MSci Programme (L3/4)

Description

1. Introduction

1.01 Welcome to the University of Manchester and the School of Biological Sciences

1.02 The information in this handbook is accurate for the 2025-6 academic year.

1.03 Welcome statement from the Head of the School of Biological Sciences

Dear Students,

Welcome to the School of Biological Sciences at the University of Manchester. I am delighted you have chosen to begin or continue your academic journey with us, and I want to personally welcome each of you to our community. The School of Biological Sciences is a vibrant and diverse part of the University, home to world-leading research and teaching across a wide range of disciplines including molecular and cell biology, biochemistry, biomedical sciences, biotechnology, bioinformatics, and evolutionary biology. Whether you are joining us as an undergraduate or a postgraduate student, you are now part of a supportive and ambitious academic environment that is committed to helping you succeed. As Head of School and a Professor of Computational Biology, I am continually inspired by the curiosity, talent, and determination of our students. You will be taught and mentored by academics who are not only leaders in their fields but also deeply committed to your education and development. We encourage you to take full advantage of the opportunities available, both in and beyond the classroom, and to engage with the wide range of activities, societies, and support services designed to enrich your time here.

Our School prides itself on a strong sense of community, collaboration, and innovation. I hope you will feel welcomed, challenged, and inspired throughout your time with us. Please do not hesitate to reach out to staff or fellow students if you need guidance. We are all here to help you thrive. I wish you every success in the year ahead and look forward to seeing the many ways you will grow, contribute, and achieve during your time in the School.

Warmest regards

Professor Simon Hubbard

Head of the School of Biological Sciences

The University of Manchester

1.04 Key contacts

Student Support Hub (Stopford Building; Email: sbs.hub@manchester.ac.uk, phone: +44 (0)161 275 1487) opening times:

- 09:00 -17:00 Monday to Friday during term-time
- 10:00 â€“ 16:00 outside of term-time

The Student Support Hub is your first stop for queries relating to your programme or courses and general student support including **career advice** special needs and **wellbeing support.** The list below outlines support available at the Student Support Hub:

- Mitigating circumstances for exams and assessments
- General course information
- Specific course enquiries Wellbeing support
- Requesting a letter
- Requesting a document
- Help with study skills
- Information on campus facilities
- Registering as a student
- Graduation information
- General enquiries

You can also find lots of information on the student SharePoint: School of Biological Sciences Student Information â€“ Home

Director of Education

Professor Nicky High

Email: nicky.high@manchester.ac.uk

Deputy Directors of Studies

Professor Lisa Swanton â€“ Programmes and Curriculum

Professor Donald Ward â€“ Assessment and Progression

Dr Helen Graham â€“ Digital and Flexible Learning

Dr Ingo Schiessl â€“ Admissions and Recruitment

Dr Maria Canal â€“ Inclusive Education

Dr Katherine Hinchliffe â€“ Student Experience

Senior Advisors

Email: senioradvisors.sbs@manchester.ac.uk

Head of School â€“ Biological Sciences

Professor Simon Hubbard

Programme Directors

The role of the Programme Director is to oversee the content of your Degree Programme, approve your choice of optional course units during Welcome Week and assist your Academic Advisor in giving you advice on academic matters.

Degree Programme	Programme Director	Programme Director Email
Biochemistry	Prof Andrew Doig	andrew.doig@manchester.ac.uk
	Dr Gino Poulin	gino.poulin@manchester.ac.uk
Biology	Dr Thomas Nuhse	Thomas.Nuhse@manchester.ac.uk
Biology with Science & Society	Dr Ruth Grady	ruth.grady@manchester.ac.uk
Biomedical Sciences	Dr Rebecca Dearman (L1)	rebecca.dearman@manchester.ac.uk
	Dr Tristan Pocock (L2)	Tristan.pocock@manchester.ac.uk
	Dr Michelle Keown (L3)	michelle.e.keown@manchester.ac.uk
Biotechnology	Dr Dennis Linton	James.D.Linton@manchester.ac.uk
	Dr Samina Naseeb	Samina.naseeb@manchester.ac.uk
Genetics	Dr Kimberly Mace	kimberly.mace@manchester.ac.uk
Immunology	Dr Kathleen Nolan	kathleen.nolan@manchester.ac.uk
Medical Biochemistry	Dr Tom Millard	tom.millard@manchester.ac.uk

Medical Physiology	Prof Liz Sheader	elizabeth.a.sheader@manchester.ac.uk
Microbiology	Dr Jen Cavet	jennifer.s.cavet@manchester.ac.uk
Molecular Biology	Dr Susan Taylor	susan.h.taylor@manchester.ac.uk
MSci Programmes	Prof Lisa Swanton	lisa.swanton@manchester.ac.uk
	Dr Martin Pool	martin.r.pool@manchester.ac.uk
Neuroscience	Dr Nicholas Glossop	Nicholas.glossop@manchester.ac.uk
	Dr Harry Potter	Harry.potter@manchester.ac.uk
Pharmacology	Stacey Lee	stacey.lee@manchester.ac.uk
Zoology	Ben Chapman	ben.chapman-2@manchester.ac.uk

1.05 Key dates in the academic year

A summary of the key dates is given below and additional information can be found here: http://www.manchester.ac.uk/discover/key-dates/

Examination Dates (applicable to L3 MSci only):

Semester 1: Thursday 15th January 2026- Friday 30th January 2026

Semester 2: Monday 18th May 2026 â€“ Wednesday 10th June 2026

Examination Result publication dates:

Semester 1: w/c Monday 2nd March 2026

Semester 2: w/c Monday 20th July 2026

Release of the examination timetable (applicable to L3 MSci only):

Semester 1 exams: Friday 12th December 2025

Semester 2 exams: Friday 10th April 2026

Please note that these are the dates on which you will be informed of the exact dates and times of your exams; your personalised exam timetables (which will inform you of your exact room and seat number) will be updated in the following two weeks.

1.06 Responsibilities of staff and students

The University of Manchester believes that education is a partnership between the learner and the teacher, conducted within a context that provides properly for pastoral care and learner needs. In the School of Biological Sciences, we have created a list of responsibilities for staff and students. You can find it on the Student SharePoint Site.

1.07 Canvas

Canvas is the Universityâ€™s digital learning environment. You will use Canvas to access online teaching material for your course units, in addition to interactive elements to assist your learning. Some Canvas spaces enable you to interact with other students as well as academic staff. Canvas can be used to submit work online and to receive feedback on this work once it has been marked.

1.08 My Manchester

My Manchester brings all your online university services together in one place. From My Manchester you can access the student self-service system, which allows you to view your timetable, select course units and access your grades for assessed work.

My Manchester also allows you to access University services including Canvas and your University library account. To access My Manchester fully, you will firstly need to register online at my.manchester.ac.uk

1.09 Changes/Updates to your personal details recorded in the Student System

It is your responsibility to ensure that the Student System is kept up to date with changes to your recorded personal or programme details. Any change of personal details must be completed online via My Manchester. Incorrect information can lead to problems with your fees and funding, at Examination times and with other official processes.

Please read guidance available on the University of Manchester Student Support webpage for details on Updating your bank details and changes to your personal information (for example, your address or

name).

If you need any help, please contact the Student Support Hub.

1.10 The Student Charter

Our Student Charter, developed jointly by the University and the Students' Union, is an important part of how we establish and maintain clear mutual expectations for the experience of all undergraduate and taught postgraduates. It sets out what we can expect from each other as partners in a learning community.

The Charter provides an overview of the Manchester experience and refers toâ€¯regulations, policies and procedures; it is not a detailed personal agreement or contract.

1.11 The Digital Equity Charter

Our Digital Equity Charter, co-created with the Studentsâ€™ Union, sets out the Universityâ€™s commitment to ensuring that all our students can effectively engage with their learning and development opportunities.â€¯ â€¯

This charter sets out the Universityâ€™s commitment toâ€¯ensuring all students have equitable access to development opportunities, hardware, software, connectivity and study spaceâ€¯to effectively engage with their learning and establishes the expectations on students to engage with the opportunities available.â€¯

1.12 Dignity at Work and Study

All members of the University community, whether staff or students, are required to treat each other in a friendly, courteous and dignified manner. This requirement also applies to visitors and those otherwise associated with the University. The Dignity at Work and Study Policy and Procedures provide more information about Universityâ€™s commitment to an environment in which there is no tolerance of discriminatory, bullying or harassing behaviour from any member of our community. The Advice and Response service provides support for anyone who experiences such behaviour.

