

Student Handbook 2019-20

For all SSPC Programmes EXCEPT
BSc (Hons) Criminology and Psychology

Faculty of Social Sciences
School of Economic, Social and Political
Sciences
Department of Sociology, Social Policy
and Criminology

Disclaimer

This information is issued on the condition that it does not form part of any contract between the University of Southampton and any student. The information given has been made as accurate as possible at the time of publication, but the University reserves the right to modify or alter, without any prior notice, any of the contents advertised. It should therefore be noted that it may not be possible to offer all modules or components of a programme in each academic session.

This handbook is available in alternative formats on request.

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1. Welcome

Welcome from the Faculty of Social Sciences Associate Dean (Education)

Dear Students,

Congratulations on what must have been a great last year for all of you. For our Freshers, did you know that we already think you are brilliant and we're looking forward to working with you this coming year. For our Continuing Students, you have not only won your place here, but you have progressed through your initial studies and are well on the way to achieving your degree now. For all of you, welcome (back) to Southampton, and good luck for the year to come.

Whilst many of you will be focussed on your own disciplines as your main point of contact, each of your disciplines sits within the Faculty of Social Sciences, and this brings you great opportunity. You can choose from a broad set of 'minor' subjects, many of which come from within our own Faculty. Alternatively, you can choose from a long list of broadening modules and option modules to complement your own discipline, many of which also come from our Faculty. This means that we actively support you in gaining a broad education to suit your interests and we are sure that there is something for everyone.

Within the Faculty, you may also like to know that there are numerous staff who have chosen the role of ensuring the quality and innovativeness of your experience at Southampton. My role, as Associate Dean, is to provide leadership to this group of staff, developing educational strategy and ultimately overseeing all matters to do with assessment and quality. I have a commitment to ensuring the best possible student experience and, if it is working well, I will be like the duck on the pond – calm on the surface but paddling hard underwater.

In all of our endeavours, we aim to provide a distinctive flavour to our education, both when bringing students from all over the world to Southampton, and when taking Southampton to the world. It is our hope and intention that you too will experience our different and cutting edge way of doing things, and that you will thrive and succeed in your studies and in all that University can offer you outside of your studies. Most of all, we hope that you will be happy during your time with us. This will shine through, and your positivity will be a beacon for friends, for opportunity and for achievements. Our staff are ready and willing to help you on that journey and we will be delighted to hear from you.

For now though, welcome (back) to what we hope will be a 'home from home', and good luck for your year to come.

With best wishes,



Jim Anderson
Associate Dean (Education)
Professor of Mathematics
J.W.Anderson@soton.ac.uk

Welcome from the School of Economic, Social and Political Science, Deputy Head of School – Education

It is a great pleasure to welcome you to the University of Southampton. We are joint Deputy Head of School – Education and our responsibilities cover all aspects of education, student matters, and your experience while you study here. Whichever of our degree programmes you are taking, you will be meeting staff and other students representing a wide spectrum of approaches to social scientific research. A lot of exciting work goes on here and it is our aim to give you the best education we can and to help you feel part of what we do. Your undergraduate years are an amazing opportunity to encounter new ideas and to challenge your old ones. We will encourage you to hone your analytical skills, become critical and reflective, and sharpen your intelligence. This will be educational in the broadest sense of the word. It is vastly more than assignments and exams, more than attending classes and taking notes. You are probably already aware that university is a more independent form of study than what you might have experienced in the past. That means it is also a form of study that rewards your own initiative and powers of insight. All of our degree programmes are selective and our expectations are high. We know that yours are too and we will do our best to live up to them. We believe that each of our students is capable of excellent performance and we will help you in any way that we can to achieve your full potential as a student with us. Indeed, while we want all of our students to develop a strong sense of independence and self-sufficiency as learners, we aim to provide a culture of academic support to help you to achieve this. Our goal is to create an environment that will enable each of you to flourish, and to graduate with a sense of accomplishment and feeling that your decision to come to Southampton was definitely the right one.

The information you are reading now is the Part I Student Guide and it is a compendium of useful information about studying in Social Sciences. You can't possibly absorb all the detail, so you will find a Quick Help section below. This guide is also available [online](#).

If anything in the Guide is unclear or if you have any questions that the Guide does not answer, real live human beings in Social Sciences are there to help. Questions about specific module material should be addressed to the module coordinator. Questions of a general academic nature should be addressed to your Personal Academic Tutor (PAT). Also, staff working in the Student Office can explain and advise on many matters. In short, there is a wealth of support and you should use all that we make available to you.

One final word about pastoral support. As well as your academic needs, we take your personal needs and circumstances very seriously and if at some time you need to call on other kinds of support, you should bring any issues to the attention of either your Personal Academic Tutor, the Senior Tutor for your department, or the Student Office. If it is not possible to assist you directly, it may be appropriate to signpost you to the Enabling Services team. This expert team has dedicated staff helping students and is there to provide assistance in a wide range of areas. This places an obligation on you to seek that support when you need it, so please do so.

The key point is that your undergraduate studies should be exciting and transformative. We hope you enjoy your time here and that you get as much as you can out of your degree programme.

With best wishes

Russell Bentley and Emanuela Lotti

The information contained within your programme handbook is designed to provide key information applicable to you and your programme during the 2019/20 academic year.

It complements the University's Student Portal. You can access the Portal by logging on to [SUSSED](#), using your user name and password, and clicking on the Students tab in the top navigation bar. It is important that you make use of these resources as they support the regulations relating to your obligations and that of the University while you are a student at the University of Southampton.

It also provides helpful information on matters such as housing, finance, leisure, healthcare and support facilities.

Resource	Web link
Faculty website	Faculty of Social Sciences
Faculty staff information	Dean of Faculty, Social Sciences: Professor Jane Falkingham Associate Dean of Education: Professor Jim Anderson Associate Dean of Research and Enterprise: Professor Sally Brailsford/Professor Rebecca Hoyle
Department website	https://www.southampton.ac.uk/sociology/index.page?
School staff information	Prof. Jenny Fleming Head of School Professor Russell Bentley and Dr Emanuella Lotti Deputy Head of School (Education) Dr Craig Webber Director of Undergraduate Programmes
Programme staff information	Dr Craig Webber Programme Director (BSc Criminology & Psychology) Sociology, Social Policy and Criminology (SSPC), Room Location: Building 58, Room 4065 Email: C.Webber@soton.ac.uk You should contact Craig Webber with any enquiries or concerns you have regarding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme-related issues, such as curriculum and structure. • British Psychological Society (BPS) accreditation. • Year Three Dissertation in Criminology and Psychology • Erasmus Exchange opportunities attached to your degree programme. • Any issues that have not been (or cannot be) resolved with the Student Office, Personal Academic Tutor or Module Lead
Programme and module descriptions	Descriptions relating to your programme can be found via the programme pages on the web, and on Blackboard. Your programme structure (i.e. which modules make up your programme) is available in your programme specification and via the on-line programme catalogue which is accessible via Banner Self Service . To find links to broad generic descriptions of the programmes and modules, follow links to your programme starting from the Faculty web pages .
Resource	Web link

2. General Information

2.1 Your student office

Team responsibilities: Manage and co-ordinate the delivery of key student life cycle activities within the Faculty. Provide a range of administrative services to the students and staff within the Faculty in support of enrolment, induction, student record maintenance, assessment, progression, attendance monitoring, awards and graduation.

