



QUALITY ASSURANCE GUIDELINES

**For Exceptional Circumstances Affecting
Teaching, Learning, and Assessment**

Version: 2.1

March 2026

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1 Introduction

The University of Bahrain (UoB), like any other higher education institutions worldwide, may from time-to-time face exceptional circumstances¹ beyond its control that disrupt normal academic operations. Such circumstances may include, but are not limited to, pandemics, war or regional instability, natural disasters, security concerns, infrastructure or system failures, or other events that necessitate temporary changes to teaching delivery, assessment practices, and quality assurance processes.

In such situations, it may not be possible to sustain standard modes of teaching, assessment, and quality assurance operations without adjustment. Nevertheless, the University remains fully committed to maintaining academic standards, safeguarding the integrity of learning outcomes, and ensuring fairness and consistency for students, while applying proportionate and temporary flexibility where required.

The role of the Competitiveness and Organizational Development Directorate (hereinafter referred to as "CODD" during exceptional circumstances) is to provide institutional guidelines that enable colleges and academic departments to respond effectively to disruption, while ensuring continued alignment with internal quality assurance requirements, and the expectations of external accreditation bodies. This document emphasizes fitness for purpose, evidence-based decision-making, and transparency, rather than prescriptive or modality specific solutions.

Accordingly, these guidelines set out principles and expectations governing teaching and learning, assessment and feedback, and quality assurance and accreditation procedures during periods when normal academic operations are affected. The guidelines are designed to support temporary and justified adjustments, ensure appropriate documentation of any deviations from standard practice, and facilitate a smooth transition back to normal operations once the exceptional circumstances have subsided.

These guidelines apply across all academic programs at the University and are intended to be adaptive and future oriented, enabling the University to respond consistently and responsibly to a wide range of exceptional circumstances, while upholding its commitment to academic quality and continuous improvement.

¹ **Exceptional Circumstances:** refer to events or conditions that significantly disrupt normal academic operations and require temporary institutional adjustments approved by the University administration.

2 Teaching and Learning

Exceptional circumstances may require the University to temporarily adjust the mode, scheduling, or organization of teaching and learning activities when normal academic operations cannot be sustained. Such adjustments may include, as appropriate, online delivery, hybrid or blended approaches, modified timetables, alternative instructional arrangements, or the deferral of certain learning activities, depending on the nature, scope, and duration of the circumstances.

Decisions related to teaching and learning during exceptional circumstances should be principle based and proportionate, ensuring that any temporary adjustments are fit for purpose, timebound, and justified, while maintaining alignment with approved course and program learning outcomes.

Colleges and academic departments should take the following considerations into account when implementing teaching and learning arrangements during exceptional circumstances:

- **Continuity of learning:** should be ensured to the greatest extent possible through appropriate alternative delivery methods that enable students to progress toward achieving the intended learning outcomes.
- **Learning outcomes remain the primary reference point:** for all teaching decisions, temporary changes to delivery modes must not compromise the scope, level, or integrity of the approved learning outcomes.
- **Teaching and learning resources:** should be made accessible to students through approved platforms or alternative means, ensuring equity and consistency across courses and programs.
- **Course materials delivery:** delivery of the entire approved course material remains mandatory. If any changes or omissions to course content are necessary due to exceptional circumstances, these must be clearly justified and documented to ensure transparency and alignment with program requirements.
- **Academic staff and students should be provided with appropriate support:** including technical guidance, training, and clear communication, to enable effective engagement with adjusted teaching arrangements.
- **Faculty with special needs:** In instances where faculty with special needs encounter challenges that prevent them from delivering course material via alternative modes during exceptional circumstances, it is essential that these circumstances be communicated at the earliest possible opportunity through the appropriate approval channels. This process should begin at the department level and proceed through college and institutional levels as necessary. Timely and transparent reporting enables the University to provide tailored support and reasonable accommodations, ensuring academic continuity and fostering an inclusive educational environment for all members of the academic community.
- **Student engagement and academic interaction:** should be maintained through suitable synchronous and/or asynchronous mechanisms that support communication, provide academic support, and feedback.
- **Accessibility of learning resources for students with technology limitations or special needs:** should be ensured through appropriate adjustments (e.g., alternative formats, low-bandwidth access, and reasonable accommodations) so that all students can access learning

materials and participate equitably. The table below categorizes the relevant needs and provides examples of possible measures:

