



كلية مسقط
Muscat College

Student Manual

General Foundation Programme 2015-2016



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1. Foreword

Dear Student,

Welcome to Muscat College (MC), one of the many institutions that symbolises education and knowledge that abounds all over Oman. A nation blessed with the foresight of its great leader, HM Sultan Qaboos, guiding us in the wake of renaissance.

The institutions of our nation were set up and have been bettered by the Renaissance Omani, the architect of the development process, geared towards learning up-to-date knowledge.

Muscat College, like the other institutions has its ground rules and by-laws; its goals and objectives to shape its academic path in order to keep up with the laws & customs of the Omani society that binds the individual to the community at large, on-campus or off-campus.

We hope that you will read this student manual carefully and that you will seek help & explanation on whatever is not clear to you.

Good luck and may you have a successful year!

Professor Haider Ali Ramadhan Al-Lawati

Dean, Muscat College



2. Important Contacts for Students

2.1. The Admissions and Registration Office

The Admissions and Registration Office is the student's first point of contact with the College and the place of continued guidance from where the admission process is initiated. All the records of students are kept in this Office. This is also the place where parents and sponsors could get all the information about the student's progress of study.

2.2. The Director of the Language Centre (DLC)

The Director of the Language Centre is responsible for overseeing the operation of the Language Centre and for the management and quality of the programme of study.

2.3. Deputy Director of the Language Centre (DDLDC)

The DDLDC is responsible for supporting the DLC in the Departmental operations and has full authority in managing the Departmental affairs during the DLC's absence.

The DDLDC can function independently in concurrence with the DLC in their assigned responsibilities and reports to the DLC.

2.4. Academic Advisor

The Academic Advisor plays a very important and key role in the students' study life. He/she provides expert guidance and valuable advice to the student in helping him/her to do what is best in their study path. The Academic Advisor is the helping hand the student may need when faced with any problems or complications. The Academic Advisor also helps the student to manage and budget time.

The Academic Advisor will arrange meetings at regular intervals during the semester, however you may arrange special meetings with the Academic Advisor if you run into an urgent problem which you need to discuss. Where necessary, the Advisor could liaise with other members of staff on your behalf.

It is essential that your Academic Advisor knows who you are and is well informed about any problem; personal, academic or otherwise, so that they can offer you guidance, advice and support which can be of great comfort, particularly in the first year of study.

2.5. Office Hours of Academic Advisors and Lecturers

All Academic Advisors and lecturers have allocated office hours so that students can meet with them for any extra help. Students are required to note down the date and time of the office hours of their Academic Advisor and lecturers.

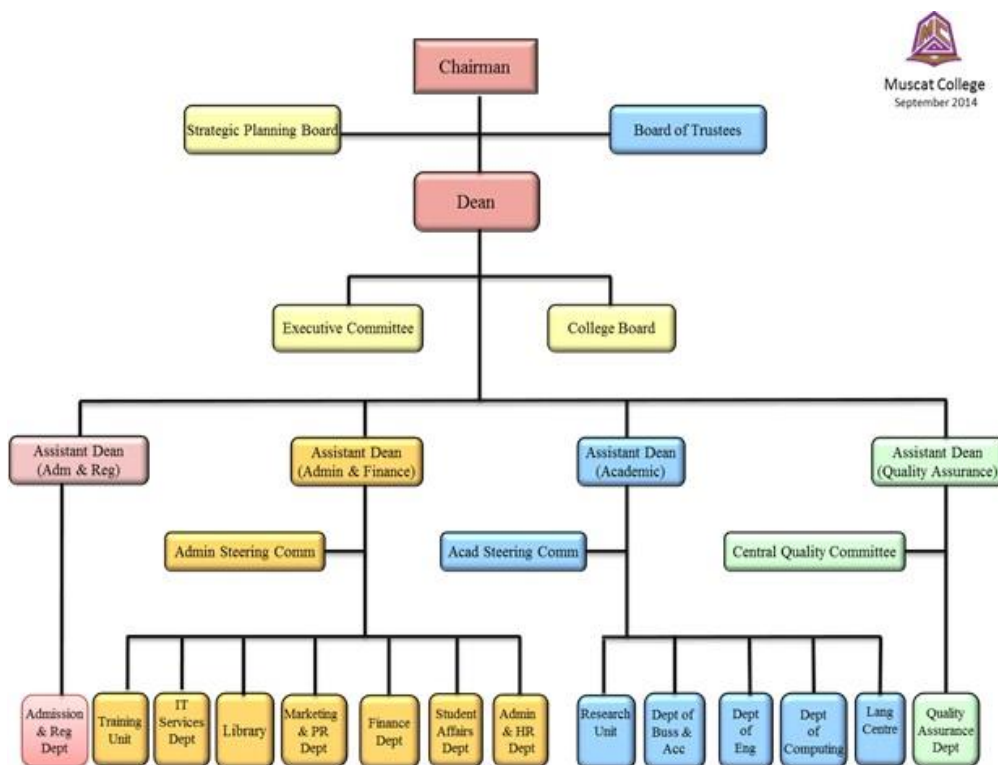


2.6. Student Affairs and General Activities

This section of the College ensures that students are well taken care of and that homely and cordial environment exists all the time during the students' stay at MC, helping them understand the disciplinary rules and code of conduct.