1.13 Health and safety information

While student life is exciting and fun, we know it can also be challenging. We take the health, wellbeing and safety of our students seriously and offer you the encouragement and support you need to stay happy and healthy. Weâ€™ve put together an online module to help you Starting University to think about some things you might encounter, and resources to help you handle them. Further information is available on our Health, Wellbeing and Safety webpages including registering with a GP, vaccinations, mental health support, wellbeing, and our SafeZone app.

White lab coats and safety spectacles are required for all practical classes; lab coats . will be provided at the start of the academic year â€“ it is your responsibility to ensure that you bring your lab coat to each practical. **These will be collected back in when your Year 2 practicals are finished. Safety spectacles will be provided during the class.** A pocket calculator will also be necessary for

examinations.

1.14 University learning resources

My Learning Essentials: The Library provides a comprehensive programme of online skills resources, workshops and drop in support clinics throughout the year designed to help you to develop your academic and employability skills: http://www.manchester.ac.uk/my-learning-essentials. **Feedback & Enquiries:** For general enquiries, e-resources support and/or to feedback suggestions please contact the library in person, via phone or online:

Contact us (The University of Manchester Library)

1.15 Library

The University of Manchester Library is one of only five National Research Libraries. With more than 4 million printed books and manuscripts, over 41,000 electronic journals and 500,000 electronic books, as well as several hundred databases, the library is one of the best-resourced academic libraries in the country. Library opening hours are available at: https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/locations-and-opening-hours/

1.16 Computers

The University has PC clusters available for use across the campus, in addition to Library laptop and iPad loans.

1.17 Developing Digital Skills

Throughout your time at University, you will be supported to develop the digital skills and confidence needed for your studies and career. A range of support and development opportunities are available to you, including being able to:

- Self-assess your digital skills with the Jisc Discovery tool, by completing questionnaires on digital capability, AI and Employability and getting your personalised report
- Enhance your digital and professional development through LinkedIn Learning
- Gain recognition through an industry recognised certification
- Become a Digital Capability Student Rep through the Studentsâ€™ Union

Our University is committed to digital equity, and you can learn more about this in the Student Digital Equity Charter which is co-owned with the University of Manchester Studentsâ€™ Union.

1.18 Social Space

There are lots of spaces to explore around the campus where you can eat, drink, study and socialise. There are cosy campus spaces, including one on the third floor of the Stopford Building, which provide

hot water and microwave stations for students to use. If you are a commuter student, there is a student space designed just for you in the Booth Street East Building. The space has comfortable seating, study pods, kitchen facilities, lockers, prayer spaces and shower facilities.

In the Stopford Building, you can find the Student Common Room on the first floor which can be used for study, as well as a group space for discussion and socialising. The Student Support Hub on the third floor also has facilities for quiet study as well as group work, and student activities are also organised in the Hub and advertised to students.

1.19 Other facilities/resources

Food/Drink on Campus

There are a variety of places to eat and drink on campus. An up-to-date list can be found below.

Further places to eat on campus

1.20 University General Regulations

The University has produced General Regulations, which are rules that students and staff must abide by. Academic-related regulations, including degree regulations, policies on assessment and feedback, and attendance monitoring can be found on our Regulations webpages.

2. About your programme

2.01 Programme Overview

You must ensure that you take 120 credits for each year of study â€“ this is most important and your responsibility. You should take no more than 60 credits per semester (maximum exception of 70 credits allowed, and only with Programme Director consent) and no less than 50 credits as specified in the Universityâ€™s Manual of Academic Procedures.

Before choosing your teaching units, it is important to understand that the University has a system of credit rating of all course units, which is intended to give you an indication of the proportion of your time that the work of a unit is expected to take. A full yearâ€™s workload expected of you is 120 credits; this equates to 30 weeks work at 40 hours per week, hence a total of 1200 hours per academic year. Therefore, you can expect to spend ~100 hours on a typical 10- credit unit. This time includes all the work for that unit, such as reading, e-learning activities, assessments and revision, as well as direct contact hours.

It is extremely important and **your responsibility to ensure that you take the correct number of units** to meet the 120 credit requirement in each year of your studies. As specified in the Universityâ€™s Manual of Academic Procedures, you should aim to take no more than 60 credits per semester; a maximum of 70 credits and minimum of 50 credits in one semester may be allowed, but only with the consent of your Programme Director.

Level 4 MSci

You will complete a seven month research project during Year 4 which is worth 120 credits.

MSci degree programmes

Level 4 MSci

You will complete a seven month research project during Year 4 which is worth 120 credits.

If you feel that you no longer wish to continue on a MSci degree programme at the end of Year 3, it is possible to exit with a BSc degree. If this is the case, you should discuss the possibility of exiting at the end of year 3 with your Programme Director and/or Academic advisor and inform the Student Support Office of your decision to exit with a BSc degree. Note: if you inform us of your intention to graduate with a BSc at the end of year 3 after the end of semester 2, you will lose the opportunity to be considered for promotion to a higher final degree classification if your final degree mark falls within the borderline range.

2.02 Aims and learning outcomes of the programme

The Schoolâ€™s general aims are to offer undergraduate students a broad and thorough education in biological sciences within an institutional culture of high-quality research and scholarship. The School aims to:

- deliver a range of broad and specialist degrees, informed by current research, which will equip students for careers within and outside science;
- meet student requirements for diversity of provision and opportunity of transfer between disciplines within biological sciences by providing a structure of flexibility and choice within the undergraduate programmes;
- provide students with subject-specific knowledge and practical skills linked to generic transferable skills which are integrated within the curriculum;
- ensure students develop skills in independent learning;
- provide a variety of teaching methods and assessment strategies, student choice and constructive feedback that will enable all students to succeed;
- provide students with effective induction information, and ongoing academic and pastoral support and advice in order to enhance studentsâ€™ learning experience and empower them to take ownership of their education and successfully progress to further study or employment;
- focus skilled academic and professional services staff on student achievement, wellbeing and career readiness;
- operate a management structure which monitors the delivery and quality of teaching provision in order to ensure high standards across our wide range of programmes;
- endeavour to ensure wider access to all who may benefit from higher education;
- endeavour to ensure that studentsâ€™ progress through programmes and acquire qualifications, knowledge and skills appropriate to their academic abilities, leading to positive exit paths;
- endeavour to ensure that students enhance their employability by developing professional skills and competencies within the curriculum; provide inclusive learning spaces and welcome activities to contribute to an environment where students can thrive and achieve their aspirations;
- provide inclusive curricula and course materials that reflect diverse experiences, validate student identities and provide a space for positive challenge, debate and engagement;

- create learning spaces that encourage collaboration and informal interactions;
- provide inclusive teaching and learning practices to ensure that all students feel valued, included and a sense of belonging within the educational community.

2.03 Summary of the programme structure

Description: You will choose a standard BSc degree programme and attend the first two years normally. In year 3, you will take five degree-specific lecture units including associated assessments and attend the standard tutorial sessions which will prepare you for problem and essay papers in the final exams. You will not engage in any â€˜final year projectâ€™ units that would normally form part of your degree programme. Instead, you will be assigned to one of your chosen MSci projects in a Manchester research group at start of semester 5, and participate in the following units:

- BIOL33000 MSci Research Project Proposal (10 credits) â€“ writing a literature review and outline of your future MSci project (overseen by your future project supervisor)
- BIOL33012 MSci Experimental Skills Module (20 credits) â€“ a two-week group practical in the subject area of your degree programme

- Up to two of the following (as determined by your Programme Director):
    - BIOL33011 MSci Bioinformatics Tools and Resources (10 credits)
    - BIOL33021 Computational Approaches to Biology (10 credits)
    - BIOL33031 Reproducible Data Science (10 credits)

During Year 4, you will complete a seven-month research project which includes the marked completion of an oral presentation, news and view style article, poster presentation and project report. On completing the four-year MSci programmes, students will have:

- gained experience in the planning and design of cutting-edge research;
- developed high quality experimental, data analysis and data management skills;
- acquired skills in the different forms of science communication.