Special need category (official-style naming)	Online-learning challenges during exceptional circumstances	Possible measures during online delivery (examples)
Visual Impairment	Difficulty accessing LMS content, non-accessible PDFs/slides, images/diagrams without descriptions, and live sessions that rely on visual cues only.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide accessible formats (tagged PDF/Word/HTML) and avoid image-only scans. • Add alt text and written descriptions for figures, charts, and diagrams; provide narrated explanations when needed. • Ensure LMS pages and documents are screen-reader friendly and use high-contrast, readable fonts. • Provide recordings with clear audio description of visual elements when essential.
Hearing Disability / Hearing Impairment	Difficulty accessing audio-only lectures, live online discussions, and video content without captions; reliance on spoken instructions during synchronous sessions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide captions for recorded videos and, where feasible, live captioning for synchronous sessions. • Provide transcripts for audio/video materials and key announcements. • Use chat, shared notes, and written summaries to support communication and instructions. • Provide sign-language interpretation when required and feasible.
Mobility Disabilities	Challenges with prolonged sitting, pain/fatigue during long synchronous sessions, and limited ability to type/write for online submissions or timed tasks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a balanced mix of synchronous and asynchronous activities to reduce continuous screen time. • Allow alternative input methods (voice typing, oral submissions, accessible formats) where appropriate. • Provide flexibility in submission timing within defined windows when justified.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure online platforms and assessments are compatible with assistive/ergonomic setups.
Mental / Intellectual Disability	Online environments may increase cognitive load (many tabs/tools), reduce structure and routine, and make it harder to follow instructions, manage time, and sustain attention; anxiety or overstimulation during live sessions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simplify and standardize course layout in the LMS (consistent weekly structure, one primary location for materials). • Chunk content into smaller steps with checklists; provide clear, concise instructions and examples. • Record synchronous sessions and provide short recap notes; limit session length where feasible. • Provide regular low-stakes check-ins (discussion prompts, short quizzes) and clear feedback cycles. • Allow reasonable flexibility in deadlines and assessment timing where justified, without changing learning outcomes.
Chronic Diseases	Health fluctuations may affect ability to attend live sessions and complete time-bound online tasks; fatigue may be exacerbated by extended screen time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide asynchronous alternatives to live participation (recordings, equivalent activities). • Offer flexibility in deadlines within a defined policy/approval pathway when medically justified. • Provide adjusted assessment windows where justified, while maintaining integrity and comparability. • Communicate expectations early and provide predictable schedules to support planning.
Multiple Disabilities / Various Disabilities	Multiple overlapping barriers may affect access to platforms, content formats, communication, and assessments during online delivery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combine measures across relevant categories into a single, documented support plan. • Prioritize accessible core materials (formats,

		<p>captions/transcripts) and consistent communication.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate support services where required (e.g., captioning + alternative formats).
Temporary Disability (e.g., accidents)	Short-term limitations may affect typing/handwriting, concentration, or sustained participation in online sessions and assessments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide temporary alternatives for participation/submission (oral, voice-to-text, extended windows where justified). • Offer recorded sessions and asynchronous options during recovery. • Apply temporary exam arrangements where required and permitted (e.g., scribe/extra time where allowed).
Technology Limitations (connectivity/device constraints)	Low bandwidth, unstable connectivity, or limited devices may prevent participation in live sessions, streaming videos, or completing online assessments reliably.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide low-bandwidth versions of content (compressed video, audio-only, slides/PDF) and downloadable packages. • Prefer asynchronous participation options when connectivity is unreliable. • Avoid streaming-only requirements; provide equivalent access routes and submission methods. • Use assessment windows and contingency arrangements that account for connectivity disruptions.

