

## **ADDENDUM TO ACADEMIC REGULATIONS, POLICIES & ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES FOR ALL NCAD PROGRAMMES VALIDATED BY UCD (Updated September 2024)**

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### 1. Programme Documentation

All undergraduate and postgraduate programmes must have the following documentation:

- NCAD Programme Specification Form
- NCAD Module Descriptor (for each module of a programme)

Templates for these documents are available on Workvivo and from Academic & Student Affairs (contact [ocallaghank@staff.ncad.ie](mailto:ocallaghank@staff.ncad.ie)).

### 2. Alignment with UCD Academic Regulations

NCAD programmes must align with and conform to UCD's current Academic Regulations, available on NCAD's website: <https://www.ncad.ie/students/examination-regulations/>

Where NCAD structures and practices differ from those in UCD and are not synchronised with UCD regulations, it is necessary for NCAD to apply to UCD for derogation to these rules. Further information and derogation request forms (the PDARF14 Derogations form) are available on the UCD website at: <https://www.ucd.ie/registry/staff/registryservices/curriculum/programmeapprovalpdarf/>

### 3. Grading Structures

As per the UCD Academic Regulations, grading should be according to the module assessment criteria and students must be made aware of those criteria in advance. Grading scales must be transparent and clearly communicated to students in advance of the assessment.

#### 3.1 NCAD Module Grades are given in the table below:

Module Grade	Description
A+	Excellent
A	
A-	
B+	Very Good
B	
B-	
C+	Good
C	
C-	
D+	Acceptable
D	
D-	
E+	Unacceptable, marginal Fail
E	
E-	
F	Fail
NG	No Grade No work was submitted by the student or the student was absent from assessment.

#### 3.2 NCAD Grade Descriptors

Grade descriptors act as guidelines for students and academic staff. The grade descriptors below are aligned with UCD's grade descriptors<sup>1</sup> and have been approved by the NCAD Academic Council to provide general guidance and should be adapted to the particular needs of the examiners and the relevant module assessment.

<sup>1</sup> See 4.25 of the [UCD Academic Regulations 2024-25](#), or go directly to [UCD Module Grade Descriptors](#).

## NCAD Grade Descriptors

Grade descriptors act as guidelines for students and academic staff. The grade descriptors below have been approved by the NCAD Academic Council to provide general guidance and should be adapted to the particular needs of the examiners and the relevant module assessment.

### A+ A A-

Work submitted for assessment that achieves a grade in the A band will be excellent. It will demonstrate most or all of the following qualities:

Assessment Criteria*	Undergraduate degree pre-final years Undergraduate certificate and diploma	Additional qualities for final year undergraduate and taught postgraduate
<b>Knowledge &amp; Understanding</b>	Deep knowledge and critical understanding of contexts relating to the work, including, where appropriate, professional ones.	High levels of critical thinking, comprehensive and deep research.
<b>Application &amp; Realisation</b>	Discerning and thorough selection, testing and/or employment of appropriate sources, materials, techniques and/or concepts.	Sophisticated synthesis.
<b>Organisation &amp; Engagement</b>	Demonstrable evidence of highly effective organisation (including planning, meeting deadlines, preparedness).	Strong evidence of high levels of enterprise, initiative and independence.
<b>Communication &amp; Presentation</b>	Inventive and eloquent expression and presentation of ideas and/or the results of the work undertaken.	Highly relevant and scrupulous.
<b>Creativity &amp; Resourcefulness</b>	A confident response to the task which demonstrates flair and ambition.	Demonstrable originality.