Progression from Year 3 to Year 4 on the Integrated Masters (MSci) Programme

Please note that in the third year, there is no opportunity to complete resits under any circumstances, nor is it possible to repeat the year, or repeat a semester. Neither of these are possible under any circumstances and the final marks achieved in each unit are final.

In order to be eligible to progress from the Third year to the Fourth year of the MSci programme you must:

- Achieve an overall Third Year Average of at least 60
- Not achieve a mark lower than 30 in any of your final year course units (with the exception of cases where there are approved mitigating circumstances)

2.04 Modes of Study

The programmes covered in this handbook are full-time in-person programmes.

2.05 Programme specifications

All our programme specifications are kept internally within the School.

2.06 Outlines of units

Outlines of all our units can be found here: Course unit information | MyManchester

2.07 Information on the way in which a student can progress through the programme

Progression from Year 3 to Year 4 on the Integrated Masters (MSci) Programme:

Please note that in the third year, there is no opportunity to complete resits under any circumstances, nor is it possible to repeat the year, or repeat a semester. Neither of these are possible under any circumstances and the final marks achieved in each unit are final.

In order to be eligible to progress from the Third year to the Fourth year of the MSci programme you must:

- Achieve an overall Third Year Average of at least 60
- Not achieve a mark lower than 30 in any of your final year course units (with the exception of cases where there are approved mitigating circumstances)

If you do not meet the above progression criteria, you will be excluded by the examination board at the end of your third year and will not be able to progress into fourth year, however you will still, if eligible, be awarded a BSc (hons) degree based on your academic standing over the first 3 years of your degree programme.

Note: you cannot continue on the integrated Masters programmes, if your year 3 average was initially below 60% but your final degree mark was either above 60 or within the borderline range (58.0 â€“ 59.9%) and was then raised to a 2i overall at the Exam Board.

Research Projects

MSci students will not complete a research project during Year 3. Instead, you will take the below units that will prepare you for your research project during Year 4. These units will provide you with research skills that are essential for a modern biological science researcher. Depending on your programme you will be required to do one, two or three of:

MSci Bioinformatics Tools and Resources, Computational Approaches to Biology, or Reproducible Data Science.

MSci Experimental Skills Module (20 credits)

You will complete a group research project within this unit. You will be placed in groups of up to eight students and will be given an experimental problem that is appropriate to your MSci degree programme. You will be expected, with the rest of the group and the support of a member of academic staff, to design the appropriate experiments to test the problem. You will be expected to explore the range of different experimental approaches available, select the most appropriate approach and plan the suitable controls; these experimental approaches will include state of the art techniques that are supported within the core facilities within the Faculty. Then you will be responsible for executing one part of the plan and to produce data for your part of the project. Your experimental planning and findings will be assessed through the following:

- a 2 page write-up describing the technique, experimental design and statistics to be used to complete your component of the overall experimental plan (15%).
- Laboratory and tutorial performance (10%).
- a 5 page write-up of your results, presenting data in an appropriate style for publication along with a short introduction and conclusion (45%). This component can also include deposition of data into an appropriate database.
- preparation of a group A1 poster that is suitable for an international scientific conference (20%).
- a 15 minute presentation of the poster (as an individual) at a poster session for all MSci students (10%).

MSci Research Project Proposal (10 credits)

This unit will provide you with the scientific knowledge and the critical reading, writing and experimental design skills that will underpin your final year project. You will be informed of your MSci project supervisor (allocated in consultation with students and their Programme Directors) at the start of the year. You will first write a Literature Review in semester 5, followed by a Research Proposal in semester 6. The Literature Review and Research Proposal are each worth 50% of the unit mark. At the start of each semester, you will attend plenary sessions and workshops that provide guidance and training on how to critically analyse primary literature, evaluate experimental approaches and design experiments to test a hypothesis. During the remainder of each semester, you will work with your supervisor to identify a research topic/question that will form the basis of your final year project, to write a review of the relevant literature (the Literature Review), and develop a proposal for your final year research project (the Research Proposal).

MSci Bioinformatics Tools and Resources (10 credits)

This unit will introduce you to a wide range of bioinformatics tools and resources, including online databases, search algorithms, and basic scripting techniques. The unit will be delivered through a series of eLearning modules, with supporting lectures and weekly computer lab sessions.

Introduction to Bioinformatics: The importance of bioinformatics and computers in modern biology; generating and analysing large datasets; range of tools and resources covered in the unit.

Command line basics: Introduction to Unix systems; the Unix/Linux/Mac OSX command line; directories and files; manipulating text files.

Scripting for bioinformatics: Introduction to the Perl programming language; scalars, arrays and hashes; operators, functions and loops; reading and writing files.

Sequence searches: Manipulating sequence data; BLAST searches and variants; other tools for protein sequence searches.

Protein databases: Protein domains and databases; Interpro, Pfam, PRINTS, PROSITE; domain searches; structure databases.

Genome analysis: The UCSC genome browser; comparative genomics; Galaxy tools and workflows.

RNAseq and differential expression: RNAseq for transcriptomics; mapping and counting reads; estimating transcript relative expression; Tophat, Cufflinks, Cuffdiff pipeline in Galaxy.

Functional pathway analysis: Gene Ontology; KEGG pathways; assessing functional enrichment of gene lists in DAVID.

Structural bioinformatics: Manipulating protein structure information; predicting the effects of mutations on protein structure and function. **Phylogenetics:** Understanding phylogenetic trees; multiple sequence alignment; inferring and visualising trees; distance, parsimony, and maximum likelihood methods.

Completion of each eLearning module will be assessed by a MCQ quiz (2% each), delivered through Blackboard. After all chapters have been delivered, you will be given a gene or protein sequence tailored to your MSci degree programme, and asked to find out all you can about it using the taught range of tools and resources. The outcome of this research will be written up as a 7 page report (80%).

Computational Approaches to Biology (10 credits)

This unit will introduce you to essential mathematical concepts used in biological modelling. You will also be introduced to the Jupyter Notebook system, a widely used online application allowing the development of code for data analysis and numerical simulation based on the Python language.

The core of the unit will be structured along four main sections, each covering a particular set of techniques and applications:

Modelling of intracellular signalling and transcription pathways. This section will introduce you to the mathematical approaches used to model cellular signalling pathways and biological noise.

Techniques for modelling of large cellular systems. This section will introduce you to the mathematical approaches used to model protein-protein interaction networks in both normal and disease situations and to model metabolic systems.

Ecological and evolutionary modelling. This section will introduce you to the mathematical approaches used to model population dynamics and evolution.

Probabilistic modelling and machine learning. This section will introduce you to the mathematical approaches to model sequence data and expression data

The unit will be assessed by completing four online modules, one for each of the main sections of the course. These modules will consist of a series of multiple choice questions and short questions, some of which will require a short piece of code to be written.

Reproducible Data Science (10 credits)

This unit will provide students with the skills needed to engage in reproducible data science. Students will learn how to wrangle data, build data visualisations, and model their data using the open source data science software, R. Each of the sessions will be run as a combined seminar and hands-on coding workshop. Students will learn how to use a reproducible workflow to generate reproducible analysis. They will also learn about general computational skills such as using git and GitHub for version control, and Binder for building reproducible computational environments. Graduates with data science skills are in high demand, with skills in using R particularly desirable to employers across the academic, industrial, and business sectors. This unit will provide students with a grounding in data science using R and the knowledge to build on this foundation for the development of more focused skills (such as machine learning using R).

The unit will be assessed by a single R-based assignment using R markdown worth 100%

During Year 4 of your MSci degree, you will complete a seven month research project based on one of the two research project proposals you wrote during Year 3. Through this project you will receive a comprehensive training in relevant research methods, data analysis and interpretation of results. You will also learn how lines of scientific research are developed and how it can be necessary at times to adapt your initial hypothesis in the light of results. You will present your project and results as a scientific talk, meeting abstract, poster presentation and a report in the format of an appropriate journal.

Aims of final year research projects

To allow you to gain experience in:

- analysing complex biological processes at cellular, whole organism or ecosystem levels to generate novel and timely hypotheses designing experimental approaches to address these hypotheses.
- interpreting complex experiments. using diverse experimental approaches. interpreting multiple lines of evidence to test a hypothesis. problem solving.
- working independently or as part of a group/team as required to address a particular bioscience question or topic.
- current life science methodologies appropriate to your MSci degree programme.
- developing critical and creative thinking skills (develop ideas, data analysis and evaluation skills) literature searching and critically reviewing the literature in a particular field, and relating your own research to that in the existing literature project management (managing your time, planning, meeting deadlines and milestones, addressing challenges, producing deliverables)
- Identify and explain key sustainability issues in carrying out your project both in terms of the impacts of your working practices and any outcomes from the research question(s) addressed.
- communicating your results as a scientific talk, meeting abstract, poster presentation and manuscript.

