



كلية الشرق الأوسط
Middle East College

YEAR OF BLENDED LEARNING

Academic Year 2020-21

**Special Regulations and Assessment Approach
for Spring 2021**



This document summarises the special regulations and assessment approach of Middle East College (MEC) for Spring 2021, in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and is sequel to earlier similar document for Fall 2020.

The special regulations and assessment approach for Spring 2021 semester draws on the Letter(dated December 09, 2020) issued by the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation (MoHERI), Sultanate of Oman; MEC's Teaching and Learning Strategy; review of performance in Spring 2020, Summer 2020 and Fall 2020 semesters; approaches adopted by universities across the world in response to COVID-19; QAA guidance documents¹; advice from our academic and professional body partners including ICE and CILIP, UK; and consultations with staff and students.

These regulations supersede those mentioned in the document entitled Special Regulations and Assessment Approach- Fall 2020. All academic regulations stated in the Student Handbook shall generally be applicable for the Spring 2021 semester as well. The special regulations and assessment approach (detailed in this document) must be read in conjunction with the regulations mentioned in the Student Handbook. In case of any conflict between the regulations stated in both documents, these special regulations will be applicable for the Spring 2021 semester.

It is important to note that changes shall be made to the implementation of this approach at any point of time during the semester based on continuous review and further directions from the Supreme Committee and/or MoHERI following changes in the COVID-19 situation in the country. Students shall be kept informed about these changes. The implementation of the Spring 2021 semester shall be based on the following fundamental principles:

1. Health and well-being of the entire MEC community is of utmost significance (P1)
2. Overall academic standards and achievement of programme and module-level learning outcomes (LOs) should not be affected (P2)
3. Students' learning experience has to be interactive and student-led (P3)
4. Students' attendance on campus should be restricted to the essential minimum and should be based on module and student category requirements (P4)

¹ www.qaa.ac.uk/news-events/support-and-guidance-covid-19



5. Students' progression, graduation, and employability should not be adversely affected because of the inability of any category of students to be present on campus due to the COVID-19 situation (P5)
6. Modes of assessments should generally be such that they allow students to submit their work online (P6)
7. Online modes of assessment should also consider achievability of learning outcomes by students learning from home and enable faculty to evaluate the work online and record those decisions (P7)
8. The current period of study affects only a part of the overall programme and its outcomes (P8)

Informed by the above principles and the guidelines issued by the government on social-distancing, and health and safety measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19, the following approach towards the delivery of courses shall be adopted by the College in Spring 2021.

1. Teaching and Learning

- a) Teaching on a module during the Spring 2021 semester shall either be purely online or blended (on-campus combined with online), based on the type of module and student category requirements (P1, P2, P3, P4).
- b) The flipped learning through blended approach of the College shall be enhanced with more opportunities for collaborative learning and shall be a key characteristic of the learning experience in Spring 2021 semester (P2, P3, P4, P5).
- c) All on-campus sessions shall also be made available online at the same time (P1, P2, P3, P4, P5).
- d) All computer laboratories, except specifically identified laboratories related to engineering design or analyses, shall be available for online access through various software from outside the campus (P1, P2, P3, P4, P5).
- e) In cases where the laboratory work of a module requires the physical presence of students, such laboratory sessions could be conducted on campus. The teaching of theoretical aspects of the module shall happen online. Students



shall be informed of such modules during registration and through the Module Information Guide (MIG) (P1, P2, P3, P4, P5).

- f) If students are not able to undertake the on-campus laboratory sessions for the type of modules mentioned in section 1.e above, on account of any general directions given by the Supreme Committee and/or MoHERI regarding attendance on campus or on account of individual extenuating circumstances, alternative laboratory related tasks shall be provided without the requirement for undertaking on-campus laboratory experiments. Summative assessments given to such students shall be the same as the ones given to other students of the module who have attended on-campus laboratory sessions (refer section 4.f below). All the students who have not taken the laboratory sessions on campus, however, are required to demonstrate the required skill or competence in using the specific laboratory equipment on campus in a subsequent semester, as per the time-limit and schedule provided by the College. A certificate of completion in this regard (certified by the Programme Manager and Head of academic department) shall be an additional graduation requirement for all such students. The marks obtained by such students in Spring 2021 for the module shall be recorded and considered by the Exam Board. However, an IP grade shall be assigned for the module until students obtain a certificate of completion of the tasks (P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8).