This is also where students can be creative and can exploit their extra-curricular capabilities and where they get a chance to mingle with students from other faculties as well as to meet College staff and faculty members. Students are encouraged to take part in such activities.

2.7. Organisational Structure of Muscat College





3. Registration and Attendance

3.1. Academic Year

There are two semesters in an academic year: Academic Semester 1 (AS1) and Academic Semester 2 (AS2). Each Academic Semester offers all the GFP modules.

The dates of each semester are:

- Academic Semester 1: 6 September 2015 to 24 December 2015
- Academic Semester 2: 24 January 2016 to 19 May 2016

3.2. Registration Officer

The student has to meet with the Registration Officer who will guide the student to register for the required modules in that particular semester. The Registration Officer will assist students in completing appropriate forms and documentation, some of which may have to be signed by the student.

3.3. Registration Steps

To complete the registration process from the academic, administrative or financial perspective, the following steps have to be carried out by the student at the Admissions and Registrations Office, all within the specified time:

- a. With the Registration Officer: Agree to the study plan, sign in the financial regulation and collect the copies of pre-registration form, flow chart and financial regulation.
- b. Clearance from the Finance Office (Financial settlement).
- c. Confirm registration and collect timetable from the Registration Officer.
- d. Lack of completion of the registration process will result in the student being barred from attending classes and from continuing with his/her studies.
- e. All fees to be settled as per the financial settlement agreement date. The student who fails to meet these requirements will be barred from attending classes and from continuing his/her studies.



3.4. Payment of Fees

Payment of fees for registered modules is due at the beginning of the semester. Fees can also be paid for the full year in advance.

- a. A 5% discount is given for the full payment of all the registered modules in the respective semester within the first week of registration.

In special cases, payment in instalments may be allowed with prior approval from the College authority. In such cases, an agreement should be finalised before the end of the second week of the semester as listed below:

- a. A down payment of 40% of the total fee is to be paid before the module registration. The remaining 60% is to be paid through two Post Dated Cheques (PDC), each worth 30% of the remaining fees.
- b. The above agreement is to be signed by either the student or the parent or the guardian. (A copy of the agreement is given to the parent/guardian).

In the case of withdrawal from the college:

- a. If the withdrawal is within the first two weeks of the add and drop period, the full fee will be reimbursed except the non-refundable registration fees.
- b. If the withdrawal is after the second week and before the fourth week, 25% of the fee is to be paid, in spite of students attending or not attending classes.
- c. If the withdrawal is after the fourth week, full fee is forfeited, in spite of students attending or not attending classes.
- d. No student will not be allowed to register after the add and drop period.

3.5. Mode of study and Entitlements

A student will be designated as full-time or part-time. Where part-time, a programme may be studied on a part-time structured basis.

3.6. Change of Mode of Study

A student may change his or her mode of study, provided that the Mode of Study definition is satisfied, and there is sufficient capacity on the programme of study. There may be financial and, where relevant, visa implications of a change for the student.

3.7. Module Registration

Before being permitted to register for some modules, a student must pass one or more prerequisite modules and/or both components of some modules.

A student must register on the set of modules as prescribed by the Study Plan.



3.8. Module Add and Drop

A student is permitted to add and drop a module during the *add and drop* period. After the *add and drop* period, fees will have to be settled for all registered modules.

3.9. Accessing MOODLE

All the PCs in the computer labs are available for students to enable them to do their assignments and academic preparation through Moodle. All students are provided with a user name and password by the College for accessing handouts / lecture notes from MOODLE. (MOODLE is a link provided by the College for accessing electronic materials).

3.10. Attendance and Engagement

Students are required to attend all hours of any module of study. The College has set the regulation of attendance for any module not to be below 70% of the total number of hours for that module to ensure that students get the best possible education. Students must inform the Admissions and Registration Office in case of absence due to illness and a medical certificate must be forwarded.

Students who do not comply with minimum attendance requirement are considered to have failed the module.

