

Subject line: No detriment: our approach to ensuring fair progression and awards

Sent: 2 April 2020

Please read this important announcement from the Pro-Vice-Chancellor



University of Brighton

Dear student,

We are very aware of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on all of our students and of the very real anxiety it is causing. The shift to remote learning for 20,000 students spread around the globe has been a major and complex undertaking and we would like to thank you for your understanding and for the positive way in which so many of you have embraced the new approach.

Understandably, we know that a number of you remain concerned about the impact of these major changes on your learning and how, in these unprecedented circumstances, the University will ensure that you all receive marks and degrees that fairly reflect your individual performance.

Over the past couple of weeks, we have been working, in consultation with Brighton Students' Union, to put ourselves into a position where we can set out clearly how this will be achieved. In doing so, we have also considered guidance from the Office for Students on the need to ensure that all degrees awarded meet academic standards and hold their value over time – something about which I know you will want absolute certainty.

I also want you to know that the University's position, that it is in the best interests of students to avoid further disruption and uncertainty by any extension to the academic year, is in line with the prevailing view across the higher education sector.

As a result, we can confirm that the University will be taking a 'no detriment' approach that ensures that you will receive an award or year average that accurately reflects your academic attainment **across the entirety of your course this year**. For the majority of courses, if your average marks in Semester 2 are lower than those in Semester 1 then you will not be disadvantaged. This isn't possible on all courses due, for example, to professional and regulatory body requirements but full information will be released by the end of the first week of next term.

This means that:

- Final-year students, wherever possible, can have certainty that they will achieve their degree, and non-final year students that they will progress, as expected this academic year, subject to achieving the required academic standard.
- Academic standards will be upheld to safeguard the value and legitimacy of all awards, with full account taken of the current circumstances.
- Suitably tailored alternative assessments will give students further opportunities to demonstrate they can meet all the required learning outcomes.

- In addition to revised assessment deadlines, students, including those with learning support plans, will still be able to request individual extensions.
- Mitigating circumstances will be automatically applied by all exam boards, with the benchmark for individual degree classifications based on each student's previous record of performance. This means that students will not have to make individual mitigating circumstances claims.

Work is ongoing to tailor this approach to courses that carry professional recognition and to taught postgraduate courses, with specific arrangements being put in place for some practical creative courses. As indicated above, we will provide further specific details to you regarding this by the end of the first week of next term.

Our approach, which is consistent with that being taken by many other institutions across the sector, will enable all final-year students to achieve awards that fairly reflect their performance and all other students to progress as expected to the next level of their studies.

Finally, students should by now, or will shortly, be receiving further details of their alternative assessments, with the exception of changes involving apprenticeship end point assessments, from their course and module leaders.

We know how hard our students work and appreciate that events over the past term have added considerably to anxiety levels. I hope that the information we have now provided will allow you to continue your studies with confidence over the remainder of the academic year.

Despite the current difficult circumstances, I hope that you are able to find some time to relax and unwind over the vacation period.

[See our FAQs for our no detriment approach](#)

Best wishes,

Professor Andrew Lloyd

Pro-Vice-Chancellor Academic Operations