- **Programs or courses with significant practical, laboratory, clinical, or field-based components:** may require special consideration. In such cases, course coordinators and departments should design appropriate alternatives, sequencing adjustments, or deferral mechanisms to ensure that all learning outcomes are ultimately achieved and evidenced. Where possible, these courses can apply to maintain the first delivery mode option approved by the University Council during the exceptional circumstances, through a designated form (Appendix 1), to be approved by the University Council.
- Any adjustments to teaching and learning implemented during exceptional circumstances must be clearly documented, throughout the committees and entities involved, including the rationale for the adjustment, its duration, and any implications for course delivery, to support internal review, quality assurance processes, and future accreditation requirements. These changes could be documented through the Department Council meetings, Quality Assurance Committee meetings, and as such.

Teaching and learning arrangements adopted under exceptional circumstances are temporary in nature. Once normal academic operations resume, colleges and academic departments are expected to review these arrangements and transition back to standard teaching practices, incorporating lessons learned to enhance institutional resilience and preparedness.

3 Assessment and Feedback

During exceptional circumstances, assessment practices may require temporary and proportionate adjustments to ensure continuity of learning while maintaining academic standards, fairness, and integrity. Any such adjustments must be justified by the circumstances, aligned with approved learning outcomes, and implemented in a manner that ensures the credibility and reliability of assessment decisions.

Academic departments are responsible for ensuring that assessment design and implementation during exceptional circumstances continue to support valid measurement of student achievement, while taking into account contextual, logistical, or technical constraints that may affect students and staff.

When designing or adjusting assessments during exceptional circumstances, academic departments should be guided by the following principles:

- **Alignment with learning outcomes:** All assessment tasks must remain clearly mapped to the approved course learning outcomes and contribute appropriately to the achievement of program learning outcomes. Where assessment methods or weightings are temporarily adjusted due to exceptional circumstances, the course specification form must be updated (or an approved addendum issued) to reflect the changes, with clear justification, documentation, and the effective period of the adjustment. These temporary arrangements are expected to be reviewed and, where feasible, reverted to the originally approved assessment scheme in the CSF once normal academic operations resume. Any changes intended to continue beyond the exceptional period must be processed as a formal (non-temporary) revision through the appropriate departmental, college, and university approval levels.
- **Appropriateness to level:** Assessment tasks must reflect the intended level of complexity and cognitive demand in accordance with the National Qualifications Framework (NQF).
- **Assessment design and workload:** The number, timing, and weighting of assessment tasks should be reviewed to ensure that student workload remains reasonable and balanced. Overassessment and underassessment should be avoided. No change to assessment weightings is implemented until it is approved through the required department/college/university pathway, as stated in the [Regulations for Offering/Developing Academic Programs and Courses at the University of Bahrain](#).
- **Changes to grading systems:** During exceptional circumstances, academic departments may consider modifying the grading system, such as shifting from the traditional A-level grading to a Pass/Fail scheme. This adjustment can help alleviate student stress and accommodate challenges in assessment consistency. Any such change must be clearly communicated, justified, and approved through the appropriate university channels, ensuring that it does not compromise academic standards or future accreditation requirements.
- **Grade curving:** The use of grade curving to adjust overall student performance may be considered if there is clear evidence that disruptions have systematically impacted assessment outcomes. Any decision to apply a grading curve must be based on transparent criteria,

approved through the appropriate departmental and college channels, and clearly communicated to students. The rationale, method, and scope of the curving should be documented to ensure alignment with academic integrity, fairness, and the intended learning outcomes.