Content, assessment and penalties

Detailed information on the content and assessment criteria can be found on the Canvas page for BIOL40010 MSci Research Project. Your work will be marked by your supervisor and moderated by another member of staff. Over-length submissions will be subject to a penalty of 20 marks per page (or

part thereof) over the limit. Submission date is Thursday 30th April 2026. **Late submission will be penalised;** if you miss the deadline you will lose 10 marks per day (or part thereof). **N.B. Computer failures are NOT valid reasons for seeking an extension see section Submission below). The same applies to theft of PCs, laptops, discs, memory sticks, etc â€“ always back up your files on your one-drive, in cloud storage, and/or keep back-up copies in a location distant from your computer. Vivas for borderline candidates will take place between 29-30th June 2026.**

Projects involving humans and other animals

You should have completed a brief **Ethics Survey** for each of your Research Project Proposals to determine whether your project requires ethical approval.

Any project using human tissue or data relating to humans MUST be covered by ethical approval. This takes time, and it is YOUR responsibility to ensure that the survey, and any subsequent application, is submitted in a timely fashion and that NO work on humans is carried out until approval has been given. Further information and the relevant forms are available on the Blackboard page for BIOL33000 MSci Research Project Proposal.

If your project involves patient data be sure to be fully aware of and comply with NHS and legal requirements for secure storage of any personal patient data and that upon reporting data is anonymised and presented in a way to remove any personal identifiers.

If this is likely to be the case be sure to discuss this with your supervisor at the start of the project.

In other projects, you may need to undertake techniques that are covered by the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act, 1986. It is your responsibility, and that of your supervisor, to ensure that you have a Personal Licence under the Act and that all necessary techniques are detailed on that Licence.

Amount and timing of the work

It is important that you spend an appropriate amount of time on your Research Project. It is recommended that you spend **at least** 35-40 hours per week on project work. Also, as the Research Project is a 120 credit unit, you should expect to spend a total of 1200 hours on project work. Students must liaise closely with their Supervisor(s) regarding periods that can be spent actively performing experiments (either â€˜wetâ€™ or computational). This is because undergraduates MUST be supervised by a member of University staff AT ALL TIMES when working in any laboratory. **You may work on University campus after normal hours (i.e., after 17.00hrs) but you MUST obtain written permission, and keep it on your person during out of hours work, and be supervised by a member of University Staff.** You will need to discuss with your supervisor obtaining the required permission to work outside of normal working hours. NB. In Semester 8, your supervisor CAN give permission for lone working subject to confirming that their student is competent, the Risk Assessment is in place and that the work is low risk.

N.B. All laboratory-based projects must be subject to a risk assessment, prior to starting work â€“ see section Health and Safety.

Suggested Stages to your project

1. **Meet with your supervisor** during Welcome Week to discuss starting of your Research Project.
2. **Complete Lab Induction** including reading and signing all COSHH and risk assessment forms for work you will be undertaking before starting ANY work.
3. **Begin work on your project** in week 1 of semester 7; this may involve shadowing staff, learning how to use equipment or software, growing plants or culturing cells, making up solutions, etc.
4. **Seek support**: at the outset of practical work you may need day-to-day help from post-docs, postgrads, your supervisor or other staff; eventually you should become more independent. Also, talk about your work to fellow students and think about what you are doing and why you are doing it.
5. **Attend supporting seminars**. Ensure that you are aware of the dates of relevant research seminars, workshops and/or lab meetings, plus submission deadlines, and attend seminars appropriate for your project type
6. **Perform a literature survey** and continue looking for new literature relevant to your project throughout the academic year. Keep detailed records of all the sources you consult (see Section Plagiarism, collusion and other forms of academic malpractice). References are best stored using bibliographic software like Endnote. If you have not used this before, or have forgotten how, you can consult the archives for BIOL10741 Writing and Referencing Skills unit on Canvas. You must be aware of copyright restrictions on the use of images in your project and reference images accordingly, or acknowledge the sources of images that are freely available under a Creative Commons copyright license.
7. **Record your progress** daily in your Lab book (experimental details, notes from meetings, ideas, to-do lists, progress, challenges etc). Write critical comments on your results. Draw conclusions and plan future work. Your supervisor will probably want to see your Lab book and discuss your progress and results. Analysing data and assembling figures as you go along, where appropriate, will help you to plan the next stage of the project.
8. **Review progress with your Research Project at regular intervals**. Try to generate your own ideas for your research if appropriate, but always discuss these with your supervisor before you do the work. Plan ahead especially if you have a number of concurrent tasks to deal with.
9. **Meet with your supervisor regularly**. Make appointments to discuss your ideas, progress and results with your supervisor at regular intervals.
10. **Finish your project work** before the end of March if possible in order to allow sufficient time for report writing and obtaining feedback on a full draft of your report.

If, **for reasons beyond your control,** your project fails to give adequate results, you will not be penalised or disadvantaged.

Feedback

All types of projects include an element of *formative* feedback â€“ an opportunity for you to submit material, e.g., an outline, and get feedback from your supervisor that will allow you to improve on submissions for **summative** feedback (observations and marks which contribute towards your final marks). It is in your best interests that **you** seek an appointment specifically for this purpose and **your** responsibility to arrange it at a mutually convenient time.

Submission

Deadlines of assessments are available on the BIOL40010 Canvas Unit.

The deadlines will be strictly enforced. Late submission will not be permitted without an approved extension accompanied by appropriate documentation. Your supervisor CANNOT grant an extension for submission of a literature review or project report â€“ this can only be done by the Senior Advisor. It is **your** responsibility to familiarise yourself with any additional submission requirements of your project.

Assessment

Your Research Project will be assessed through the following:

- a News and Views style summary of a relevant paper and completion of the MSci Journal Club programme (15%)
- a 10 minute scientific talk followed by 5 minutes of questions, describing the background and aims to your project, the results you have obtained, and the conclusions you can draw from your work (10%) preparation and presentation of an A1 format poster that is suitable for an international scientific conference (20%)
- project performance (5%)
- a 25 page project report in the format of an appropriate journal for your MSci degree programme (50%)

2.08 Consequences of unsatisfactory progress

Please see section 2.13

2.09 Programme Specific Regulations

Not relevant to programme.

2.10 Professional and statutory body requirements

Royal Society of Biology accreditation

All four-year pathways including integrated masters and the three pathways with placements have been accredited by the Society of Biology. Degree accreditations by the Royal Society of Biology recognise academic excellence in the biosciences, and highlights degrees that educate the research and development leaders and innovators of the future. The accreditation criteria require evidence that graduates from the programmes meet defined sets of learning outcomes, including gaining a substantial period of research experience. Our School has been successful in demonstrating that our programmes meet these criteria. In recognition of your time spent on the programme, and as a graduate of an accredited programme, you can apply for membership of the Society of Biology at Member (MRSB) level after just one year of practice, rather than the usual three years. This will allow you to attain the qualifications of Chartered Biologist or Chartered Scientist two years sooner than graduates from other Degree Programmes. Further information is available from the Royal Society of Biology.

2.11 Fieldwork and placements or study abroad

Not relevant for this programme.

2.12 Additional costs

All students must normally be able to complete their programme of study without having to pay additional study costs over and above the tuition fee for that programme. **Any unavoidable additional compulsory costs totalling more than 1% of the annual home undergraduate fee per annum must be made clear at the point of application and in the programme handbooks, with details of what these costs are.**

Optional costs must be made clear at the point of application and in the programme handbooks. Where costs are unknown or uncertain, information about how these will be calculated must be set out.

2.13 Degree classification algorithm

The Taught Degree Regulations for students can be found on the University website here.

During your degree programme, you will complete 480 across 4 years. Each course unit you complete carries a weighting in credits and an average is calculated at the end of each year of the marks you have achieved, and these year averages are then in turn used to calculate your final degree mark out of 100. Course units are counted in to your degree mark based on their weighting in credits, so a 20 credit course unit would be counted in to the year average twice, whilst a 10 credit course unit would be counted in to the average once.

