ACADEMIC REGULATIONS – Diploma

BRITISH COLLEGE OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE

ESO European School of Osteopathy

Part of BCNO Group

Table of Contents

Introduction

The Academic Regulations outlined in this document provide a clear framework for academic standards, assessment, and progression across the Diploma programme. These regulations are designed to ensure consistency, fairness, and transparency in all areas of academic management, supporting learners in their academic journey and personal development.

This document serves as a comprehensive guide to the requirements and expectations for both learners and faculty. It covers key areas including attendance, assessment procedures, formative and summative feedback and academic progression. The regulations also outline processes for managing interruptions of study.

By adhering to these regulations, the BCNO upholds its commitment to academic excellence and integrity, helping learners achieve the qualifications they need to advance in their careers. All learners are encouraged to familiarise themselves with these regulations to fully understand the responsibilities and standards expected throughout their studies.

Attendance

Regular attendance is closely linked to academic success. Learners who attend classes consistently are more likely to have a positive experience and achieve higher results.

Learners are expected to attend all scheduled classes and clinic sessions punctually. If you are unable to attend, please email us as soon as possible to inform us of your absence.

Attendance Policy

If you are absent due to illness for more than one three-day seminar, you must present a medical certificate to the Programme Manager promptly upon your return.

It is essential to be available for all formal assessments at the scheduled times. Failure to attend an assessment or to submit coursework by the deadline—without having obtained an extension or deferral through the mitigating circumstances procedure—

may result in a failure of that assessment.

If you are experiencing difficulties attending classes due to personal, financial, or academic issues, please do not hesitate to discuss your situation with the Danish Programme Manager.

Learners are required to maintain a minimum attendance rate of 80%. Attendance will be closely monitored, and while 100% attendance is encouraged, the School acknowledges that external responsibilities and health issues may occasionally prevent attendance. Poor attendance may be considered when reviewing requests for exam resits, as the BCNO Group has found a correlation between poor attendance and lower exam performance.

Attendance Monitoring

Learner attendance is monitored by the International Team and will be reported regularly to the International Head of Programmes.

If you are contacted via email by a member of the International Team regarding your attendance, it is strongly advised that you arrange a meeting to discuss your attendance record. The International Team may be able to provide assistance or offer advice. This meeting will initially be with your Danish Programme Manager, who may be able to resolve any issues immediately.

Assessment

The primary purpose of assessment is to allow learners to demonstrate that they have achieved the objectives of their programme and met the standard required for the award. Assessment relies on academic judgement, not merely on numeric computation. While grades indicate student attainment, they should not be seen as absolute values or exact measurements.

For example, when determining final award classifications, the Exam Board will consider the overall grade profile of learners near the classification boundaries. At its discretion, the Board may adjust the classification of an award based on the distribution of marks, applying a principle of preponderance where appropriate.

Formative Assessment

Recognising the essential role of formative assessment in preparing learners for success, the programme integrates a variety of methods to enhance understanding, reinforce key concepts, and build essential skills. These formative assessments are not graded but are designed to provide constructive feedback, allowing learners to gauge their progress and identify areas for improvement.

The key formative strategies used throughout the course include:

- Tutorials: Regularly scheduled tutorials encourage learners to engage directly with tutors on specific topics, discuss challenging areas, and deepen their comprehension of core content.
- Quizzes and Polls: Frequent quizzes and interactive polls help learners test their knowledge in real time, reinforcing learning and pinpointing topics that may require additional focus.
- Class Discussions: Facilitated discussions promote critical thinking, enable peer learning, and allow learners to articulate their understanding of the material in a collaborative setting.
- Mini-Presentations: Learners are allowed to present on various topics, helping to build confidence, communication skills, and subject mastery.
- Group Work: Collaborative activities foster teamwork, encourage diverse perspectives, and build interpersonal skills, which are essential in both academic and clinical practice.
- Immediate Feedback: Tutors provide on-the-spot feedback during sessions, helping learners to make prompt adjustments and build upon their strengths.

To further support exam readiness, an annual exam preparation seminar is provided. This session offers structured guidance on exam techniques, time management, and common pitfalls, ensuring that learners are well-equipped for their summative assessments.

Collectively, these formative assessment strategies provide a structured, supportive framework that fosters continuous improvement and development, empowering learners to confidently progress through the programme.

Summative Assessment

Summative assessment extends beyond just the mark received for your written or practical performance; it plays a crucial role in your overall learning experience.