- **Clarity and transparency:** Clear instructions regarding assessment requirements, submission formats, deadlines, and evaluation criteria must be communicated to students in advance. Where applicable, assessment rubrics or performance criteria should be shared.
- **Flexibility and accessibility:** Reasonable flexibility should be incorporated into assessment timing and arrangements to accommodate circumstances that may affect students' ability to engage under exceptional conditions. This principle may apply to all assessments, including midterm and final examinations; however, the default approved examination duration/window should be maintained unless a justified need for adjustment arises during exceptional circumstances. Any such adjustment must remain aligned with learning outcomes, be time-bound, documented, and communicated, and processed through the appropriate approval levels
- **Diversity of assessment methods:** A range of assessment methods may be adopted, where appropriate, to enable comprehensive and accurate evaluation of student learning and to reduce reliance on a single assessment format. This does not mean that departments are required to increase the number of assessment tasks or add additional assessment types; rather, where a standard assessment format becomes infeasible under exceptional circumstances, an equivalent alternative method may be used to assess the same learning outcomes, while maintaining a reasonable workload and avoiding overassessment.
- **Academic integrity:** Assessment design should incorporate measures that promote academic integrity and minimize opportunities for academic misconduct through appropriate task design and verification mechanisms.

Attendance and participation should not be used as graded assessment components unless they are explicitly linked to approved learning outcomes and justified within the course design.

3.1. Use of assessment tools and methods

The selection of assessment tools and methods remains at the discretion of academic departments and teaching teams, provided that the chosen approaches are appropriate to the learning outcomes, level of study, and exceptional circumstances. Where relevant, approved digital tools and platforms may be used to support assessment implementation, submission, feedback, and verification.

Examples of approved tools include the LMS (e.g., Blackboard), plagiarism detection tools (e.g., Turnitin and Blackboard SafeAssign), and, where applicable, online exam proctoring tools (e.g., LockDown Browser and Respondus Monitor), in line with University guidance.

Examples of assessment methods that may be considered for formative and summative purposes, as appropriate, include:

- Essays and written assignments
- Projects and reports
- Case studies and applied problem-solving tasks
- Research papers or research-based assignments
- Oral examinations, presentations, or interviews

- Portfolios, journals, or reflective tasks
- Discussion-based assessments
- Short quizzes or tests
- Simulations or scenario-based assessments
- Audio-visual submissions, such as recorded presentations or digital narratives

3.2. Written and Take Home Examinations During Exceptional Circumstances

Written examinations may continue to be used during exceptional circumstances where they remain feasible, fair, and appropriate to the intended learning outcomes. Where necessary, academic departments may implement temporary adjustments to written examinations to accommodate the prevailing circumstances, provided that academic standards and assessment integrity are maintained.

Such adjustments may include, but are not limited to:

- Modifying the examination format to emphasize application, analysis, and problem-solving rather than recall.
- Allowing defined examination windows or flexible scheduling, where appropriate.
- Adopting open books or resources supported examination formats where aligned with learning outcomes.
- Implementing alternative arrangements to ensure equitable access for students.

Online vs take-home: An online examination is typically a time-limited exam delivered through the approved platform within a defined sitting/window (with or without proctoring tools). A take-home examination is a time-bound assessment released over a longer window to allow completion and submission, typically relying more on applied/problem-solving questions and integrity controls through design and verification. In both cases, the chosen approach must remain aligned with learning outcomes and documented.

Take home examinations may be used as an alternative to traditional written examinations during exceptional circumstances, provided that they are clearly structured, timebound, and aligned with the approved learning outcomes. Academic departments must ensure that take home examinations are designed to assess the intended cognitive demand of the approved CILOs at the relevant NQF level (e.g., application, analysis, problem-solving where appropriate) and include appropriate measures to support academic integrity.

Where written or take-home examinations are temporarily adjusted or replaced, the course specification form must be updated accordingly, with clear rationale and documentation of the changes implemented, where these changes must be processed through the appropriate departmental, college and university levels accordingly. All such arrangements are temporary in nature and subjects to review once normal academic operations resume.

Approved tools (such as plagiarism detection systems or other assessment verification technologies) may be used, where appropriate, to support academic integrity. In all cases, assessment design should prioritize authentic, higher order tasks that reduce opportunities for academic misconduct and support meaningful demonstration of learning.

Where proctoring is not feasible or does not fully mitigate risk, integrity should be supported through a combination of approved verification tools (e.g., plagiarism detection in the LMS) and assessment design choices, as applicable.