### B+ B B-

Work submitted for assessment that achieves a grade in the B band will be very good. It will demonstrate most or all of the following qualities:

Assessment Criteria*	Undergraduate degree pre-final years Undergraduate certificate and diploma	Additional qualities for final year undergraduate and taught postgraduate
<b>Knowledge &amp; Understanding</b>	Well-informed understanding of appropriate contexts relating to the work, including, where appropriate, professional ones.	Very good levels of critical thinking and extensive research.
<b>Application &amp; Realisation</b>	Thorough selection, testing and/or employment of suitable sources, materials, techniques and/or concepts in relation to the task.	Significant levels of synthesis, and a thorough application of skills and knowledge.
<b>Organisation &amp; Engagement</b>	Effective organisation in relation to planning, meeting deadlines, preparedness.	Ample evidence of enterprise and initiative.
<b>Communication &amp; Presentation</b>	Coherent, well-structured expression and presentation of ideas and/or the results of the tasks undertaken.	Clear, focused and very well managed presentation.
<b>Creativity &amp; Resourcefulness</b>	A response to the task which demonstrates ingenuity and/or imagination.	Demonstrable inventiveness.

### C+ C C-

Work submitted for assessment that achieves a grade in the C band will be good. It will demonstrate most or all of the following qualities:

Assessment Criteria*	Undergraduate degree pre-final years Undergraduate certificate and diploma	Additional qualities for final year undergraduate and taught postgraduate
<b>Knowledge &amp; Understanding</b>	Reasonable understanding of appropriate contexts relating to the work, including, where appropriate, professional ones.	Critical thinking and research which, is proficient and/or methodical.
<b>Application &amp; Realisation</b>	Appropriate selection, testing and/or employment of sources, materials, techniques and/or concepts in relation to the task.	Reasonable synthesis.
<b>Organisation &amp; Engagement</b>	Effective organisation in relation to planning, meeting deadlines, preparedness, etc.	Some evidence of initiative or enterprise.
<b>Communication &amp; Presentation</b>	Cogent expression and presentation of ideas and/or the results of the tasks undertaken.	Competent expression and analysis.
<b>Creativity &amp; Resourcefulness</b>	A fair response to the task which shows a good level of ingenuity and/or inventiveness.	Some evidence of originality.

\* See page 3 for details.

## NCAD Grade Descriptors

### D+ D D-

Work submitted for assessment that achieves a grade in the D band will be satisfactory. It will demonstrate most or all of the following qualities:

Assessment Criteria*	Undergraduate degree pre-final years Undergraduate certificate and diploma	Additional qualities for final year undergraduate and taught postgraduate
Knowledge & Understanding	Moderate understanding of appropriate contexts relating to the work, including, where appropriate, professional ones.	Partial evidence of critical thinking and research.
Application & Realisation	Generally basic deployment of appropriate sources, materials, techniques and/or concepts in relation to the task.	Limited development of ideas.
Organisation & Engagement	Adequate planning, preparedness and other organisational activities required to complete the work.	Minimum levels of initiative and enterprise.
Communication & Presentation	Incomplete presentation and/or limited expression of ideas and/or the results of the tasks undertaken.	Presentation and communication lacks consistency.
Creativity & Resourcefulness	Sufficient evidence of imagination and ingenuity.	Limited evidence of ambition.

### E+ E E-

Work submitted for assessment that achieves a grade in the E band will be unsatisfactory. It may achieve satisfactory levels in terms of some of the qualities outlined below, but does not meet the overall threshold to pass. As such it will be a marginal fail.

Assessment Criteria*	Undergraduate degree pre-final years Undergraduate certificate and diploma	Additional qualities for final year undergraduate and taught postgraduate
Knowledge & Understanding	Insufficient understanding of appropriate contexts relating to the work including, where appropriate, professional ones.	Insufficient evidence of critical thinking.
Application & Realisation	Poor engagement and application of sources, materials, techniques and/or concepts in relation to the task. The student may have chosen inappropriate materials or has not followed the 'brief' set.	
Organisation & Engagement	Inadequate planning, preparedness and/or other organisational activities required to complete the work.	
Communication & Presentation	Incomplete presentation and/or insufficiently coherent expression of ideas and/or the results of the tasks undertaken.	
Creativity & Resourcefulness	Minimal evidence of creative originality and imagination.	

### F

Work submitted for assessment that achieves an F will be deemed a fail. It will not have achieved satisfactory levels of achievement in all or most of the qualities outlined above.