3.11. Breach of Attendance Policy – Disciplinary Actions

- a. The first communication will be issued by the Academic Advisor and the Department of Admissions and Registration to the student both via email and SMS when the absenteeism reaches 10%.
- b. The second and final warning message will be sent via email by the Academic Advisor and a warning letter by the Department of Admissions and Registration to the student when the absenteeism reaches 25%.
- c. When absenteeism exceeds 30%, the student will not be allowed to continue in that Module for that semester. The student is required to re-register as a regular student for the Module and pay the fees for repeating the Module.
- d. A copy of the warning letters will also be sent to the sponsor, parent or guardian.



4. Muscat College Code of Conduct

4.1. Responsibilities of Staff to Student

It is the responsibility of staff to work for the success of all students and to treat them with respect and care. This can be accomplished by:

- Recognising that students are the very embodiment of Muscat College's mission.
- Delivering the prescribed curriculum.
- Ensuring that the learning / teaching environment is sensitive to the cultural heritage of our students.
- Giving students correct and complete information relating to modules and programmes, assessment requirements and College policies and rules.
- Actively promoting the development of students as independent learners.
- Ensuring that students receive timely and constructive feedback on their academic performance.
- Helping students to communicate effectively by encouraging the development of the skills of inquiry, negotiation and conflict resolution.
- Attending classes and assigned meetings regularly and punctually.
- Encouraging the participation of students in extra- curricular activities.
- Helping students to make appropriate and rational decisions.
- Providing students with supportive and caring relationships which respect confidentiality.
- Providing extra care for students with special needs.
- Promoting a safe and clean learning environment.
- Recognizing the right of students to resort to the appeals process when necessary.
- Serving as a positive role model.



4.2. Responsibilities of Students to the learning and teaching process

Muscat College represents your intellectual honour and academic stature, which should be a source of personal pride and achievement to you and to others, so please note the following:

It is your responsibility to participate in the learning process by:

- Demonstrating a commitment to your own learning.
- Being sincere and active participation in learning activities.
- Ensuring that work presented is yours.
- Submitting all assignments and other work on time.
- Attending classes regularly and punctually.
- Reading and observing all pertaining notices issued.
- Ensuring that all information presented is true, complete and accurate.
- Asking for guidance and advice from others when needed.
- Supporting the learning / teaching process within the College without interfering with the educational efforts of others.
- Respecting the values and roles of all staff in the learning process.
- Treating others with respect, courtesy and consideration and by example, promote appropriate behaviour at all times.

4.3. Discipline and Code of Conduct

To ensure the cordiality of behaviour and co-operation in the community of the College, amongst students as well as with College staff and in keeping with the stature of this academic institution, students should carefully note the following:

- To observe all by-laws and disciplinary codes of conduct of Muscat College.
- Safe guard all College equipment and property.
- To contribute actively and sincerely to the betterment of safe and clean learning environment.
- To be careful in handling any Muscat College equipment and appliances.
- To have respect for all students, College staff and all College visitors.



4.4. Disciplinary Measures

Students in breach of code of conduct and personal responsibilities or other related College regulations would be subject to disciplinary proceedings. Disciplinary measures may be any of the following:

- Verbal warning.
- Written warning.
- Temporary suspension from attending classes for a period of time.
- Termination of scholarships for one semester.
- Pay cash compensation for the value of the damaged furniture, equipment, tools and other College properties.
- Penalisation for plagiarism and unfair means as per the regulation.
- Penalisation for breach of examination rules as per the regulation.

5. The General Foundation Programme (GFP)

The General Foundation Programme is a formal, structured, generic programme of study designed to prepare students to be successful in their higher education studies. It is a compulsory entrance qualification to undergraduate programmes offered in Oman.

The aim of the General Foundation Programme is to prepare students to gain the necessary English Language proficiency and study skills to further their academic studies.

The Oman's Academic Standards set the minimum requirement for the General Foundation Programme and the primary focus of the Programme is the achievement of the Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) in four areas of learning:

- English Language
- Mathematics
- Computing
- General Study Skills

The Programme is based on the Common European Framework of Reference for languages (CEFR). This provides a common basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, assessments, textbooks and other teaching materials.

The English curriculum covers four skills: Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. The GFP also develops students' competencies in Mathematics, Information Technology and General Study Skills.

The GFP curriculum and syllabus is in line with the Oman Academic Standards, which follow the Bloom's Taxonomy learning objectives.



The primary focus of the General Foundation Programme is the achievement of the Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) as set by the Oman Academic Standards.

