- 18.2.1. Each of the stages of a course will be defined by a set number of credits ([See Section A, article 3](#))
- 18.2.2. In cases in which courses are not divided into stages (for example, most postgraduate courses and access courses) the provisions below apply to the whole course.
- 18.2.3. To complete and pass a stage of a course, a student must normally acquire the total number of credits set out in the course specification at the approved qualification level for the award. Exceptions are restricted to those who have been exempted through **advanced standing (RPL)**.
- 18.2.4. The credit value of each module contributing to a stage determines its weighting in the aggregation of credit for a stage.
- 18.2.5. No more than two attempts will be granted on the same assessment regardless of the circumstances within the duration of the module.
- 18.2.6. Attempt: To have 'attempted' a module is defined as having registered for a module and not applied for Extenuating Circumstances, Change of Study form (available as online forms, accessed from RelION) or RPL claim by the deadline (first two weeks of the module start date), nor to have suspended studies or withdrawn from a course of study.

### **18.3. Where a student fails a component, the following may apply in the first instance:**

- 18.3.1. Resit - following failure at the first attempt the student will be referred to a second attempt of an assessment component within a module offered at the next scheduled re-submission date. The resit mark will be capped at the minimum for a pass.

- 18.3.2. For practical clinical work students are given the opportunity to complete 2 extra consultations (1 client - initial and follow-up) to achieve the required competencies. If after 1 additional client (initial and follow-up consultations) the required competencies are not achieved the student will automatically be required to resit the module and must not sit the final module assessment. The resit mark will be capped at the minimum for a pass.
- 18.3.3. Resit the next time the module runs – if a student fails at the second assessment attempt, they will be required to resit with fees payable. This may disrupt progression on some courses and will disrupt progression on the full-time courses.
- 18.3.4. Where a student fails by not submitting at all identified assessment points within a module/s they will have been deemed to have withdrawn from the course. The following resit options are available:
  - a. Semester 1 module resits - retake the next time the module runs
  - b. Semester 2 module resits – either take the resit at the first opportunity in the first semester if available or resit when the module next runs within the student’s current plan of study.
  - c. Trimester 1 modules resits - retake the next time the module runs
  - d. Trimester 2 module resits – when the module next runs within the student’s current plan of study.
  - e. Trimester 3 module resits – retake the next time the module runs.
- 18.4. Academic Administration will contact the student to discuss the options available including impact on progression.
  - 18.4.1. Retake – a second attempt of all assessment components within a module following failure at the first attempt. Retake of the failed component may require the student to review classes and course materials to prepare them for the second attempt. The mark will be capped at the minimum for a pass. This will be confirmed at the Awards and Progression Board (ION) or UoP Module Assessment Board/Board of Examiners.
  - 18.4.2. Repeat module with attendance - module fees apply. If the student fails or is unable to submit on the second submission date, then they will be deemed to have failed the assessment. The module will be required to be repeated with attendance. Where a student undertakes Repeat Assessment, the following shall apply:
    - a. The student must do so with attendance.
    - b. The student must attempt all the assessment components in the module description and no marks may be carried forward from any earlier attempt.
    - c. The Module Assessment Board shall award the student the full mark their assessment earns on merit if they pass a module after repeat



assessment. That mark shall be annotated on the transcript with the legend "Passed after Repeat Assessment";

- d. The Board of Examiners shall use the mark recorded for the Repeat Assessment when recommending the classification of the award;
- e. The Board of Examiners, at the time it permits a student to undergo Repeat Assessment, may restrict the award classification that can be awarded. This will be confirmed at the Progression & Awards Board (ION) or UoP Module Assessment Board/Board of Examiners.

## **19. SUBMITTING OUTSIDE OF THE SET SUBMISSION POINTS**

- 19.1. ION students only: On rare occasions ION award students may be allowed to submit outside of the set submission points with valid extenuating circumstances (ECs). Students must submit assessments at the advised set submission points. If this option is offered, then a fee is payable. This is at the Head of Undergraduate Course's discretion and based on the weight of evidence presented, and logistics.
- 19.2. Only two attempts at a module are permissible. A student failing a module twice will be offered, if one exists, an exit award and will be subject to the regulations of that exit award. If no exit award exists, the student will be given a transcript stating their performance to date.
- 19.3. If a student decides to withdraw from a module or their course but does not complete the necessary forms by the specified deadline, they will be deemed to have failed the module and to have used up one attempt. Until the required forms are received the student will continue to fail the module at subsequent submissions points until all attempts are exhausted. At which point the student will be deemed not to have met the requirements for the course if no option modules or alternative route is available as stated in the course specification. At this point the student will be excluded having irrevocably failed.

## **20. RESIT, REPEAT and RETAKE PROVISION**

- 20.1. Boards may, at their discretion, make such special arrangements as it deems appropriate in cases where it is not practicable for students to be reassessed in the same elements and by the same methods as at the first attempt. Or it may adjust the module fee for retake with attendance in clinical modules depending on the number and type of outstanding assessments. However, where a course is discontinued, provision must be made to ensure fair assessment opportunities for all students who have been enrolled. Resit provision is subject to all the following conditions:
  - 20.1.1. A student who does not complete the resit by the date specified shall not progress the course, except in cases where the process for allowing

extenuating circumstances has been followed and no pre or co-requisites prevent progression.

- 20.1.2. Resits can only take place after the meeting of the relevant Board or following agreement by the Board Chair.
- 20.1.3. A student who successfully completes any required resits and retakes within a module shall be awarded the credit for the module and the result/s for the individual assessment component capped as appropriate at the minimum pass mark for the module.
- 20.1.4. A student who successfully completes any repeated module will receive the full module mark.
- 20.1.5. A resit, retake or repeat will normally be carried out by the same combination of assessments as in the first attempt. The Board of Examiners, at the time it permits a student to undergo Repeat Assessment, may restrict the award classification that can be awarded.

## **21. GRADING AND CLASSIFICATION AWARDS**

- 21.1. Calculation of a Science Access Certificate will be based on the average mark across all modules.
  - 21.1.1. Where the final result of the award classification calculation creates a mark of 0.5% or greater this will be rounded up to the next full percentage point (e.g., 69.5% is rounded to 70; 64.5% to 65%; and so on).
- 21.2. Calculation of ION UG Awards, from September 2018, consisting of credits at FHEQ level 4 or above will be based on the average mark across all Level 5 and Level 6 modules.
  - 21.2.1. Where the final result of the award classification calculation creates a mark of 0.7% or greater this will be rounded up to the next full percentage point (e.g., 69.7% is rounded to 70; 59.8% to 60%; and so on).
  - 21.2.2. Where a student has Recognised Prior Learning (RPL) for a module then the overall award is calculated based on the average of the remaining level 5 and level 6 modules.
- 21.3. Calculation of UoP Awards can be found in sections 10.5.8. CLASSIFICATION OF HONOURS DEGREES and 10.5.9. CLASSIFICATION OF OTHER AWARDS University of Portsmouth Collaborative Partners - Examination & Assessment Regulations <http://regulations.docstore.port.ac.uk/ExamRegION.pdf>
- 21.4. Calculation of ION PgDip will be based on the average mark across all modules within a course.
- 21.5. The award of PgCert can be awarded with Merit and Distinction.

- 21.6. PG Short Course can be awarded with Merit or Distinction.
- 21.7. Performance in work for which an award of credit for prior learning (RPL) has been made is not taken into account in the calculation of a final PG award. [See article 24](#) for rules related to credit for RPL. UoP students [see article 21, clause 3](#).

**Table 2: Performance required to achieve the Science Access Course award**

% Scale Score, Performance Standard	Science Access Cert Award
Distinction	80+
Merit	65-79
Pass	50-64
Fail	0-49

**Table 3: Performance required to achieve ION undergraduate awards from September 2018**

% Scale Score, Performance Standard	UG awards from September 2018
Distinction	70+
Merit	60-69
Pass	40-59
Fail	0-39

**Table 4: Performance required to achieve ION undergraduate awards before September 2018**

% Scale Score, Performance Standard	UG awards before September 2018
Distinction*	70+
Merit	60-69
Pass	40-59
Fail	0-39

\*Or achieve an average of 65% or more across the level 5 & 6 modules and 70% or higher in NTDC6115 Clinical Practice 2.

## 22. PROVISION FOR EXIT AWARDS

- 22.1. Courses must make provision for exit awards at intermediate stages, for which clear learning outcomes must be stated and laid out in course specifications approved by Academic Review Board (ION) or UoP.
- 22.2. Where a student leaves with an exit award they may reapply, at a later date, to upgrade to a higher award on the same course, if still offered by ION. Time limits may apply based on currency of knowledge.

- 22.3. A student who has withdrawn from a course or has exhausted all assessment attempts will automatically be considered for an exit award where sufficient credit has been accumulated.

## **23. POSTHUMOUS AND AEGROTAT AWARDS**

- 23.1. Should a student be prevented by illness, or other circumstances, from completing the final assessed component of their course, the Progression & Awards Board, having considered the relevant evidence (including medical certification), may recommend that an Aegrotat award be made. Such exceptions are limited to students who are permanently unable to continue their studies and are registered for the final module that would complete a qualification and have been assessed on at least part of the module. The board must be satisfied that the student's prior performance shows beyond reasonable doubt that they would have passed but for the illness, or other circumstances.
- 23.2. Posthumous awards are permitted for all courses. The ION or UoP Boards will consider classification for such awards is based on past performance and aligned to the closest exit award (which may include a classification).

## **24. RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING**

- 24.1. The Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is defined as the assessment of previously acquired learning (whether certificated or experiential learning) within the context of the course on which the prospective students are currently enrolled. The term RPL is used as a generic acronym to cover the accreditation of both experiential and certificated prior learning that is sufficient, reliable, and valid.
- 24.2. Students who can demonstrate that they have already fulfilled some of the learning outcomes of the course by means other than attendance on the planned course and will be able by completing the remaining requirements to fulfil the learning outcomes of the course and attain the standard required for the award, may be admitted with advanced standing, thus exempting them from some modules or stages of the course. Please be advised that assessment of RPL is relative to currency of knowledge, which must be attained within 5-years prior to planned course start.
- 24.3. If the student's prior learning is not certificated, ION will assess the student's learning directly, either by requiring the applicant to take the normal progression assessments of the course or by some other appropriate form of assessment e.g., Portfolio of Evidence with reflective narrative. This will be laid out in the [Policy for Student Admissions](#)
- 24.4. A student admitted with uncertificated learning and experience or through prior certified learning is subject to the same principles of admission as all other students on that course. Subject to the requirements of any Professional, and Regulatory Body

requirements ION has discretion to admit a student with exemption from certain elements of the course or with specific credit.

- 24.5. ION will be satisfied that an individual applicant has fulfilled some of the progression and assessment requirements of the course by means other than attendance on the planned course, and will be able, by completing the remaining requirements, to fulfil the learning outcomes of the course and attain the standard required for the award. That student may be admitted to an appropriate point in the course.
- 24.6. Credit for prior learning can be applied for before the start of a course and during a course. During the course credit must be applied for within the first two weeks of the module start date.
- 24.7. Specific credits: RPL evidence must relate to learning that matches the learning outcomes and levels of named modules.
- 24.8. If credit is awarded for a particular module, the prospective student will, in addition to gaining specific credit, be exempt from that module's assessment but will be given access to all the learning materials within the module.
- 24.9. ION does not guarantee the award of any credit to any prospective student who makes a claim.
- 24.10. ION RPL courses limits: There is no limit on certificated or experiential Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).
- 24.11. UoP RPL courses limits: degree 240 credits, CertHE and Graduate Diploma 80 credits.

## SECTION D: EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES (ECS)

### 25. DEFINITIONS AND PROCEDURES

- 25.1. We want all students to undertake and pass all their assessments at the first attempt and make normal progression through their course. We are aware that failure to progress normally can lead to financial difficulties for both the student and the Institute. However, there may be occasions during the year where students are affected by extenuating circumstances and are unable to complete their assessments.
- 25.2. ION operates a “fit to sit” extenuating circumstances policy. This means if a student sits an examination or submits an assessment on time, they are declaring themselves fit to sit the assessment and no extenuating circumstances will be accepted. A student can only submit extenuating circumstances if they do not attend an examination/practical including clinic appointment or submit coursework on time or were taken ill during an examination or practical. Problems with course management that have affected a student’s performance, either individually or as part of a group should be remedied by following the student complaints procedure.
- 25.3. For extenuating circumstances, the key words are serious and significant. Life, unfortunately, is full of difficulties, irritations, and worries that would not be expected to have a significant effect on performance or to prevent attendance, or completing, or submitting on time an assessment. We all face difficulties and problems that we normally are expected to overcome. Only serious problems that can reasonably be expected to have had a significant effect will be considered valid. Circumstances such as a cold, feeling under the weather, a few sleepless nights, the illness of a relative, financial worries, difficulties with a computer, the pressures of sitting exams or meeting deadlines, will not be accepted as valid reasons for failing to attend, completing on time, or submitting.
- 25.4. Serious long-term circumstances that have a significant effect on a student’s ability to study will be expected to result in the student requesting a suspension of their studies or withdrawing from the course rather than claiming extenuating circumstances.
- 25.5. In line with ION policy, students with a disability or learning difficulty should have declared these and secured an agreement as to what additional help ION can reasonably provide as part of the admissions process. The disability or learning difficulty cannot be regarded as an extenuating circumstance.
- 25.6. A student affected by an extenuating circumstance should complete an online Extenuating Circumstance Form. The link to the form is available in the Essential Documents section on the ReIIION landing page.

