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ECT Central Glossary

Purpose

This glossary provides a single, authoritative source of definitions used across ECT policies, procedures, regulations, and guidance documents. It is intended to promote consistency of terminology, support understanding among students and staff, and reduce duplication across policy documents.

Unless otherwise stated, the definitions in this glossary apply across all ECT policies and procedures. Where a policy requires a definition with a specific meaning for the purposes of that policy, the policy-specific definition shall take precedence.

A

Academic Appeal

A request from a student for a review of an academic decision (such as a mark, progression, continuation, or award outcome), based on specified grounds and considered under a published institutional procedure.

Academic Appeals Panel

A formally constituted panel convened at the final stage of the academic appeals process to review eligible appeals. The panel includes members independent of the original decision and prior stages of consideration and makes impartial decisions in accordance with published procedures.

Academic Decision

A formal decision about a student's assessment result, progression, continuation, or final award made by an authorised body or officer of ECT.

Academic Freedom

The freedom of academic staff and students to teach, research, discuss, publish, and disseminate knowledge; to engage in intellectual inquiry; to express opinions in relation to their subjects and ECT; to participate in academic bodies or student societies; and the autonomy of ECT to determine its academic courses, teaching methods, and research activities.

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Academic Integrity

A commitment by students and staff to honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility in teaching, learning, research, and assessment. This includes appropriate acknowledgement of sources and the responsible use of artificial intelligence (AI) and other tools.

Academic Judgement

The professional judgement of academic staff in areas where they hold decision-making authority, such as assessment marks, progression decisions, and degree classifications. Disagreement with academic judgement alone is not grounds for appeal.

Academic Misconduct

Any act or attempted act that breaches academic integrity or seeks to gain an unfair academic advantage. Examples include plagiarism, collusion, contract cheating, fabrication, falsification, impersonation, bribery, cheating, and sabotage.

Adequacy Decision

A formal decision by the UK Government recognising that another country, territory, sector, or international organisation provides an equivalent level of protection for personal data to that required under UK data protection law.

Admission

The process for admitting an applicant to a programme at ECT following acceptance of an offer. Admission forms part of the enrolment process.

Advanced Standing

The granting of block credit for a semester or more, recognising prior learning and achievement of learning outcomes and reducing the number of modules required to complete a programme.

Anonymisation

The process of removing personal identifiers so that an individual cannot reasonably be identified or re-identified. Anonymous information is not considered personal data under UK data protection legislation.

Appeal Outcome

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The formal written decision issued at the conclusion of a stage of the appeals process, including reasons and any actions, recommendations, or remedies.

Applicant

A person who applies for a place on a programme at ECT. An applicant becomes a student upon enrolment.

Assessment

Any task, activity, or process used to evaluate the extent to which a student has achieved the intended learning outcomes of a module or programme.

Assessment Board

A formally constituted body, including internal and external examiners where appropriate, responsible for confirming marks and making progression and award decisions.

Assessment Criteria

Published statements describing how student performance will be judged against learning outcomes.

At Risk

A student identified as having the potential not to meet academic progress requirements or who has missed key milestones, such as assessment submissions or module passes, and who may require additional support to progress successfully.

Automated Decision-Making (ADM)

A decision made solely by automated processing, including profiling, that produces legal or similarly significant effects for an individual.

B

Block Credit

Credit awarded for whole stages or components of a programme based on recognised equivalence of prior learning.

BME (Black and Minority Ethnic)

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A collective term used to describe people from Black and Minority Ethnic backgrounds, including those of African, Asian, Arab, Caribbean, and Indigenous heritage.

Bribery

Offering, giving, requesting, or accepting an inducement with the intention of influencing an academic, assessment, or institutional decision.

BYOD (Bring Your Own Device)

Personally owned devices used to access ECT systems and services. Such use requires appropriate authentication to ensure activity can be attributed to individual users.

C

Channel

A national multi-agency programme that provides support for individuals who may be vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism or extremist activity.

Cheating

Any attempt to gain an unfair advantage in an assessment, including the use of unauthorised materials, devices, information, or assistance.

Child

A person under the age of 18 years.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

A form of abuse in which children are manipulated, coerced, or deceived into criminal activity, including drug trafficking, theft, violence, or other unlawful conduct.