There are two types of assessment: formative and summative. Formative assessment is intended to provide feedback on your progress and inform your ongoing development, while summative assessment measures your achievement against the module's learning outcomes. The summative assessment also indicates your ability to progress to the next stage of the programme. It's important to note that summative assessment marks contribute to your course/programme progression, whereas formative assessment marks do not. Both types of assessment serve as vital tools for providing feedback, allowing you to reflect on your performance and identify areas for improvement. Assessment is the mechanism through which the achievement of learning outcomes is monitored, ensuring compliance with the standards set by the School and validating authority for performance classification. The programme employs a variety of assessment strategies that align with individual course learning outcomes.

Please be aware that Danish/English dictionaries are permitted in the practical exam room, under the supervision of the examiner, for translation purposes only. The use of mobile phones or smartwatches is strictly prohibited in the exam room.

For coursework, high standards of spelling and grammar are expected, as you will have time to prepare your submissions. All learners are encouraged to ask a colleague or friend to proofread their work. If you have learning differences, please speak to the Danish Programme Manager as your first point of contact.

Assessment Regulations

The summative assessment schedule is typically published during the initial weeks of the academic year by the International Programme Team in the Learning Zone.

The following regulations apply to all assessments for the BCNO Diploma in Osteopathy:

Summative Practical Exams

- Learners must arrive at the time specified on the schedule published on the Learning Zone.
- Each learner will have a timed assessment (e.g., 30 minutes), with additional time allocated for changeovers.
- Wait outside the exam room until called in.
- Once you leave the exam room, you should not return.
- Learners are required to wear their BCNO Group polo shirt, smart trousers, and shoes. Jewellery and watches should not be worn. Please ensure you bring any necessary equipment for the assessment, such as medical screening tools.
- Eating sweets (including cough sweets) or chewing gum during the assessment is not permitted.
- Times for assessments cannot be changed. If you are ill on the day of the assessment, please refer to the section on mitigation later in this Handbook.

Modelling for Practical Assessments:

Practical assessments are integral to the development and progression criteria for the Diploma Programme. All learners are expected to model at various times throughout their studies. This serves as a valuable learning opportunity, allowing you to experience different assessments, understand the questioning style, and meet faculty members you may not have encountered before. If health issues may prevent you from modelling during any of the exams, please inform the International Team Administrator or Exam Manager as soon as possible.

To ensure that practical assessments run smoothly, please adhere to the following guidelines and rules regarding modelling:

- If you cannot model when scheduled, it is your responsibility to arrange a swap

or find someone in your class group to model in your place. Notify the International Team Administrator or Exam Manager of any changes. Failing to show up to model when required could delay the exam and may lead to disciplinary action.

- If you have a known condition that may prevent certain techniques from being performed on you, inform the International Team Administrator or Exam Manager immediately.
- If you are in a relationship with one of the learner practitioners being examined, please notify the International Team Administrator or Exam Manager in advance so you can be paired with someone else.

On the Day of Assessment:

- Arrive at the designated time and report to the waiting area.
- Wear appropriate underwear; avoid crop tops and sports bras as they may obscure visibility for practitioners. Thongs should also be avoided.
- Remove any jewellery, such as necklaces, bracelets, or long earrings that may catch.
- As the patient, wait for instructions from the learner practitioner or examiner.
- Answer questions from the learner practitioner only within the context of the exam process.
- Do not question the examiners' instructions or assist the learner practitioner, such as by adopting a treatment position without being prompted. Models should refrain from commenting on the learner's performance.

Please remember that the assessment is a confidential interaction between the learner and the examiner. You are not permitted to discuss any individual learner's performance with others unless requested by the Registry Officer or a member of the International Team, such as in the case of a Learner appeal.

Summative Coursework

For each piece of coursework, you will receive an Assessment Briefing, which will include all necessary information regarding the assessment. This briefing, available on the Learning Zone, will detail the submission deadline, feedback dates, provisional results, coursework questions, related learning outcomes, and submission instructions.

Submission dates are outlined in the assessment schedule, and learners are expected to submit their work before the specified deadline. A designated submission area will be accessible on the relevant year's Assessment page on the Learning Zone.

Coursework submitted up to ten working days after the official deadline will be accepted and marked; however, if it meets the criteria for a "pass," the mark will be capped at 50%. If the late submission is accompanied by a valid reason accepted by the Extenuation Panel, no capping will apply. Coursework submitted later than ten working days after the deadline will not be accepted, resulting in a non-submission recorded as 0% for that assessment item.

All coursework must be submitted electronically via the Learning Zone. Specific details regarding submission, including the assessment title, question, deadline, formatting requirements, learning outcomes, feedback date, and provisional grade, will be included in the Assessment Briefing.

The BCNO Group employs the plagiarism detection software "Turnitin." After submission, your work will be processed through Turnitin, and a report will be generated.