- 25.7. The Academic Administrative team will advise students on completing the form. The completed form must record exactly which assessment artefacts (component/s) have been affected (by assessment artefact we mean the examination, course work, essay, compulsory attendance at training clinic etc.). The student must link these assessment artefacts to the module(s) they have been set for. Most importantly, it must clearly state a case that explains why the circumstances were serious and how they affected the student's ability to attend or submit the assessment artefact. Dates must relate to the circumstance(s) and the assessment(s) and the reasons given. The submission needs to be convincing. Finally, you need to be able to provide evidence to back up your case. Documentary evidence must either be in English or accompanied by an official translation in English.
- 25.8. The criteria provided explain what types of evidence are acceptable. In cases of illness, a medical certificate is required to prove the student has been incapacitated for five working days or that there is a severe medical condition that prevents the completion of an assessment or attendance at an examination/clinic consultation - if the illness or condition did not last that long or the medical condition was not severe, the student will need to submit a note of self-certification. Please note that medical certificates should be signed whilst the symptoms of the illness or condition were still evident to the doctor. Repeated cases of self-certification will mean that ION will ask the student for a signed release so that the doctor can provide information about the student's state of health. Repeated cases of self-certification where there is no such supporting evidence may be judged to be invalid. Reference to a professional relationship in the criteria may be to a doctor, a counsellor or other appropriate member of student support services, or some other professional person who, through the nature of their professional relationship with the student, knows about their difficulties and can confirm what is being claimed. The professional must be a member of a recognised regulatory body or professional body.
- 25.9. Extenuating circumstances applications should be submitted at least 48 hours before the assessment deadline, where possible, to be considered by the Panel. In cases of acute or accidental circumstances, applications can be submitted closer to the deadline, provided it is accompanied by the appropriate evidence.

## **26. EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES PANEL**

- 26.1. The submitted form will be judged by a Panel of three members of staff as Extenuating Circumstances Officers appointed to consider all submitted cases, judging them against the criteria. The Panel will decide whether they consider a case to be valid and, if so, which assessment artefacts in which modules have been affected. The student will be informed of the outcome within ten working days of submitting the form.
- 26.2. If the extenuating circumstances are particularly distressing, the student can indicate that they wish the claim to be dealt with as confidentially as possible. The

student should contact their level leader directly, who will follow a special procedure for Serious and Confidential Circumstances. If the student does not wish to contact their level leader, they may contact any member of ION staff. That person, however, will have to then follow the appropriate procedure in intervening on the student's behalf, i.e., they must contact the Level Leader.

- 26.3. Should the Extenuating Circumstances Panel consider circumstances to be valid, the student will be advised that, named assessment artefacts, attendance or submission was prevented by valid extenuating circumstances.
- 26.4. Please also note that a penalty imposed because of an assessment offence, other than late submission, or because of disciplinary action taken by ION against the student, will over-ride a valid extenuating circumstance and will invalidate the remedies explained above.
- 26.5. In exceptional circumstances the Extenuating Circumstances Panel may consider retrospective applications (i.e., applications submitted after the assessment deadline). In these cases, it is imperative that the student contact their Module Coordinator and Extenuating Circumstances Panel at the earliest opportunity. Please be advised that retrospective applications are only considered for extreme or sudden circumstances where there is robust supporting evidence.
- 26.6. When unsure whether the assessment artefact is considered coursework or an examination, please contact the module coordinator.
- 26.7. As a professional courtesy the module coordinator must be informed the assessment will be submitted late.

## **27. DEFER (EXTENSION) OPTIONS**

The Extenuating Circumstances Panel may choose one of the following outcomes for students with valid extenuating circumstances:

- 27.1. The defer options for ION awards are:
  - 27.1.1. All students – Short-term, 10 working days, defer extension on the initial submission date (written assessments only) without evidence. Mark capped at 40%.
  - 27.1.2. ION Students – Short term, 10 working days, defer extension on the initial submission date (written assessments only) with evidence. Marks not capped.
  - 27.1.3. ION Students – Long term defer extension (defer assessment to the next assessment point). Marks not capped.
  - 27.1.4. ION students – Defer module without penalty (DWP). The application must be made at the start of the module and before the first assessment is due.



- 27.1.5. ION students – On very rare occasions students on courses being rolled-up may be allowed to submit for practical assessments outside of the set module submission/resubmission points. If this option is requested and offered, then a fee is payable. Only one application can be made per module. Claims go to the Head of Undergraduate Provision.
- 27.2. Deferring a module/s without penalty (DWP) may affect progression and delay graduation date. Modules must be passed in order (prerequisites). A DWP claim may lead to needing an extended study application and/or change of mode application (note full-time degree students cannot change mode to part-time). Level leaders can provide advice.
- 27.3. Multiple ECs claims in the same semester or year
  - 27.3.1. Students applying for EC in multiple modules who suspect or know their circumstances are unlikely to resolve quickly are advised to consider either lengthening their course or suspending their studies for a semester and discussing this with their level leader.
- 27.4. Number of module attempts: Only two attempts at a module are permissible.
- 27.5. Number of extenuating circumstances claims per assessment
  - 27.5.1. No more than two defer extensions will be granted on the same assessment, regardless of the circumstances, within the duration of the module. If the student is unable to submit on the second deferred extension date, then they will be deemed to have failed the assessment and will be required to resit and pay again for the module.
- 27.6. Should a student fail the second deferral; they will be deemed to have failed the module and will not be eligible to progress into the next academic year.
  - 27.6.1. No student will be allowed to trail modules into the next academic level.

## **28. ECS INFORMATION APPLICABLE TO UOP STUDENTS**

- 28.1. Only one EC application per module is allowed under the UoP Students Regulations: therefore, students should consider carefully which extension deadline to choose to submit to. By submitting to the 10 working days deadline students have the opportunity, should they fail, to resubmit again to the refer deadline. If students choose to submit to the refer deadline and fail, or fail to hand-in, they will need to repeat the module.
- 28.2. 10 working days late deadline:
  - 28.2.1. Assessments submitted within 10 working days of the published submission date will be marked. With a valid EC the mark is uncapped.

- 28.2.2. With a valid EC if a student fails the assessment, they will be referred to the second attempt (refer) deadline and the mark capped.
- 28.2.3. Without a valid EC the mark for the assessment submitted will be capped to the module pass mark.
- 28.2.4. Without a valid EC, coursework submitted more than 10 working days after the published submission date will not be marked and recorded as a non-submission.
- 28.2.5. All failed coursework is referred and reassessed in the second attempt (refer) period with the mark will be capped at 40%.

### 28.3. Refer deadline:

- 28.3.1. With a valid EC students can choose to delay their coursework submission until the Refer deadline. Students are encouraged to submit earlier where possible. Any coursework submission uploaded to Turnitin before this deadline will be marked. Late submissions will not be accepted.
- 28.3.2. If a student fails to submit to the refer deadline or their submitted work is marked as a failure an award of zero will be given for the coursework and the student will have to repeat the module (fee applicable).
- 28.3.3. ECs cannot be submitted for Referral attempts.

## 29. DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

The type of evidence is explained in [Table 2 below](#).

**Table 1: Extenuating Circumstances and Appropriate Evidence**

Criteria		Type	Appropriate Evidence
1	<b>Bereavement</b> Death of member of family, partner, or close friend on or close to the date the assessment artefact was due to be undertaken or submitted or during the period the student might reasonably have been expected to give time to the production of the assessment artefact.	A or C	A + (E or F or G)
2	<b>Acute illness or injury (less than five working days)</b> Acute illness likely to have incapacitated the student on the date the assessment artefact was due to be undertaken or submitted <u>OR</u>	A	A + (B or D or F)

	<p>Acute incident or exacerbation of long term or chronic condition which was likely to have incapacitated the student to a greater extent than that to which she/he is normally accustomed on the date the assessment artefact was due to be undertaken or submitted</p> <p><u>OR</u></p> <p>A personal injury to the student likely to have incapacitated the student on the date the assessment artefact was due to be undertaken or submitted.</p>	A	A + (B or D or F)
3	<p><b>Extended illness or injury (more than 5 working days)</b> Illness likely to have incapacitated the student during the period she/he might reasonably have been expected to give time to the production of the assessment artefact</p> <p><u>OR</u></p> <p>Brief incident or exacerbation of a long term or chronic condition which was likely to have incapacitated the student to a greater extent than that to which she/he is normally accustomed during the period she/he might reasonably have been expected to give time to the production of the assessment artefact</p> <p><u>OR</u></p> <p>A personal injury to the student likely to have incapacitated the student during the period the student might reasonably have been expected to give time to the production of the assessment artefact.</p>	C	A + B
4	<p><b>Illness of another person</b></p> <p>Acute illness, injury, or incident or exacerbation of long term or chronic condition, affecting a person or persons which required the close and frequent attention of the student on the date the assessment artefact was due to be undertaken or submitted, and where no other person might reasonably be expected to have supplied that attention</p> <p><u>OR</u></p>	A	<p><b>A + (C or F) or A only</b></p> <p>If only A, this will be cross-referenced to the student's history in this regard, and the validity of such evidence will lessen if used more than once.</p>
	<p>Acute illness, injury, or incident or exacerbation of long term or chronic condition, affecting a person or persons who require the close and frequent attention of the student, and where no other person might reasonably be expected to have supplied that attention, during the period she/he might reasonably have been expected to give time to the production of the assessment artefact.</p>	C	

5	<b>Domestic and/or Personal Problems</b>  Significant problems in the student's domestic or personal circumstances of a nature likely to have prevented the student's attendance on the date the assessment artefact was due to be undertaken or submitted, or to have affected his or her performance during the period the student might reasonably have been expected to give time to the production of the assessment artefact.	A or C	A + (F or G)
6	<b>Court Attendance</b>  Jury Service, or attendance at Court or a Tribunal as a witness, defendant, or plaintiff, on the date the assessment artefact was due to be undertaken or submitted, or during the period the student might reasonably have been expected to give time to the production of the assessment artefact.	A or C	A + H
7	<b>Work Commitment</b>  Student must be studying part-time, by distance learning or be a postgraduate student who has completed the taught element of the course and is writing up their dissertation AND there must be unanticipated and/or non-negotiable work commitment as a result of which, either the student was unable to attend on the date the assessment artefact was due to be undertaken or submitted, or the student was unable to give time to the production of the assessment artefact during the relevant period.	A or C	A + J
8	<b>Representing County or Country at Sport</b>  Student selected to represent country or county at sporting event which required absence from ION on the date the assessment artefact was due to be undertaken or submitted, or for at least five consecutive working days during the period she/he might reasonably have been expected to give time to the production of the assessment artefact.	A or C	A + L
9	<b>Religious Observance</b>  Observance of the student's religion as a result of which she/he is unable to attend at the date and time the assessment artefact was due to be undertaken or submitted, and no alternative and reasonable arrangements had been agreed by ION.	A	A + M

10	<p><b>Active Exercise of Citizenship</b></p> <p>An unanticipated and/or non-negotiable commitment to duties associated with an elected office, membership of a voluntary organisation, or service with Reserve Forces, as a result of which, either the student was unable to attend on the date the assessment artefact was due to be undertaken or submitted, or the student was unable to give time to the production of the assessment artefact during the relevant period.</p>	A or C	A + J
11	<p><b>Holidays</b></p> <p>A holiday that had been booked before the initial offer of a place on the course was accepted and which caused the student to be absent from the on the date the assessment artefact was due to be undertaken or submitted, or for at least five consecutive working days during the period the student might reasonably have been expected to give time to the production of the assessment artefact.</p>	A or C	A + P
12	<p><b>Transport Difficulties</b></p> <p>Difficulties with public or personal transport which prevented attendance on the date the assessment artefact was due to be undertaken or submitted, that could not reasonably have been anticipated, and such that sufficient time was not available to allow for alternative arrangements reasonably to be made.</p>	A	R + S
13	<p><b>Victim of a Crime</b></p> <p>The student was the victim of a crime that has been reported to the appropriate authority for investigation and that crime was likely <u>either</u> to have prevented the student's attendance on the date the assessment artefact was due to be undertaken, <u>or</u> to have prevented the student from submitting the assessment artefact on the due date, <u>or</u> to have affected his or her performance during the period the student might reasonably have been expected to give time to the production of the assessment artefact.</p>	A or C	A + N
14	<p><b>Client Cancellation or Issue with Client</b> (for Training Clinic purposes only)</p> <p>The students' client is unable to attend a set training clinic appointment, (client must contact Training Clinic staff) or difficulties arise during the consultation, due to technical difficulties with the clients' equipment, leading to the appointment being cancelled.</p>	A	A + F

<b>15</b>	<b>Computing Difficulties</b>  Normally there are no valid extenuating circumstances under this category. Should the ION computer network or specialist software that is only available through ION or UoP become unavailable for a substantial period of time, guidance will be given to all affected students as to what measures will be put in place.		
<b>16</b>	<b>Financial Difficulties</b>  No extenuating circumstance that might fall under this category can be accepted as valid.		
<b>17</b>	<b>Other</b>  Exceptional extenuating circumstances that do not fall under any of the criteria defined above.	<b>A or C</b>	A + Q

**Table 2: Types of Evidence**

<b>A</b>	The student's statement of case.
<b>B</b>	Medical Certificate signed while the illness or incident was affecting the student, or other medical evidence such as copies of prescriptions, certificates of attendance at surgery or hospital, a doctor's opinion given after receiving the student's permission to release information.
<b>C</b>	Medical Certificate signed while the illness or incident was affecting the other person, or other medical evidence, together with a statement by the student about the nature of the relationship, explaining why their personal attention was necessary and why no other person could reasonably be expected to have provided attention.
<b>D</b>	The student's self-certification of illness or incapacity. This type of evidence may be provided on Self-Certification stationery or may take the form of a signed and dated statement by the student. It must be submitted as soon as possible after the affected assessment date. Repeat use of self-certification will mean ION will ask your permission to speak to your doctor for more information about your health and may mean that the evidence is not found to be acceptable.
<b>E</b>	Death Certificate.
<b>F</b>	Corroboration from a person with whom the student has a professional, not a personal, relationship. This does not include members of ION Staff except in cases of Training Clinic and client cancellations.
<b>G</b>	Corroboration by a member of the student's family.
<b>H</b>	Official correspondence from the Court or Tribunal Authority.

<b>J</b>	Letter of corroboration (that must explain why the commitment was non-negotiable and/or unanticipated) signed by the student's line manager or supervisor, or by an appropriately senior and authorised representative of the relevant organisation.
<b>L</b>	Letter from the appropriate sporting association or authority that explained why the absence was necessary.
<b>M</b>	Confirmation from the Dean that the religious observance is a reasonable one for a member of the faith AND a statement from the student explaining why the observance in question prevented their attendance and explaining what attempts had been made to agree a reasonable alternative arrangement.
<b>N</b>	Corroboration of the reported crime from the Police or other investigating authority.
<b>P</b>	Appropriate documentary evidence that corroborated both the timing of the booking of the holiday and its duration.
<b>Q</b>	The Extenuating Circumstances Panel shall seek advice from the Dean. Such advice shall include questions of what evidence would be appropriate to support the exercise of Chair's action in determining whether such extenuating circumstances can be valid.
<b>R</b>	Statement from the student that explains the nature of the difficulty and why the difficulty could not reasonably have been anticipated and why alternative arrangements could not reasonably have been made.
<b>S</b>	Corroboration from a relevant and appropriate source.