School of Social Sciences Student Office School Building 2, Reception, Highfield Campus, Southampton, SO17 1BJ Tel: 02380 592250 Opening Hours: 09:00 – 17:00 Monday - Friday	SSPC.StudentOffice@soton.ac.uk
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You should visit the Student Office for all general queries relating to the administration of your programme (this may include coursework submissions and collection of feedback, module registration changes, special considerations requests, sickness self-certification forms, suspension and withdrawal requests).

2.2 How we keep in touch with you

Email

We will use your University email account to contact you when necessary. We will not use any other email accounts or social networking sites. **It is your responsibility to check your University email account regularly** and you must not let your inbox exceed your storage limit.

Notification that you are due to exceed your storage limit will be sent to your University email account and you should take immediate action as you will be unable to receive further emails once your storage limit has been exceeded.

Written Correspondence

Formal correspondence regarding your programme of study (e.g. suspension, transfer or withdrawal from programme, academic performance (including progression/referral information), issues of academic integrity, student complaints and academic appeals) will be sent to your term-time (TT) or permanent (PM) address listed as active on your student record. You are responsible for advising the University if you change your permanent or term-time address. The University will not be held accountable if you do not receive important information because you failed to update your student record.

Use of social networking sites

We understand that students are increasingly using social networking sites to interact with members of their student community. You should note that any behaviour that affects other members of the University community or members of the general public in ways which might damage the standing and reputation of the University may be subject to [disciplinary action](#) within the scope of the University's Regulations.

2.3 Confirmation of your student enrolment status

The Student Office can provide you with a certificate to confirm your status as a student (e.g. for bank account opening purposes). Please ensure that you give at least 48 hours' notice of your requirements (longer at peak times such as at enrolment or during the examination periods).

Your award certificate will be produced using the legal name data you have provided within your student record. Please make any necessary amendments to your record immediately a change occurs to ensure that your certificate contains accurate information.

In accordance with policy, a scale of fees exists for the provision of certificates, transcripts and award certificates. Please see point 11 'Transcripts, Certificates and Award Letters' within the [fees section](#) of the University Calendar.

Your award certificate will be produced using the legal name data you have provided within your student record. Please make any necessary amendments to your record immediately a change occurs to ensure that your certificate contains accurate information. Changes are made via [Banner Self Service](#).

3. Supporting you through your studies

3.1 The role of your Personal Academic Tutor

The University operates a tutor system to help support and advise students in their academic study. As a student, you can expect to be allocated a [Personal Academic Tutor](#). Your Personal Academic Tutor may or may not be one of the teaching staff you see in the course of your studies, but their role in this context is to provide advice and support to you throughout your study, and to help review your academic progress. You can expect to see your Personal Academic Tutor at key points through your University career and, if you need to, you can contact them more frequently. Sometimes, your Personal Academic Tutor may refer you to other areas for support. They may refer you to individual support services, or to your student office for information, or to a Senior Tutor. The Senior Tutor will have a more specialised understanding of supporting students, and may support you if you have a particular problem. You can also contact the Senior Tutor if you wish to change your allocated Personal Academic Tutor.

Sociology, Social Policy and Criminology	Graham Baxendale Room 58/4091	gnb@soton.ac.uk
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The University expects that you will engage with your Personal Academic Tutor, attend the scheduled meetings, respond to messages from your Personal Academic Tutor, and notify your Personal Academic Tutor (or Senior Tutor, if you prefer) if you are experiencing problems which are affecting your performance, attendance or progress in your studies. In particular, you should contact your Personal Academic Tutor if you feel your performance in any forthcoming examinations will be affected by ill health or other special considerations, and check with your Personal Academic Tutor if you plan to cite him/her as a referee for job applications.

3.2 Student buddying and mentoring schemes

University of Southampton Schools and societies provide new undergraduate students with opportunities to liaise with current students who are able to offer advice and guidance based on their own experience as they adjust to living and learning at the University. Some of these opportunities are described as student buddying, family or peer mentoring schemes.

Run by students for students, the ESPS Buddy Scheme allocates a student buddy to new students to help with the transition to University life. Your buddy's goal is to help you adjust to life here at Southampton, as we appreciate that you may have questions which you would rather discuss with a trusted (and specially trained) senior peer. The scheme runs from week 0 through to week 6. In 2019-20 the Buddy Scheme will be run by Joanne Adamson jeh2g17@soton.ac.uk, who will tell you more about it during induction. The scheme is supervised by Sarah Chapman (FSS-StudentExperience@soton.ac.uk) and Graham Baxendale gnb@soton.ac.uk

3.3 What to do if you are ill

It is important that your doctor (as well as your Personal Academic Tutor) is immediately informed of any illness that is likely to affect your studies. If appropriate, your GP may inform your Personal Academic Tutor that you are experiencing some health difficulties that may affect your academic performance. This will be done with your consent and you may wish the details of your illness to be withheld from your Personal Academic Tutor, although you should think carefully about this (your tutor will, in any case, respect your privacy).

More information can be found in the [General Regulations - Attendance and Completion of Programme Requirements](#).

3.4 External factors affecting your attendance or performance in your studies

We expect you to take responsibility for your studies to ensure that your full academic potential can be realised. However, sometimes difficulties can arise that can affect you.

If you are absent from an examination or other assessment or have other grounds for believing that your studies have been affected by external factors you must bring this to the attention of your Personal Academic Tutor or to the Student Office immediately. Whilst we recognise that students can sometimes be reluctant to discuss cultural, sensitive or personal issues, it is essential that you bring problems affecting you to our attention immediately so that we can determine how best to help you.

3.5 Special considerations

If you believe that illness or other circumstances have adversely affected your academic performance, this is known as [Special Considerations](#). If you wish for these to be considered you must complete a [Special Considerations form](#). **It is important that you submit this in a timely manner and prior to the Board of Examiners. You will need to submit any Special Considerations forms to your Student Office.**

All claims must be substantiated by written documentary evidence, for example a medical certificate or GP/consultant letter, self-certification (although self-certification will not be regarded as evidence in relation to your examination performance) or a statement from your Personal Academic Tutor. The purpose of asking for supporting documentation is for you to be able to corroborate the facts of your submission.

All claims will be reviewed by the Special Considerations Board which meets regularly throughout the year. The Student Office will contact you via your University email account to let you know once approval has been made.

3.6 Student Support Review

The [Student Support Review Regulations](#) are in place to support students if concerns are raised about their health, wellbeing or behaviour which may be impacting on their academic progress and/or general management of life at University or on placement. The regulations seek to be both supportive and to actively engage with students prior to decisions made about their fitness to study. The regulations and supporting documents identify the procedure and support available to both students and staff when a student becomes unwell and/or presents a risk to self and/or others.