Collusion

Unauthorised collaboration between two or more individuals in the preparation or production of work submitted for assessment.

Commercialisation

The process of bringing intellectual property (IP) to the market to achieve commercial success by developing, licensing, or exploiting a product, service, or innovation for business growth or financial benefit.

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Complaint

An expression of dissatisfaction about the standard of service, action, or lack of action by ECT or those acting on its behalf.

Completion of Procedures Letter

A formal letter confirming that ECT's internal procedures have been completed and informing the student of their right to refer the matter to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA).

Conflict of Interest

A situation where a person's personal, professional, or financial interests may influence, or reasonably be perceived to influence, their judgement or decision-making.

Consent

Voluntary, informed, and freely given agreement to engage in a specific activity. Consent may be withdrawn at any time and cannot be assumed from silence, previous consent, or the existence of a relationship.

Contract Cheating

Obtaining, commissioning, purchasing, or otherwise procuring work from another person or service and submitting it as one's own.

Copyright

The exclusive legal right granted to the creator of an original work to control its use, reproduction, distribution, publication, or adaptation for a specified period, and to authorise others to use the work under agreed conditions.

Credit

The numerical value assigned to learning, based on notional learning hours. One credit typically represents ten notional learning hours.

Credit Arrangements

Formal agreements governing the recognition, transfer, or award of credit.

Credit Granted

The recognition of equivalent learning through credit transfer, recognition of prior learning, articulation arrangements, or advanced standing.

Credit Outcomes

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The results of a credit assessment process.

Credit Transfer

The process through which credit achieved in one qualification or institution is recognised towards another qualification.

D

Data Controller

The individual or organisation responsible for determining the purposes and means by which personal data are processed.

Data Processing and Confidentiality

The collection, use, storage, sharing, and disposal of personal data in accordance with applicable data protection legislation and ECT policies.

Deferral

Permission granted to postpone commencement of a programme or continuation of studies to a later date.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The senior individual with overall responsibility for safeguarding within ECT. The DSL oversees safeguarding procedures, referrals, risk assessment, case management, and liaison with external agencies.

Distance / Online Learner

A student studying wholly or mainly through online or distance-learning methods.

Domestic Abuse

Physical, emotional, psychological, sexual, or financial abuse occurring within family, intimate, or domestic relationships.

Due Regard

The legal requirement to consider the need to prevent individuals from being drawn into terrorism when carrying out institutional functions.

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E

ECT Community

All individuals connected with ECT, including students, applicants, staff, contractors, consultants, volunteers, and visitors.

ECT Staff

Individuals employed or contracted to provide academic, managerial, operational, or support services on behalf of ECT.

Emotional Abuse

Behaviour that undermines an individual's emotional wellbeing, self-esteem, or sense of security.

Enrolment Process

The process through which an applicant becomes a registered student.

Entry Requirements

The academic, professional, language, or other criteria that applicants must satisfy to gain admission to a programme.

Equity and Inclusivity

The principle of ensuring fair and equitable opportunities for all students to demonstrate achievement and participate fully in learning and assessment.

Explicitness

The clear communication of expectations, requirements, criteria, deadlines, and regulations.

Extension

An approved allowance of additional time for submission of an assessment due to accepted mitigating circumstances.

External Examiner

An independent academic or professional appointed to provide external oversight of academic standards and assessment processes.

External Examining

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The process through which external examiners review assessment, marking, moderation, progression, and award decisions.

Extremism

Vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

F

Fabrication

Making up data, results, citations, quotations, or information and presenting them as genuine.

Falsification

Manipulating, altering, or misrepresenting data, results, information, records, or documentation.

Fee Schedule

The published schedule of tuition fees, charges, penalties, and other costs applicable to students.

Feedback

Information provided to students regarding their performance and how they may improve future work.

Financial Abuse

The misuse, theft, control, or exploitation of another person's financial resources.

Fit to Sit

The principle that by attending an assessment or submitting work, a student declares themselves fit to undertake that assessment unless mitigation has been approved.

Formal Appeal

A written appeal submitted through the formal appeals process and supported by relevant evidence.

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Formative Assessment

Assessment intended primarily to support learning and provide feedback rather than contribute substantially to final outcomes.

Frivolous or Vexatious Appeal

An appeal that is manifestly without merit, pursued improperly, maliciously, or abusively.