29.1. ION reserves the right to check the authenticity of all documentation submitted as part of an extenuating circumstances claim.

29.2. A student who submits documentation that is not authentic will be subject to the procedures for investigating alleged academic misconduct and may be liable to criminal charges. See [Section F, article 40: Code of Conduct for Student Behaviour](#).

## 30. OUTCOMES

30.1. Several decisions can be made:

- 30.1.1. Accepted (in cases of Training Clinic appointments, new dates may be issued by Training Clinic Co-ordinator)
- 30.1.2. Allow 10 working days late
- 30.1.3. Allow long term extension (two submission points available for DipION students, one Defer extension point for UoP courses),
- 30.1.4. Allow practical assessment outside of the normal submission points (fee payable) applicable to ION courses only (with exceptional ECs)

- 30.1.5. Allow defer module without penalty
- 30.1.6. Requires further clarification
- 30.1.7. Requires further supporting evidence
- 30.1.8. Refused
- 30.2. Details of why a claim was unsuccessful will be made available to the student, module coordinator/s and level leader via email.
- 30.3. The ECs Panel will inform the student of the new deadline or online attendance date set.
- 30.4. Important: Failure to submit to the new agreed deadline will result in a grade of zero being awarded and will result in any subsequent submission of the assessment being capped. If a further extension is needed, then this must be applied for ahead of the submission deadline.
- 30.5. The module presented at ION or UoP Boards will clearly identify results where extenuation has been considered and applied.



## SECTION E: CHANGE OF STUDIES

### 31. CHANGE LENGTH OF STUDY

- 31.1. If a student is struggling to cope with the required number of hours needed to study for any of the courses, they can choose to slow down their length of study by reducing the number of modules taken in each semester (part-time courses) or take a study break – suspend - (part-time and full-time courses).
- 31.2. Full-time degree students cannot transfer too part-time. To slow the pace of study a study break must be requested.
- 31.3. Full-time CertHE and Graduate Diploma students can transfer to part-time (see relevant Student Handbook).
- 31.4. Part-time degree students may, at the end of a level of study, switch to full-time study (see Student Handbook). We advise switching at the end of level 5.
- 31.5. The decision to lengthen a course of study would normally be taken at the beginning (before the first assessment) or at the end of a module (after the last assessment). This decision may or may not be taken at the same time as changing the mode of study.
- 31.6. If circumstances mean that it is necessary to slow studies down mid-way through a module, the student will be required to provide extenuating circumstances to support their inability to complete the required module assessment.
- 31.7. Students undergoing Clinical Practice modules (either Clinical Practice 2 or Clinical Practice) and have entered training clinic, can only make changes to their length of study (i.e. deferrals or suspensions) before they have conducted the third client appointment.
- 31.8. A student wishing to change their length of study must complete their course of study within the set number of years and must complete the modules in accordance with pre- and co- requisite requirements (see Table 1, 2 & 3 in [Section B, article 7](#)).
- 31.9. Progressing on return to studies: available space on e-learning clinical practice workshops cannot be guaranteed and any changes to pace of study will be subject to ION's ability to accommodate students on these workshops.

### 32. CHANGING MODE OF STUDY

- 32.1. On courses that are offered in fully blended mode (part online and campus attendance) a student may choose to switch their mode of study.

- 32.2. A student wishing to change their mode of study must complete their course of study within the set number of years and must complete the modules in accordance with pre- and co- requisite requirements.
- 32.3. A decision to change the mode of study would normally be taken at the beginning (before the first assessment) or at the end of a module (after the last assessment).
- 32.4. This decision may be taken at the same time as changing the length of study.
- 32.5. If circumstances mean that it is necessary to change mode, onto a parallel course, mid-way through a module, this will depend on space availability at the clinical attendance workshops, and clinic practice slots.
- 32.6. If a student requests a change of mode, onto a course not in synch with the current course, mid-way through a module, the student will be required to provide extenuating circumstances to support their inability to complete the required module assessment.
- 32.7. Changing mode onto a course not in synch with the current course, mid-way through a module, is dependent upon adequate space at the lecture/workshop venue/training clinic and cannot be guaranteed. This may affect progression.

### **33. PROGRESSION BETWEEN LEVELS OF STUDY BSc (HONS) NUTRITIONAL THERAPY STUDENTS ONLY**

- 33.1. Students may study modules at two different levels concurrently if they would be studied in the same year normally, such as the level 4 and 5 modules in year 2 of the part-time BSc (Hons) Nutritional Therapy and all prerequisites are observed.

### **34. SUSPENDING STUDIES (STUDY BREAK TO TAKE TIME OUT)**

- 34.1. A student may put all studies with ION on hold for a maximum of one year before returning to complete their course of study.
- 34.2. A period of suspension cannot last longer than one year, without a further request being necessary, and any such further request will only be agreed to in exceptional circumstances.
- 34.3. If a student fails to be assigned credit for a period of two calendar years, the Board of Examiners will exclude that student unless it believes that to do so would be unjust.
- 34.4. The decision to suspend studies would normally be taken at the beginning (before the first assessment) or at the end of a module (after the last assessment).

- 34.5. For UoP courses only there is a cut-off point of six weeks after the first online lecture is released within a module (this will always be a Friday for the degree and Cert HE courses, and Wednesdays for the Graduate Diploma course).
- 34.6. If circumstances indicate that it is necessary to suspend studies after the six-week deadline or mid-way through a module, the student must use the extenuating circumstances process to delay assessment hand in for the required module assessment.
- 34.7. Accepted extenuating circumstances allow the student to defer assessment until they resume their studies. The student will not be required to pay again to complete the module/s.
- 34.8. If an extenuating circumstances claim is rejected and the student does not complete the module/s that they have started, they will be deemed to have failed the module/s. In this circumstance the student is referred to retake the modules with a full module fee penalty.
- 34.9. Modules and assessments/weighting of assessments within modules change over time. A returning student will preferentially be placed on a new diet of module/s. This may mean new assessments and weighting of assessment components.
- 34.10. Full terms and conditions relating to suspension of studies are set out in the Student Agreement.

## **35. WITHDRAWAL FROM STUDY**

- 35.1. If a student, for whatever circumstances, wishes to completely withdraw from the course, they should refer to their Student Agreement regarding entitlement to any full or partial refund.
- 35.2. The student should be aware that payments may still be due to ION after the date of withdrawal when paying by instalments or if they have outstanding arrears owing.
- 35.3. A transcript or qualification will only be issued when outstanding fees have been paid.
- 35.4. Full terms and conditions relating to withdraw of studies set out in the Student Agreement.

### **36. PROCEDURE FOR REQUESTING A CHANGE OF STUDIES – LENGTH/MODE/SUSPEND**

- 36.1. To agree on the preferred route from the options outlined above a student should follow the steps outlined below:
  - 36.1.1. The student is advised to contact [academicadmin@ion.ac.uk](mailto:academicadmin@ion.ac.uk) in the first instance to discuss options.
  - 36.1.2. Complete an online Change of Study Form (link available on ReIION).
  - 36.1.3. The student is responsible for checking their Student Agreement terms and conditions relating to payment of outstanding fees.

### **37. PROCEDURE FOR WITHDRAWING FROM STUDIES**

- 37.1. To agree on the preferred route from the options outlined above a student should follow the steps outlined below:
  - 37.1.1. The student is strongly advised to speak with their level leader as soon as possible.
  - 37.1.2. The full terms and conditions relating to withdrawal are contained in the Student Agreement.
  - 37.1.3. The student is responsible for checking their Student Agreement regarding entitlement to any full or partial refund. Payments may still be due to ION after the date of withdrawal if the student has agreed to pay in instalments or if they have outstanding arrears owing.
  - 37.1.4. After speaking with the level leader, the student should email the Academic Administration team who will email back to confirm receipt of intention to withdraw from studies. Any course fees owed to or from ION will be calculated from the date that Academic Administration is notified by the student of their intent.
  - 37.1.5. The Academic Administration team will confirm any money owed to or from ION and send the student a withdrawal form, which should be signed and returned to Academic Administration immediately.
  - 37.1.6. A refund for course fees will be made to the student's debit/credit card on receipt of the signed withdrawal form. All refunds must be given in the same form as the original payment was made.
  - 37.1.7. ION may retain refunds to be used against future course fees.
  - 37.1.8. If course fees are outstanding, payment should be sent with the withdrawal form to cover the outstanding fees.

- 37.1.9. If a student is unable to settle the amounts owed immediately, they must as a matter of urgency discuss the matter with the Academic Administration Team.

### **38. RETURNING TO STUDY**

- 38.1. Applicable to DipION and UoP courses: if a student withdraws from their course, they are unable to return in the same academic year, and they would need to reapply to re-join the course in a subsequent academic year.
- 38.2. The student may subsequently register on a module or qualification, by following the ION/UoP regulations and procedures in force at the time. ION will maintain the student's record of study and if the student is eligible to do so under the regulations, including those of the professional and regulatory bodies, and time limits in force at the time, they may be able to count any credit awarded in an earlier period of study towards an ION qualification.
- 38.3. Excluded students (fails to make satisfactory progress, assessment offence, misconduct, withdrawing without notifying ION) are not eligible to rejoin their course or transfer to another course at ION.

## SECTION F: STUDENT CONDUCT

There are four codes covering student conduct: Code of Behaviour for Student Conduct which includes PREVENT (Prevention of Extremism and Radicalisation), Fitness to Practise (Clinical training courses only), Code of Practice Governing the Ethical Conduct of Research; and Academic Integrity.

### 39. PREVENT

39.1. ION acknowledges that the UK government considers current threat from Terrorism and Extremism to be real and severe and that it can involve the exploitation of vulnerable people, including children, young people, and adults.

39.2. Definitions:

39.2.1. Radicalisation is defined as the process by which people come to support terrorism and extremism and, in some cases, to then participate in terrorist groups.

39.2.2. Extremism is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas (HM Government Prevent Strategy, 2011).

39.3. As an institution of higher education, ION has an important role in providing appropriate platforms to challenge extremist views and ideologies through the provision of learning and research and the protection of academic freedom and promotion of free speech, debate, and liberal values.

39.4. Preventing people from being drawn into terrorism is synonymous with our concern for student and staff welfare and wellbeing. These factors and other important aspects of our response to the Duty are contained in a set of ION Prevent Principles.

39.5. ION's PREVENT principles:

39.5.1. ION's implementation of the Prevent Duty will be informed and moderated by a range of other duties and responsibilities which include, but are not limited to, equality and human rights legislation, data protection and freedom of information laws and the protection of individuals from harassment and racial and religious hatred.

39.5.2. The response to the Duty will be proportionate, consistent, and appropriate to the scale and nature of risks identified.

39.5.3. All kinds of extremism is within scope including, but not limited to, religious, ideological, political, animal welfare and environmental

extremism. Policy, communication, and training will need to challenge views of extremism that are inaccurate, overly simplistic, stereotypical, or are themselves divisive.

- 39.5.4. All members of the ION community are included in the scope of those that may be vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism, i.e., the response will not be limited to consideration of vulnerable students.
  - 39.5.5. All members of the ION community should develop sufficient knowledge and understanding to meet their responsibility to act to prevent people being drawn into terrorism. Different staff will have different responsibilities depending on their role.
- 39.6. Referral and intervention process:
- 39.6.1. Any identified concerns as the result of observed behaviour or reports of conversations to suggest that the person supports terrorism and/or extremism, must be reported to the CEO, Dean, or Head of Corporate Services (details for which can be found in the staff directory) immediately and no later than the end of the working day.
- 39.7. Further information on ION's PREVENT principles is laid out in the [Policy to Support the Prevention of Extremism and Radicalisation \(PREVENT\)](#) document

## **40. CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STUDENT BEHAVIOUR**

- 40.1. The Code of Conduct for Student Behaviour protects the rights of all students, staff, clients, local community, and others who encounter ION to participate freely in the educational and charitable purposes of the Institute both formally and informally.
- 40.2. The Code of Conduct for Student Behaviour must be signed at each enrolment and re-enrolment point.
- 40.3. Student responsibilities (non-clinical and clinical practice). You must:
  - 40.3.1. Only enrol/re-enrol for a course, leading to professional qualification, for which you are well suited or for which a professional body or regulator will register you, only engaging in conduct that renders you fit to be admitted to and practise that profession.
  - 40.3.2. Conduct yourself ethically, legally and with integrity as a student, or as a student practitioner, with due regard for the communities with which you interact, and the good name and reputation of ION.
  - 40.3.3. Read the Student Handbook and familiarise yourself with ION's policies, regulations, codes, and procedures.
  - 40.3.4. Be responsible for health and safety at all times.
  - 40.3.5. On enrolling with ION each year, sign an agreement confirming that you are willing to comply with the Student Code of Conduct for Student

Behaviour, and if engaging in clinical practice training, the Fitness to Practise Policy and any professional body and regulator codes.