3.7 Suspending your studies

Should you feel that you need to take some time out from your studies, known as [suspending your studies](#), you should first discuss this with your Personal Academic Tutor. A Suspension Request form should be obtained, completed and returned to the Student Office. Please note that, if you

wish, you can suspend your studies in order to undertake an internship or period of industrial training outside of normal vacation time.

3.8 Withdrawing from your studies

If you no longer wish to continue with your studies, a Withdrawal Notification form should be obtained, completed and returned to the Student Office. Further information can be found in the [General Regulations - Transfer, Suspension, Withdrawal and Termination](#)

The Students' Union Advice Centre has developed a [Guide](#) for students.

4. Your safety

4.1 University/Faculty/School Health and Safety Policy and further information

The University's Health, Safety and Risk website, covering the Health and Safety Policy Statement and Management System, which defines commitment, governance, responsibilities and management of health and safety is available here:

<https://sotonac.sharepoint.com/teams/HealthSafetyRisk>

Ensuring student health and safety is a major goal of the University. As a new student you will have received information on Personal Safety and H&S/Fire Safety as part of your 'Southampton Welcome'. Both new and existing students should also take a look at the following links for further information:

The Faculty of Social Sciences H&S sharepoint pages:

<https://sotonac.sharepoint.com/teams/FacultyofSocialSciences/SitePages/Health-&Safety.aspx>

You can also receive support from the Students' Union – SUSU at

<http://www.susu.org/support>

4.2 Local arrangements

Key local Health and Safety arrangements are as follows. If you have questions relating to any of the following information please contact a member of the Faculty Health and Safety team, details of which you will find at the end of this section.

4.3 Action in the event of a fire



If you notice or suspect that there is a fire you should immediately raise the alarm by operating the nearest fire alarm call point (one will be located on the wall as you leave the building). The fire alarm is a continuously ringing bell.



On hearing the fire alarm you should immediately stop what you are doing and make your way out of the building by following the green emergency exit signs to the nearest exit, shutting doors behind you as you leave. Do not stop or return to collect personal belongings. Lifts will not operate when the alarm sounds.

NOTE: If you have a permanent or temporary mobility impairment that affects your ability to use stairs to exit a building then you should have a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP). If this is not the case, please contact your personal tutor for further assistance. In any event, should you be isolated when the alarm sounds, please call 3311 from an internal telephone or 02380593311 from a mobile phone.



On leaving the building make your way to the assembly point. Ensure any car parks or roads are kept clear for emergency vehicles. Do not re-enter a building until you are told it is safe to do so by the Fire & Rescue Service, the senior Fire Warden or Security staff.

Fire extinguishers are provided in buildings but should only be used by those trained in their use and only if it is safe to do so.

Evacuation alarms are tested weekly. The times of these tests are detailed near main entrances to buildings. When tests take place the bell will ring for no more than a few seconds.

4.4 Assembly points

Building	Assembly point
B2	South of Building 4, on the grass area between the Turner Sims and the Staff Centre, well away from the buildings
B4	South of Building 4, on the grass area between the Turner Sims and the Staff Centre, well away from the buildings
B6	South of Building 4, on the grass area between the Turner Sims and the Staff Centre, well away from the buildings
B32 (Education)	South of Building 32, on the Jubilee Plaza area before the service road and the library.
B34 (Education)	Area around flag pole in front of University library.
B39 (S3RI)	Car park in front of B54
B44 (Geography / Psychology)	Grassed area in front of University Health Service Building (North end of Physics building).
B44a (Psychology)	Car park in front of B44 (Shackleton)
44 Chamberlain Rd (Psychology)	Car park in front of B44 (Shackleton)
B54 (Mathematics) and B56	Grassed area adjacent to Turner Sims Concert Hall
B58 (Social Science)	Grassed area adjacent in front of University Health Service
Other buildings	Check the emergency information that should be displayed on a noticeboard in teaching rooms.

4.5 First Aid



In the event of an accident causing injury, the nearest first-aider should be contacted. Their details are displayed on signs in corridors. Alternatively, contact security on 3311 using an internal phone and they will assist. Following treatment, the incident must be reported to your line manager/supervisor and the Faculty Health and Safety team.

4.6 Incident Reporting



If you are involved in an accident or incident, spot a hazardous situation or are concerned that you are being asked to do something without the necessary information, instruction or training that would ensure your safety, please report this to your supervisor and the Faculty Health and Safety team. The circumstances can then be investigated and measures put in place to minimise

future risk.

Incidents can be reported online at: <https://www.southampton.ac.uk/healthandsafety/incident-report.page>

4.7 Induction and Training



As a new student you should have the following expectations with regard to Health and Safety:

- To be made aware of local emergency arrangements and H&S contacts on your first day.
- To receive a local induction before using any laboratory or workshop area. This will identify hazards and make you aware of particular procedures in place to help ensure your safety.
- That risk assessments and other written arrangements that maintain good H&S in all your activities will be brought to your attention by your supervisor.

4.8 Building Access

Most University buildings are open to all from 08.00-18.00 Mon-Friday excluding University and public holidays.

ALL undergraduate students - must leave buildings by 18.00.

Postgraduate students - Access by ID card may be available by approval of your Head of School, to postgraduate students (depending on student status and/or circumstances) from 06.00-23.00. If permission is granted, buildings are to be clear by 23.00 and remain so until 06.00 (Closure Period).

4.9 Out-of-Hours Policy

The Out-of-Hours Policy covers the Closure Period from 11.00pm through to 6.00am the following day and applies to every day of the year, including weekends and Public Holidays. You must have received approval to work during the closure period from your Head of School and this must be documented using **Form 1.5** available from the link <http://www.southampton.ac.uk/estates/what-we-do/security.page>

You are required to present a completed copy of the form, together with your University ID when requested by Security Staff.

4.10 Further information

More detailed information, forms and links to other sources of advice are available via the links provided in part 1.1 of this document.

4.11 Contact Information

A student's primary contact should be their supervisor. However, the following contacts may be used if necessary:

Health and Safety Contacts				
Aloma Hack	Health and Safety Liaison Officer	4/3063 63A/1013	023 8059 3025	A.J.Hack@soton.ac.uk
Gary Griffiths	Health and Safety Co-ordinator	63A/1013	023 8059 4994	G.B.Griffiths@soton.ac.uk
Health, Safety and Risk Directorate				
HSR general and specific enquiries	Please contact HSR directorate if local contacts are not available	26 University Road	023 8059 3951	M.K.Ridley@soton.ac.uk
Security - Central Control Room (CCR)				
CCR	023 8059 3311 (Emergency)	023 8059 2811 (Enquiries)		unicc@soton.ac.uk

5. Your Academic Programme

5.1 The academic year and the programme structure

The structure and modular content provided within the programme specification is specific to your own programme.

You can view the most up to date version of the programme specification [SUSSED](#).

5.2 Registration and amendment to optional modules

Most programmes will have a number of optional modules. If applicable, you will need to select a certain number of optional modules to complete your portfolio of modules and fulfil the credit points as required for the programme.