Your year average is calculated as an average of all of your marks across the full academic year. Please note that in cases where students have approved mitigating circumstances for some of their marks, the final mark may be calculated differently, at the discretion of the exam board, for example a 10 credit unit where the student has under-performed may be excluded from the final calculation.

Note that units graded as Pass/Fail only (i.e. the Tutorial Units) are **not** included in the year average mark calculation, but the credits are still awarded for these units for progression purposes.

At the final examination board, your final degree mark is calculated by weighting the years of your degree programme to calculate a final overall degree mark, which would then be used to determine your classification. The weightings are shown in the table below:

UG Programme type	Year 1 %	Year 2 %	Year 3 %	Year 4 %
Integrated Masters (MSci)	6%	19%	37.5%	37.5%

All degree marks are rounded to 1 decimal place. Year averages are rounded to 3 decimal places.

Please see below an example degree mark calculation:

4 Year Integrated Masters (MSci):

Year 1 Mark: 67.332

Year 2 Mark: 71.226

Year 3 Mark: 80.331

Year 4 Mark: 75

The calculation would be:

(67.332 x 0.06) + (71.226 x 0.19) + (80.331 x 0.375) + (75 x 0.375) = **75.8**

Degree Classification

Please note that unlike the BSc degrees, it is not possible to attain a 3rd class for an MSci degree. Consequently, MSci students who obtain a final mark of less than 50% will fail the MSci degree. However, you will be able to graduate with BSc (Hons) degree based on your performance during your first three years.

Classification Review:

For final degree marks which fall within the boundary zone; 2 marks of the higher classification (68 â€“ 69.9 for a First or 58 â€“ 59.9 for a 2.1 etc.), the examination board will consider whether there is a case for the student to be awarded the higher classification and in some cases students will be awarded the higher classification where their final degree mark falls in the boundary zone.

PLEASE NOTE: There is no guarantee if your final degree mark falls in the boundary zone that you will be awarded the higher degree classification. This will only be awarded automatically if you have achieved a degree mark above the degree classification boundary (e.g. 70 for a First).

If your mark falls in the boundary zone; you will only be awarded the higher degree classification if two thirds or more of the credits you have completed during the final your degree programme (80 credits or more) are marks at the higher degree classification, you will be automatically promoted to the higher degree classification (so 80 credits with marks above 70 would be needed to be promoted to a First)

For MSci degrees, there is no classification review available for the classification of a 2.2; any degree mark below 50 cannot be awarded an MSci degree under any circumstances, but will still be considered by the examination board for the award of a BSc based on performance over the first 3 years of the programme.

For the Integrated Masters (MSci) programme only: Further to the classification review outlined above, if your final degree mark falls in the boundary zone and you are still not eligible to be promoted to the higher classification, you will be given the opportunity to complete a Viva Voce examination with the external examiner who will then make a recommendation to the exam board as to whether they feel the student should be awarded the higher classification or not, and the board will then make a final decision. **This is available only in the fourth year of the MSci programme, and is not available on any of the 3-year BSc programmes.**

3. Assessment and academic standards

3.01 Assessment

Criteria for marking answers on theory examination papers can be found here**: Marking Schemes**

Examination feedback

Students have a right to receive feedback on their examination performance from Unit Coordinators. This may be done in a number of ways:

Unit Coordinator may publish a general feedback document outlining how questions were answered, addressing general strengths and weaknesses of students and giving a general indication of how well the questions were answered.

For handwritten (paper) exams, script viewing sessions will be organised following the release of examination results where students will be able to view **handwritten feedback** provided by markers in their exam scripts. Students will be notified in advance when the session is due to take place and will be able to request specifically which scripts they want to view in advance. Students will be able to view all exam scripts in the same session.

HOWEVER, PLEASE NOTE

- that for **MCQ Examinations**, there is **no opportunity to view the answer sheets**, exam paper or solutions. However, following the release of semester 2 results, students will have the opportunity to receive a feedback email for each unit they are resitting which will inform them of which topics they lost marks on to help them better prepare for the resit examinations. Students who are eligible to receive this feedback will be contacted following the release of semester 2 results.
- that a student **DOES NOT** have the right to **challenge any academic judgements** on the quality of the answer. This means there is **NO** opportunity for papers to be re-marked.

Guidelines on feedback to students during the teaching period

Feedback is a broad term, which can be interpreted in different ways. The purpose of this section is to define the activities associated with feedback mechanisms, as they relate to lecture-based BIOL units so that you are aware of the feedback available for any unit which you decide to take.

Lecturers are expected to provide general guidance to students on appropriate reading material and other learning resources for the unit in advance of the start of the unit.

We encourage you to ask questions through any appropriate medium. If you ask questions, for example by email, please make sure you include your own interpretation of the answer, including the literature sources that you used, and ask whether your interpretation or understanding are correct. For example:

Wrong format: â€œ*Can you tell me the primary role of voltage-gated sodium channels?*â€•

Correct format: â€œ*It is my understanding that voltage-gated sodium channels are primarily responsible for the depolarising phase of the action potential. I used Kandelâ€™s Principles of Neuroscience to obtain this information. Is this correct?*â€•

NB: The School does not publish marking schemes or answers to examination questions â€“ you are expected to deduce these yourself using textbooks, peers, and PASS sessions.

In addition to providing the mandatory level of feedback, Unit Coordinators may provide more detailed feedback on your work. You should consult the feedback entry within the unit description in this handbook for further details on the additional feedback provided.

Please note that the comments on examination papers are intended primarily to allow the first marker to communicate the rationale for their marking to the moderator and external examiner. These comments are not written with the [primary] aim of providing feedback to the student, although the student may find that the comments do provide them with beneficial insights into their performance.

Deadlines, penalties and document limits

Deadlines: Items of coursework, such as essays and write-ups, have strict deadlines. Submission dates and times are in UK local time, and it is the responsibility of students to ensure that they check the **relevant time zone**. Any work that has been submitted at least **1 minute past the deadline** or later is classed as late, except in cases where **an extension has already been agreed** via DASS, the extensions process or mitigating circumstances.

All submission deadlines for summative coursework assessments are at 2pm. You may see in Canvas that your submission deadline is showing as 14:01 rather than 14:00. Your submission deadline is still 2pm, however the system will display this as 14:01 to ensure that any work submitted up to 14:00:59 is not incorrectly flagged as late and incorrectly penalised. Please keep in mind that all, submission times are 14:00 and whilst deadlines will show as 14:01 in Canvas, any submission from 14:01:00 onwards will be penalised.

If you have an extension to a piece of work, either due to a DASS auto extension or an extension approved through the School Extensions Request process, you may also see your deadline update in Canvas to the new deadline you have been assigned; this is so that your work is not incorrectly penalised for being late. The deadline you see in Canvas will be the correct final deadline inclusive of any extensions, and does not mean that the extension can be used on top of the deadline displayed in Canvas. It is a studentâ€™s own responsibility to ensure that they know what the original deadline is and what their new, extended deadline is.

Late submission will be subject to a **penalty** consisting in a reduction of 10 marks per each 24 hours or part thereof past the deadline until a mark of zero is reached. At 10 days late submission, the work is considered as not submitted and the school reserves the right to not mark the work or provide feedback. **Students who submit referral assignments after the deadline will be automatically subject to a mark of zero.** The full university guidance on late submission can be found here.

Page/word limit: Coursework will normally have a specified content limit. This will normally be a maximum page number or word count (usually with a 10% margin). It is your responsibility to ensure that you understand exactly what the limits are and how they are to be achieved. Exceeding the specified page limit will result in a deduction of 20 marks per page or part thereof.

Format: A typical School of Biological Sciences instruction for coursework including essays, reports and write-ups is worded along the lines of: â€œ*The [submission] must not exceed [x] pages of text*

excluding the list of references. *Text must be in Arial, 10 point, one and a half line spacing, with margins of at least 2.5 cm all around the text. ALL supporting material, such as figures, tables, text boxes etc. must be included in the page limit, and you are advised to ensure that any such items are sufficiently large to be read and understood with ease.*â€• You should conform to the format that has been specified. If the work needs to be converted to a PDF for submission you must check very carefully

that the conversion is accurate and conforms to the guidelines well in advance of the submission deadline. A **penalty of 20 marks (out of 100) will be applied to all SBS coursework or exams that are incorrectly formatted** (i.e. does not follow the specified guidelines on line spacing, margins, figure position, sections etc). Existing penalties for lateness (10 marks per day or part thereof) and length (20 marks per page or part thereof) will continue to be applied as noted above. Where an assignment is incorrectly formatted and up to one page over length, then a single 20-mark penalty will be applied.