- 40.3.6. Maintain as required up to date memberships throughout your time as a student, clinical practice student (BANT) at ION and any other memberships. For degree students BANT membership is optional in Level 4 but mandatory in Levels 5 and 6. BANT student membership is optional for Graduate Diploma students. Degree top-up students must evidence student membership or full membership. BANT student membership is required for the Credit Bearing Short Course – Clinical Practice.
  - 40.3.7. Agree not to provide nutritional therapy advice or to consult with individuals as part of a nutritional therapy consultation unless under the supervision of an ION Training Clinic Supervisor as an integral part of your training or unless already qualified to do so.
  - 40.3.8. Take responsibility for your learning and academic integrity to achieve your best results. Learning support is available to help you complete your studies.
  - 40.3.9. Download assessments and feedback, lecture slides, audio/video recordings and other learning materials in a timely fashion and before your modules/course closes. For assessments you must download your feedback within 2 weeks of the grade release.
  - 40.3.10. Abide by the copyright and licence conditions of all information materials, and those licensed by ION.
  - 40.3.11. Understand that as a student on this course you may be recorded during class and/or webinar-based activities, during clinic consultations and during assessments.
  - 40.3.12. Inform ION Academic Administration department as soon as possible if your personal circumstances or contact details change.
  - 40.3.13. Inform your module coordinator of any non-attendance and catch up on any learning missed.
  - 40.3.14. Inform your level leader if you are having difficulties with any aspect of the course, or if you are contemplating leaving the course, so that you can discuss your options and give yourself time to consider ways in which ION may be able to support you.
  - 40.3.15. Notify ION if your general health deteriorates while on the course to an extent that it impacts on your ability to meet Fitness to Practise requirements (see [Fitness to Practise Declaration](#))
  - 40.3.16. Inform ION if you are convicted of a criminal offence while on the course.
  - 40.3.17. Report views of extremism that are inaccurate, overly simplistic, stereotypical, or are themselves divisive.
- 40.4. You will have breached the Code of Conduct for Student Behaviour if you have:



- 40.4.1. Engaged in any conduct that prevents, obstructs, or disrupts teaching, learning, clinical practice, or research carried out at or for ION, and the administration of ION or its courses (including obstruction or improper interference with, the functions, duties or activities of any student, member of staff or visitor/client).
- 40.4.2. Acted in a way likely to impair health and safety.
- 40.4.3. Deliberately misused or defaced or damaged property, including learning materials, equipment, furniture, fittings, or property belonging to or under the control of ION, or the property of any student or member of staff, visitor or the local community and also including computer misuse and misuse of the world wide web (including the accessing and downloading of pornographic material).
- 40.4.4. Been involved in the misappropriation of property belonging to ION, fellow students, host venues, research/clinic participants, or local community, including computer files.
- 40.4.5. Acted (physical, written, verbal) in an aggressive, violent, indecent, disorderly, threatening manner or assaulted, engaged in harassment, bullying or otherwise grievously insulted any fellow student, staff, visitor (in person or online) to ION, research participants or members of the local community.
- 40.4.6. Contravened our anti-discrimination policy (ability, disability, age, gender identity, sexuality, marital status, race, colour or political or religious beliefs).
- 40.4.7. Breached the confidentiality of clients, research participants, fellow students, or ION staff.
- 40.4.8. Invaded or abused or attempted to abuse the security, integrity or privacy of any files or confidential material (including those held within ION's computer system).
- 40.4.9. Acted in an unprofessional manner towards ION staff/students or clients in the Training Clinic or research participants.
- 40.4.10. Been involved in an academic or professional offence (including failure to notify ION you are unfit to practise).
- 40.4.11. Engaged in fraud, bribery and corruption, deceit, deception, or dishonesty in relation to ION, its clients, research participants and its staff.
- 40.4.12. Behaved in a way that brings the Institute into disrepute.
- 40.4.13. Been found guilty of any criminal offence such as may damage the good name of the Institute, or behaved in such a way on the premises of ION as would be deemed to amount to a criminal offence had such behaviour occurred in a public place.
- 40.4.14. Repeatedly cancel given clinic appointment dates.

- 40.4.15. Been removed from clinical practise/research project due to serious misconduct in relation to the [Fitness to Practise](#) policy.
- 40.4.16. Failed to comply with a previously imposed penalty under this code.
- 40.4.17. Espouse views of extremism that are inaccurate, overly simplistic, stereotypical, or are themselves divisive.
- 40.4.18. Failed to meet minimum performance standards in clinic, including being not fully or unprepared for client consultations.

## **41. BREACH OF THE ION AND UOP CODES OF CONDUCT FOR STUDENT BEHAVIOUR**

- 41.1. Any breach of the Code of Conduct will be dealt with under the Student Disciplinary Procedure for either ION or UoP students (see [Section F: Student Conduct Policy](#))

## **42. BURDEN OF PROOF**

- 42.1. Panels with responsibility for administering codes (Student Behaviour, Fitness to Practice and Academic Integrity) do not have the same powers as a court of law. They work in line with the common-law principles of 'natural justice', which means that decisions will be made fairly and reasonably, and based on evidence, and that student will be given an opportunity to put forward their version of events before a decision about an alleged offence are made and before any disciplinary penalty is imposed. Decisions are made "on the balance of probabilities" – the civil level of proof, rather than "beyond reasonable doubt" - the criminal level of proof. In matters relating to misconduct, the case against the student will be deemed proven if it is substantiated on the balance of probabilities.

## **43. STUDENT DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE**

- 43.1. Any member of staff, client, research participant or student who has reason to believe that a student has breached the Code of Conduct for Student Behaviour should notify the Head of Undergraduate Courses or if the breach is related to [Fitness to Practise](#), the Training Clinic Lead or related to research to the Chair of the Research Ethics Committee (Dean), who will notify the Head of Undergraduate Courses.
- 43.2. The member of staff, client, research participant or student initiating the investigation is hereinafter called the complainant.
- 43.3. The Head of Undergraduate Courses will acknowledge receipt of the notification usually within five working days of receipt and will investigate or initiate (research) the alleged breach of the Code of Conduct for Student Behaviour (hereinafter called the alleged offence).

- 43.4. The Head of Undergraduate Courses will within 5 working days of receipt of an allegation notify the student who is alleged to have committed the offence that an investigation is proceeding.
- 43.5. Where the conduct complained of seems likely to amount to criminal activity, ION may decide to ask the police to initiate their own enquiries, in which case ION's enquiry may be suspended.
- 43.6. The investigation by the Head of Undergraduate Courses will usually include interviews with the complainant and the student accused of the alleged offence. The findings will be presented to the Student Disciplinary Panel, which will include the Dean usually within 10 working days.
- 43.7. If the allegation is admitted or proven on the balance of probability, the Panel will determine the penalty and will consider the student's disciplinary record and will write to the student with their decision, usually within five working days.

#### **44. PENALTIES**

- 44.1. The penalties available to the Panel are:
  - 44.1.1. Informal caution if the Panel considers that an offence has been committed but it is not sufficiently serious to warrant a disciplinary or an academic penalty as set out below. An informal caution is not a penalty under this code however a record of the correspondence in relation to the informal caution will be kept on the student's record and further misconduct may result in disciplinary action being taken.
  - 44.1.2. A formal written warning concerning the student's future conduct.
  - 44.1.3. A formal caution is a penalty under this code and may be delivered in writing, electronically, or orally in the presence of at least one witness but will always be confirmed in writing to the student. Formal cautions are permanently recorded on the student's electronic record for as long as that record is held.
  - 44.1.4. Exclusion from the course. A student who is excluded will be provided with the reasons in writing and will be informed about the right to appeal against the decision. A copy of the letter will be forwarded to the CEO.
- 44.2. The action taken against the student will be entered on their record.
- 44.3. Where required, notification of any action will be sent to the appropriate regulator and professional body.
- 44.4. There will be no entitlement to any reimbursement of fees if a student expelled or subjected to any other disciplinary penalty under this code other than any entitlement that a student has under law.

44.5. If the allegation is found not proven, the Panel will write to the student with their decision, usually within 5 working days. No indication of the action taken against the student will be entered on their record.

44.6. Appeals – see [Section H: Academic Appeals and Complaints](#).

## **45. FITNESS TO PRACTISE (CLINICAL COURSES ONLY)**

ION recognises that in conferring awards, that lead to a professional qualification, admission to a professional body and registration, it must be satisfied that the student will be a safe and suitable entrant to the profession.

45.1. Students on courses leading to professional qualifications should also acknowledge that it is in their interests not to proceed into a career for which they may not be well suited or for which a professional body may not register them and that they should not engage in any conduct that renders them not fit to be admitted to and practise that profession.

45.2. “When we say that someone is ‘**fit to practise**’ we mean that they have the skills, knowledge, and character to practise their profession safely and effectively. Finding that a registrant’s fitness to practise is “impaired” means that there are concerns about their ability to practise safely and effectively. It also includes acts by a registrant which may have an impact on public protection or confidence in the profession or the regulatory process. This may include matters not directly related to professional practice.” CNHC

45.3. Our fitness to practise processes are not designed to punish students. They are designed to protect the public from those who are not fit to practise. Finding that a student’s fitness to practise is “impaired” means that there are concerns about their ability to practise safely and effectively. This may mean that they should not practise at all. Or that they should be limited in what they are allowed to do for a period of time within the context of regulations on module enrolment and assessment deadlines. ION will take appropriate action (Fitness to Practise Procedure), in consultation with the student, to make this happen. Sometimes students make mistakes that are unlikely to be repeated. This may mean that the student’s fitness to practise is unlikely to be impaired. Students do make mistakes or have lapses in behaviour. Our processes do not mean that we will pursue every isolated or minor lapse, however these will be pointed out and feedback given on how to avoid repetition.

45.4. BANT Student Membership or Full Membership (those practitioners with existing membership) is a course requirement for the degree (Levels 5 & 6) and those on the Graduate Diploma who wish to progress to the Full BANT membership and CNHC registration.

- 45.5. Students undertaking nutritional therapy training at ION must, always, adhere to the regulator (CNHC) and professional body (BANT) codes and the ION Code of Conduct for Student Behaviour.
- 45.6. The BANT Professional Practice Committee (PPC) sets the standards for professional practice incorporating the CNHC Code of Conduct, Performance and Ethics in the BANT Professional Practice Handbook, and monitors their implementation by practitioners. BANT student members can access the Professional Practice Handbook from their BANT dashboard.
- 45.7. At ION, student fitness to practise (knowledge and skills, health, and behaviour) is monitored throughout the course in class and forum-based activities, in written and practical assessments, communications with staff, clients and research participants and in Extenuating Circumstances Claims and on external media platforms and BANT forums.
- 45.8. It is the responsibility of all staff to report concerns about, and potential breaches of the Fitness to Practice Policy (also see Extenuating Circumstances Policy, Change of Study Procedure, and Safeguarding Policy).
- 45.9. ION is bound to report serious misconduct to professional bodies and regulators.
- 45.10. The designated co-leads for Safeguarding (see [Safeguarding Policy](#)) are the Clinical Practice 2 module coordinator and Training Clinic Lead, usually the same person.

## **46. PRINCIPLES RELATING TO STUDENT BEHAVIOUR ON CLINICAL & RESEARCH COURSES.**

- 46.1. In the context of fitness to practise, successful completion of a course leading to admission to a professional body and registration requires adherence to both the requirements of BANT and the CNHC, the [ION Code of Conduct for Student Behaviour](#) and of these regulations and procedures.
- 46.2. Students are expected to behave in a manner appropriate to the codes of the relevant professional and regulating bodies, the [ION Code of Conduct for Student Behaviour](#) and these Regulations within the clinical environment and outside of the clinical environment.
  - 46.2.1. Students' communication and demeanour in the clinic environment and outside the clinic environment should be polite, respectful, ethical, and professional.
  - 46.2.2. Students should ensure that they arrive punctually for clinic appointments and that documents are sent to clinic supervisors/others in a timely fashion.

- 46.2.3. Students should ensure that they are adequately prepared (knowledge, skills) for clinical practice.
- 46.2.4. Conduct is continuously assessed with the expectation that the Code of Conduct for Student Behaviour, and the BANT Professional Practice guidelines are always observed.
- 46.3. Students will always act in the best interests of their clients, research participants, fellow students, staff, and others, and conduct themselves in a professional manner.
- 46.4. Students will report to their level leader/ Training Clinic Lead behaviours and actions by others that may put clients, fellow students, staff, and others at risk. Students will report to their Module Coordinator behaviours and actions by others that may put research participants, fellow students, staff, and others at risk. Failure to report such actions could lead to disciplinary action being taken against such a student. Persons making disclosures must identify themselves.
- 46.5. Students must disclose any criminal convictions (including spent convictions) in their course application. It is a requirement that any change from your original application, regarding criminal convictions or cautions that arise over the duration of the course, be disclosed at the earliest opportunity. This includes a decision by any other regulator. If a student fails to disclose such information and it subsequently comes to light, the student will be referred to [Fitness to Practise Procedures](#).
- 46.6. Students must disclose any health concerns and disabilities in their course application. It is a requirement that any change from the original application, regarding health or disability status that arise over the duration of the course that might affect fitness to practice, be disclosed at the earliest opportunity.
  - 46.6.1. It is the student's responsibility to notify ION if their general health deteriorates while on the course.
  - 46.6.2. It is the student's responsibility to notify ION if they have: a severe and/or relapsing mental illness or health complaint that is not being managed or prevents the student from giving full attention to studies and practice or affects behaviour (See [Code of Conduct for Student Behaviour](#)), a notifiable disease under the UK Health Protection Regulations 2010; or any other circumstance, which may call into question fitness to practice.
  - 46.6.3. The student must also inform their general practitioner if they suspect that they are suffering from or have been in contact with a serious communicable disease and that the student has have been engaged in nutritional therapy practice, under supervision.
  - 46.6.4. Students must not travel to the UK if suffering from or have been in contact with a serious communicable disease.

- 46.6.5. Evidence will be required from an appropriately qualified healthcare practitioner/s (member of a professional body and registered with the appropriate regulator) regarding a student's health status so that fitness to practise can be assessed.
- 46.6.6. If a student fails to disclose such information or fails to provide evidence when requested and it subsequently comes to light, the student will be referred to the Fitness to Practise Procedures.
- 46.7. Certain students are required to have BANT Student/Full Membership/other memberships and are bound to observe the guidance set out within the BANT Professional Practice Handbook which incorporates the CNHC codes/membership codes. If a student's behaviour/health/attitude/knowledge is inappropriate so as to compromise client welfare or contradict the guidelines, the student will be referred to a [Fitness to Practise Procedures](#).

## **47. SERIOUS MISCONDUCT**

- 47.1. The following circumstances in addition to those above would, prima facie, render a student unfit to practise (also see [Code of Conduct for Student Behaviour](#)):
  - 47.1.1. Offences against the vulnerable, including children, the elderly and the mentally incapacitated.
  - 47.1.2. Engaging in romantic or sexual personal relationships with a client or research participant.
  - 47.1.3. Chronic drug or alcohol abuse or other addictive behaviour that prevents the ability to act as a facilitator to the client, e.g., imposing one's belief onto the client, projecting the student's own health condition onto the client.
  - 47.1.4. Acting in a violent, indecent, disorderly, threatening, coercive, bullying, or offensive manner on or away from ION premises.
  - 47.1.5. Conviction of a relevant criminal offence, or the acceptance of a caution in relation to such an offence of a nature which suggests the student may pose a risk to their clients, research participants, staff, peers, or others.
  - 47.1.6. Assaulting, engaging in sexual or racial harassment, or otherwise grievously insulting any fellow student, member of ION staff, or any visitor, research participant or client to ION; or engaged in sexist or racist behaviour such as may be liable to give serious offence to fellow students, ION staff, visitors (including online), clients, or members of the local community.
  - 47.1.7. Intimidating clients, research participants, fellow students, staff, or others on religious or other grounds.
  - 47.1.8. Repeatedly being unprepared for clinical practice.
  - 47.1.9. Ignoring feedback on performance and providing incorrect/dangerous/unethical advice to a client or research participant.