When choosing your options, you are strongly advised to ensure that you have a similar total number of modules in Semester 1 and Semester 2, to maintain a balanced workload throughout the year. Once you have registered your options, it is possible for you make changes but there are restrictions. The substitution of modules is not allowed (i.e. you cannot take an extra module in semester 2 to replace a semester 1 module in which you failed to perform well).

You may request a change to your optional module choice up to the **end of week 2** in each semester. You should complete a Change of Module form to specify your request (forms can be obtained from the Student Office). If your optional module choices clash in your timetable, then you will need to amend your optional choice accordingly by contacting the Student Office immediately.

You should regularly check your online student record for details of your registered modules. This is particularly important after you have made any changes and will help to maintain the accuracy of your student record. It will also save time and confusion during the examination period.

5.3 Attendance

The [University attendance regulations](#) details the University expectations relating to attendance.

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5.4 Additional Costs

You may incur additional costs because of your programme, for example for materials, field trips or books. General programme costs are located in the programme specification. Modules that are optionally available to select also include information on module specific costs.

5.5 Exchanges / Placement programmes

Students on a number of degree programmes will have opportunities to apply to spend a semester in a European University under the Socrates scheme. In addition, Social Sciences operates an exchange scheme with the University of Madison-Wisconsin in the United States. Further details of these exchange schemes are available through the Student Office. The Social Sciences Exchange Co-Ordinator organises information sessions each year, usually at the beginning of the second semester. Contact the Student Office for details.

6. Teaching and Learning Skills

6.1 Time management

It is your responsibility to manage your time in order to ensure that you keep up to date with the material presented and with the requirements of the programme. Deadlines for work submission should be adhered to otherwise marks will be deducted via the imposition of a [late submission penalty](#).

The framework of when lectures and classes occur and deadlines for submission of work will be made available to you well in advance, but if you are unclear about any aspect of your module you should talk this through with your module lead or programme lead. This knowledge will allow you to plan your life based on how you know you work best. Effective use of your time will allow you to perform well on your course and to enjoy student life.

One of the work-place skills you should aim to acquire at University is the ability to manage multiple priorities. If you have problems in this area please discuss them with your Personal Academic Tutor.

6.2 Lectures

A single lecture slot lasts 45 minutes. It is therefore vital that you arrive promptly in order to gain maximum benefit from the time. Each lecturer will present material using either handouts or require you to make your own notes. Transcribing lectured material into a form that you find most useful is an important part of the learning process. You should ensure that you understand the material and, if you have difficulty in understanding or applying the knowledge, use recommended textbooks or the assistance of teaching staff during tutorials to gain understanding.

It is your responsibility to develop your ability in a given subject. How well you have acquired that ability and the associated knowledge is gauged by the assessment process. Lectures are provided for your benefit and you should take full advantage by ensuring you attend all of the lectures in a given module. If, for any reason, you are unable to attend, ensure that you get hold of a copy of the notes or handouts from your module lead.

6.3 Compulsory attendance

For pedagogical reasons, some Psychology modules require your attendance in some or all of timetabled sessions and stipulate penalties for failing to attend certain number of compulsory sessions on time. If you have special circumstances that may prevent you from attending any compulsory session you must request permission to be absent.

To avoid penalties for failing to attend compulsory sessions on time, you can request permission to be absent from compulsory sessions. You should inform both your Module Lead and the Student Office in writing (for example, in the same email) of your request for an absence from a compulsory session. You should preferably do so before the compulsory session, or as soon as possible afterwards.

Only a limited number of absences from compulsory sessions can be requested without your fitness to study undergoing review, and the possibility of voluntary or involuntary degree suspension or termination being considered. Other action may also be taken by the University in accordance with its Regulations. As a guideline, no more than three requests for absences from a compulsory session for the same reason, and no more than six for any reason, in the same year.

6.4 Use of electronic recording devices or mobile phones in lectures or classes

Out of courtesy to staff and other students, please ensure that mobile phones are switched off in lectures and seminars. You are advised that lectures are the copyright property of the lecturer and

permission to audio-record a lecture must be personally sought from the lecturer before proceeding.

If you wish to use an electronic device to take notes in a lecture, you should do so in a way that does not cause disruption to those sitting near you.

If you have a health condition for which additional support is needed, you may, following assessment by the University's educational support services, make appropriate arrangements with staff for recording lectures.

6.5 Tutorials/supervisions

Group tutorials/supervisions are timetabled for some modules. These sessions are intended for you to develop your problem-solving skills as well as for you to discuss further with an experienced member of staff any particular lecture material you are finding difficult to understand. It is essential that you come well prepared for these sessions. These sessions are one of the most effective ways of reinforcing the lecture material.

6.6 Independent or Self learning

Independent study or self-directed learning involves using libraries, data retrieval systems, internet, etc, or in a group working on coursework, reading the lecture material or reading around the subject. This should also develop your investigative and problem solving skills in furthering understanding of the subject, creating links with other modules - past and present - and providing a broadening of your educational experiences and knowledge base.

Self-learning is your personal responsibility and your commitment to the programme. It requires discipline, motivation and focussing on achieving individually set targets. It enables you to reach your full potential academically, develops your personal skills and helps establish a successful professional career.

6.7 Key skills

Key skills are those skills which can be applied to other disciplines and fields of work. Employers are increasingly seeking to employ individuals with well-developed key skills. More can be found on the Academic Skills pages of the [library website](#).

6.8 Faculty/School Policy on referencing

As a Joint Honours student, you will need to know the referencing systems followed in each of your two disciplines. In Social Sciences degree programmes, the Harvard referencing system is preferred. In your Psychology modules you will be expected to follow the APA referencing and formatting system. The University's Library has many APA Publication Manuals available and details about how to use both the Harvard and the APA referencing system can be found through the following library link: <http://library.soton.ac.uk/sash/referencing>. Speak to your module lead before using any other referencing system and if you are unsure.

6.9 Academic integrity: the University Policy

The University expects that all students will familiarise themselves with the [Regulations Governing Academic Integrity](#).

The Students' Union Advice Centre has developed a [Guide](#) for students.

6.10 Research Ethics

The University of Southampton is committed to carrying out its research, teaching, enterprise and other activities within a comprehensive ethical framework (<http://www.southampton.ac.uk/ris/policies/ethics.html>).

Principles of ethical research include the expectation that studies are undertaken with integrity, quality and transparency. Participants in research must be fully informed about the research and participate voluntarily. They need to know what will happen with the information they provide, and that they can withdraw from the study subsequently (wherever possible). Risks from participation in research must be explained and minimised. Participants' anonymity and/or confidentiality should be protected, for example by removing information that could be used to identify them and by storing confidential information securely.

All research on human participants, their tissue or data requires ethical approval via the University's Ethics and Research Governance Online (ERGO) system (www.ergo.soton.ac.uk). The University believes that ethical issues should be interpreted broadly and that ethics approval might also be needed for research where other factors could be present including:

- a risk of damage to the environment;
- political or social sensitivity; and
- impact on culture and cultural heritage.