2. Students on-campus

- 2.1 Given the COVID-19 scenario and the aforementioned teaching and learning approach followed by the College, reasonable attempts shall be made to allow the following groups of students to be on-campus on a priority basis and after obtaining necessary approval from MoHERI (P1, P2, P3, P4):

2.1.1 Students undertaking GFP.

2.1.2 Students who register for modules that require laboratory-based work on campus.

2.1.3 Students undertaking Diploma, UG, and PG graduation projects which require the use of laboratories on-campus.



Further, the Deans Council may allow a student/students belonging to the following groups to be on-campus based on their specific prior request:

- 2.1.4 First semester students and other students who need specific academic support
- 2.1.5 Students with disabilities
- 2.1.6 Students who do not have access to the technological resources that are required for learning

3. Attendance

All UG and GFP students are expected to have a minimum of 55 percent attendance and all PG students are expected to have a minimum of 50 percent attendance for every module registered in the Spring 2021 semester. Attendance percentages are calculated based on the attendance in online and/or on-campus sessions including practical sessions and tutorials. Failure to have the minimum attendance percentage shall lead to a fail in a module even if students have scored the minimum pass marks required for that module (P2, P3, P4).

4. Assessments

- a) There shall be no end of semester written examinations during Spring 2021 semester (P1, P2, P5, P6, P7, P8).
- b) There shall generally be no group assessments. In case of modules that have learning outcomes(LO) that explicitly refer to group work, assessment designs shall ensure that such outcomes are assessed by using internationally accepted practices employed in extraordinary situations (P1, P2, P5, P6, P7, P8).
- c) There shall generally be no presentation component for any assessment except Projects or where the LO specifically requires it.
- d) All modules shall have a maximum of two assessments such that they together cover all the LOs of the module (P1, P2, P5, P6, P7, P8).
- e) The assessments shall generally be “Online assessments” such that students can undertake them remotely (e.g. by staying at home) without the need for



- physically coming to campus or going outside to organizations or other social settings for data collection (P1, P2, P5, P6, P7, P8).
- f) Online assessments if followed in the case of laboratory-based assessments that by nature requires student work on campus shall focus on the handling, analysis, and interpretation of data (that would otherwise have been generated from such lab experiments on campus), and reaching appropriate conclusions (P1, P2, P5, P6, P7, P8).
 - g) Students who cannot undertake online assessments due to technological or network connectivity issues, can attempt these assessments online from the campus (P1, P2, P5, P6, P7).
 - h) The issuance of assessment QP to students, evaluation and feedback shall be done as per established processes of MEC.
 - i) Information on assessments shall be provided to all students through the MIGs and assessment briefs. The dates of submission of assessments shall be based on the Programme Assessment Calendar, based on the Spring 2021 academic calendar (P2, P6, P7).
 - j) The administration of PG Dissertations, as well as Final Projects at UG and Diploma levels shall also follow the above guidelines. Individual supervisors shall communicate the requirements to students as per the directions of Programme Managers and Heads of academic departments (P1, P2, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8).

4.1. Supplementary attempts

- i. Unless otherwise mentioned in the regulations that shall be provided in Summer/Fall 2021, UG students who fail modules in Spring 2021 shall follow the assessment regulations mentioned in the Student Handbook:
 - (a) take a supplementary examination for modules that usually have an end semester examination or
 - (b) re-register modules that are usually evaluated based on course work alone (P1, P2, P5, P6, P7).
- ii. For UG students to be eligible for supplementary examinations, they should have obtained a minimum of 30% of the module marks in Spring 2021 and the minimum attendance mandated by this regulation, failing



which they will have to re-register the module. The aggregate marks in the module shall be calculated by totalling the marks obtained by the student in Spring 2021 scaled to fifty and the marks obtained in the supplementary examination scaled to fifty (P1, P2, P5, P6, P7, P8). An example of the same is provided in *Annexure 1* for ready reference.

- iii. GFP students who have obtained (a) a minimum of 30% of the module marks in Spring 2021 and (b) the minimum attendance mandated by this regulation, shall be provided one single assignment covering all LOs as the supplementary assessment. Students who do not fulfil the conditions (a) and (b) will have to re-register the module (P1, P2, P5, P6, P7, P8).
- iv. If a UG student (a) failed in a module during Spring 2020 and has scored at least 30% total marks in that module but had not attempted supplementary examination of the module in Summer 2020/Fall 2020 and/or (b) failed a module in Summer 2020 and he/she has scored at least 30% total marks in that module but had not attempted supplementary examination of the module in Fall 2020, (c) failed a module in Fall 2020 and he/she has scored at least 30% total marks in that module, the student shall be allowed to attempt the supplementary examination in the module in Spring 2021 by providing him/her one single assessment covering all module outcomes. If he/she scored less than 30% total marks in that module in Spring/ Summer /Fall 2020, the student will have to re-register for the module in Spring 2021 (P1, P2, P5, P6, P7, P8).
- v. Supplementary assessments for students of Spring 2020, Summer 2020, and Fall 2020 shall be a single assignment covering all module LOs.