- 47.1.10. Failing to comply with a previously imposed penalty under the [Code of Conduct for Student Behaviour](#).
- 47.1.11. Failure to rectify behaviour that has been subject to any disciplinary actions.
- 47.1.12. Repeated inappropriate behaviour towards others.
- 47.1.13. Falsifying client or other professional records.
- 47.1.14. Breaching confidentiality.
- 47.1.15. Severe and/or relapsing mental illness or health complaint that is not being managed or prevents the student from giving full attention to studies and practice or affects behaviour.
- 47.1.16. A notifiable disease under the UK Health Protection (Notification) Regulations 2010.
- 47.1.17. Practising nutritional therapy (giving advice) while not qualified to do so, falsifying, or misleading re qualified status.
- 47.1.18. Complaints or appeals that are frivolous and vexatious e.g., obsessive, harassing, unreasonable manner non-meritorious or repetitive, designed to cause disruption or annoyance, or lacks serious purpose or value.
- 47.1.19. Any other circumstance which may call into question fitness to practise.
- 47.2. Serious misconduct will be recorded on the student's record and reported to the relevant professional body and regulator/s.

## **48. FITNESS TO PRACTISE PROCEDURE (CLINICAL PRACTISE COURSES)**

- 48.1. General Overview: This is the procedure to be followed regarding the clinical practice courses only where the professional and regulatory bodies involved require ION to say that the student is not only academically qualified to practise, but also to be suitable and fit to practise. It sets out the procedures to be followed to determine whether there is a cause for concern and if so, whether it is of such seriousness that the Fitness to Practise procedure should be invoked, or whether the concerns can be addressed by supporting and managing the student.
- 48.2. Any concerns about fitness to practice will be discussed with the student either before their assessment or during their assessment feedback.
- 48.3. The Training Clinic Lead, module coordinator or clinical supervisor may decide not to allow an assessment consultation to take place or can interject at any point in an assessment consultation if there is any issue with fitness to practice, this includes being not fully or unprepared for clinic consultations. Initially the student will be removed from the consultation and given advice so as to continue in a more appropriate manner. If the student ignores the advice or is incapable of following the advice, the clinical supervisor will take over the consultation. It will be the



discretion of the clinical supervisor if the student remains in the consultation for the remainder of the appointment. The incident will be discussed with the student during their feedback session and documented and discussed with the Training Clinic Lead. The student will be informed if their behaviour is considered temporary requiring ECs or long term, and or serious misconduct. Fitness to practice will be reviewed (informally or formally depending upon the issue) with the student before their next client consultation.

- 48.4. If the student's health, behaviour, or conduct raises serious or persistent concern, the module coordinator, clinic supervisor or Lead Clinic Supervisor is obliged to exclude the student from clinical attendance pending investigation, which may render the student not fit to practise. Any incidences/concerns of this nature are recorded in the student's performance feedback and student's central record together with any outcomes. The student must demonstrate fitness to practise before taking any further consultations.

## **49. TEMPORARILY UNFIT TO PRACTISE PROCEDURES.**

- 49.1. A student may be deemed temporarily unfit to practise, incapable of conducting a consultation in the best interests of the client, due to extenuating circumstances e.g., a student is anxious or upset due to events in their personal life. Such decisions are made by a clinic supervisor following a discussion with the student, and in consultation with the module coordinator.
- 49.2. The student will need to make a successful extenuating circumstances (ECs) claim. If the ECs claim is unsuccessful the student may fail the module. The student can return to clinical practice as soon as the negative effects of extenuating circumstances have subsided, and they can demonstrate fitness to practise. All incidences will be logged in the student's clinic feedback and the student is required to reflect on any such incidences in their personal development portfolio (PDP).
- 49.3. Where there may be more serious concerns about fitness to practise over a longer period, the Long Term Unfit to Practise procedures are followed.

## **50. LONG TERM UNFIT TO PRACTISE PROCEDURES.**

- 50.1. Initiation:
- 50.1.1. Any concerns that a student may have acted in such a way or may suffer from a health problem which may render that student not fit to practise or would likely exclude them from either professional body membership or regulatory body registration, must be made in writing and addressed to the Training Clinic Lead.
- 50.1.2. These concerns may be linked to an incident within the Institute, or externally such as a criminal conviction.

50.1.3. The Training Clinic Lead will conduct a preliminary investigation to consider if misconduct may have taken place or health problems exist.

50.2. Investigation:

50.2.1. The student will be notified in writing of the preliminary investigation, which will consist of an informal interview. This will state:

- a) Details of the concern/complaint
- b) Who will be present at the interview
- c) The date, time, and location
- d) Whether the student will be suspended temporarily from participating in the course at this stage
- e) Their entitlement to be accompanied

50.2.2. During the preliminary investigation, where the critical incident relates to a health condition, the student will be required to attend an independent medical examination.

50.2.3. A written report of the outcome of the investigation is produced by the Training Clinic Lead within 15 working days and sent to the Fitness to Practise Panel. Within 5 working days of receipt of the report, the Fitness to Practise Panel will decide the outcome, which may be:

- a) Dismissal of the concern/complaint
- b) Issue of interim actions or a formal warning
- c) Referral of concern/complaint to the Fitness to Practise Panel

50.2.4. Within 5 working days of the decision, the Fitness to Practise Panel will notify the student in writing of the outcome of the investigation and if they have been referred to attend in person or virtually a Fitness to Practise Panel, when and where this will take place, and who will be present. They will be sent a copy of the report and any other evidence. If a student has been suspended temporarily, they will be informed whether this remains or has been lifted or any changes made to the original restriction.

## **51. FITNESS TO PRACTISE PANEL**

51.1. The Fitness to Practise Panel members consist of the Head of Undergraduate Courses (Chair), CP2 module coordinator, or a level leader, and a note taker to record the proceedings of the meeting.

51.2. Fitness to Practise Panel Attendees - the student, student's support person, any witnesses if relevant.

51.3. The student is invited to attend with another person of their choosing for support, but not to represent the student.

- 51.4. The student will be given a minimum of 10 working days' notice of the date. The meeting can go ahead without the student if there is not a reasonable explanation for their absence.
- 51.5. The meeting may be delayed if a reasonable request is made.

## **52. PROCEDURE OF THE FITNESS TO PRACTISE PANEL**

- 52.1. The outcomes shall be decided on the evidence before the Panel. Decisions must be fair and reasonable and shall be determined on the balance of probabilities.
- 52.2. The Chair will explain the purpose of the meeting and outline the procedure to be followed and introduce the members and others present.
  - 52.2.1. The Panel will review the written report from the Training Clinic Lead.
  - 52.2.2. The student if present, will address the Panel, providing a statement and presenting their evidence. The Panel may ask questions of the student presenting the report and any witnesses.
  - 52.2.3. The student can ask questions through the Chair.
- 52.3. At the Chair's discretion, the panel may declare any matter introduced as inadmissible if they do not deem this to be related to the case being heard.
- 52.4. The student, support person, and any witnesses must withdraw from the meeting as requested by the Chair.
- 52.5. After deliberation, the Panel will decide the outcome.
- 52.6. Within 2 working days the student will be sent a written statement of the findings.

## **53. FITNESS TO PRACTICE PANEL OUTCOMES**

- 53.1. Continue with the course although lost clinic time may mean the student has to repeat and pay for the module.
- 53.2. Recommend further ongoing action e.g., monitoring, supervision and support which may have an impact on module performance.
- 53.3. Suspend studies. Returning upon demonstration that the concern has been resolved.
- 53.4. Terminate current studies and provide an exit award if applicable.
- 53.5. Suggest withdrawal, as no alternative course is available to offer.

- 53.6. Termination of registration as evidence/decision deemed student as unfit to practise.
- 53.7. Inform the CNHC of the decision so they may consider any future application for registration.

## **54. CODE OF PRACTICE GOVERNING ETHICAL CONDUCT OF RESEARCH**

Research may be defined as “a process of investigation leading to new insights, effectively shared. It includes work of direct relevance to the needs of commerce, industry, and to the public and voluntary sectors; scholarship; the invention and generation of ideas, images, performances, artefacts including design, where these lead to new or substantially improved insights; and the use of existing knowledge in experimental development to produce new or substantially improved materials, devices, products, and processes, including design and construction.” *Universities UK (2012) Concordat to Support Research Integrity*.

- 54.1. ION is committed to the five commitments outlined in the Concordat to Support Research Integrity (2019 Revision); and the principles contained within the ION Code of Practice Governing the Ethical Conduct of Research which promotes good practice and preventing misconduct.
- 54.2. ION is guided by the fundamental principle that research involving humans should involve no more than minimal risk to physical or psychological well-being.
- 54.3. ION is concerned to protect the rights, dignity, health, safety, and privacy of research participants, including researchers and the integrity of the environment. ION is also concerned to protect the health, safety, rights and academic freedom of researchers and its reputation as a centre for properly conducted, quality research. *Universities UK (2019) Concordat to Support Research Integrity*.
- 54.4. ION is responsible for ensuring that its research is carried out in conformity with current legislation. Relevant Data Protection legislation and ION guidance in data security must be observed in the collection, use, storage, back-up and eventual destruction of all data.
- 54.5. ION is an educational charity and is guided by charity law. ION will only use its funds for research that falls within its charitable objectives. Additionally, charity law imposes certain obligations and restrictions on the use of charitable funds for research, for example a requirement to disseminate research findings, and a proscription on funding research for the purpose of commercial or private gain.
- 54.6. ION provides induction and ongoing staff development (supervision, mentoring and training) for all staff and members of the Research Ethics Committee (REC) on research integrity.

- 54.7. ION also expects its researchers, research module leaders and supervisors, and REC committee members to be familiar with their obligations in relation to the relevant external bodies and to ensure that their work complies with these guidelines and expectations, regardless of the source of funding.
- 54.8 ION is committed to Open Access (OA) publishing. Peer-reviewed research will be made freely available online, with as few restrictions on how the works may be re-used as possible.

## **55. TERMS OF ENGAGEMENT RELATING TO ETHICAL CONDUCT OF RESEARCH**

- 55.1. All students are responsible for the success of their project and for achieving highly developed subject-specific knowledge, skills, general problem-solving ability and transferable skills throughout the research skills and project modules. Students are encouraged to take control of their engagement with their supervisor.
- 55.2. As a student it is expected:
  - 55.2.1. To observe the relevant regulation and policies for your ION degree programme.
  - 55.2.2. Agree to a timetable of meetings with project supervisors. A minimum notice period of two weeks is needed in which the supervisor is approached for an appointment.
  - 55.2.3. To prepare for and undertake meetings with your supervisor and provide a written record of these meetings (using the 'Supervision Record' word document on the module info page)
  - 55.2.4. To attend all meetings. If you are unable to attend, notice must be given to the supervisor (at least 48 hours).
  - 55.2.5. If you fail to attend and do not give notice to your supervisor, the appointment will count as one of your designated meetings.
  - 55.2.6. You can request a maximum of five, hourly meetings with your supervisor before submitting the research project.
  - 55.2.7. To agree to confirm that the project is completely of your own research and all data are a true representation of the research project.
  - 55.2.8. To agree that your supervisor is a facilitator, and you will endeavour to construct your research project independently.
  - 55.2.9. To behave as a considerate member of the ION community and contribute to the development of the research culture at ION.
  - 55.2.10. To treat staff, students and members of the community with respect, consideration and courtesy, in person and when communicating online.

## **56. RESEARCH MISCONDUCT**

- 56.1. The ION Code of Practice Governing the Ethical Conduct of Research sets out the ION's position regarding research integrity and good practice and its expectations that all parties involved in research activities will exhibit the highest standards of research integrity and conduct. A failure to observe these standards may result in an allegation of Research Misconduct.
- 56.2. ION, through the Education Committee, treats all reported allegations of Research Misconduct seriously, requires that they are investigated fully and that the outcomes are reported to the appropriate Regulatory Bodies, Partners and the Education Committee.
- 56.3. Investigations of alleged Research Misconduct should be carried out thoroughly, sensitively, in a timely manner and under a presumption of innocence. The Respondent will be given an opportunity to respond before any decision is made.
- 56.4. Should the Respondent leave ION, the allegation may still be investigated as far as possible and appropriate recommendations/actions proposed and implemented.
- 56.5. Researchers, Supervisors or Students attempting to influence, victimise or intimidate an Initiator of an allegation of misconduct, or a witness will themselves be subject to disciplinary action (gross misconduct). Similarly, any organisation condoning such behaviour may also be subject to action by ION.
- 56.6. ION requires that instances of potential Research Misconduct should be reported (see Code of Practice Governing the Ethical Conduct of Research). ION will assume that an allegation is made in good faith and that it is the Initiator's belief that misconduct may have occurred. As such, ION will aim to provide appropriate support for the Initiator. Equally, ION is committed to protecting Researchers from frivolous, vexatious, or malicious accusations. Where it is found that an Initiator has acted in bad faith, which includes raising frivolous, vexatious, or malicious allegations, this will be treated as a serious matter and may lead to disciplinary action.
- 56.7. All parties involved in the management of an allegation of potential Research Misconduct are required to maintain confidentiality in so far as it is practicable. Where it is considered, it may be necessary to disclose confidential information, a balance will be drawn between preserving confidentiality and the need for informed discussion.
- 56.8. The following are examples of Research Misconduct that may be investigated using this procedure (this list is non-exclusive and non-exhaustive):
  - 56.8.1. Fabrication
  - 56.8.2. Misrepresentation of data and/or interests and/or involvement

- 56.8.3. Plagiarism (including the inappropriate use of generative AI (GAI))
- 56.8.4. Inappropriate attribution of authorisation
- 56.8.5. Inciting others to be involved in Research Misconduct
- 56.8.6. Collusion in or concealment of Research Misconduct of others
- 56.8.7. Failure to obtain appropriate permission to conduct research
- 56.8.8. Failure to declare an interest in the commission, completion or outcome of research activities
- 56.8.9. Failures to follow accepted procedures or to exercise due care in carrying out responsibilities for avoiding unreasonable risk or harm to humans and or the environment
- 56.8.10. Breach of a duty of care, including:
  - a. Breach of confidentiality without consent
  - b. The improper handling of privileged or private information on individuals collected during the research. (e.g. data protection or Information Security)
  - c. Placing parties either directly or indirectly associated with the research in danger without valid consent and appropriate safeguards being in place
  - d. Failing to observe legal and ethical requirements
  - e. Improper peer review of proposals, results, or research outputs
- 56.9. For the avoidance of doubt, a Researcher may be subject to an allegation of misconduct in research for:
  - 56.9.1. Acts of omission as well as acts of commission, and
  - 56.9.2. Failing to report an act of Research Misconduct.