7. Assessment and Examinations

7.1 Coursework assessment and submission

A number of modules include coursework assignments as part of the assessment. Coursework can often occupy a large amount of time. It is worth noting that getting a few extra marks on an assignment may not justify the extra time spent. Conversely, students who forget or do not bother to hand in work can make it very difficult for themselves to achieve their full academic potential.

Normally, all coursework should be accompanied by a completed Coursework Submission/ Feedback form and submitted to the Student Office by no later than the published date and time. If both paper-based and electronic submission is required, you should note that your submission will not be considered complete until both formats have been submitted. If other arrangements are in force for submission of a particular piece of coursework, this will be advised by your module co-ordinator.

In Psychology, and unless otherwise instructed, use the [eAssignment system](#) to submit your coursework, and to receive your marks and feedback. Please familiarise yourself with the system via [eAssignment Support Guide](#).

The submission is time-stamped after the submission process is completed. The eAssignment system can take several minutes to process your submission, depending on how busy the system and other factors (e.g., random interruption in your internet connection). A submission process that begins only minutes before a deadline may result in the process being completed after the deadline; thus, it will be flagged as a late submission incurring late penalties. You are strongly encouraged to manage your time to prevent any such lateness in submission. If, however, a malfunction occurs in the eAssignment system (excluding being busy), or with the University computer network, then that will be considered a valid excuse for not submitting on time.

After a submission process is complete, a receipt will be sent to your University email account. Do not delete this email receipt as it may be required to prove assignment submission at a later date.

7.2 Penalties for late coursework submission

When coursework is set a due date for submission will be specified and there will be associated penalties for handing in work late. The University has a [uniform policy for the late submission](#).

7.3 Coursework extensions

If you know there will be a valid reason why you cannot submit the work at the given date you must contact the Student Office as soon as possible. You should complete a Special Considerations form, which should provide adequate detail of the reasons why you are seeking an extension. Your completed form should be submitted to the Student Office who will arrange for your request to be reviewed. The Student Office will contact you via your University email account to let you know once approval has been made. **It is your responsibility to request an extension in a timely manner and prior to the original deadline.**

Note, that for Psychology modules, the maximum extension that can be applied for is one week. If one week is not sufficient and difficulties are interfering with your studies for longer periods of time these should be discussed further with your PAT and addressed through Special Considerations and the Psychology Student Support (psy-support-ug@soton.ac.uk) should be contacted.

See paragraph 3.5 above.

7.4 Multiple Choice Quizzes in the School of Psychology

Multiple choice quizzes (MCQs) — questions with single or multiple correct answers — are an excellent tool for assessing how much information you know about a subject. Here we explain how we convert your MCQ performance to a categorical mark. We use a conversion so that there is consistency across MCQs, and so that we can combine MCQ marks with those from other types of assessment, such as essays.

All modules in the School of Psychology use a standard algorithm to convert your performance (the proportion of questions that you answer correctly) into a categorical mark. It has been designed to ensure that if you do well on the test your categorical mark reflects this. For example, if you get 40 out of 40 the algorithm allocates a categorical mark of 100. If your performance is the same as chance then you would get a categorical mark of 18. For example, in a test with 40 questions, and 4 possible answers for each, 10 questions correct would be converted to a mark of 18. Scores between chance and perfect performance are mapped to categorical marks between 18 and 100 via an algorithm based on z-scores. Scores below chance will be given a categorical mark of 0.

For some larger School of Psychology modules, students take MCQs in separate groups, and are often asked to answer different questions. One of the good things about our method is that we can ensure that you will not be unfairly disadvantaged if the sample of questions used in your particular test are slightly more difficult than those answered by a different group. Likewise, another group will not have an unfair advantage if their questions are slightly easier than those used in your test.

To familiarise yourself with the standard algorithm used in Psychology, you can download [this Excel file](#) to peruse examples from two previous MCQ tests

7.5 Examination preparation (also see Appendix B)

You will know yourself how best you prepare for examinations. It is always worth remembering that the sooner you start your preparation the better and that one of the aims of each module is to help you prepare for the examination. Make sure that you have a complete set of notes; that you understand their content; that you can apply the material by solving the example sheet questions; and that you have practiced questions from past papers under examination time constraints. The University's online archive of previously set examination papers is available to assist with your learning and preparation for forthcoming examinations.

[Past Exam Papers](#) are available via the library.

Remember that if you get into difficulty during your revision process on a particular subject ask someone to help you. This may be either one of the lecturers or teaching assistants on the module. For helpful hints on revision strategy and examination techniques, please refer to Appendix B.

7.6 Examinations

The dates of University examination periods are published annually on the [SAA Exam timetables webpages](#). However, Faculties/Schools that have extended academic years, may have assessment periods outside of these times.

7.7 Illegible exam scripts

If your examination script is considered illegible, the [Illegible Examination Scripts Policy](#) will be instigated. You will be asked to come in to dictate your script so that it can be transcribed. The cost of this work will be met by you. If your script is not transcribed then it will receive a mark of zero (0).

7.8 Coursework and examination feedback

Feedback comes in many forms and you must learn to recognise the merits of all of these. The [Student Feedback Policy](#) provides an overview of formal feedback.

Formal feedback is well documented and the following paragraphs identify ones that you are officially entitled to.

Informal feedback is just as important and comes in the form of individual chats with your Personal Academic Tutor, module leaders or project supervisors, or group meetings with academics after a lecture or practical session. Also tests and quizzes on Blackboard, which are available for several modules, can provide valuable feedback on how you are progressing.

All coursework will be marked and returned to you, accompanied by feedback which will relate to the standard of your work and the reasons for the mark/grade given. You should note that all marks are considered provisional until they have been reviewed and confirmed by the Board of Examiners. This feedback will typically be returned within four weeks following your submission. Large assignments (e.g. your dissertation/project work) may take slightly longer to be returned. Bear in mind that if you hand in work late, your feedback may be delayed.

Where appropriate, for example with smaller problem-solving exercises like calculations, the lecturer will decide if feedback should be given individually or reported back to the whole group. You are, however always free to ask the lecturer personally how you are progressing.

The feedback you receive will be:

- **timely** - allowing you to learn from your work
- related to the **learning outcomes** for that piece of work
- **constructive** and **honest** – allowing you to take the comments on board, learn from your mistakes and understand why you did well.

For the feedback to be effective, it is important that you work with the feedback given and identify how you can improve your work in the future. Should you need further information about your work, get in touch with whoever marked the coursework.

Feedback may be made available online or can be collected from the Student Office. You will be contacted when feedback is ready. For some kinds of assignment, other arrangements will be made and the module lead will explain those to you.

Although individual feedback on examinations is not automatically given, you may request a meeting with the marker of the exam (or lead of the module in question) to discuss your performance (see 8.8 below). In addition, feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of the performance of the whole group that took an examination will be available via Blackboard.

Coursework and examination feedback – it's as easy as SSPC!

SSPC's feedback policy is based on the principles below. If you follow these closely you will receive all the help you need to improve your work. If you have any questions at any time please contact in the first instance to your Personal Academic Tutor.