5. Special need students

- a) Any issues faced by 'special needs' students are to be taken into consideration on case-by-case basis. These cases may be reported to Student Success Centre (SSC) for additional support.



- b) Such students may be allowed to undertake assessments on-campus as per the decision of the Academic Exemption Committee (AEC).
 - a. Cases of such students shall be brought before the AEC by faculty, through the PM and HoD.
 - b. SSC may separately deal with such students.

6. Additional important notice

- a) Students and staff on-campus should follow MEC guidelines on health and safety as precautions against COVID-19.
- b) The rules of classification of PG degrees shall remain the same as those mentioned in the Student Handbook. If, however, Coventry University were to make any changes to the regulations, the same shall be communicated to students.
- c) It shall become mandatory for students to attend classes on campus if there are specific requirements for the module or if there are specific directions given by a government authority or the College. In such circumstances the students shall be informed about this.
- d) It is important that students plan their studies well, attend all the online classes, have a proper personal assessment timetable, undertake self-study effectively and take good care of their health. The possible physical and mental health risks associated with the overuse of computers should be understood by students and they should accordingly take precautions to avoid its adverse effects.
- e) The existing policies on **Academic Integrity** apply for this period as well. Viva and other internationally accepted practices will be employed to detect academic integrity violations and the policy for determining penalties will be strictly adhered to. Disruptions caused by emergent situations similar to COVID-19 are seen as opportunities by antisocial elements and essay mills who will try everything possible to drag students to commit grave academic integrity violations. Taking any help from an external party to complete assessments is not only unethical, unprofessional and in violation of our academic integrity policy, but also an encouragement of antisocial activity that could have severe consequences. Students are strongly advised to avoid these courses of action.



If students need additional support with their assessments, they are encouraged to contact their teachers who will provide the necessary academic support to complete their assessments.

- f) MEC shall take all reasonable steps to provide a safe and secure IT infrastructure and online learning platforms for the use of its stakeholders, including students and staff. **It is, however, important that users are cautious and alert in using online systems to avoid falling victims to cyber threats and crimes.**
- g) Communication with College: We recommend that students use emails to contact their faculty members, Heads of academic departments, and other staff members or official portals to request for IT services. They could also contact the Student Experience Office (seo@mec.edu.om), if required. However, in cases of an emergency, they may contact the following numbers between 8 am and 4 pm on working days.

Departments	Hotline numbers	Email
Admissions Office	24531531	ad@mec.edu.om
Registration Office	24531591	ro@mec.edu.om
Accounts Office	24531422	ao@mec.edu.om
IT Office	24531555	support@mec.edu.om

If a student belonging to a category mentioned in clauses 2.1.4, 2.1.5 and 2.1.6 wants to be on campus, he/she is required to contact the College through the mechanisms that shall be separately announced. Only those students who are permitted by the Deans Council shall be allowed to be on campus. Such students shall be allowed on campus for a scheduled time period in an allotted venue, informed to the student by the College.



Annexure – 1

CALCULATION OF AGGREGATE MODULE MARKS WHEN ATTEMPTING SUPPLEMENTARY EXAMINATION

The aggregate marks in the module shall be calculated by totalling the marks obtained by the student in Spring 2021 scaled to fifty and the marks obtained in the supplementary examination scaled to fifty.

Example:

Module X (which has End Semester written examination component in a normal semester as per the Module Descriptor) has two assessments during Spring 2021, Assignment 1 and Assignment 2. The student has the required attendance as per this regulation. In Assignment 1, the student scores 19 marks out of 50 and in Assignment 2, the score is 21 out of 50. The overall marks scored in the module is therefore 40 out of 100 and thereby the student shall be declared to have failed in the module.

Since the student has scored more than 30% marks in the module, the student shall be eligible to take the supplementary examination in Summer 2021 /Fall 2021. The minimum threshold marks of the End Semester examination, as per the regulations of a normal semester, shall be applicable in this case. If the student scores 60 marks out of 100 in the supplementary examination, they shall be scaled down to 50 which is 30 out of 50. The aggregate module marks of the student after the supplementary examination will be calculated as follows:

- a. Marks from the regular attempt in Spring 2021: 40 out of 100, scaled to 50 = 20 out of 50
- b. Marks from the supplementary attempt in Summer /Fall 2021: 60 out 100, scaled down to 50 = 30 out of 50
- c. Total aggregate module marks = 20 + 30 = 50.

The student shall then be considered to have passed the module in this case since the required marks to pass as well as more than the minimum threshold marks required for the End Semester examination have been achieved.