3.3. Feedback

Feedback to students is a critical component of the assessment process and must be provided in a timely, constructive, and meaningful manner, regardless of any adjustments made to assessment methods. Academic departments should ensure that feedback mechanisms remain effective in supporting student learning and progression during exceptional circumstances.

4 Quality Assurance and Accreditation Procedures

During exceptional circumstances that disrupt normal academic operations, the Competitiveness and Organizational Development Directorate (CODD) remains responsible for ensuring that academic standards and quality are maintained, while allowing temporary and proportionate flexibility in quality assurance processes where justified by the circumstances.

Recognizing that standard quality assurance and accreditation procedures may not be fully implementable during such periods, CODD will apply an adaptive, evidence-based approach that safeguards the integrity of academic provision and ensures continued alignment with institutional policies, the NQF, and the expectations of external accreditation bodies. This process is to be implemented through the Program and Courses Changes Tracking Form, which must be completed and submitted by the Colleges. The form should be submitted either at the end of the semester or at the conclusion of the exceptional circumstances, whichever occurs first, to ensure all modifications are properly documented and reviewed.

4.1. Moderation of Assessment:

During exceptional circumstances, assessment moderation procedures may be temporarily adjusted, subject to CODD oversight, as follows:

- Moderation shall remain mandatory for assessed courses, including both pre-moderation and post-moderation, to ensure consistency, fairness, and alignment with learning outcomes.
- A representative sample of courses from each academic program shall be internally moderated. Major assessments, defined as assessments that carry significant weighting and/or assess multiple learning outcomes, must be included within the moderation process.
- All deviations from standard moderation procedures must be clearly justified and documented.
- **Digital moderation:** Where on-campus handling of papers/portfolios is not feasible, pre- and post-moderation may be conducted digitally (e.g., via electronic copies of assessment papers, marking guides/model answers, and samples of assessed work), using the approved moderation forms. This is consistent with practice where moderation forms are accessible online to facilitate collection and archiving.

- **Evidence retention:** Evidence of moderation must be retained within the course portfolio and/or the designated program/department repository, including (as applicable): the completed internal pre-moderation and post-moderation forms, the assessment paper and marking guide/model answer, and samples of assessed student work and feedback; and for external moderation, the completed external moderation form and the supporting course portfolio materials provided to the external moderator.

4.2. Course and Program Documentation

To ensure transparency and traceability, the following documentation requirements shall apply during exceptional circumstances:

- Complete course portfolios must be maintained for all courses offered, clearly documenting any temporary changes to teaching delivery, assessment methods, or assessment weightings, together with the rationale for such changes.
- **Documentation approach:** Recording the temporary change in the Course Specification (as applicable) is required for alignment with approved documentation; however, the course portfolio should also retain the supporting evidence of the change and its implementation (e.g., updated assessment briefs/questions and model answers, grade records, samples of assessed work/feedback, and moderation forms), in line with the standard course/e-portfolio audit components.
- Where assessment or delivery arrangements are adjusted, course specification forms must be updated accordingly (or an approved addendum issued), with appropriate justification and approval levels, to ensure consistency between approved documentation and implemented practice. The justification must be recorded in writing either (a) within the updated course specification form/addendum itself, and/or (b) within the formally approved minutes of the relevant committees (e.g., Department Council and Quality Assurance Committee). Approved minutes are considered acceptable evidence and must be retained in the course portfolio together with any related attachments.
- Documentation should be retained to support future internal review and any subsequent external accreditation or quality assurance processes.

4.3. Program Review and Reporting

- Academic programs shall continue to submit self-evaluation reports in accordance with CODD templates and deadlines, unless otherwise determined by CODD due to the exceptional circumstances.
- Where data collection or stakeholder engagement activities are affected, programs must clearly explain the impact of the exceptional circumstances and identify any alternative evidence used.
- Any temporary postponement or modification of review-related activities must be approved by CODD and documented.