## Assessment criteria

### Knowledge and Understanding

Capacity to undertake (independent) research, to identify and collate appropriate materials, ideas, concepts, theories, debates, formula, in relation to a subject and know how to interpret and discuss these.

### Application and Realisation

Application of skills and knowledge to address the assessment tasks; shows students' capacity to apply what is learnt to the assessment task; show reasoning, deduction, solving problems, making sense of their learning.

Realisation is linked to resolution, judgement, evaluation and making choices, it shows students' ability to realise their efforts in the final outcome, and relate this to the wider context.

### Organisation and Engagement

Organising, managing and completing the assessment task within a timeframe, meeting deadlines; ability to manage complex situations; shows capacity to be a self-directed learner. Also this category includes organising of ideas and values.

Engagement is both a process and an outcome. It is linked to student interactions, and commitment. Students learn how to ask and answer questions, show the extent to which they have actively engaged with the learning and assessment tasks, achieved learning outcomes, and interacted positively within the learning environment, ie, demonstrated an awareness of interaction with and responsiveness to others in the learning environment and/or in placement contexts.

### Communication and Presentation

Quality execution, coherent, clear presentation, evidence of making connections and integration of ideas, also demonstrates judgement, evaluation and editing. Complete a bibliography, appropriate and accurate use of referencing.

### Creativity and Resourcefulness

Independent thought and expression, experimentation, ambition in response to an assessment task, ingenuity, the ability to analyse, process, select, construct, assemble and resolve an assessment task beyond the terms of the task set.

## 4. Examination

### 4.1 Examination Board Dates

There are five Exam Boards in each academic year. For 2024-25, the dates are as follows:

Exam Board	Date	Examining
Exam Board 1	24 January 2025	Trimester 1 results for Academic Year 2024-25, UG & PG
Exam Board 2	23 May 2025	End of year results for non-award UG and PG
Exam Board 3	13 June 2025	Final Award for UG and PG
Exam Board 4	05 September 2025 ( <i>tbc</i> )	Results for Erasmus/Exchange students Deferrals from EB 1, 2 & 3 Final Award and continuing PG
Exam Board 5	24 October 2025 ( <i>tbc</i> )	Deferrals from EB4 Final Award PG

### 4.2 Composition of NCAD Examination Board

1. Head of Academic Affairs
2. Head of School of Design
3. Head of School of Education
4. Head of School of Fine Art
5. Head of School of Visual Culture
6. Head of Department of First Year Studies
7. Head of Department of Communication Design
8. Head of Department of Design for Body and Environment
9. Head of Department of Product Design
10. Head of Continuing Education in Art and Design
11. Head of Department of Applied Materials
12. Head of Department of Media
13. Head of Department of Painting
14. Head of Department of Print
15. Head of Department of Sculpture & Expanded Practice
16. Director of Assessment – University College Dublin

Note: All of the above constitute the regular Examination Boards and are required to attend through all the meetings. The quorum shall be two-thirds of the filled posts.

Note: In addition to the above, College staff who exercise an examination function shall be deemed to be internal examiners and are invited to attend the Examination Boards.

## 5. Remediation – Resits and Repeats

Where a student fails a module or part of a module, the following opportunities for remediation may be offered.

**Resit** – A resit is an opportunity to obtain the required credits without attendance. There will be no more than one resit opportunity for each module. **Resits are marked on a pass / fail basis and**

**recorded on the student record as grade D-(r).**

A resit should offer the student a second opportunity to demonstrate that they have achieved the major learning outcomes associated with a module. Resits can take into account the learning outcomes already achieved by an individual student. The resit does not have to be identical to the original offering of the module. While the learning outcomes of resit modules will remain the same as those of the original modules undertaken, the content and delivery may change to take account of the availability of academic and studio support over the summer vacation period

**Repeat** – A repeat is a second attempt at a module with attendance. **Repeats are graded but the maximum grade recorded on the student record will be Grade D-(r).** A student repeating a module will be expected to repeat all the course work, assignments and assessments associated with a module.

Module remediation opportunities must be available within one of the two subsequent teaching trimesters of a programme after the module has been delivered unless the module is a clinical teaching module, a field-based module, or a work placement, where remediation with the two subsequent trimesters is not possible.