Staff

- We will provide you with the feedback you need to improve your academic work and perform to the very best of your ability
- We will provide all feedback online and relate this very clearly to the marking criteria, so you know exactly where you picked up marks, where you lost them and how to improve
- We will provide general feedback after module and exam coursework is returned
- We will always be available during our office hours and at other times by appointment

Self

- You need to take responsibility for improving your work on the basis of the feedback you receive
- You need to read VERY carefully any feedback you receive
- You need to communicate with members of staff if you need any advice on the best way of responding to feedback

Peers

- Together, you can compare notes on the feedback you have received
- Together, you can read each other's work once it has been returned
- Together, you can formulate questions about your feedback that you can ask tutors

Communication

- Communicate by checking the office hours of all staff involved in teaching which are detailed outside their offices
- Communicate by checking the e-mail address of module teaching staff included on the module outline on Blackboard
- Communicate by using staff office hours or making an appointment by e-mail if this time is not convenient
- Communicate by informing your Personal Academic Tutor if you are struggling through personal difficulties to undertake an assignment

7.9 Access to coursework/examination scripts

Students are entitled to view their examination scripts on request (your Student Office can advise on the process to be followed). You are only permitted to view an examination script to enable you to see how you can improve your future performance and no mark or other annotation on the script is negotiable or open to alteration. The absence of annotation on a script does not mean that it has not been marked.

7.10 Release of results

Students will be given, as a matter of course, the marks they obtain in each individual module of study after they have been ratified by the Board of Examiners. More information can be found in [the Release of Marks procedure.](#)

You should note that the official transcript of your marks would normally show the latest mark obtained in each subject with a note, where appropriate, that it was obtained at repeat or referral attempt.

7.11 Prizes

YEAR 3 - The Sociology, Social Policy & Criminology Year 3 Performance prize (£100) is awarded to the UG student demonstrating the best overall performance in the final year of their degree programme.

YEAR 3 - The John H Smith Prize (£100) is awarded to the UG student who has gained the highest mark in her/his final year dissertation. John Smith was a professor of sociology in the 1980's.

7.12 Final assessment

At the end of your programme, your overall performance will be assessed.

If you satisfy the academic standards necessary, the Board of Examiners will recommend you for award.

8. Staff/Student Liaison: getting your voice heard

8.1 Module Survey

The Faculty/School aims to consult with and to provide opportunities for all students and staff to make their views known. You are encouraged to offer your comments/suggestions to members of staff and feedback is requested for each module undertaken.

8.2 Module Reports

Your feedback to module surveys will be reflected upon by the module leader and will be included in the Module Report. Modules reports are available via SUSSED under the "programme specific information' tab.

8.3 Staff Student Liaison Committees

Staff-Student liaison committees have representatives from across each programme. These committees have the role of monitoring the organisation and management of the student programmes, to note any difficulties that students may be encountering, and to take advice about ways of improving the programmes.

8.4 Student Representation

Through the [Students' Union](#) you will be invited to elect your Faculty/School representatives who co-ordinate the student voice on Faculty/School committees to enable your voice to be heard.

More information on the Students' Union officers and their roles is available on the [Students' Union Representation webpages](#).

9. Careers and Employability

The [Careers and Employability Service](#) provides support to students at all levels of study and has a range of opportunities on offer. Research¹ shows that graduates with no previous work experience are unlikely to be successful during the selection process and over 30% of positions will be filled by graduates who have already worked for that organisation. We provide drop-in advice, 1:1 guidance, workshops, skills sessions, Careers Fairs and employer led events to support your career planning as well as the following opportunities:

9.1 Excel Southampton Internships

The [Excel Southampton Internship Programme](#) offers 4-12 weeks paid internships which enhance your CV, expand your network and open graduate recruitment opportunities

9.2 Business Innovation Programme

The [Business Innovation Programme](#) provides an opportunity to develop your business acumen, team working and problem-solving skills by working on an 8 week project put forward by local businesses or not-for-profit organisations.

9.3 Year in Employment Placements

The [Year in Employment](#) is a work placement of up to 12 months duration taken after your second year of study enabling you to develop the skills employers value and gain insight to an industry of your choice. Eligibility criteria is available [here](#) please check before applying.

9.4 Volunteering Bank

[Volunteering](#) is a great way to help you gain many of the skills employers are looking for, build your network and develop yourself in new ways. Opportunities vary in duration and the type of role advertised.

9.5 Employability events

The Careers and Employability Service work closely with departments and Faculties to provide targeted careers support within and alongside your curriculum. Activities and opportunities may be appear within the timetable, or be advertised. Examples include lectures and workshops, online learning options, and events featuring alumni/employers. There are often opportunities to connect with organisations that offer themed events focused on employability. Some companies offer projects linked to dissertations or specific research.

Details of events and opportunities are set out below:

- Tailored undergraduate employability workshops and/or talks linked to your programme of study, including drawing your attention to career opportunities relating to your degree.
- New for the 2017/18 academic year, is a "Your Future Career" event. This has been specifically designed for those students studying your subject. This comprises employer talks, workshops and a networking event. Career areas covered as part of this event are some of the most popular for students studying social sciences degrees, including Civil Service Faststream, Office for National Statistics, Teaching, Marketing, Banking and Finance among many others.
- Employer Talks - A comprehensive programme of employer talks and presentations runs throughout the academic year covering a wide range of career sectors. These are a really great way to discover more about a particular organisation or career, and to receive some

¹ [High Fliers 2016](#)

key advice on how to do well in the recruitment process. Booking a place on these events will be through the Event

Calendar <https://www.southampton.ac.uk/careers/students/events-workshops-fairs/calendar.page>

- Business Innovation programme – a unique opportunity to work in a team of four students on a real-life business issue of a local business or not-for-profit organisation. You will receive some dedicated training from IBM to support you. See: <http://www.southampton.ac.uk/careers/students/work-experience/business-innovation-programme.page>
- Career mentoring programme -An opportunity to gain invaluable knowledge and expertise from a mentor especially chosen for you to support your transition into the graduate job market. See: <http://www.southampton.ac.uk/careers/students/mentoring.page>
- Excel internship programme - offers paid internship opportunities during vacation periods and at term-time that enhance your CV, expand your network and open graduate recruitment opportunities. See: <https://www.southampton.ac.uk/careers/students/work-experience/excel.page>
- Year in Employment - is a great opportunity to complete a work placement between your second and third year as part of your degree. This placement year will help you develop fantastic skills and successful students will graduate with the Year in Employment on their degree transcript. See: <https://www.southampton.ac.uk/careers/students/work-experience/year-in-employment.page>
- Volunteering - can develop many of the skills employers are looking for, such as leadership, teamwork and organisation. You can try out different career ideas by volunteering which may help you decide if the voluntary sector is right for you. See: <https://www.southampton.ac.uk/careers/students/work-experience/volunteering.page>
- Student Enterprise - is a creative and rewarding field. Engaging in its activities will offer you opportunities which you may otherwise never encounter. Southampton students have created businesses on the east coast of Africa. Other students have created start-ups which are operating in the heart of London. Excluding business start-up however, countless students have gone to employers as entrepreneurial agents with experiences which make them uniquely employable. See: <https://www.southampton.ac.uk/careers/students/enterprise/index.page>
- Advice, Information and Guidance - Our Drop-in Service provides an opportunity for you to have a conversation with one of our advisers to assess how the service can best meet your present needs. We may refer you to appropriate resources, activities or information, including small and large group sessions, talks, campus events and individual help sessions. See: <https://www.southampton.ac.uk/careers/students/talk-to-an-advisor.page>
- MyCareer - is our online careers site, which allows all University of Southampton students and graduates to easily find out about everything we have to offer, including finding jobs and opportunities – see: <https://www.southampton.ac.uk/careers/students/mycareer-user-guide.page>

9.6 Curriculum Innovation

Curriculum innovation modules are available during your programme and will be indicated as UOSM modules when you come to choose options.