5.1. Importance

The General Foundation Programme prepares students to:

- Gain the necessary English language skills and equip them with critical and analytical skills required to cope with the demands of the degree programmes.
- To develop broad intellectual thinking and life skills which are vital in today's society.
- Develop and improve their Maths and IT skills required to cope with the demands of the undergraduate programmes.

5.2. Programme Structure

There are a total of ten (10) modules offered in the General Foundation Programme.

Five (5) modules are offered in the Academic Semester 1 (AS1) and five (5) modules are offered in the Academic Semester 2 (AS2).

5.3. Compulsory Modules

- Academic Semester 1 (AS1)
 - ELAS English Language Studies
 - GWIC Grammar and Writing in Context
 - MATH 1 College Mathematics 1
 - TECH 1 Information Technology 1
 - TUT1 Tutorials AS1
- Academic Semester 2 (AS2)
 - ARAV Academic Reading and Vocabulary
 - AGAW Academic Grammar and Writing
 - COMS Communication Skills
 - MATH 2 College Mathematics 2
 - TECH 2 Information Technology 2

5.4. Elective Modules

There are three elective modules: 1. Islamic Studies, 2. Civic Studies and 3. Arabic Language. Students are required to undertake two elective modules.

Students can undertake Islamic Studies, Civic Studies and Arabic Language during the General Foundation Programme or during their undergraduate programmes. Students are



encouraged to study these modules during the General Foundation Programme, to minimise undue stress during their undergraduate studies.

5.5. Framework - Full-Time Programme

The framework for the full-time programme is 26 hours per week in both semesters.

- Academic Semester 1 – AS1

Total Number of Class Hours per Week	English Language Studies	Grammar and Writing in Context	College Mathematics 1	Information Technology 1	Tutorials
26	12	8	2	2	2

- Academic Semester 2 – AS2

Total Number of Class Hours per Week	Academic Reading and Vocabulary	Academic Grammar and Writing	Communication Skills	College Mathematics 2	Information Technology 2
26	6	8	6	4	2

5.6. Framework - Part-Time Programme

The framework for the full-time programme is 16 hours per week in both semesters.

- Academic Semester 1 – AS1

Total Number of Class Hours per Week	English Language Studies	Grammar and Writing in Context	College Mathematics 1	Information Technology 1
16	8	4	2	2

- Academic Semester 2 – AS2

Total Number of Class Hours per Week	Academic Reading and Vocabulary	Academic Grammar and Writing	Communication Skills	College Mathematics 2	Information Technology 2
16	4	4	4	2	2



6. Assessments

6.1. Assessment Methods

Students will be assessed throughout the semesters in the form of continuous assessments. Assessments will be in the form of quizzes, tests, projects, portfolios, presentations, assignments and exams, both online and on paper.

At the end of the Academic Semester 1, students will take final exams for the core modules: English Language Studies (ELAS) and Grammar and Writing in Context (GWIC).

At the end of the Academic Semester 2, students will take two General Foundation Programme Assessment Equivalency (FPAE) final exams in Academic Writing, Academic Reading and Vocabulary and Listening.

- Academic Semester 1 – AS1

Core Modules

50% of the marks will be obtained during the semester and 50% will be obtained in the Final Exams for Core Modules for all students.

ELAS	English Language Studies
GWIC	Grammar and Writing in Context
MATH 1	College Mathematics 1
TECH 1	Information Technology 1

Non-Core Modules

100% of the marks will be obtained during the semester through continuous assessments for the Non-Core Module Tutorials 1 (TUT1) for full-time students.

- Academic Semester 2 – AS2

Core Modules

50% of the marks will be obtained during the semester and 50% will be obtained in the Final Exams for Core Modules for all students:

ARAV	Academic Reading and Vocabulary
AGAW	Academic Grammar and Writing
COMS	Communication Skills
MATH 2	College Mathematics 2
TECH 2	Information Technology 2



6.2. Module Components

The ELAS and COMS modules are comprised of two components:

ELAS

1. ELAS RV – English Language Studies – Reading and Vocabulary
2. ELAS LS – English Language Studies – Listening and Speaking

COMS

1. COMS AS – Communication Skills – Academic Studies
2. COMS LS – Communication Skills – Listening and Speaking

To pass the ELAS and COMS modules, students have to pass both components.