Plagiarism is a serious concern in higher education, and both the validator and the BCNO Group actively work to prevent plagiarised submissions. For further information on plagiarism, please refer to the relevant section later in this Handbook.

Reasonable Adjustments Procedure

The BCNO Group is committed to ensuring that all learners have equal opportunities to succeed in their studies. As part of this commitment, the School provides reasonable adjustments to support learners with disabilities or specific learning differences. These

adjustments are designed to accommodate individual needs while maintaining the integrity of the assessment process. For detailed information on the procedures for requesting and implementing reasonable adjustments, please refer to the "Reasonable Adjustments Procedures" Policy available on the Virtual Learning Environment.

Results Interim/Provisional Results

Whenever possible, the School will publish interim summative assessment results, which are provisional and pending final approval at the Exam Board. These provisional results will be accompanied by feedback for each learner. The purpose of this feedback is to encourage learners to reflect on their performance, seek additional verbal feedback from tutors if desired, and develop a plan to enhance their skills and knowledge for future assessments and personal development.

Exam Board

The Exam Board, accountable to the Board of Trustees, oversees learner progress. The authority to assess learner performance and make progression decisions is delegated to the Exam Board.

The membership of the Exam Board is as follows:

- Head of Quality (Chair);
- Registry Officer;
- International Head of Programmes;
- Danish Programme Manager;
- Internal Examiners;
- External Examiner.

(In the absence of the Head of Quality, the Board shall be chaired by the Registry Officer)

The Exam Board reviews all learners individually and their assessment profiles for that academic year. The Board makes decisions on the progression of each learner following

the BCNO Group's academic regulations.

In exceptional cases, after an initial decision by the Exam Board, the Head of Quality and the International Head of Programmes may take further action in full consultation with the External Examiner. Any such action will be reported at the next Exam Board meeting.

Gaining Credit and Progressing

Learners gain credit by achieving the learning outcomes and passing a module through assessment.

Passing a Module

Learners are required to attend examinations and submit their work for assessment in accordance with the Assessment Briefing, adhering to the institutional procedures that govern academic conduct.

Any mark or grade received by a learner is considered provisional until it has been ratified by the Exam Board.

Credit will be awarded for modules where the learner achieves at least a bare pass. To pass a module, a learner must obtain an overall passing grade.

Compensation for a failed assessment may be applied when a learner receives a grade of 48-49%. This option is limited to one module, provided that all other modules have clear passing marks.

Reassessment

In cases where a module was failed, the Exam Board will review the Learner's profile to assess the degree of failure and determine the appropriate manner and timing of reassessment. Candidates who do not successfully retrieve their initial failure at the next assessment opportunity will typically be granted only one further opportunity to be assessed, at the discretion of the Exam Board. This means that learners may be allowed up to three attempts to pass an individual module.

Learners who fail to show adequate academic progress or engagement may not be

considered for reassessment opportunities by the Examinations Board unless extenuating circumstances have been accepted.

Resit

If the Examinations Board allows a learner to resit failed modules (or some assessment elements), this will typically occur before the start of the learner's next academic stage. However, due to the structure of the Diploma Programme, where the Final Board of Examiners meets right before the new academic session begins, resit opportunities cannot be taken until the start of the new session. As a result, learners will usually progress with Intermediate Standing (PIS).

When a learner retrieves a failure through a resit, the grades for the reassessed components will be capped. However, the overall module grade will not be capped.

Repeat

If a learner fails more than the specified number of UK credits without extenuating circumstances, they will be required to repeat that academic year, focusing only on the modules they have failed. The stipulated credit limits for this requirement are as follows:

Yr 1 – XX credits;

Yr 2 – XX credits;

Yr 3 – XX credits;

A learner will be permitted to repeat a year on one occasion only (without mitigation).

Where the Exam Board has determined that the learner is required to repeat failed modules (all or only failed components of assessment) reassessment will be permitted in the learner's next academic year;

Retrieval of failure obtained by repeating a module(s) will result in the overall grade attained being recorded for progression and classification purposes;

Derivation of the Final Weighted Mark

The final weighted mark will be derived by taking the average of the end-of-year weighted mark for each of the four years.

The final awards will be classified as follows:

- Pass: 50-59%;
- Merit: 60-69%;
- Distinction: 70% and above

Approved Results

Approved results will be published after the Exam Board has met.

Appeals

If you have any complaints or concerns, it is important to refer to the BCNO Complaints Procedure for Diploma Learners, which is available on the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). This procedure outlines the steps to address your concerns effectively and ensures that all complaints are handled in a fair and timely manner.