## **57. ETHICAL CONDUCT OF RESEARCH PROCEDURES**

- 57.1. ION aims to promote good academic practice in research by asking individual researchers to complete and retain an initial assessment document (Ethics Application Form Part A), to demonstrate that ethical implications have been considered. Where there are ethical implications, an Ethics Approval Form Part B must be completed and submitted to the Research Ethics Committee.
  - 57.1.1. All applications for research ethics approval to the Research Ethics Committee should be submitted using the research ethics approval application forms.
  - 57.1.2. Applications must be complete, dated and signed and prepared in accordance with the format provided.

- 57.1.3. Applications from students must be checked and signed by the Research Project module coordinator.
- 57.1.4. Staff applications must be signed by the relevant line manager.
- 57.1.5. Ethical approval shall be obtained before the commencement of any research which has ethical implications. The Research Ethics Committee may allow part of the research to commence, prior to full approval being granted for those aspects of the research which do not relate to the ethical implications, but which are intended to contribute to the final piece of research.
- 57.1.6. The Research Ethics Committee reserves the right to request modifications or clarifications of any applications/proposals.
- 57.1.7. A Principal Investigator or researcher cannot attend any discussion involving their own research proposal even if they are members of the Committee (except by invitation).
- 57.1.8. Members must declare any special interest including personal, departmental, or financial etc.
- 57.1.9. If the Chair is involved in any such conflict of interest(s) then the vice-chair or nominee from the Education Committee will take over until the discussion is concluded.
- 57.1.10. The Research Ethics Committee will seek expert guidance or advice as required through the co-opting of additional membership.
- 57.1.11. Applications for Research Ethics Committee approval should reach the Administrator no later than seven working days before the meeting at which they are to be considered.
- 57.1.12. Committee meeting dates are published in advance of the Academic Calendar and Module Handbooks.
- 57.1.13. The Research Ethics Committee will maintain a register of all current projects involving students to enable a full overview of research activity.
- 57.1.14. The Research Ethics Committee will report serious events to the Education Committee.
- 57.1.15. The Research Ethics Committee will report suspected incidents of Research Misconduct to the Education Committee.

## **58. RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE**

- 58.1. A quorum of the Research Ethics Committee shall comprise a minimum of 40% of the members, including the Chair or their nominee and excluding the administrator. The Research Ethics Committee should not normally consider applications unless at least 40% of the Committee are able to consider the applications, excluding the administrator. However, provision may be made to approve applications by Chair's Action or through a smaller panel where business cannot be postponed until the



next calendared meeting. In this case, Chair's Action or panel consideration and decisions should be recorded and reported at the next opportunity to the Research Ethics Committee.

- 58.2. Applications to the ethics committee are circulated in advance of the meeting allowing conflict of interest by members to be declared in advance of the Committee meeting. Members with a conflict of interest will not be able to contribute to the processing or outcome of the identified application but may be able to remain present or participate in a discussion if invited by the Committee. Conflicts of interest will be recorded in the minutes.
- 58.3. In exceptional cases, Chair's Action can be applied in between scheduled meetings, but the use of this will be avoided where a decision by the Committee can be made by an electronic meeting or correspondence instead. Where Chair's Action has taken place, it will be reported and ratified at the next scheduled meeting.
- 58.4. Where the Committee has set conditions, and it agrees that these conditions can be reviewed and considered as having been met by the Chair, this can occur outside of scheduled meetings.
- 58.5. The Chair, along with a member of the Education Committee, will also be responsible for regulating access to students as research participants from both internal and external applicants. This is to protect students from external surveys that have not received ethical approval from a relevant body and avoid over-burdening them with participation requests.
- 58.6. The Chair along with a member of the Education Committee must meet to approve permission to proceed for Stage 3 and Stage 4 applications.
- 58.7. Where it is not clear which class proposed undergraduate research falls into, advice should be sought from the Chair. If it is not clear whether the research falls under Class 1, it should be forwarded to Research Ethics Committee for review.

## **59. PROCEDURE OF THE RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE**

- 59.1. The Committee shall consider each Application for Ethics Approval, and the decision of the Committee shall be either:
  - 59.1.1. to approve the application
  - 59.1.2. to approve the application subject to conditions or modifications
  - 59.1.3. not to approve the application but invite the applicant to resubmit a revised or new application after addressing the concerns/conditions of the committee
  - 59.1.4. not to approve the application

- 59.2. The Committee will refer Applications for Ethics Approval for external consideration and/or approval as necessary.
- 59.3. The applicant shall be notified by the administrator of the Committee's decision via email within seven working days of the meeting at which the application was considered.
- 59.4. Relevant legislation and professional guidance should be applied to all research work as well as the Code of Practice Governing the Ethical Conduct of Research.

## **60. RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE OUTCOMES**

- 60.1. Approval shall normally be for the duration of the research project which should be stated in the application form.
- 60.2. An application which has been approved subject to conditions and/or modifications should be resubmitted by the applicant, and supervisor where relevant with revisions as required to the Committee Administrator within 10 working days of the date of the notification email.
- 60.3. Approval shall normally be for the duration of the research project which should be stated in the application form.
- 60.4. Research should not normally begin until such modifications have been provided and approved by the Committee or separately by Chair's action.
- 60.5. The Committee may require as part of the Application for Approval, either written confirmation that the Institute's Insurers are content for their policy to apply, or that appropriate additional insurance cover needs been arranged.
- 60.6. The Committee may require that changes are made to a research protocol for health, safety and wellbeing reasons.
- 60.7. The Committee may request the researcher, and supervisor where relevant to submit a new application, with or without advice to the applicant. The new application will receive a new Ethics Application Number and will be considered by the Committee at another meeting.
- 60.8. The Committee may refuse to accept a revised application. If a proposal has been rejected and new information becomes available, a revised application may be submitted.

## SECTION G: ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

### 61. ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

- 61.1. ION fosters academic citizenship, courtesy, honesty, and mutual respect. ION develops the practice in academic writing to promote the goals of learning, developing the ability to synthesise and critically evaluate information, increase the validity of assessment, and demonstrate our commitment to ethical scholarly practice. We consider cheating, seeking to gain an unfair advantage and any attempt to pass off the work of others without giving them recognition as unacceptable. Students (not SAC) are afforded the opportunity to upload their assessments, more than once, for self-checking via a Turnitin portal found within the Academic and Study Skills RelION pages. We take steps to prevent its occurrence and address issues that arise. ION acknowledges that applying academic conventions is a skill that must be learned. Students and the Institute must invest in this process.
- 61.2. Academic integrity means honesty and responsibility in scholarship and practice. Assessments, exams, and practical assessments exist to help students to learn. The grades achieved show how fully the learning outcomes of a module have been attained. Therefore, all assessed work, and all grades should result from the student's own understanding and effort.
- 61.3. The most common forms of failing to meet academic requirements are the inappropriate use of Artificial Intelligence (AI), taking another's work and not citing appropriately, collusion, and exam cheating.

### 62. BRIBERY

- 62.1. Bribery can be defined as the act of offering, giving, promising, asking, agreeing, receiving, accepting, or soliciting something of value or of an advantage so to induce or influence an action or decision.
- 62.2. A bribe refers to any inducement, reward, or object/item of value offered to another individual to gain a personal advantage.
- 62.3. Staff at ION and fellow students cannot accept the following in return for unacceptable personal gain:
  - 62.3.1. Gifts and hospitality
  - 62.3.2. Facilitation payments
  - 62.3.3. Favours, sexual or otherwise
- 62.4. It is a student's responsibility to report any acts/attempts of bribery.
- 62.5. Bribery is viewed as a misconduct (see [Code of Conduct for Student Behaviour](#))

## 63. PLAGIARISM

- 63.1. Plagiarism can be defined as ‘the act of stating or implying’ that another person’s work is your own. There is a spectrum of degrees of plagiarism and several types, including self-plagiarism (work already marked is used in a subsequent assessment) and using AI or essay writing services. ION recognises that there will be situations where plagiarism is inadvertent. This is considered in the response to the first, minor incidence.
- 63.2. You may be seen as plagiarising if you:
- 63.2.1. Submit an assessment, online exam answers, etc. to be marked or reviewed that you have not written on your own.
  - 63.2.2. Quote or paraphrase from source without crediting the original author or citing the author but not presenting their words as a quote.
  - 63.2.3. Cite data, diagrams, pictures, recipes etc. without crediting the original source.
  - 63.2.4. Propose another author’s idea as if it were your own.
  - 63.2.5. Copy an answer or text generated by AI or similar see [UoP website: Using AI at University](#).
  - 63.2.6. Fabricate references, use incorrect references, or not use references.
  - 63.2.7. Copy answers or text from another student or exemplar and submit it as your own.
  - 63.2.8. Submit someone else’s presentation, client case, essay, etc. with only minor alterations.
  - 63.2.9. Self-plagiarism - This occurs when a student submits material for assessment which has been previously submitted as part of another assessment submission and which has been marked (including a match to work submitted on a previous course and that course has been used for [Recognition of Prior Learning](#)). The extent of the offence is evaluated using the below categories (Table 1).
- 63.3. There is no definitive list – any action which misleadingly implies someone else’s work is your own can constitute plagiarism.
- 63.4. Also see Collusion.

## 64. COLLUSION

- 64.1. A form of plagiarism, involving unauthorised co-operation between at least two people, with the intent to deceive and/or the consequent submission of highly similar work. Unless instructed otherwise, any work you submit for assessment must be your own work, even if the work has been produced because of group work. You can discuss ideas and share resources for an assessment or practical with your peers. You should never lend a draft of your work before it has been submitted or lend a completed and marked assessment to a peer or student in another cohort or year below you. Always safeguard your work.
- 64.2. If two submissions are largely similar, the students concerned are likely to be accused of colluding with each other.
- 64.3. If collusion has taken place, both/all students can be penalised.

## **65. CHEATING**

- 65.1. This consists of attempting to complete an examination that counts towards a module grade by unfair means, including:
  - 65.1.1. Copying or attempting to copy from the scripts of other students.
  - 65.1.2. Obtaining help from others in a manner not explicitly permitted by the regulations for the assessment/examination.
  - 65.1.3. Supplying help to others in a manner not explicitly permitted by the regulations for the assessment/examination or allowing work to be copied.
  - 65.1.4. Bringing into an examination/viva any unauthorised materials.
  - 65.1.5. Referring to any unauthorised material during an examination/viva.
- 65.2. Plagiarism and collusion are also forms of cheating.

## **66. MARK ADJUSTMENT**

- 66.1. For pass/fail assessments or a component of an assessment where there is a choice of the number of artifacts to be submitted and it is found 50% breeches academic integrity rules the whole assessment or component will fail. This can result in an outright failure of an assessment.
- 66.2. The following table shows the actions taken in response to breeches of academic requirements including recycling or reusing whole or parts of previously assessed work.

**Table 1: Characteristics of poor academic practice and the actions taken against them**

Category	Characteristics	Action
1. Poor Academic Practice*	<p>Collaboration or poor citation practice or where there is evidence that the student did not appreciate the rules of academic writing or where the extent can be considered so slight as to not warrant disciplinary proceedings against the student. Where this is the case, the work in question would create a very low similarity index on Turnitin, and it would normally concern issues including (but not exclusively):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Generally, two or more continuing lines copied material from sources which are cited but not in quotation marks.</li> <li>Short blocks of text / data / diagrams etc. which are not cited or may be cited but paraphrasing is very close to the original (e.g., only changing the odd word), may or may not be listed in the reference list and which have been represented, subject to minor linguistic changes, as the student's own work.</li> <li>Data/diagrams etc. taken from sources, which have not been credited and are without citation (copy and paste).</li> <li>Generally, two or more continuing lines of recycling or reusing.</li> <li>Some collaboration between students evidenced in structure and sources, but mostly original writing throughout.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Informal warning</b> issued by the Academic Integrity Panel (AIP).</p> <p><b>Outcome</b> determined by the Academic Integrity Panel.</p> <p><b>Initially</b> a mark of zero (0) will be awarded pending the outcome of the AIP. The assessment outcome (mark) is calculated based on a zero mark for the plagiarised component/s. (See procedure below this table for further explanation).</p> <p><b>Mark adjustment</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In cases of poor academic practice, the mark will reflect the academic merit of the work; the mark is likely to be low and could mean the assessment/module is failed.</li> <li>A record will be kept of the outcome for the duration of Level 4 studies.</li> </ol> <p><b>Developmental action</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The student will be referred to the Academic Support team to discuss an action plan to avoid further issues with academic integrity.</li> <li>The student is required to view the Referencing and Basic Research webinar.</li> <li>The student will make a statement, on the submission cover of the next possible assessment to Turnitin to alert the Module Coordinator to give feedback on the student's progress with meeting academic requirements.</li> </ol>

