

SUPPLEMENTARY ASSESSMENT

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS ABOUT GRADING STUDENTS FOR MODULES.

The final assessment of a student for a module is based on a simple calculation, with results of tests as input.

These tests in a module exist in two categories: the *pass/fail* category, and the *full marks* (1-10) category.

Test results in the full marks category are given with one decimal precision.

Every test in the full marks category has a minimum score.

The minimum score is given with one decimal precision

The minimum score is between 4,5 and 5,5.

The calculation of the mark for the entire module is as follows:

Mark=4, if there is a failed item in the pass/fail category

Mark=4, if there is an item in the full marks category with a score below the required minimum.

Mark= rounded weighted average of the marks for items in the full marks category, otherwise.

Rounded means that the resulting mark is the natural number nearest to the weighted average; in case there are two natural numbers at equal distance (0,5) of the average, then the outcome is the higher of these two.

Are there restrictions to be set on the distribution of weights. Would we accept 1, 2, 1, and 10 as the four weights for four items?

WHO IS A CANDIDATE FOR SUPPLEMENTARY ASSESSMENT

We distinguish two situations where a student gets an insufficient mark for a module; the *above threshold* and the *below threshold* situation.

ABOVE THRESHOLD.

The student has a pass for all tests in the pass/fail category, and a mark above the minimum score for each test in the full marks category.

But the mark for the module is insufficient.

This implies that at least one minimum score is below 5,5. Think of a student who has 5,6; 5,6 and 5,3, where the weight of the lowest score is twice the weight of the others. So the weighted average is 5,45, which is rounded to 5.

General observation: in the *above threshold* situation there is little or no room for supplementary assessment. Students in this category simply did not manage to compensate their weaknesses.

However, we could adopt the following

A candidate who fails a module in the above threshold situation, is a candidate for supplementary assessment only if he/she meets the following two conditions

If we replaced one of his/her test results which is 5,0 or higher, by a 6,0, then the weighted average of the full marks results would be 5,75 or higher; and

At least one of the results in the full marks category is 7,0 or higher.

Examples:

4 tests A, B, C and D, with weights 2, 1, 3, 4

(a) student's scores 6,2; 6,0; 5,2; 5,0; weighted average 5,4; NO CANDIDATE

(b) Student's scores 5,5; 7,0; 5,2; 5,2; weighted average 5,44; CANDIDATE

BELOW THRESHOLD.

The student has a fail for one of the tests in the pass/fail category, and/or a mark below the minimum score for a test in the full marks category.

General observation: in the *below threshold* situation there may be more situations where supplementary assessment could be offered. Students in this category have an obvious weakness, which is a great one, but the rest of their results may show good progress towards the desired final qualifications.

Therefore, we could adopt the following

A candidate who fails a module in the below threshold situation, is a candidate for supplementary assessment only if he/she meets the following two conditions

There is only a single item with a score below threshold

The weighted average of the scores of the (other) full marks items is 6,0 or more; each of the others is 5,5 or higher

At least one mark is 7,5 or higher

Examples:

4 tests A, B, C and D, with weights 2, 1, 3, 4

(a) student's scores 6,5; 6,8; 5,0; 5,5; where 5,0 is below threshold NO CANDIDATE

(b) Student's scores 5,5; 7,6; 5,0; 5,5; where 5,0 is below threshold; CANDIDATE

CONCLUDING REMARKS

It is virtually impossible to set guidelines for examiners outlining who they should consider as candidates for supplementary assessment, and who not.

I am not entirely dissatisfied with my attempts above, but I would certainly want to give the examiners some freedom in taking their decisions.

Whatever the rules are, it should never be the case that everyone who falls within the set limits automatically gets a supplementary assessment. In all cases, the examiners must take not just the rules, but also the actual situation into account.