Mitigating Circumstances

Mitigating or extenuating circumstances are typically defined as unexpected, significantly disruptive events beyond a learner's control that may have impacted academic performance. These may include personal difficulties, such as ill health, supported by acceptable evidence (e.g., a medical certificate, a report from a neutral osteopath, or a police accident report). If approved, such circumstances may be considered by the Exam Board when determining awards and progression. Claims for special consideration must be submitted at the time of the incident, not retrospectively. Additionally, late coursework submissions within ten working days may avoid mark capping if the Extenuation Panel validates the claim.

Coursework is generally not accepted more than 10 working days after the deadline; in such cases, a non-submission is recorded as 0%. Extenuating circumstances affecting assessments must be reported to the Registry Officer or International Head of Programmes prior to the Exam Board; exceptions are rare and would only be considered for appeals in exceptional cases.

The following situations are not valid grounds for claiming special consideration:

- Holidays or other courses taken during term time
- Traffic delays
- Financial issues
- Unawareness of assessment dates or times
- Personal computer or printer malfunctions
- Late submissions on the due date/time
- Medical evidence outside the relevant assessment period
- Lack of supporting evidence
- Foreseeable or preventable circumstances
- Minor illnesses (e.g., a cold)
- Poor time management
- Poor IT practices (e.g., no backup copies of documents)

Process of Notification

Learners who need to inform the Registry Officer or International Head of Programmes about mitigating/extenuating circumstances should complete a Special Consideration Application Form, which can be obtained electronically from the Registry Officer. This form, along with any supporting evidence, should be submitted to the Registry Officer or International Head of Programmes before the relevant examination or assessment.

In cases of exceptional circumstances, learners may submit the completed form and evidence up to three working days after the exam or assessment, but always before the next Exam Board meeting. If an issue arises during an examination, the Invigilator must be informed, who will then relay the information to the Registry Officer or International Head of Programmes to ensure it reaches the Exam Board.

Academic Offences – Plagiarism/Cheating

For any issues related to academic offences, Learners should consult the Learner Disciplinary Policy and Procedure, which is accessible on the Virtual Learning

Environment (VLE). This policy outlines the procedures for addressing academic misconduct and ensures that all cases are managed fairly and consistently.

External Examiners

An external examiner is an independent academic professional appointed to review and ensure the integrity and quality of the assessment process for the Diploma programme. Their role includes evaluating the curriculum, examining assessment methods, and providing feedback on the standards of Learner performance in relation to national benchmarks. The relevance of an external examiner for the Diploma is crucial, as it helps maintain academic rigour, promotes transparency, and ensures that the programme meets the required educational standards, ultimately enhancing the credibility of the qualification awarded to learners.

Role of the External Examiner:

- Review and comment on the standards of key assessment elements set for the Diploma programme.
- Evaluate samples of assessed and moderated learner work to ensure the quality meets expectations for the award.
- Confirm that the standard is comparable to other Level 7 qualifications.
- Provide the awarding organisation with an independent view of the effectiveness of our marking and internal moderation processes.
- Attend Exam Boards and contribute to discussions regarding the conferral of qualifications.
- Ensure that all learners are treated fairly and consistently in accordance with regulations.
- Endorse the outcomes of Exam Boards based on scrutiny of assessments and Board deliberations.
- Note that no diploma award can be made without the assent of an External Quality Assurer (EQA).

- Formally report findings to the awarding organisation at the end of each year.
- Identify good practices within the programme and make recommendations for future improvements.

External Examiners will not personally mark your work or comment on individual learners or specific pieces of work in their reports. They will not engage in correspondence with individuals regarding grades, marking, feedback, award classification, or other personal academic matters. For inquiries related to these topics, you should speak with your tutors and the International Programme Leader.

Interruption of Studies and Returning to Study

Learners enrolled in the Diploma programme may request an interruption of their studies under certain conditions. The following points outline the provisions and requirements for both interruption and return:

Interruption of Studies

Learners are permitted to interrupt their studies for up to two years without adverse effects. During this period, their place in the programme will be held for them, and they will generally be able to return to the point where their studies were initially paused.

Extended Interruption

If the interruption extends beyond two years, each case will be reviewed individually by the International Team. In these cases, learners may be required to participate in additional seminars or instructional sessions to ensure their knowledge and skills are up-to-date with current programme standards.

Returning to Study

Returning to study after an interruption is at the School's discretion and will be guided by programme and institutional regulations.

Carry-Forward of Previous Marks

Marks from fully completed stages of study will remain valid and be carried forward for learners who return following an approved interruption.

Resuming the Programme

Returning learners are expected to re-join their programme at the stage following their last fully completed and passed stage.

Restrictions on Return After Discontinuation

Learners who were previously discontinued from their studies due to academic failure are generally not permitted to return to the programme.