<p><b>2.</b></p>	<p>Plagiarism and/or collusion is found in cases where students have not complied with academic requirements in the following ways (this list is not exhaustive):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Generally, two or more continuing lines copied material from sources which are cited but not in quotation marks</li> <li>Short blocks of text /data/diagrams etc. which are not cited or are cited but only subject to minor amendments, may or may not be listed in the reference list and which have been represented, subject to minor linguistic changes, as the student's own work.</li> <li>Text/data/diagrams etc. taken from sources, which are unaccredited and without citation (copy and paste).</li> <li>Recycling or reusing</li> <li>Collaboration between students to produce work together with high similar indexes, similar structures, some identic blocks of text with only minor linguistic changes, similar reference lists</li> </ol>	<p><b>Formal warning</b> issued by the Academic Integrity Panel (AIP).</p> <p><b>Outcome</b> determined by the Academic Integrity Panel.</p> <p><b>Initially</b> a mark of zero (0) will be awarded pending the outcome of the AIP.</p> <p>The assessment outcome (mark) is calculated on the basis of a zero mark for the plagiarised component/s. (See procedure below this table for further explanation).</p> <p><b>Mark adjustment</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If this adjustment results in an assessment/ module fail, the student should resubmit, at the next assessment point, for a capped (40%) mark.</li> <li>If the offence occurs in a defer or refer attempt and the module is not passed as a result of the adjustment, then the student will be offered to repeat the module with penalty (fee at current price).</li> <li>A record will be kept of the penalty.</li> </ol> <p><b>Developmental action</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The student will be referred to the Academic Support team to discuss an action plan to avoid further issues with academic integrity.</li> <li>The student is required to view the Referencing webinar.</li> <li>The student will make a statement, on the submission cover of the next possible assessment to Turnitin to alert the Module Coordinator to give feedback on the student's progress with meeting academic requirements.</li> </ol>
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<p><b>3.</b></p>	<p>The line between Category 2 and Category 3 offences will be determined by the degree of originality in the assessment and the two of more pieces of work where collaboration is evident, determined by a case-by-case analysis; Plagiarism and/or collusion is found in cases where students have not adopted academic conventions in the following ways (this list is not exhaustive):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Copied material represents a large proportion of the work.</li> <li>Copied material from sources which are cited but not in quotation marks.</li> <li>Text /data/diagrams etc. which are not cited or may or may not be listed in the reference list and which have been represented, subject to minor linguistic changes, as the student's own work.</li> <li>Text/data/diagrams etc. taken from sources, which are unaccredited and without citation (copy and paste).</li> <li>Recycling or reusing.</li> <li>Collaboration between students to produce work together with very high similarity indexes, similar structures, numerous identical blocks of text with only minor linguistic changes, similar reference lists, etc.</li> <li>Cheating in an exam or viva.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Formal warning</b> issued by the Academic Integrity Panel (AIP).</p> <p><b>Outcome</b> determined by the Academic Integrity Panel.</p> <p><b>Initially</b> a mark of zero (0) will be awarded pending the outcome of the AIP.</p> <p><b>Mark adjustment</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This will result in a failure of the assessment / module. The student should resubmit, at the next assessment point, for a capped (40%) mark.</li> <li>If the offence occurs in a defer or refer attempt the module will not be passed and the student will be offered to repeat the module with penalty (fee at current price).</li> <li>A record will be kept of the penalty.</li> </ol> <p><b>Developmental action</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The student will be referred to the Academic Support team to discuss an action plan to avoid further issues with academic integrity.</li> <li>The student is required to view the Referencing and Basic Research recorded webinar.</li> <li>The student will make a statement, on the submission cover of the next possible assessment to Turnitin to alert the module coordinator to give feedback on the student's progress with meeting academic requirements.</li> </ol>
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4	<p>As for Category 2 or 3 but this is a repeat offence.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A repeat offence is defined as a piece of work identified as having been plagiarised, and which has been submitted following prior imposition of a penalty for plagiarism.</li> <li>Contemporaneous incidences are not treated as repeat offences.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Formal warning</b> issued by the Academic Integrity Panel (AIP)</p> <p><b>Outcome</b> determined by the Academic Integrity Panel.</p> <p><b>Initially</b> a mark of zero (0) will be awarded pending the outcome of the AIP.</p> <p><b>Mark adjustment</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This will result in a failure of the module. The student will be offered to retake the module with penalty (fee at current price). Dependent on the degree of discrepancy with academic requirements and the student's previous record, the AIP may instigate disciplinary proceedings.</li> <li>A record will be kept of the penalty, and it may be mentioned in any request for a reference, along with the appropriate explanation regarding improvements and engagement with understanding the requirements.</li> </ol> <p><b>Developmental action</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The student must book a tutorial with the level leader to discuss the <a href="#"><u>ION Code of Conduct for Student Behaviour</u></a>.</li> <li>The student will be referred to Academic Support to discuss</li> </ol>
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5	<p>Instances of the most severe plagiarism and/or collusion is found in cases where students have not complied with academic requirements in the following ways (this list is not exhaustive):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Purchasing of a piece of work.</li> <li>Soliciting a piece of work</li> <li>Multiple repeat offences including cheating (contemporaneous incidences are treated as individual offences).</li> <li>Fabricated references</li> <li>Using incorrect references/making up references.</li> <li>Submitting someone else's presentation, client case, essay, etc. with only minor alterations</li> <li>Recycling or reusing</li> </ol>	<p><b>Disciplinary</b> issued by the Disciplinary Panel</p> <p><b>Initially</b> a mark of zero (0) will be awarded pending the outcome of the AIP.</p> <p><b>Outcome</b> determined by Disciplinary Panel.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initially the student is referred to the Academic Integrity Panel who will request a Disciplinary Panel. See <a href="#">Code of Conduct for Student Behaviour</a>.</li> <li>A disciplinary panel has the power to impose penalties up to and including exclusion.</li> <li>This will result in a failure of the module. The student will be offered to retake the module with penalty (fee at current price).</li> <li>A record will be kept of the penalty, and it will potentially be mentioned in any request for a reference, along with the appropriate explanation regarding improvements and engagement with understanding the requirements.</li> </ol> <p><b>Mark adjustment</b></p> <p>This will be determined by the Disciplinary Panel.</p> <p><b>Developmental action</b></p> <p>If not excluded:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The student must book a tutorial with the Head of Undergraduate Courses to discuss the ION <a href="#">Code of Conduct for Student Behaviour</a>.</li> <li>The student will be required to meet a member of the Academic Support team (either face to face or via the Zoom to support any additional learning needs and to create an action plan to avoid further issues with academic conduct</li> <li>The student will make a statement, on the submission cover of the next possible assessment to Turnitin to alert the module coordinator to give feedback on the student's progress with meeting academic requirements.</li> </ol>
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\*The minor first occurrence in the first year or level of the student's course should normally be treated as poor academic practice.

## **67. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY PROCEDURE**

- 67.1. Category 1 to 4 cases of suspected plagiarism/collusion/exam cheating are initially evaluated by the module coordinator in conjunction with either the marker or another module coordinator, or a level leader in certain circumstances.
- 67.2. The Module Coordinator will award a temporary assessment mark of zero and forward the student's assessment to the Academic Integrity Panel (AIP), with supporting documentation and links.
- 67.3. The Panel will contact the student to notify them that their assessment has been referred for a breach in academic integrity.
- 67.4. Alleged plagiarism (includes use of AI)/collusion/exam cheating) are assessed by the Academic Integrity Panel consisting of senior academic staff and academic administration staff. The panel consider the student's history, stage of studies and the extent to which academic requirements have not been followed.
- 67.5. On review a mark may be assigned, by the module coordinator that reflects the work, excluding those elements that are not appropriately cited and referenced.
- 67.6. Where it is not clear that the work is the student's own, a viva on the assessment may be arranged.
- 67.7. For category 5 cases of suspected plagiarism/collusion/exam cheating the AIP refers the student to a Disciplinary Panel.
- 67.8. The AIP will uphold or reject the allegation of breaches of academic integrity.
- 67.9. When upheld, the AIP will determine an appropriate outcome and inform the student, copying in the module coordinator, level leader, Head of Undergraduate Courses and Head of Academic Support via email.
- 67.10. The module coordinator will remove the temporary zero mark and award a mark commensurate with the outcome awarded.
- 67.11. The student will be referred to the Academic Support team to discuss an action plan to avoid further issues with academic integrity. The Academic Support team will identify on the student's record engagement or non-engagement in this process.
- 67.12. The student may appeal against this decision within 10 working days of the outcome via e- mail to the Academic Integrity Panel.
- 67.13. Formal breaches of academic integrity are kept on the student's record and progress is monitored closely.

## **68. ACCEPTABLE FORMS OF ACADEMIC REFERENCING AND CITATION**

- 68.1. Students will follow the referencing convention specified in each assessment brief. Advice on referencing is found on the Academic and Study Skills ReIION pages.
- 68.2. Module coordinators will identify, in the assessment criteria, which referencing convention should be used. It will be either the American Psychological Association (APA) edition 7 or Vancouver. For guidance on the referencing and citation conventions of these styles, please use the [referencing@portsmouth](mailto:referencing@portsmouth) service, found on the UoP library home page.
- 68.3. Students are encouraged to explore a range of citation and referencing software tools. When using software, students should always check and adjust the output to ensure a match with guidance provided on presentation.
- 68.4. Unreferenced components of assessments will not be assessed, and this will impact on the grade awarded.

## **69. ASSESSMENT GRADES**

- 69.1. ION provides students, markers, moderators, and external examiners with detailed assessment criteria and marking schemes or competencies.
- 69.2. For each module ION undertakes marking and moderation processes to ensure that student assessment grades are appropriate and fair.
- 69.3. All assessment and module grades are provisional until scrutinised by the external examiners and ratified by ION and UoP Boards.

## SECTION H: ACADEMIC APPEALS AND COMPLAINTS

### 70. ACADEMIC APPEALS

- 70.1. An academic appeal is a request for a review of a decision made by ION relating to your academic studies including:
  - 70.1.1. Querying an assessment mark
  - 70.1.2. Fitness to Practise Panel
  - 70.1.3. Research Ethics Committee
  - 70.1.4. Academic Integrity Panel
  - 70.1.5. Extenuating Circumstances
- 70.2. Grounds for an Academic Appeal:
  - 70.2.1. If you believe you have been marked inaccurately you may appeal against the marking decision if:
    - a. The assessment was not carried out in accordance with the course and/or module regulations and procedures.
    - b. The administrative procedures were not correctly followed or that a significant mistake was made in the administrative process
- 70.3. Instructions for appealing an assessment mark can found below and outlined in [Diagram 1: Appeals Procedure](#)

### 71. INFORMAL RESOLUTION – LODGING AN ACADEMIC APPEAL

- 71.1. Before considering an appeal, you should contact your module coordinator and explore informal resolution.
- 71.2. You are expected to have reflected on the assessment feedback against the marking criteria and have identified where you believe the key issue/s to be.
- 71.3. Timeframe:
  - 71.3.1. Appeals must be submitted within 15 working days (Monday – Friday 9.00am – 5.30 pm GMT) of the assessment hand back date. In cases of training clinic appointments, within 15 working days of the feedback sheet being uploaded to your SharePoint folder.
- 71.4. Procedure and outcome:
  - 71.4.1. It is your responsibility to prepare in advance of a meeting and notify the module coordinator before the meeting of the key issue/s you wish to discuss.

- 71.4.2. Your module coordinator will inform the Academic Appeals Panel that informal resolution has been sought.
- 71.4.3. Your module coordinator will help you to understand the grade awarded against the assessment criteria or refer you to the Academic Support team for support.
- 71.4.4. If the module coordinator identifies a material irregularity in the marking, they must inform the relevant Level Leader using the Assessment Mark Change Form and copy in the Academic Appeal Panel, who will authorise the student's work to be re-marked or the mark adjusted, and the mark amendment will be notified to the student via the Academic Appeals Panel. Please note that marks may be adjust down as well as up.
- 71.4.5. If the module coordinator cannot find a material irregularity in the marking, they will inform the Academic Appeals Panel who will then inform the student of the outcome via email.
- 71.4.6. Appeals will be rejected if:
  - a. The appeal is against the academic judgement of the assessor.
  - b. If the appeal is received 15 working days after the deadline of the assessment hand back date.
  - c. An assessment has already been moderated and/or has been presented to external examiners and the mark ratified at an ION or UoP Board.
  - d. If the appeal is frivolous and vexatious e.g., obsessive, harassing, unreasonable manner, non- meritorious or repetitive, designed to cause disruption or annoyance, or lacks serious purpose or value.
- 71.4.7. The student may appeal this decision by following the formal academic appeals process.

## **72. FORMAL ACADEMIC APPEALS PROCESS**

- 72.1. If you have evidence of a material irregularity, then you may challenge your assessment grade and seek resolution through the formal Academic Appeals process.
- 72.2. It is important to understand that through this formal process your grade may stay the same, increase or decrease.
- 72.3. You will need to complete the Assessment Grade Appeal form and email this to the Academic Appeals Panel, copying in the relevant module coordinator and level leader. The form can be found on the Essential Documents section of the ReLION Landing page

72.4. Timeframe:

- 72.4.1. An appeal must be made within 10 working days of the written notification of the Informal Resolution outcome.

72.5. Procedure and outcome:

- 72.5.1. The Academic Appeal Panel consists of the Head of Undergraduate Courses, and a level leader and they will review the appeal.
- 72.5.2. The Head of Undergraduate Courses will acknowledge the appeal and investigate as necessary, discussing the appeal with appropriate members of staff and the course management.
- 72.5.3. The Academic Appeal Panel aims to respond by letter within 15 working days, but in the event a resolution is not achieved within this time frame, you will be informed of what is happening.
- 72.5.4. If you have admissible grounds to re-appeal the Formal appeal outcome you may appeal to Appeals Panel, as the Final Internal Appeal.
- 72.5.5. Appeals against specific panel decisions relating to Academic Integrity, ECs, Disciplinary, and Fitness to Practice should be directed to the Final Internal Appeals Panel (see below).
- 72.5.6. If your appeal is successful (upheld) the module coordinator will then arrange for the script to be remarked or for any practical assessment to be reorganised.
- 72.5.7. Confirmation will be given in writing on the process and rationale for the decision.
- 72.5.8. Your script will not be marked anonymously in this instance.
- 72.5.9. If the appeal is unsuccessful (not upheld) confirmation will be given in writing on the process and rationale for the decision.

### **73. FINAL INTERNAL APPEAL – APPEALING A REMARKED ASSESSMENT**

- 73.1. An appeal to the Appeals Panel (Dean and CEO), must be made, in writing, within 10 working days of the written notification of the Formal Academic Appeals outcome or Academic Integrity, ECs, Disciplinary or Fitness to Practice Panel outcomes. The Appeals Panel has the power to dismiss an appeal before it is presented if:
  - 73.1.1. The grounds are inadmissible.
  - 73.1.2. There is no evidence presented on procedural error
  - 73.1.3. There is no new evidence relevant to the case
- 73.2. If the appeal is not accepted, The Panel will advise the student the reason why this is the case and issue a Completion of Procedures letter. Appealing a Remarked Assessment (Final Internal Appeal).