3.02 Dissertation

Please see section 2.03 (Research Projects)

3.03 Examinations and coursework

Examinations

The Third Year Examinations consist of on-campus, invigilated exams under closed-book conditions, for each of the third-year lecture units. The semester 2 final year examinations also include two special programme-specific papers in which essay writing and problem-solving and data handling/analysis are tested. Training for these two â€œsynopticâ€• papers is given in programme-based tutorial time.

Written exams will be sat during the examination period at the end of the semester in which the unit is taught (i.e. January or May/June). Units that run across both semesters will normally be examined in the May/June exam period. Units taken from other Schools may be examined at a different time.

Attendance at all appropriate examinations is compulsory. The pass mark for unit examinations is 40%.

To prepare for examinations, you are encouraged to use any quizzes and practice exercises posted on Canvas and to look at copies of past examination papers and any mock examples available. These can be obtained from the My Learning tab in your MyManchester portal, where you can search for papers by Faculty, School, exam name or code, year or semester. If the unit has no past papers the Unit Coordinator should make questions available that are representative of the kind that will be set in the examination available at least 6 weeks before the exam which will be representative of the kind that will be set in the examination. **Please note that there are no past problem papers, although example questions will be made available through programme-based tutorials.**

3.04 Laboratory work and practical reports

Most of the practicals will require you to do some background reading **before** the session, so please come prepared.

Practical work is assessed either as written work that you submit during or at the end of a unit, your ability to perform a task during a practical session, and/or as an online assessment or examination at the end of the unit. Details of assessment will be given to you at the start of each unit. Short answer questions and essay-type questions are NOT negatively marked. You will not lose marks for incorrect material (but will not gain any either) so it is worth writing something, even if you are not sure it is correct.

If you fail to submit an assessment by the due date and time, it will not normally be possible for it to be marked. If ill-health prevents you attending a practical session or meeting a submission deadline, see Guidelines on ill health.

NB: In many practical classes you will work as one of a pair or larger group of students. Be careful that you feel confident with all the procedures yourself and do not leave it to others to do tasks for you: remember, in the exam you will be on your own. Furthermore, although you will most likely obtain results as part of a group, it is **essential** that any

practical work that you submit for assessment is **written in your own words,** unless you have been specifically instructed to submit a group report (see Plagiarism, collusion and other forms of academic malpractice).

3.05 Examination Boards and release of marks

At designated points in the academic year, after each assessment period, all marks and assessments are considered by the Board of Examiners. Members of the Exam Board normally include the Programme Director, Unit Leads, lecturers, including markers and moderators, External Examiners,representatives from the clinical practice areas (where relevant) and representatives from the Assessment and Progression team. No mark or grade is finalised until it has been considered by the board of examiners

You normally receive marks and grades before they have been ratified by the examination board; therefore all individual marks should be considered provisional until your final degree mark has been confirmed by the examination board and released to you. Please be aware that provisional marks could change after consideration by the Exam Board. Any change of marks is rare but if it does occur, students will be informed immediately. If the mark has been changed from a pass grade to a fail grade, and if you are eligible for a resit, an appropriate date for resubmission of the assessment will be given.

It is the purpose of the Exam Board to review student mark profiles anonymously and make decisions on the progression of students through the programme (such as resits or compensation). It is also the role of the Exam Board to identify students who cannot progress and will be exited from the programme, with an exit award where applicable.

3.06 Programme specific assessment

Not relevant to programme

3.07 Prizes and awards

The examination board will award programme-level prizes to students and students who have won a prize will be notified of this ahead of the graduation ceremony, and would be presented with the prize after the ceremony has finished.

3.08 Statement about the use of Turnitin

The University uses electronic systems for the purposes of detecting plagiarism and other forms of academic malpractice and for marking. Such systems include TurnitinUK, the plagiarism detection service used by the University. All work will be submitted through Canvas but is all checked for plagiarism against the Turnitin database.

As part of the formative and/or summative assessment process, you may be asked to submit electronic versions of your work to TurnitinUK and/or other electronic systems used by the University (this requirement may be in addition to a requirement to submit a paper copy of your work). If you are asked to do this, you must do so within the required timescales.

The School also reserves the right to submit work handed in by you for formative or summative assessment to TurnitinUK and/or other electronic systems used by the University.

Please note that when work is submitted to the relevant electronic systems, it may be copied and then stored in a database to allow appropriate checks to be made.

3.09 Plagiarism and academic malpractice

Information and resources about academic integrity and academic malpractice

- Regulation XVII (Conduct & Discipline of Students)
- Academic malpractice procedure
- Plagiarism and Academic Malpractice â€“ Guidance for Students
- University of Manchester Library My Learning Essentials, including workshops and online resources such as â€˜Getting started with referencingâ€™ and â€˜Avoiding plagiarismâ€™
- The University of Manchester referencing guide
- An Introduction to Referencing and Avoiding Plagiarism (Student Guidance Service)
- Student Support Website â€“ Good Study Skills and Avoiding academic malpractice

3.10 Referencing and Proofreading statement

University Proofreading Statement

If a student chooses to approach another person to proofread their written work or seeks to use the services of a proofreading service or agency, they must take account of the following principles:

- it is the responsibility of students to ensure that all work submitted is their own, and that it represents their own abilities and understanding. Any proofreading of work that is undertaken by a third party must not compromise the studentâ€™s own authorship of the work;
- proofreading undertaken by a third party must not take the form of editing of text, such as the adding or rewriting of phrases or passages within a piece of studentâ€™s work;

- proofreading undertaken by a third party must not change the content or meaning of the work in any way

3.11 Artificial Intelligence (AI) statement

We urge students to be cautious when using a chatbot or AI tool within their learning. Chatbots and AI tools can be useful, but there are a number of risks associated with using them. Please ensure that you are aware of what is permissible use of AI for each assignment. You can utilise AI to generate ideas, key themes, and plan your assessment but not to write your assessment. Do not use AI to generate text, or partial text for use in your assessment unless the assignment brief explicitly states that this is permitted, otherwise use will be deemed academic malpractice. This is academic malpractice because the words and ideas generated are not your own and not an accurate reflection of your learning. Further to this, the words and ideas generated by the chatbot or AI tool may make use of other, human authorsâ€™ ideas without referencing them, which is plagiarism. Where a chatbot or other form of AI has been used, make sure you acknowledge that use. Information on how to cite can be found here: https://manchester-uk.libanswers.com/teaching-and-learning/faq/264824. Some units, for example those on AI and technology, permit the use of AI. However, they require you to sign a code of conduct which must be adhered to. Make sure you understand and follow these codes. If you are unclear on what is permissible, speak to the unit lead or for general information, please read our AI guidelines.

3.12 External Examiner

External Examiners are individuals from another institution or organisation who monitor the assessment processes of the University to ensure fairness and academic standards. They ensure that assessment and examination procedures have been fairly and properly implemented and that decisions have been made after appropriate deliberation. They also ensure that standards of awards and levels of student performance are comparable with those in equivalent higher education institutions.

The External Examiners for the Undergraduate Programmes are:

Programme	External Examiner	Institution
Biochemistry	TBC	TBC
Biology	Dr David Booth	University of Dundee
Biology with Science & Society	Dr David Booth	University of Dundee
Biomedical Sciences	Prof. Rachel Ashworth	University of Worcester
Biotechnology	Dr Christopher Randall	University of Leeds
Genetics	Prof. Guy Tear	Kingâ€™s College London
Immunology	Dr Rachael Rigby	Lancaster University
Medical Biochemistry	TBC	TBC
Medical Physiology	Dr Taufiq Rahman	University of Cambridge
Microbiology	Dr Christopher Randall	University of Leeds
Molecular Biology	Dr Paul Lavender	Kings College London
Neuroscience	Assoc. Prof. Tracy Farr	University of Edinburgh
Pharmacology	Dr Taufiq Rahman	University of Cambridge

Please note that it is inappropriate for students to make direct contact with External Examiners under any circumstances, in particular with regards to a studentâ€™s individual performance in assessments. Other appropriate mechanisms are available for students, including the Universityâ€™s appeals or complaints procedures and the UMSU Advice Centre. In cases where a student does contact an External Examiner directly, External Examiners have been requested not to respond to direct queries. Instead, External Examiners should report the matter to the School contact who will then contact the student to remind them of the other methods available for students.

