

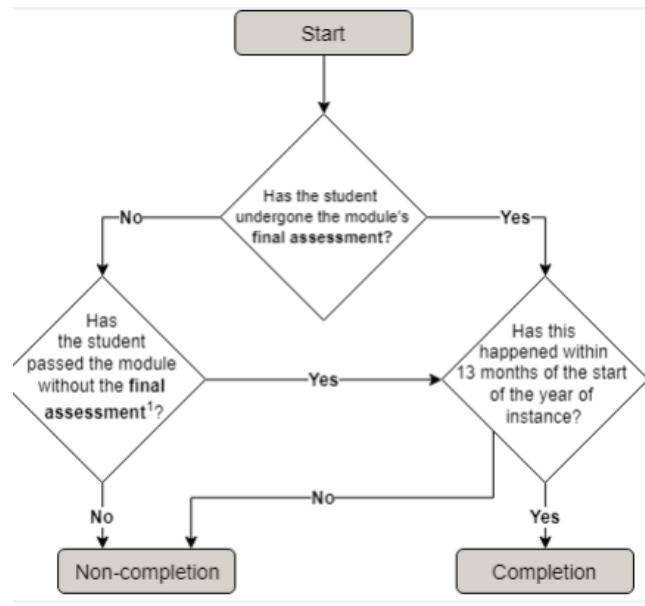
## **Guidance CG (iii)**

### **Module Set Up – Funding and Reporting**

Virtually all courses are now set up on a modular basis. The Office for Students (OfS) rules use the first attempt at the final element of assessment of each module to determine if a student is deemed to be a completion or non-completion. (Note the OfS determination of completion is NOT based on whether a student has passed the module, only that they have attempted the final element of assessment). The rates of non-completion are important to the University as these are used in external data sets such as League Tables and a high rate of non-completions could damage the University's reputation.

Under the OfS rules students have 13 months from their start date (or anniversary of their start date for subsequent years) to undertake the final element of assessment to be classed as a completion.

For example, a student starting on 1 September 2021 will be considered a non-completion if they have not submitted the first attempt of the final element of assessment by 31 October 2022.



This data is recorded in the annual HESA student return and uses the date marks are entered into SITS by the student office as a proxy for the final assessment date. If a student takes four modules in the year, and in one of these modules they fail to attempt the final assessment within the 13-month period, they are automatically considered a non-completion for the whole year's study.

Therefore, how modules are delivered, and their start and end dates can have an impact on whether the 13-month rule is breached. For example, a spanning module (where the submission and assessment for the work extends beyond the end of the academic year) is far more likely to breach the 13-month rule.

Things to consider when planning and delivering modules:

- Will the mark for the final assessment be entered into SITS within 13 months of the student start date?
- Is the final element of assessment clearly identified as this needs to be flagged in SITS by the Student Office?
- Does the module need to span academic years (for standard courses)?
- Is the module entirely a PG dissertation? (It is beneficial to keep PG dissertations in separate modules and clearly name them as dissertations.)

This is because the OfS allow an extra four months on the 13-month rule for this scenario.)

- Is it feasible to submit and receive marks for the final assessment within the 13-month timescale?
- For CPD type 'standalone' modules, delivering the teaching late in the academic year (e.g. in May) risks that the module will span into three academic years, and this may cause issues with maintaining student access to things like VLE.
- It is important that marks are made available for inputting into SITS in a timely way.

*Note – students with mitigating circumstances, or who do not complete all the modules they intended to take at the start of the year, will be non-completions.*

There will be exceptional cases and non-standard courses and it is recommended that advice be sought from the Student Returns and Returns Team in these cases.

## **1 - Examples of Completion and Non completion of modules**

### **1.1 - Example 1: Final assessment taken within 13 months**

A standard year of instance commenced on 14 September 2019. Final assessment for a particular module counted within the year of instance took place in June 2020, with an opportunity to resit or resubmit in September 2020. The student did not take the assessment in June 2020 but did so for the first time at the resit or resubmission opportunity in September 2020. The module is treated as completed, because the assessment was taken within 13 calendar months of 14 September 2019, the start of the year of instance.

### **1.2 - Example 2: Final assessment taken after 13 months**

A standard year of instance commenced on 29 September 2019. Final assessment for a particular module counted during the year of instance takes place only in June each year. The student did not take the assessment in June 2020 and has not otherwise passed the module but did take the assessment at the next opportunity in

June 2021. The module is treated as not completed, because the assessment was not taken within 13 calendar months of 29 September 2019, the start of the year of instance. This would be the case whether or not the student had been given permission to defer their assessment for a year.

### **1.3 - Example 3: Module already passed without taking final assessment**

A student studies for four modules during a year of instance. They undergo the final assessments in three modules, but do not undergo the final assessment in one, because they know that they have already passed the module, based on the marks already achieved in that module. In this case, the student is treated as a completion, because they underwent the final assessments in three modules and passed the remaining module, where it was possible to pass without undergoing the final assessment.

### **1.4 - Example 4: Student undertaking all final assessments but failing a module**

A student studies for four modules during a year of instance. They undergo the final assessments for all modules, but in one module their performance is insufficient to meet the academic standards required to pass that module. In this case, the year of instance would be treated as a completion, because the student underwent the final assessments in all modules.

### **1.5 - Example 5: Progression to the following year where the student did not take a final assessment**

A student studies for four modules during a year of instance. They undergo the final assessments for three modules, but not the fourth, with the consequence that they do not have enough marks in that module to be awarded credit for it. Whether or not the provider allows the student to progress (continue) to the following year of instance, the student is treated as a non-completion for funding purposes for all activity in the year, because they did not undergo the final assessment in a module.

### **1.6 - Example 6: Substituted modules**

A full-time student has a clear intention of studying for four modules during a year of instance. Their intention initially was to include one particular module (A), but although they started the module they decided to switch to a different module (B) of equal value.

The completion status for the year of instance depends on completion of module B (rather than module A), together with the other three modules taken by the student.

### **1.7 - Example 7: Break in study**

A full-time student starts in September intending to study four modules during a year of instance. At the end of the first semester they interrupt the course having completed two modules and return 12 months later to complete the remaining two modules. The student is a full-time non-completion for the first year of instance, because they did not complete two of the modules that they intended to take within the year of instance. They will be a completion for the second year of instance – though normally this will be part-time because they will not meet the attendance requirements to be full-time.

### **1.8 - Example 8: Repeating modules**

A student on a standard year of instance begins a module in October but withdraws from it after undertaking some activity and before completing the final assessment. The following February (within the same year of instance) the student retakes the module and completes it. Providing no additional fee is charged, the first attempt at the module from October would be disregarded in determining the completion status for the year of instance.

### **1.9 - Example 9: Failure to complete overall study intentions**

A full-time student on a standard year of instance has a clear intention of completing four modules within the year. One particular module that they start in the first semester is not completed, but the student retakes it in the second semester in place of another one and completes it. In this case, the year of instance would be a non-completion, because the student completed only three modules, rather than their overall study intention of four.