Non-submission of assessment tasks will be regarded as a fail.

## 6. Regulations that apply to Resits & Repeats

The following regulations apply to Resits and Repeats for all programmes at NCAD.

The Examination Board (NCAD Exam Board) in consultation with the Head of School and Head of Academic Affairs has the discretion to recommend a specific course of action to remediate failed modules.

- Remediating up to 10 ECTS of learning by means of a Resit, that is without academic supervision, is feasible.
- Remediating between 15 and 20 ECTS of learning by means of a Resit, that is without academic supervision may be feasible. A determination in respect of remediation through a Resit or Repeat will be informed by the recommendation of the Head of School/Department and agreed by the Examination Board (NCAD Exam Board).
- Remediating 25 ECTS or more of learning by means of a Resit, that is without academic supervision, is not academically credible and is not permitted.
- Where a student fails to pass their Critical Culture modules for a given academic session, a determination in respect of remediation through a Resit or Repeat of those modules will be informed by the recommendation of the Head of the School of Visual Culture and agreed by the Examination Board (NCAD Exam Board).

## 7. Repeated Failed Modules and Failure to Progress - Continuation

In the case of a student repeatedly failing modules and not achieving enough credits to progress in their degree, the Head of Department may ask the Exam Board to refer the student to the Continuation Committee for consideration. Referral to the Continuation Committee for failure to

progress will only be considered in a case where the student has failed the equivalent of two full academic years and after the student has been counselled as to the suitability of their degree choice by the Head of Department.

The Continuation Committee consists of the Heads of School, Head of First Year and the Head of Academic Affairs & Research and is convened on the recommendation of the NCAD Exam Board. Such cases are only considered at the end of the Academic Year. The outcome of the Continuation Committee's considerations may be to recommend that a student is not permitted to re-register the following year.

## 8. Late Submission of Course Work

The NCAD policy on the penalty for late submission of course work is outlined below. This policy allows for a graduation of penalties for late submission (up to TWO weeks late) and a differentiation between the penalty applied for late submission and the penalty applied for remediation of failed modules.

### 8.1 Grade Penalty for Late Submission of work (First Sitting):

Where a student submits a piece of work late without any mitigating circumstances (such as in the case of illness with supporting Doctors note) the policy is

- ONE week late (from Day 1 after submission deadline, up to and including Day 7, ie, if an essay is due to be submitted on a Tuesday, the week late should include the following Tuesday):  
Penalty: Minus 2 grades: A+ → A-
- TWO weeks late (from Day 8 up to and including Day 14): Penalty: Minus 4 grades: A+ → B
- Coursework/essays that are more than two weeks late will not be graded.

## 9. First Year - Allocation of Degree Pathways / Change of Programme

### 9.1 Changing Programme During First Year

During the first Trimester of Year 1 students are expected to remain on the programme they were accepted onto through the CAO.

A change to a registered programme during the first Trimester can only be considered once the CAO season has completed and under the following circumstances:

- The student is a registered First Year student in NCAD
- The student meets the portfolio and other eligibility requirements (as per that year's CAO offers) for the programme they wish to transfer into
- That there are 'direct entry' places still available on the programme (direct entry places offered through the CAO, not including spaces reserved for Common Entry and Education) students.

Enquiries on transfer during the First Trimester should be made to the Admissions Officer.



## 9.2 First Year Art & Design – Allocation of Degree Pathways

First Year Students on all entry routes submit their preferences to do two three week area experience projects in the first module of Trimester 2 from the available specialisms in Art and Design, CE1-6 at the end of Trimester 1. All direct entry students will do one of their pathway area experience projects plus one other of their choice. The area experience that a student takes does not determine the degree pathway that students pursue.

Toward the end of the CE1-6 Module in trimester 2 all students on all entry routes will be asked to fill in a form indicating their preferred degree pathway in order of preference. Students on single entry direct entry pathways are requested to confirm their choice of pathway. There is also the option for those on designated pathways to also opt to state their preference to change their degree choice and change Department specialisation at this point. Once all Common Entry Education and multiple direct entry students have been placed it is possible to allow students to transfer pathway if there is a place available for them.

