**No detriment policy**

Last week we sent out details about the measures that make up our [no detriment policy](https://unihub.mdx.ac.uk/student-life/announcements/2021/03/no-detriment-2021) for the upcoming assessment period. I know that this is a challenging time for many students and I am writing to provide further updates and emphasise the support that we have in place for you.

**Reach out for support, especially if you have specific personal circumstances**

In response to our email last week, we heard from students about particular hardships or challenges that they are facing, which make them concerned about their assessments. I want to thank these students for reaching out and I encourage anyone with specific personal circumstances which have impacted on your studies to report these so that they can be taken into account. We will be applying extenuating circumstances to all students at Assessment Boards.

Please talk with your Programme Leader if you require any further details about support within your programme of study. You can find more details about how to access the support available on [UniHub](https://unihub.mdx.ac.uk/support). This includes access to [financial support](https://unihub.mdx.ac.uk/support/fees-payments-funding/financial-support/student-emergency-fund), [mental health and wellbeing](https://unihub.mdx.ac.uk/support/teammdx-resources) and [IT equipment](https://unihub.mdx.ac.uk/study/it/laptops-for-loan). Also, if you just want to talk with another student, you can now [request a call](https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=iHvjOKGjz0ifBWU3Qn_tJLnZGDUHyLtDjWIpBsonZkVUOVFJTDRRM1FDRksyRFREU1ZDREg5UU82VyQlQCN0PWcu) from one of our trained Student Support Callers. We will also develop a set of FAQs on the range of measures and assessment next week which will be published on UniHub.

**Ensuring fairness in your assessments**

We are confident that the supportive measures that make up our [no detriment policy](https://unihub.mdx.ac.uk/student-life/announcements/2021/03/no-detriment-2021) for this year will ensure you are not disadvantaged. After discussion with the Students’ Union, who highlighted many of the challenging issues our student community are facing, we have put in place an additional safety net as part of our overall No Detriment provision.

Assessment Boards will now be reviewing module grades against the achievements of students prior to the pandemic and we will upwardly adjust where there are significant differences to grades. Our approach is in line with what other universities are doing to ensure fairness in assessments.

**Assessments developed in the context of online learning**

Assessments including coursework, practicals and exams have been reconfigured to take account of the circumstances. Your assessments will only be based on the subject matter that has made up your learning this year. You will not be asked to demonstrate your ability on topics or skills which you have not been taught, or using any resources or materials that you have not been able to access.

Beyond this, your assessments have [flexibility and inclusivity](https://unihub.mdx.ac.uk/covid-19-updates-faq/adapted-forms-of-assessments-as-a-result-of-covid-19) built into their design, so that they work in the context of the pandemic and online learning.

This year has been different to last academic year in that we designed our approach to teaching and assessment to take account of the pandemic from the beginning.

We have listened to student responses and the approach the University has taken has been carefully designed to be fair in the current circumstances. I hope that the change outlined above, taken with the comprehensive support already in place, meets the concerns that have been raised.

I also recognise from some of the correspondence I have received that students have experienced significant personal challenges. I would encourage you to report these to your Programme Leader or through our student support services so that they can be taken into account in addition to the general measures in place.

Professor Nic Beech

Vice-Chancellor