G

GCSE

General Certificate of Secondary Education.

Gender-Based Violence

Violence, abuse, or harm directed at an individual because of their gender or gender identity.

Group Appeal

An appeal submitted jointly by two or more students affected by the same circumstances or decision.

H

Harassment

Unwanted conduct that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment.

Historic Abuse

Abuse that occurred in the past but may continue to affect an individual.

I

ICT (Information and Communication Technology)

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Technology used to capture, process, store, transmit, retrieve, or communicate information electronically.

IELTS

International English Language Testing System.

Impartiality

The requirement that decisions are made objectively and free from actual or perceived bias.

Impersonation

Assuming another person's identity, or allowing another person to assume one's identity, in relation to assessment or academic activity.

Institutional Abuse

Abuse arising within an organisation due to systemic failures, poor practice, or misuse of authority.

Intellectual Property (IP)

Creations of the mind, including inventions, literary and artistic works, designs, symbols, names, images, software, and other original works that are protected by law through rights such as patents, copyright, trademarks, and design rights.

Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)

The legal rights that protect intellectual property and enable the owner or creator to control its use and benefit commercially from it. These rights include copyright, patents, trademarks, and other recognised forms of legal protection.

Interventions

Measures designed to prevent radicalisation or engagement with extremist activity, including mentoring, counselling, pastoral support, or community engagement.

Invention

A product, process, method, or technology that provides a new way of doing something or offers a novel technical solution to a problem.

IT Manager

The individual responsible for managing ECT's ICT systems and providing technical expertise and support.

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L

Learning Support Officer

The designated contact responsible for student support and administrative coordination within a module or programme.

Low-Level Concern

A concern about behaviour that may be inconsistent with professional standards or safeguarding expectations but does not meet the threshold for formal safeguarding referral.

M

Machine Translation and Proofreading Tools

Software or services used to translate or edit text. Their use must comply with assessment requirements and programme guidance.

Mitigating Circumstances

Serious, unforeseen, unavoidable circumstances outside a student's control that significantly affect their ability to prepare for, undertake, or perform in assessment.

Moderation

A quality assurance process through which assessment tasks or marked work are reviewed to ensure fairness, consistency, and appropriate standards.

Module

A discrete and formally structured unit of study with defined learning outcomes, assessment requirements, and, normally, a specified credit value.

Moral Rights

The rights of creators to be identified as the author or creator of their work and to protect the integrity of that work. These rights protect the creator's personal connection to their work independently of economic rights.

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O

Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA)

The independent body responsible for reviewing unresolved student complaints about higher education providers in England and Wales.

Online Abuse

Harmful behaviour conducted through digital platforms, including cyberbullying, grooming, harassment, or exploitation.

Online Delivery Mode

The delivery of teaching, learning, and assessment through online technologies, including live-streamed sessions.

Online Event

Any ECT activity involving external speakers or public participation delivered through online platforms.

Originator

The individual or individuals who create, author, invent, or otherwise originate intellectual property.

Owner of Intellectual Property

The individual, organisation, or legal entity that holds the legal rights to intellectual property and has authority over its use, licensing, modification, assignment, or commercial exploitation.

P

Patent

An exclusive legal right granted for an invention, providing the owner with protection against unauthorised manufacture, use, sale, or distribution of the invention for a specified period.

Payment Date

The published date by which fees or charges must be paid.

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Penalty

A sanction imposed following a finding of academic misconduct.

Plagiarism

Presenting another person's work, ideas, words, data, images, code, or intellectual output as one's own without proper acknowledgement.

Position of Trust

A situation in which an individual holds authority, responsibility, or influence over a child or adult at risk.

Prevent

The government strategy intended to stop individuals from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.

Prevent Duty

The statutory duty placed upon specified authorities to have due regard to preventing individuals from being drawn into terrorism.

Programme

A structured sequence of modules and learning activities leading to academic credit, a qualification, or another recognised award.

Programme Entry Requirements

The specific requirements applicants must satisfy to gain admission to a particular programme.

Protected Characteristics

Characteristics protected under the Equality Act 2010, including age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

R

Radicalisation

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The process through which an individual comes to support extremist ideologies or engage in terrorism-related activities.