- Students will be allocated into their degree pathway based on their preference as stated on the allocation form.
- Where there is an over-subscription to an area, places will be allocated based on the aggregate result achieved by a student in their CE1-4, CE1-5 & CE1-6 module summative assessments. Places will be allocated based on the aggregate results of all studio modules together. Where there is more than one student on the same grade, their grade in their VC1-1 or ED equivalent will be compared and the student with the highest grade in this summative assessment will be awarded the place, if these assessments are also at the same grade allocation on a random basis will be organised through Academic Registry.
- Repeating students can use the grade achieved in their summative assessment at the end of Trimester 1 as well as any subsequent assessments to compete for a place in an oversubscribed area.
- The First Year allocation process and waitlist continues to be in effect up to the end of the registration period during the first trimester of Year 2 (31 October). Students who are still interested in making a change during this period should contact Academic Registry [studentrecords@ncad.ie](mailto:studentrecords@ncad.ie).
- Final confirmation will be issued to students by Academic Registry.

## 9.3 Change of Registration in Year 2 +

Students wishing to transfer registration to a different programme can only do so with the approval of the Head of Academic & Student Affairs, the Head of Department of the programme they are currently registered on and the approval of the Head of Department of the programme they wish to transfer into.

For a change of programme to be properly recorded on the student record system a Course Transfer Application Form must be submitted to Academic Registry signed by both Heads of Department.

This form is available [online here](https://www.ncad.ie/students/academic-student-affairs-registration-regulation/registration/) (<https://www.ncad.ie/students/academic-student-affairs-registration-regulation/registration/>), and should be returned to Academic Registry [studentrecords@ncad.ie](mailto:studentrecords@ncad.ie) by mid-February of each year.

Students wishing to transfer registration to a different programme can only do so with the approval

of the Head of Academic & Student Affairs. Prior to Trimester 2 of Year 2, all such requests must be made through Academic Registry and the allocation of available places will be decided as follows:

- As part of the process through which students are allocated into their degree pathway based on their preference as stated on the allocation form, a 'waitlist' is generated for over-subscribed pathways.
- The waitlist order is based on the aggregate result achieved by a student in their CE1-4, CE1-5 and CE1-6 module summative assessments (as per the original process for the allocation of places).
- Where there is no waitlist for a particular pathway and places are available, a prompt decision will be possible.
- Where there is a waitlist for a particular pathway and places are available, they will be offered to students on the basis of the waitlist.
- Where there is a waitlist for a particular pathway and no places are available, a final decision will be deferred until the registration process for continuing students has concluded. Where a space becomes available, this will be offered to students on the basis of the waitlist.
- Final confirmation will be issued to students by Academic Registry.

#### 9.4 Design or Fine Art with Critical Cultures or And Visual Culture

First Year Studio Students may opt to take additional visual culture modules during the course of their degree studies. This decision is made initially at the end of Trimester 2 in First Year and will depend on a student achieving an overall minimum grade of B- in Critical Cultures in First Year. Students who take on additional Critical Culture modules can achieve an award of either a *BA in Design or Fine Art with Critical Cultures* or a joint *BA in Design or Fine Art and Visual Culture*.

## 10. APPENDIX 1

### Recommended Resit / Repeat Report [delete as appropriate]

*This report is to be completed in situations where it is the judgement of the examination panel that a student should be required to repeat a module without being given opportunity to re-sit the module over the summer. The report should then be submitted to the Head of Academic Affairs for presentation and discussion at the relevant Exam Board. It should be accompanied by a copy of the completed module assessment record for the student.*

<b>Student Name:</b>	
<b>Module:</b>	
<b>Members of Examination Panel:</b>	
<b>Grade Achieved:</b>	

1. Is the Module Assessment record attached? Yes / No. [delete as appropriate]
2. Please identify the reasons why the student is being recommended to resit/repeat [delete as appropriate] the module.