10. Further study opportunities

Perhaps you are considering postgraduate study. There is a wide range of programmes leading to various qualifications available to you, and selecting the appropriate programme may not be easy.

The first thing to realise is that you need to make a well informed decision and therefore the key is to obtain all the information you need. The Faculty/School always aims to retain its best and brightest students for research. However when collecting information about postgraduate studies,

you should cast your net wide. You need to select an area that interests you – a difficult task in itself because you will also seek an area that has good employment prospects.

There is also the choice between taught postgraduate programmes leading towards a Master of Science (MSc) and/or research postgraduate degrees.

Further details on the programmes offered by the Faculty/School can be found on the Faculty's/School's website.

11. Regulatory Issues

We hope that you will be satisfied with your experience during your time as a student at the University of Southampton, but we do recognise that, on occasion, things can go wrong. If you have a concern about any aspect of your experience at the University, we encourage you to raise it as soon as the concern arises.

It is always better to let us know that you feel there is a problem as soon as possible so that the matter may be resolved quickly. You may alternatively wish to consult with your student academic president if it is an issue in common with other students. Please be reassured that you will not suffer any disadvantage or recrimination as a result of raising a genuine concern, student complaint or academic appeal.

11.1 Academic appeals

Provided you have grounds, you may appeal against any academic decision made by the University. There are some exceptions and you should note you cannot appeal against a decision that has been made in the proper exercise of academic judgment. The [Regulations Governing Academic Appeals by Students](#) outlines the regulations and procedure that should be followed should you wish to make an academic appeal.

The Students' Union Advice Centre has developed a [Guide](#) for students.

11.2 Student complaints

The [Regulations Governing Student Complaints](#) sets out the process that should be followed should you wish to raise a complaint about a matter relating to either the facilities and services provided by the University, its academic programmes, and the conduct of University staff, and which has materially affected you.

11.3 Dignity at work and study

The [University's Dignity at Work and Study Policy](#) applies to the conduct of staff and students, in the context of their University work of study, or which otherwise affects the working, learning or social environment of the University. Fair criticism of staff or student performance or conduct will not be considered to be bullying or harassment provided that those involved are treated with dignity, courtesy and respect. Any allegation of harassment, bullying or victimisation will be treated seriously, regardless of the seniority of those involved, and anyone found to have behaved unacceptably may be the subject of disciplinary action up to and including dismissal or expulsion.

11.4 Student Non-academic Misconduct

As members of the University community, all students are expected to conduct themselves with due regard for its good name and reputation and are required to comply with the University's Regulations at all times. Any allegation of misconduct will be considered within the [Student Non-academic Misconduct Regulations](#), in accordance with the evidence and circumstances presented. Information for students on non-academic misconduct is available from the [Student and Academic Administration web pages](#)

Appendix A: Grade Descriptors and categorical marking scheme

First class	Description	First class qualities include relevance (a high degree of focus on the question), accuracy of interpretation, originality and insightfulness of analysis, critical reflection, wide reading, coherence of structure, and clarity of expression. These factors will be present to varying degrees in a first class answer.
100	Outstanding 1 st	An assessment that could not be bettered within the time available.
90	Excellent 1 st	Distinguished by substantial scholarship and, in some cases, originality.
85	Very good 1 st	An answer that includes almost all the first class qualities.
78	Good 1 st	An answer showing a great deal of insight into the question, and one which indicates wide reading beyond the reference lists provided in course handouts.
72	Low 1 st	An answer showing substantial evidence of most of the first class qualities, demonstrating a comprehensive coverage of the subject matter and relevant literature, a very strong analysis, and no major inaccuracies of interpretation.
Upper second class		Upper second class qualities include a good degree of focus on the question and accuracy of interpretation, evidence of reading of the core literature and some insightful analysis. Although not necessarily original, the answer will articulate a clear and well-supported viewpoint on the key issues being discussed. The work will be well-structured and relatively clearly expressed.
68	High 2:1 – Very good	Displays all upper second qualities, but narrowly misses first class, most commonly in areas of insight or breadth of additional reading.
65	Mid 2:1 – Good	An answer that displays most of the upper second class qualities. There will be clear evidence of reading of relevant literature and key issues will be interpreted accurately, although the answer may not be entirely comprehensive, or may be let down by one or two weaker components such as coherency of structure.
62	Low 2:1 – Capable	An answer which displays some of the upper second class qualities. There will be evidence of reading of relevant literature and key issues will be interpreted mostly accurately, although the answer may be let down by one or two weaker components such as coherency of structure, coverage of key issues and readings.
Lower second class		Lower second class qualities include a good degree of relevance, coverage of the topic and accuracy of interpretation. There is evidence of reading, but it is limited in extent. Coherence of structure, clarity of analysis and degree of insight and critical reflection are also limited.
58	High 2:2 – Competent	Displays all of the lower second class qualities, but fails to demonstrate much reading. Structure is present, but may not be the most suitable. Typically, such an answer may cover the course material and be correct, but display a lower level of clarity in comprehension and analysis than a low 2:1.
55	Mid 2:2 – Satisfactory	An answer that displays most of the lower second class qualities, largely relevant and accurate and covering the topic, but with limited coverage of the literature and limited insight.
52	Low 2:2 – Adequate	Some of the required qualities are significantly lacking. The structure may be weak, or there may be little evidence of reading. An answer at this level may be let down by significant sections which are not relevant to the question, or by some inaccuracy of interpretation.
Third class		Work with severe shortcomings in presentation, relevance, analysis and structure. Though there may be some evidence of basic knowledge of the literature, it is likely to be superficial and/or inaccurate.
48	High 3 rd – Rudimentary	An answer that is relevant to the question and demonstrates some of the key points, but with little or no evidence of reading, and possibly large segments of inappropriate material. The answer demonstrates little or no insight and is weakly structured.
45	Mid 3 rd – Weak	An answer that is only partly relevant to the question and covers only some of the key issues, with little or no evidence of reading, and possibly large segments of inappropriate material. The answer demonstrates little or no insight and is weakly structured.
42	Low 3 rd – Very weak	An answer that demonstrates only a rudimentary understanding of the key issues, with little focus on the question, little or no evidence of reading, and possibly large segments of inappropriate material. The answer demonstrates little or no insight and is weakly structured.