4.4. Stakeholder Feedback and Surveys

- Stakeholder feedback mechanisms, including student, alumni, employer, and faculty surveys, should continue where feasible.

- Where standard instruments cannot be used, alternative or adapted survey tools may be implemented to capture feedback relevant to the exceptional circumstances.
- All adaptations to survey instruments or data collection methods must be documented and reported to CODD.

4.5. Accreditation and External Engagement

- Colleges and academic departments must continue to adhere to approved accreditation and review schedules to the extent possible.
- Quality Assurance Directors or Coordinators shall monitor communications from accreditation and quality assurance agencies regarding flexibility or procedural adjustments during exceptional circumstances and report any implications to CODD in a timely manner.
- Any deviations from approved accreditation timelines or requirements must be formally recorded and supported by evidence.

4.6. Review and Transition to Normal Operations

All quality assurance arrangements implemented under exceptional circumstances are temporary in nature. Once normal academic operations resume, CODD, in coordination with colleges and academic departments, shall:

- Review the effectiveness of the temporary measures applied.
- Ensure a structured transition back to standard quality assurance procedures.
- Incorporate lessons learned to strengthen institutional preparedness and resilience.

5 Governance and Decision-Making Structure During Exceptional Circumstances

5.1. Purpose

This section clarifies who decides, how decisions escalate, and what evidence is required when exceptional circumstances require temporary adjustments to teaching, learning, assessment, and quality assurance. The aim is to ensure decisions are timely, consistent, auditable, and aligned with University regulations and quality requirements.

5.2. Core principles (apply to all decisions)

- **Use existing governance:** Exceptional circumstances do not replace the University's normal governance; rather, they require accelerated and well-documented use of existing decision routes.
- **Decisions at the lowest appropriate level:** Decisions should be taken at the lowest level that has the authority to decide, and escalated only when the impact/risk requires it.

- **No unilateral changes:** Any change that affects approved documentation (delivery mode, assessment method, assessment weightings, or key arrangements) must be documented and approved through the appropriate level(s).
- **Auditability:** Every decision must have a written trail (approved documents and/or approved minutes) that can be retained in the course/program records.

5.3. Roles and responsibilities

- **Course Team (Course Instructor / Course Coordinator / Teaching Faculty):**

Responsible for:

- Identifying the practical impact of the exceptional circumstances on the course.
- Proposing feasible temporary adjustments that maintain alignment with learning outcomes.
- Preparing the required evidence for the course portfolio (updated assessment materials, revised schedules, updated instructions to students, etc.).
- Ensuring students are informed of any approved changes clearly and promptly.

- **Head of Department / Program Coordinator (where applicable)**

Responsible for:

- Coordinating the department's response across courses (consistency across sections and instructors).
- Ensuring proposed changes are reviewed through the appropriate departmental committees.
- Ensuring documentation is complete before escalation to college level, where required.

- **Department Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) and related departmental committees (e.g., Curriculum / Examination / Moderation Committees, Postgraduate Committee as applicable)**

Responsible for:

- Reviewing the quality and compliance of proposed adjustments (alignment, fairness, integrity, moderation implications, workload).
- Confirming that documentation is complete and evidence is retained in the course portfolio.
- Recording decisions/recommendations in committee minutes where applicable.

- **Department Council (DC)**

Responsible for:

- Considering and endorsing departmental academic decisions that require departmental approval.
- Ensuring the decision trail is formally recorded and that the approved minutes reflect the decision and its rationale.

- **College Quality Assurance Office / College QA Director (QAD/CQAD) and College Quality Assurance Committee (CQAC)**

Responsible for:

- Ensuring consistency across departments within the college.
- Reviewing cases that affect multiple departments, have higher risk, or require standardization at college level.
- Consolidating and escalating matters that require College Council action or institutional guidance.
- Ensuring appropriate documentation and evidence requirements are met.

- **College Council (CC)**

Responsible for:

- Approving college-level academic decisions in line with its authority and University regulations, especially when the change has broader implications across the college.
- Ensuring the decision is formally recorded and auditable.