External Examinersâ€™ reports relating to the degree programme are shared with student Reps at the Staff Student Liaison Committee (SSLC), where details of any actions carried out by the programme team/School in response to the External Examinersâ€™ comments will be discussed. Students should contact their student Reps if they require any further information about External Examinersâ€™ reports or the process for considering them.

3.13 Academic Appeals

An academic appeal is your way of asking the University to review a recent decision taken by an Examination Board or equivalent body.

If you think there are adequate grounds for an appeal against a decision of the examination board, in the first instance, please refer to the Universityâ€™s Appeals Procedure (Academic Appeals â€“ Regulation XIX). Please read the documentation carefully.

If you wish to pursue an appeal, your first step would be to submit a Stage 1 appeal, which will be sent directly to the school for consideration. You will then receive an outcome from the school, and can then proceed to Stage 2 if your Stage 1 appeal is unsuccessful. A Stage 2 appeal would instead be reviewed by the Faculty of Biology, Medicine and Health Appeals, Complaints and Discipline team.

Please submit your Stage 1 appeal through this online form. The form will tell you what information you need to provide. You cannot submit a Stage 2 appeal until the school has already considered a Stage 1 appeal.

Please Note:

- Your Stage 1 appeal must be submitted within **20 working days** of the date you were informed of the decision you wish to appeal against, e.g. when your results are released. Any appeal received outside of this timeframe will be automatically rejected.
- Evidence (e.g. medical evidence) must be provided to support the appeal. Any appeal that does not provide evidence will not be considered.
- We will not consider any appeals which challenge academic judgment or are in relation to generally being unhappy with a mark that you have been awarded.
- If you appealing on the grounds of mitigating circumstances, your appeal must evidence why you did not submit an application for mitigating circumstances to the school prior to the examination board.

If you have any generic appeal-related queries, please direct these to sbs.appealsandconduct@manchester.ac.uk. Please note we will not accept appeals submitted to this address, they must be submitted through the form linked above.

The Students' Union Advice Service also provides useful information on the appeals process and can provide advice and guidance.

4. Student Voice

4.01 Representation at programme, School and Faculty level

Every year, Student Representatives will be recruited to represent each degree programme. Student Reps are the link between the study body and the University on all things course related. They listen to your thoughts and ideas about your programme and feed this back to your School. Student Reps represent their cohorts at every level of the decision-making process within the University. Student Representatives help to drive positive change within the University to make sure you are getting the best experience you can whilst at Manchester.

If you are interested in becoming a Student Representative, please speak to your Programme Director or respond to the email from the SBS Hub which you will receive shortly after your start your programme. Student Reps are also invited to attend Programme Committee meetings and School Board meetings to represent their student cohorts.

4.02 Role of the Student Voice Committee

Student Voice Committees are a forum for students, student representatives and staff to meet. The Committees are an opportunity to provide feedback on specific issues, make suggestions for improvement and any other aspects about the course, Department/School, or university.

4.03 Role of the Programme committee

The purpose of the committee is to provide a forum to facilitate communications and discussions and will

- Review proposal made by the SBS Teaching Board
- Be responsible for overseeing the operation and management of UG programmes of study
- Consider all aspects of the student experience of the UG programmes that they undertake and to ensure issues are acted upon appropriately and reflected in the SEAP
- Consider External Examiner reports and actions to be taken as a consequence

- Be responsible for the content, structure, delivery of the UG programmes and ensure quality standards are maintained e.g. web audits, CMA requirements, accreditation requirements
- Oversee student representation and analysis of student feedback, implementing actions to address areas of concern and to incorporate these into the SEAP
- Approve curriculum changes and programme amendments as recommended by the SBS TLSE Executive Committee

The committee will have decision making authority on matters within its remit and will report to the SBS TLSE Executive Committee.

4.04 Mechanisms for collecting and reporting back on feedback from students

As a University, weâ€™re committed to elevating the student voice and bringing the senior leadership team (SLT) together with our students to discuss and raise awareness of key issues and opportunities at Manchester. We have introduced a number of ways in which students can provide feedback and input, which you can learn more about through the Your Voice Matters pages.

4.05 Use of University unit surveys and other questionnaires

University surveys provide one of the easiest ways to share your opinions and feedback on your experiences as a student. Throughout the academic year, all students have the opportunity to take part in at least one University-recognised survey.

Your feedback from these surveys is used across the University to implement real and positive changes to the student experience, from course specific changes to updating facilities and the support we provide you.

4.06 Student Complaints

If you have any concerns about your course or a service, we'd always recommend that you try to resolve the issue informally in the first instance. However, if this is not possible or you aren't happy with the outcome you can pursue a formal complaint via the university complaint procedure.

5. Attendance requirements, interruptions and mitigating circumstances

5.01 Attendance Requirements

Monitoring your attendance is part of our commitment to providing a supported learning environment in which students are encouraged to develop knowledge, understanding and the range of skills and attributes expected of a Manchester Graduate. It encourages your active participation in all learning activities through regular attendance. Further information is provided in our Policy on Recording and Monitoring Attendance and Engagement and Regulation XX Monitoring Attendance and Wellbeing of Students.

You should ensure that you are familiar with your programme attendance requirements and make sure that, if you have any difficulty in following them, that you inform your School.

You are expected to log your attendance at all timetabled on-campus sessions using the Student Engagement and Attendance System (SEAtS). You can download the SEAtS app from the Apple App Store or Google Play Store. If you are unable to access SEAtS on your phone or do not have a smartphone, you can log your attendance using the SEAtS webpage. Your academic or teaching staff will provide a QR or PIN code so you can check-in to your timetabled teaching session.

If you cannot attend an on-campus timetabled session you must log your absence on SEAtS. Absences in timetabled sessions will only be authorised by submitting an absence form via SEAtS. You can find more information on how to submit an absence form here - Information for Teaching Colleagues

For further information on SEAtS including top tips, video guides and frequently asked questions, please visit the student support page at: https://www.studentsupport.manchester.ac.uk/study-support/seats/.

5.02 Student Engagement

Attendance is expected at all timetabled postgraduate sessions, as active engagement is essential for academic progress. Students are responsible for attending regularly and engaging fully with the course material.

5.03 Consequences of paid employment

Whilst working part-time can be beneficial, itâ€™s important to find the right balance between work and university life. It is usually recommended that you work no more than 15 hours a week during a semester, as it may start to affect your studies. The consequences of paid employment will not normally be regarded as grounds for mitigation (see Section 5.06).

If youâ€™re an international student, most visas allow you to work up to 20 hours per week during term-time, and full-time outside of term. However, some visas can vary, so itâ€™s important to check your specific visa to confirm this.

5.04 Procedure for reporting ill health

If you are going to be absent from a timetabled session you need to submit an absence form via SEAtS. You can find instructions on how to do this here . You must submit this absence form in order to get your absence authorised. Please note: absences will only be authorised for reasons outside of your control, such as illness. Some units, such as the tutorial unit or the practical units, have specific attendance requirements. It is important you familiarise yourself with them at the start of the academic year. You can find details of these requirements on the relevant Canvas pages.

5.05 How to change, interrupt or withdraw from a programme

If you come across difficulties during your studies which mean that completing the semester, year or remainder of your degree is not possible, you might want to consider a temporary interruption or

withdrawal from your course. Please visit the Student Support webpages for further guidance on interruptions and withdrawals.

Changing degree programme or pathways

If you feel that you no longer wish to continue on a programme or pathway of your choice and would like to transfer to another programme or pathway, please act fast by discussing this with your Academic Advisor. If agreed, please complete a â€˜Degree Programme Change Requestâ€˜ adhering to the deadlines. Be aware that transfers between programmes or pathways may depend on exam performance in certain units, or some of your unit choices up to this point may be incompatible with the new programme or pathway.

Interruption of Studies

It is the Universityâ€™s expectation that students complete their programme in one continuous period of uninterrupted study. It is understood, however, that students may encounter personal difficulties or situations which may seriously disrupt their studies. In such instances, students may be granted a temporary interruption to their studies.