Fail		Poor answers with serious omissions or errors. A distinction is made between answers at the higher end of this range, which typically demonstrate a serious weakness in argument and/or a lack of knowledge and understanding, and answers at the lower end, which are simply deemed inadequate.
38	Bare qualifying fail – Poor	Answers with serious omissions or errors, but with some material relevant to the question. There is evidence that the question has been understood in part, but that there is only a fragmented and shallow acquaintance with the subject. Work at this level will demonstrate serious weakness in argument, and/or a serious lack of knowledge and understanding.
30	Low qualifying fail – Inadequate	Little substance or understanding, but with a vague knowledge of the correct answer.
18	Unqualifying fail – Unsatisfactory	Some relevant facts but an inadequate structure and approach leading to a jumble of disorganised material. This grade is also appropriate for an answer which is wholly tangential to the question, or to a very short answer (less than one side), without promise of being better had it been longer.

All assessment criteria are based on recommendations from Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA). The agency defines [National Qualification Descriptors and Attributes for each Level of Award](#) (i.e., Year) — for the same mark (e.g., 65%), assessments become more challenging over the three level/years. Note that different assessments may focus on different descriptors. Grading templates for respective years can be accessed via the following links.

[Year 1 grading template](#)

[Year 2 grading template](#)

[Year 3 grading template](#)

Appendix B - Revision Strategy and Examination Techniques

A.1 Revision strategy

Revision should be an on-going process which starts very early in your programme. The amount of knowledge to be accumulated and the variety of skills and techniques to be developed are large and they are best assimilated gradually and consolidated as you go along. Regular revision is really a part of the learning process but, of necessity, becomes more concentrated as the examination approaches. "Re-vision" means looking again at things you have already seen – it is not about learning for the first time.

A.1.1 Final revision programme

At the start of your final revision schedule (during the Christmas Vacation for Semester 1 exams, and during the Easter Vacation and at the end of the taught element of the programme for Semester 2 exams) you must get organised, and the best way to do this is to devise a revision timetable. Plan your time carefully, give yourself definite objectives for each session, revise actively, test yourself regularly, make notes, and practise problem solving. Use revision sessions to study topics you have worked on before, as revision is simply the process of reminding you of topics and techniques previously understood. You will appreciate how well-organised notes will help you during your revision. Write out important definitions, proofs, formulae and equations, checking them against your notes. Re-work previously solved problems without looking at your previous solution, then attempt questions that you have not looked at before. Make special revision notes for quick reference on cards to keep in your pocket and charts to hang on the wall of your study room. Practise your examination technique.

A.1.2 Examination practice

You should be familiar with the modules and syllabuses you will be examined in at the end of Semesters 1 and 2. Analyse recent examination papers. Work out how long you have for each question and become familiar with the style of questions.

During your ordinary study periods you will no doubt have attempted many questions but will have seldom given yourself strict time restrictions. In examinations the timing of your answers to questions is vitally important. Practice answering examination questions in mock examination conditions, allowing yourself only the normal available examination time and the equipment you are permitted to take into the examination room. To obtain 'mock examination' practice save one or two complete examination papers so that you can use them as final test papers 'against the clock'.

Examination nerves are common and understandable but will be lessened if you have followed a sensible course of study and revision. You may not do yourself justice if you have a poor examination technique. The hints on the next page should help you to tackle the examination with greater confidence.

A.2 Examination techniques

A.2.1 Before the day

Before the actual day of your examination, make sure you know:

- the date, day, time and venue of each paper for your course;
- how to get to the examination venue if it is not well known to you;
- your candidate number;
- the telephone number of the Student Office.

Prepare any equipment you will need for your particular examination:

- pens which are comfortable to use;
- sharp pencils, a pencil sharpener and rubber;
- drawing instruments such as a ruler, compasses, protractor, set squares;
- University approved calculator (if allowed) and spare batteries (check that you know how to replace them quickly);
- an accurate watch or small clock.

A.2.2 On the Day

Before the examination:

Check that you have all the equipment you will need before setting off for your examination with plenty of time to spare. If you are delayed, contact the Student Office (have the telephone number with you) to explain what has happened. Arrive at the examination room early; a late start to an examination cannot be a good start and you will not be permitted to enter the examination room later than 30 minutes after its scheduled start time.

Just before the start:

Listen carefully to the invigilator. There may be some changes or special instructions which you were not expecting or some errors in the paper. Fill in any details, such as your candidate number, when the invigilator instructs you to do so.

Reading the instructions:

When the invigilator says that you may begin, read the instructions on your examination paper very carefully. Make sure that it is the correct examination paper and, in particular, note:

- the number of sections and questions you have to do;
- how much time you have to do them in;
- which questions (if any) are compulsory;
- what choice of questions (if any) you have;
- how to present your answers.

Planning your time

Quickly calculate the length of time you should spend on each question. You will have practised doing this for past papers but make sure that you use the instructions on your actual examination paper, rather than making any assumptions. Try to allow about 10 minutes at the end for checking your paper.

Choosing the questions

Read through the whole examination paper carefully, checking that you have read each page. If you have a choice of questions:

- cross out the ones you can't do;
- tick those you can definitely do;
- choose the correct number to do;
- mark the order in which you are going to attempt them, attempting your best question(s) first.

Answering the question

Before you attempt to answer a question, read it all again carefully, jotting down points such as formulae and information relating to that question. These hints should help you when writing an answer.

- Plan before you write – the stress of working under time constraints in the exam room can make all your good study intentions disappear. However, this is when it is more important than ever. Take a few minutes to think and plan.
- Think about what the question is actually *asking*. What are you expected to include in your answer. What material will be *relevant*?

Underline the key words in the question; identify the main topic and discussion areas; choose a few points/arguments about which you can write; make a mini plan which puts them in order before you start writing. You can cross it through afterwards.

- Make sure that your writing is legible.
- Present your answer in a neat, logical and concise way.
- Show all your working; marks are often given for methodology as well as your answers. You should be able to refer by name to the main theorists/researchers in your topic, giving the year of their major works. You do not need to give page numbers of lengthy quotes, except in an open book exam. You do not need a reference list.
- Do not do things you are not asked for.
- If relevant, state any principles, results or formulae used and indicate your reasons for using them.
- Check any formulae you use with the formula sheet, if provided.
- Always do a rough estimate of any calculation to check that your answer is sensible.
- When using a calculator, make sure that each calculation is shown clearly in your answer and give your final answer to the required degree of accuracy.
- If you get 'stuck', re-read the question carefully to check that you have not missed any important information or hints given in the question itself.
- When you have completed your answer, re-read the question to check that you have answered all parts.

Examination discipline

It is important that you try to keep to the times you have allocated to answering a question or section and that you answer the correct number of questions. If you answer less than the number of questions required you are limiting the number of marks available to you.

At the end

Before handing in your examination script check that:

- any 'front sheet' is completed according to the instructions;
- every loose page is clearly marked with your candidate number, etc;
- every answer is numbered correctly;
- pages are numbered clearly and in order.