- 73.3. Following relevant consultation and having reviewed your grounds for appeal, the Panel has the right to decide if the final reasons the student has given for lodging an appeal are admissible and should be allowed to progress.
- 73.4. Once determined as admissible by the Appeals Panel an appeal will be heard within 15 working days of the Appeals Panel receiving your appeal, unless a later date is agreed by you and the Panel, or you are considered to have abandoned the appeal.

## **74. FINAL INTERNAL APPEAL – APPEALING A FITNESS TO PRACTISE PANEL FINDING**

### **74.1. Timeframe:**

- 74.1.1. Should you wish to appeal against the findings of the Fitness to Practice Panel, you may do so by outlining the reasons in writing addressed to the Dean and CEO within 10 working days of receiving the decision.

### **74.2. Procedure and Outcome:**

- 74.2.1. The Final Internal Appeal Panel consists of the CEO (as Chair), and Dean or a level leader who did not sit on the committee, and a note taker to record the proceedings of the meeting. No member of the Fitness to Practise Panel, which hears the original case, shall be a member of the Appeal Panel.
- 74.2.2. Appeal hearings are arranged either in person or virtually and should be heard within 15 working days of receipt of the letter of appeal. The student is invited to attend with another person of their choosing for support, but not as a representative.
- 74.2.3. The Chair or a panel member will address the Appeal Panel to explain the decision and the reasons for it.
- 74.2.4. The student will address the Appeal Panel to explain why the decision is unfair.
- 74.2.5. The Appeal Panel will ask questions.
- 74.2.6. The Appeal Panel will decide the outcome and inform the student in writing within two working days, with the minutes of the appeal meeting and the reasons for the decision.
- 74.2.7. For ION students the final level of appeal is NTEC. See contact details in [article 74](#).
- 74.2.8. For UoP students a further an appeal of the ION outcome may be forwarded to UoP, see University of Portsmouth Collaborative Partners - Examination & Assessment Regulations <http://regulations.docstore.port.ac.uk/ExamRegION.pdf>



## **75. FINAL INTERNAL APPEAL – APPEALING A RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE DECISION**

### **75.1. Timeframe:**

- 75.1.1. Should you wish to appeal against the decisions of the Research Ethics Committee, you may do so by outlining the reasons in writing addressed to the Education Committee within 10 working days of receiving the decision.

### **75.2. Procedure and Outcome:**

- 75.2.1. The Final Internal Appeal Panel consists of the Education Committee. No member of the Fitness to Practise Panel, which hears the original case, shall be a member of the Appeal Panel.
- 75.2.2. Appeal hearings are arranged either in person or virtually and should be heard within 15 working days of receipt of the letter of appeal. The student is invited to attend with another person of their choosing for support, but not as a representative.
- 75.2.3. The Chair or a committee member will address the Appeal Panel to explain the decision and the reasons for it.
- 75.2.4. The student will address the Education Committee to explain why the decision is unfair.
- 75.2.5. The Education Committee will ask questions.
- 75.2.6. The Education Committee will decide the outcome and inform the student in writing within 10 working days, with the minutes of the appeal meeting and the reasons for the decision.
- 75.2.7. For ION students the final level of appeal is NTEC. See contact details in [article 82](#).
- 75.2.8. For UoP students a further an appeal of the ION outcome may be forwarded to UoP, see University of Portsmouth Collaborative Partners - Examination & Assessment Regulations <http://regulations.docstore.port.ac.uk/ExamRegION.pdf>

## **76. APPEALING AN ACADEMIC INTEGRITY OR EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES PANEL OUTCOME**

### **76.1. Timeframe:**

- 76.1.1. You may appeal against a decision made by the Academic Integrity Panel or Extenuating Circumstances Panel within 10 working days of the outcome via e-mail to the Academic Integrity Panel ([academicintegrity@ion.ac.uk](mailto:academicintegrity@ion.ac.uk)) or for ECs ([ECS@ion.ac.uk](mailto:ECS@ion.ac.uk)).

## 76.2. Procedure and outcome:

- 76.2.1. The Academic Integrity and ECs Appeal Panels consists senior academic staff and Academic Administration who will review the written appeal.
- 76.2.2. The Panel may in addition arranged either in person or virtually a meeting with the student which should be heard within 15 working days of receipt of the letter of appeal. The student is invited to attend with another person of their choosing for support, but not to represent the student.
- 76.2.3. The Panel will also have a note taker to record the proceedings of the meeting.
- 76.2.4. The Chair or a panel member will address the Panel to explain the decision and the reasons for it.
- 76.2.5. The student will address the Appeal Panel to explain why the decision is unfair.
- 76.2.6. The Appeal Panel will ask questions.
- 76.2.7. The Appeal Panel will provide an outcome and inform the student in writing within two days, with the minutes of the appeal meeting and the reasons for the decision.
- 76.2.8. For ION students the Appeal Panel decision is final internal step. A student may then appeal to the relevant accrediting body.
- 76.2.9. For UoP students see University of Portsmouth Collaborative Partners - Examination & Assessment Regulations  
<http://regulations.docstore.port.ac.uk/ExamRegION.pdf>

**Diagram 1: Appeals procedure**

	Appeal relating to assessment outcome	Appeal relating to academic integrity or ECs Panel outcome	Appeal relating to fitness to practise outcome
<b>Informal resolution</b> (Submit within 15 working days of the assessment hand back date)	Email to: Module coordinator	n/a	n/a

<b>Formal appeal</b> (Submit within 10 working days)	Complete assessment grade appeal form Email to: <a href="mailto:academicappeals@ion.ac.uk">academicappeals@ion.ac.uk</a> cc Appropriate level leader and module coordinator	Email to: <a href="mailto:academicintegrity@ion.ac.uk">academicintegrity@ion.ac.uk</a> for Academic Integrity Panel <b>OR</b> Email to: <a href="mailto:ECS@ion.ac.uk">ECS@ion.ac.uk</a> for ECs	Email to: Head of Undergraduate Courses
<b>Final Internal Appeal</b> (Submit within 10 working days)	Email to: <a href="mailto:appeals@ion.ac.uk">appeals@ion.ac.uk</a> (CEO, Dean)		
<b>External appeal (see <a href="#">article 82</a>)</b>	NTEC or other relevant accrediting body		
	UoP		
<b>Final External Appeal (see <a href="#">article 82</a>)</b>	Office for Independent Adjudicator (UoP students only)		

## 77. COMPLAINT'S PROCESS

- 77.1. A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction with a service provided or the lack of a service. It must relate to services that students were led to believe would be provided. This could include enrolment, contract, or finance.
- 77.2. Quite often issues can be explained and resolved quickly once a member of staff is made aware of the issue. This initial contact is known as Informal Resolution. If your issue remains unresolved or is serious, then you can seek formal resolution through the complaints process.

## 78. STAGE 1 – INFORMAL RESOLUTION – LODGING A COMPLAINT

- 78.1. If you consider that we have failed to provide you with a satisfactory service, complaints are grouped as following (see [Diagram 2: Complaints Procedure](#) below):
- 78.1.1. Payments/contract/enrolment/etc.
  - 78.1.2. Module content/delivery
  - 78.1.3. Lecture/e-unit content/delivery
  - 78.1.4. Learning support/personal Issues

- 78.2. The member of staff contacted will acknowledge the complaint and investigate as necessary, discussing the problem with appropriate other members of staff and the course management.
- 78.3. Please do not contact multiple staff in relation to your complaint, this could lengthen the time it takes to resolve the issue. The person you contact will either lead your investigation or notify you as to who will take your investigation forward.
- 78.4. We would aim to respond within 15 working days, but in the event a resolution is not achieved within this time frame, we will inform you of what is happening.
- 78.5. If the unresolved issue is with the provision of the course, please raise a formal complaint with the relevant level leader as soon as is possible.
- 78.6. If the unresolved issue/issue is with your admission decision, contract, or finance, please raise your complaint with the Academic Administration team as soon as is possible.
- 78.7. Your complaint will be recorded, acknowledged, and investigated within 15 working days. The Institute aims to resolve all complaints at this stage. If you have admissible evidence, you may appeal the Stage 1 and proceed to Stage 2.

## **79. STAGE 2 – LODGING A FORMAL COMPLAINT**

- 79.1. If your initial informal contact (Stage 1) with the Institute did not resolve your issue you may wish to make a formal complaint. You can make a formal complaint without going through informal resolution procedure.
- 79.2. Please make clear in any communication that you are making a ‘formal’ complaint and address it to the person or panel indicated in [Diagram 2: Complaints Procedure](#).
- 79.3. Timeframe:
  - 79.3.1. A complaint must be made, in writing, within 10 working days of the written notification of the Stage 1 outcome or after the critical incident.
- 79.4. Procedure and outcome:
  - 79.4.1. The appeal is reviewed by the relevant Head of Undergraduate Courses or Business Manager.
  - 79.4.2. The relevant Head of Undergraduate Courses or Business Manager will acknowledge the appeal and investigate as necessary, discussing the problem with appropriate members of staff and the course management
  - 79.4.3. We would aim to respond within 15 working days, but in the event a resolution is not achieved within this time frame, you will be informed of what is happening

- 79.4.4. If you have admissible grounds to re-appeal the Stage 2 outcome you may appeal to Appeals Panel, Stage 3.
- 79.4.5. Appeals against specific panel decisions (Academic Integrity, ECs, Disciplinary, Research Ethics Committee, and Fitness to Practice) should be directed to the Final Internal Appeals Panel. See [article 73](#), [article 74](#), [article 75](#), and [article 76](#).

## 80. COMPOSITION OF COMPLAINT'S PANELS

80.1. For Stage 2 and Stage 3 complaints please see Diagram 2 on the next page:

Diagram 2: Complaint's procedure			
	Complaint relating to academic provision and/or learning support	Complaint relating to admission, contract, finance	Complaint relating to disciplinary panel outcome
<b>Stage 1: Informal resolution</b> (Submit within 10 working days)	Email to: <a href="mailto:academicadmin@ion.ac.uk">academicadmin@ion.ac.uk</a> cc module coordinator, academic support, and level leader	Admissions: Email to: <a href="mailto:addmission@ion.ac.uk">addmission@ion.ac.uk</a>  Contract and finance: Email to: <a href="mailto:academicadmin@ion.ac.uk">academicadmin@ion.ac.uk</a>	Email to: Appeals Panel (CEO, Dean)
<b>Stage 2: Formal complaint</b> (Submit within 10 working days)	Complete complaint form and email to: <a href="mailto:complaints@ion.ac.uk">complaints@ion.ac.uk</a> cc <a href="mailto:academicadmin@ion.ac.uk">academicadmin@ion.ac.uk</a>	Complete Complaint form and email addressed to the Business Manager: <a href="mailto:complaints@ion.ac.uk">complaints@ion.ac.uk</a> cc <a href="mailto:academicadmin@ion.ac.uk">academicadmin@ion.ac.uk</a>	Email to: Appeals Panel (CEO, Dean)
<b>Stage 3: Final appeal</b>	Email to: <a href="mailto:appeals@ion.ac.uk">appeals@ion.ac.uk</a> (CEO, Dean, Head of Finance)		
<b>External appeal (see <a href="#">article 82</a>)</b>	NTEC		
	UoP		
<b>Final External Appeal (see <a href="#">article 82</a>)</b>	Office for Independent Adjudicator (UoP students only)		

## 81. PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOUR

- 81.1. When dealing with appeals and complaints, we expect you to extend the same courtesy and consideration as you expect from us. You need to be specific and constructive in dealing with the issues arising for us to be able to come to a resolution (see [Code of Conduct for Student Behaviour](#)).
- 81.2. If a complaint or appeal is frivolous and vexatious e.g., obsessive, harassing, unreasonable manner non-meritorious or repetitive, designed to cause disruption or annoyance, or lacks serious purpose or value you will be in breach the Code of Conduct for Student Behaviour.

## 82. EXTERNAL APPEAL

- 82.1. If you have evidence to suggest the Institute is in breach of NTEC's accreditation criteria (see [NTEC Handbook Appendix B: Core Criteria for Accreditation](#))<sup>1</sup>, contact the Nutritional Therapy Education Commission directly. By post The Administrator, Nutritional Therapy Education Commission, PO Box 6114, Bournemouth BH1 9BL. By phone: general enquiries 01425 462 507.
- 82.2. For UoP students see University of Portsmouth Collaborative Partners - Examination & Assessment Regulations  
<http://regulations.docstore.port.ac.uk/ExamRegION.pdf>
- 82.3. Having followed through procedures set out for internal and external appeal, UoP students are able to make a final complaint to the Office for Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA).
- 82.3.1. The OIA runs an independent scheme to review student complaints. ION is a member of this scheme. If you are unhappy with the outcome, you may be able to ask the OIA to review your complaint or appeal. You can find more information about making a complaint to the OIA, what it can and cannot look at and what it can do to put things right if something has gone wrong here: <https://www.oiahe.org.uk/students/>
- 82.3.2. You normally need to have completed the complaints or appeals procedure before you complain to the OIA. ION will send you a letter called a "Completion of Procedures Letter" when you have reached the end of our processes and there are no further steps you can take internally. If your complaint or appeal is not upheld, ION will issue you with a Completion of Procedures Letter automatically. If your complaint or appeal is upheld or partly upheld, you can ask for a Completion of Procedure Letter if you want one. You can find more information about Completion of Procedure Letters and when you should expect to receive one here:  
<https://www.oiahe.org.uk/providers/completion-of-procedures-letters/>

82.3.3. Students must make their complaint to the OIA within 12 months of completing this procedure. The 12-month period will normally run from the date of the Completion of Procedures Letter.

#### Reference

<sup>1</sup> Nutritional Therapy Council (2024) Core Curriculum for Training in Nutritional Therapy.

### **83. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT**

83.1. Under the Freedom of Information Act, you have the right to request any correspondence generated during your complaint. The fee is £10. All correspondence regarding your complaint is filed in your personal record. Contact the Business Manager who will acknowledge your request within 10 working days.

It can take up to 40 working days to provide collated paperwork.

## SECTION I: DISCLAIMER

The information contained in this handbook was correct to the best of our knowledge at the time of release. The facts are subject to change, and you should always refer to the most recent publications and information from ION to make sure you meet the course requirements.

It is the student's responsibility to log on to RelION regularly to stay informed of any changes to information contained in this handbook.