If students have been, or are being, affected by mitigating circumstances that have lasted or are expected to last for a significant period, or that may impact upon a significant number of units, it may be better for students to apply for an interruption to their studies.

If an application to interrupt a programme of study is approved, it would normally be to help students recover from medical problems, or problems of a personal or financial nature which are having, or may have, a negative impact on performance. However, the School has the flexibility to consider and make decisions on whether to approve requests for interruption in relation to other circumstances too, e.g. work placements.

In the first instance students should speak to members of staff within the School, e.g. Academic Advisor, Student Support Hub, Senior Advisors; about if a period of interruption would be the most appropriate course of action. If students decide to apply, they must

make an appointment (via the Student Support Hub) to meet with one of the Senior Advisors who will provide the application form and go through it with students. Students will need to include evidence to support their application, e.g. medical evidence, confirmation of work placement.

5.06 Mitigating circumstances

If personal circumstances affect your exams/assessments or your attendance at teaching activities, you can make a request for mitigating circumstances. This includes extension requests on assessment deadlines. Each request will be assessed and, where necessary, action will be taken to mitigate for any impact on your performance.

Mitigating circumstances might include a significant short-term illness or injury, a long-term or recurring medical or mental health condition, the death or illness of a close family member, acute stress from personal or financial issues, absence for public service (e.g. jury service), or technical issues during an online exam or assessment. If you are going through any of these circumstances, remember that there

is support available and always somebody to talk to. As well as applying for mitigating circumstances, be sure to seek additional support if you need it.

Our mitigating circumstances policy gives further examples of what are and are not considered mitigating circumstances.

- You should include any evidence that supports your request, such as:
- Extracts from your medical notes (you can request these from your GP practice)
- Copy of prescription or photo of name label on prescribed medication
- Photo of labelled positive COVID-19 test result
- Appointment cards from medical unit or hospital admissions letter
- Confirmation text of medical appointment
- Communications from a school or care facility confirming that they are closed or the person you care for is unable to attend
- An obituary or letter from a family member, in the case of bereavement
- Police, security or insurance report
- Press or media report
- Internal confirmation of existing engagement with our counselling / Advice and Response service

If you are registered with DASS, and you are submitting mitigating circumstances due to your DASS registered condition, you do not have to provide evidence with your application.

Please note some third-party providers can take several weeks to provide you with supporting evidence, so it is important to organise this as soon as possible. If your evidence will not be available until after the deadline, you must ensure your application is submitted on time and notify sbs.mitcircs@manchester.ac.uk when they can expect to receive the evidence.

If due to an emergency you have attended a hospital Accident and Emergency (A&E) Department, you must obtain written confirmation of attendance either from the hospital or subsequently from your GP confirming your attendance and stating the nature of the emergency.

If the information is of a highly confidential nature, you may submit your evidence in a sealed envelope to the SBS Student Hub, marked for the attention of the Chair of the Mitigating Circumstances Committee.

Mitigating Circumstances for Coursework and Attendance Request Form

Mitigating Circumstances for Exams Request Form

5.07 Policy on Supporting Health, Fitness and Return to Study

The University is committed to supporting students and recognises the impact that a studentâ€™s health, wellbeing, behaviour and conduct can have on their academic progression and wider university experience. Issues with any of these may affect a studentâ€™s fitness to study. The Universityâ€™s Policy on Supporting Health, Fitness and Return to Study provides further information.

6. Support for students

6.01 Student Support microsite

The Universityâ€™s Student Support site is a central place for you to access support services, resources to support your day-to-day wellbeing and find answers to common queries. The site provides essential advice, information and guidance for students.

Student parents and carers can find specific student study support information for them at: https://www.studentsupport.manchester.ac.uk/tailored-support/parents-network/

6.02 The role of the Programme Director, Academic Advisor and Student Support Hubs

Your Programme Director

Programme Directors lead the academic development of the programme and Chair Programme Committee meetings. They also attend relevant Teaching and Learning Committees, and Examination Boards. They act as one of your key contacts and will liaise with student representatives. Programme Director also monitor the delivery of the programme and will act proactively on feedback to address any emerging issues to ensure a positive student experience.

Your Academic Advisor

Academic Advisors are members of academic staff associated with your degree programme and/or School, who are here to support you throughout your time at university. All new students are invited to attend a meeting with their Academic Advisor as part of Welcome and Induction activity. Following that, your Advisor will make contact with you at least twice a semester during each year of study, so look out for their emails and respond to any invitations to meet, or to share with them how youâ€™re getting on.

Through a combination of scheduled meetings and ad hoc communications your Advisor will get to know you, in order to help you to make the most of your academic potential and your time at university. Manchester is a big place â€“ your Advisor is a point of contact for you and can signpost you to resources and opportunities you may not otherwise have been aware of.

Student Support Hubs

The Student Support Hubs are here to provide you with help and guidance. Whether you need career advice, wellbeing support or help with course information, the Hubs team will be able to point you in the right direction. There are nine Student Support Hubs located across campus. Youâ€™ll be able to access the same University support services from every Hub, no matter where youâ€™re usually based or what subject youâ€™re studying. If you have a query about your particular study programme, you can visit your â€˜homeâ€™ Hub, which will be located within your School.

6.03 Studentsâ€™ Union and SU Advice Service

The University of Manchester Studentsâ€™ Union is one of the largest student unions in the country, with approximately 40,000 University of Manchester student members. The organisation is democratically run, with eight sabbatical officers (elected annually) directing our work. However the overall responsibility for the Studentsâ€™ Union is overseen by our Board of Trustees, who have ultimate responsibility for the organisation. The Studentsâ€™ Union Advice Service can provide information on academic, finance, student life and housing issues.

6.04 Counselling and Mental Health Service

The Counselling and Mental Health Service is available to all students. The service provides confidential counselling by a team of professional counsellors for students who want help with personal problems affecting their studies or well-being. It is a free service. You can contact the Counselling Service via their website to make an appointment or to access self-help resources and workshops.

6.05 Disability Advisory and Support Service

The Disability Advisory and Support Service (DASS), aims to assist students who are affected by substantial and long-term conditions. If you choose to register with DASS the team can assess and identify your individual support needs whilst studying at the University.

With your consent, the Disability Advisory and Support Service will inform the School of your condition and suggest ways in which the School and academic staff can support you throughout your duration of your studies as part of your individual support plan. If you choose not to disclose the details of your disability/support needs to the School, please note that this will affect the level of support that the School is able to provide.

6.06 Student Occupational Health Service

The University of Manchester Occupational Health Service provides confidential services to protect the health of staff and students, assessing and advising on fitness for work, training and study, so as to ensure that health issues are effectively managed.

6.07 PASS (Peer Assisted Study Scheme)

Peer Support aims to encourage students to work together and support each other within their learning community. Improving the student experience and empowering students to become leaders within their learning community are some of our primary objectives.

Every first-year undergraduate student is assigned to a PASS or Peer Mentoring group. These groups are run by higher-year student volunteers from the same course of study. All our student volunteers undergo a recruitment and training process before they begin their roles and regularly participate in skills-enhancing debriefs and workshops.

6.08 Careers Service

The Careers Service offers support and advice throughout your time at The University of Manchester, to help you make the most of your time here and best prepare you for your future.

6.09 University College

The University College for Interdisciplinary Learning (UCIL) offers course units that provide you a chance to explore a topic beyond the scope of your main degree, providing new perspectives and skills that complement your academic journey.

6.10 Stellify

The Stellify Award is a unique University of Manchester award supporting your personal development and graduate outcomes alongside your studies.

The Stellify Award gives you the chance to make a difference in a way that feels authentic to you, your passions and interests. Through volunteering, leadership roles and ethical grand challenges, youâ€™ll not only take action to help causes you truly care about, but will also be prepared for life after university and will enter the world of work feeling confident in your abilities.

6.11 International Society

The International Society has more than 6,000 members from more than 130 different countries, making it a great place to meet friends and make contacts during your stay. Its members, many of whom have themselves experienced living away from their native country, aim to ensure students have a rewarding experience in the UK.

The society arranges weekend trips around the UK, offers over 40 different classes each week and organises over 100 different social events throughout the year, helping you to make the most of your time in the UK.