Reasonable Adjustments

Modifications made to remove or reduce disadvantages experienced by students with disabilities or specific learning needs, without compromising academic standards.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

The formal recognition of prior certificated or experiential learning for admission or credit purposes.

Reliability

The extent to which assessment judgements are consistent across markers, cohorts, and time.

Representative / Support Person

A person chosen by a student to provide support during institutional procedures.

Respondent

The person, committee, or body whose decision or actions are the subject of a complaint or appeal.

Retrospective Mitigation

A claim for mitigating circumstances submitted after an assessment has been completed.

S

Safeguarding

The process of protecting children, adults at risk, and other vulnerable individuals from abuse, neglect, exploitation, harm, and radicalisation.

Sabotage

Deliberate action intended to interfere with or damage another student's academic work or opportunities.

Scaling of Marks

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A controlled and documented adjustment to marks where evidence indicates this is necessary to ensure fairness and maintain standards.

Scholarship

The systematic creation, advancement, synthesis, application, or dissemination of knowledge through research, critical enquiry, and academic activity.

Scholarly Work

Academic work produced during a student's enrolment at ECT that contributes to knowledge or scholarship, including dissertations, journal articles, conference papers, books, reports, creative works, videos, or other scholarly outputs.

Self-Plagiarism

The submission of previously assessed work, in whole or substantial part, without permission or acknowledgement.

Sensitive / Extremism-Related Research

Legitimate teaching, learning, or research activity requiring access to extremist materials for academic purposes.

Sexual Abuse

Any sexual act imposed without consent or through coercion, manipulation, or exploitation.

Sexual Assault

Any unwanted sexual act or behaviour carried out without consent.

Sexual Harassment

Unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that violates dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment.

Sexual Misconduct

Any unwanted conduct of a sexual nature, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, rape, stalking, image-based abuse, or coercive behaviour.

Sexual Violence

Physical or threatened acts of sexual violence.

Similarity Checking Software

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Software used to compare submitted work against other sources to identify potential plagiarism or academic misconduct.

Standard of Proof

The civil standard of proof applied by ECT: the balance of probabilities.

Start Date

The official commencement date of a teaching period or module.

Statement of Support Needs (SoSN)

A document outlining a student's disability, diagnosis, or support needs and recommending reasonable adjustments.

Student

A person enrolled on an ECT programme or, where relevant to a procedure, a recently enrolled student affected by a decision made during their period of registration.

Student Support Services

Services that provide academic, pastoral, wellbeing, disability, welfare, and related support to students.

Summative Assessment

Assessment that contributes to the final mark, progression decision, or award outcome.

Sufficiency, Currency and Authenticity of Evidence

Principles ensuring assessment evidence is adequate, current, and demonstrably the student's own work.

T

Teaching Period

A defined period of teaching and learning activity within an academic year, typically referred to as a semester.

Terrorism

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As defined in the Terrorism Act 2000, actions or threats intended to influence government or intimidate the public for political, religious, racial, or ideological purposes.

TOEFL iBT

Test of English as a Foreign Language (Internet-Based Test).

Trademark

A legally protected sign, symbol, logo, word, phrase, design, or other identifier used to distinguish the goods or services of one organisation or individual from those of another.

Tuition Fee

The compulsory fee charged by ECT for tuition and academic instruction.

Tuition Fee Loan

A government-funded loan paid directly to the institution to cover tuition fees and repaid by the student in accordance with applicable regulations.

U

Unavoidable

An event or circumstance that could not reasonably have been prevented.

Unforeseeable

An event or circumstance that could not reasonably have been anticipated.

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

The use of generative AI or related technologies to create, edit, translate, or otherwise contribute to assessed work. Use is permitted only where expressly authorised.

V

Validity

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The extent to which an assessment accurately measures the intended learning outcomes and skills.

Victimisation

Subjecting an individual to disadvantage or detriment because they have made, supported, or participated in a complaint or legal process.

Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)

The online learning platform and associated tools used by ECT to support teaching, learning, assessment, communication, and community engagement.

Vulnerable Adult / Adult at Risk

A person aged 18 or over who may require care or support and who may be unable to protect themselves from abuse, neglect, exploitation, or harm.

W

Withdrawal

The formal process by which a student discontinues a programme or module.

Working Day

Any day on which ECT is officially open for business, excluding weekends, public holidays, and published closure periods.

End – ECT Central Glossary