- **CODD (Competitiveness and Organizational Development Directorate)**

Responsible for:

- CODD provides institutional guidance, interpretation support, and quality oversight during exceptional circumstances to ensure that temporary adjustments remain consistent with institutional policies, quality assurance requirements, and external expectations.
- CODD does not replace academic governance bodies (Department/College/University councils and committees). Formal academic approvals remain with the competent authorities under University regulations.
- CODD may:
 - Issue clarifications and unified guidance to ensure cross-college consistency.
 - Request additional documentation/evidence where needed for auditability.
 - Escalate matters to higher authorities when they exceed college/department authority or carry significant institutional risk.

5.4. University Level Authorities (as applicable under University regulations)

This includes (where relevant): University committees/administration, Vice-Presidency structures, and University Council approvals for matters that regulations reserve to the university level. Responsible for:

- Approving decisions that require university-level authorization under existing regulations (e.g., changes that cannot be approved at department/college level).

5.5. Escalation mechanism (clear pathway)

Decisions follow this escalation path unless regulations require otherwise:

Course Team → Department (HoD/Program Coordinator + QAC/Committees) → Department Council (if required) → College QA (QAD/CQAC) → College Council (if required) → CODD for institutional guidance/oversight → University-level approval (if required by regulation).

5.6. When to escalate (simple triggers)

Escalate a matter to the next level when any of the following apply:

- The change affects assessment weightings, major assessment structure, or has integrity/fairness implications.
- The change affects the approved delivery mode in a way that requires higher approval under university rules.
- The change affects multiple departments or requires college-wide consistency.
- The change has potential implications for NQF placement/credit/level, accreditation expectations, or institutional reporting.
- There is uncertainty about authority, interpretation, or evidence requirements (seek CODD guidance).

5.7. Emergency / Crisis Committee (only if established)

If the University administration formally establishes an Academic Emergency / Crisis Committee during a specific event, the committee's role is to coordinate urgent decisions, ensure cross-college consistency, and issue institutional directives. All directives and decisions must still be documented and retained as evidence through the appropriate governance routes.

5.8. Required documentation and evidence

To protect all parties and ensure auditability, every approved temporary adjustment must have a written record. Acceptable evidence includes:

- Updated course documentation (e.g., Course Specification / approved addendum where applicable).
- Approved minutes from relevant meetings where the decision was reviewed/endorsed (e.g., departmental committee minutes, QAC minutes, DC minutes, CQAC minutes, College Council minutes, as applicable).
- Supporting attachments referenced in those minutes (e.g., revised assessment brief/questions, revised marking guides/model answers, revised assessment schedule, moderation records, communications to students). All evidence must be retained in the course portfolio and/or the designated department/college repository in a manner that can be retrieved for internal review and external verification.

6 Exceptional Circumstances: Request to Maintain Traditional (Face-to-Face) Delivery Mode

In exceptional circumstances where it is not possible to switch teaching and learning to distance delivery modes (e.g., online or hybrid), and where maintaining in-person delivery is necessary to

achieve the approved learning outcomes, academic departments must use the form provided in [Codd Forms](#) webpage to request approval to maintain the traditional (face-to-face) delivery mode. The completed request shall be examined through the relevant departmental and college approval pathways and submitted for consideration; the final decision to approve, approve with conditions, or reject the request rests with the University Council.

7 Further Assistance

These guidelines are subject to ongoing review and refinement to ensure their continued relevance and effectiveness in responding to exceptional circumstances that may affect academic operations at the University.

Academic departments and colleges are encouraged to seek guidance from CODD when clarification is required regarding the interpretation or implementation of these guidelines, particularly in cases where exceptional circumstances necessitate temporary adjustments to teaching, assessment, or quality assurance processes.

CODD will provide advisory support to ensure that any adjustments made under exceptional circumstances remain consistent with institutional policies, quality assurance requirements, and accreditation expectations, and that appropriate documentation and justification are maintained.

Queries related to the application of these guidelines may be directed to the Competitiveness and Organizational Development Directorate on: qaac@uob.edu.bh