6.3. Final Exams

Final Exams will be given for writing, reading and listening skills as well as mathematics and information technology:

6.4. Re-sitting Final Exams

Re-sits of Final Exams will be given for writing, reading and listening skills as well as mathematics and information technology:

- Academic Semester 1 – AS1

Core Modules

ELAS English Language Studies
 GWIC Grammar and Writing in Context
 MATH 1 College Mathematics 1
 TECH 1 Information Technology 1

- Academic Semester 2 – AS2

Core Modules

ARAV Academic Reading and Vocabulary
 AGAW Academic Grammar and Writing
 COMS Communication Skills
 MATH 2 College Mathematics 2
 TECH 2 Information Technology 2

6.5. Special Examination

Special examinations can be held for the following cases:

- a. Students who are unable to sit for the final examination due to illness and provide a valid medical certificate.
- b. Students that have the death of a mother/father/ guardian/husband/ wife/child.



- c. Students who have to provide intensive care to their mother/ father /guardian /husband /wife /child who are extremely ill.
- d. Other mitigating reasons with valid evidence that can be accepted by the College.

6.6. Assessment Regulations

Students who do not pass module(s), at the end of AS1 and/or AS2 will benefit from taking remedial classes before they re-sit the final exam for the modules listed below:

- GWIC – Grammar and Writing in Context
- ELAS – English Language Studies
- AGAW – Academic Grammar and Writing
- ARAV – Academic Reading and Vocabulary
- COMS – Communication Skills
- MATH 1 – College Mathematics 1
- TECH 1 – Information Technology 1
- MATH 2 – College Mathematics 2
- TECH 2 – Information Technology 2

6.7. Assessment Schedules

Details of all assessments are displayed on the Notice Board of the Language Centre at the beginning of each semester.

Academic Advisors inform students of assessment dates and times through academic advising meetings.

7. Student Performance Report

A Student Performance Report is issued after the completion of the first round of assessments in week eight. The Student Performance Report is given to students by their Academic Advisor. Students are responsible for showing the report to parents/guardians or sponsors.

8. Grades

8.1. General Foundation Programme Modules

Students' performance for a particular module is indicated by the Module Grading Scheme. The relationship between the marks and grade is shown below.

Module Grading Scheme			
A+	96-100	C	64-74
A	90-95	D	60-64
A-	85-89	E	40-59
B	75-84	G	0-39



Results are normally certified as:

P: Pass **W: Withdrawn**
F: Fail **CR: Continuing course**

8.2. College Requirement Modules

College requirements courses are graded as:

P: Pass **W: Withdrawn**
F: Fail **CR: Continuing course**

A student who achieves all learning outcomes will be awarded a pass in the module.

8.3. Re-sits and Exemptions

- The maximum grade possible for a module after the re-sit is (D).
- Exempted due to prior learning. A Pass (P) will be awarded for any module achieved as prior learning

9. Announcement of Results

Announcement of the results will be done on the last Thursday of the semester, via SMS by the Admissions and Registration.

10. Remedial Classes and Re-Sit of Final Exams

Details of remedial classes and re-sit of final exams are available on the Language Centre Notice Board, through the Academic Advisor and the Admissions and Registration Department.

10.1. Academic Malpractice

Muscat College has a robust examination policy which ensures to create learning environment that is honest and ethical. Academic Dishonesty will not be tolerated at MC. Academic Dishonesty includes cheating, plagiarism or any other attempt to gain an academic advantage in a dishonest or unfair manner. Malpractice by a student in examination can occur in many ways like making use of unfair means in examinations or assisting another student to make use of unfair means. The procedures to handle malpractice relating to examination in MC are:

- If an invigilator suspects an irregularity in the conduct of a student within the examination room, the invigilator informs the student and removes any possible prohibited material and endorses the student's answer book.
- The invigilator fills in the student misconduct form duly signed by the invigilator and the student. The student is allowed to complete the examination and at the end of the examination, the invigilator informs the student that, in accordance with the examinations procedures, the irregularity will be reported to the DLC for further action.



Further, any reported case is submitted to the Academic Honesty Committee and the College regulations empower the Academic Honesty Committee to take one of the following decisions:

- a. A warning may be given to the student,
- b. A reduction in the grade for the examination or according to the decision by committee formed when any such case comes up or,
- c. A fail grade for the examination.

If the student disagrees with decisions (b) or (c) he/she has to appeal within one (1) day of receiving the decision. The matter will automatically be referred to the Dean for further proceedings.

Muscat College deals with plagiarism very seriously in all its academic endeavors. Plagiarism is handled under the malpractice policy by the students and seriously pursued. MC has turnitin software to check and detect plagiarism in the coursework in any form. Students and staff are well aware of the policy and they use it extensively to check their work.

Seminars and workshops are conducted for new students to make them aware of plagiarism aspect and the subsequent consequences.

There is a policy on marking and double marking the coursework and the final examinations of the students.

11. Progression Requirements

To progress from AS1 to AS2, students are required to pass all modules. To pass, students have to obtain 60% of all assessment marks.

Students who do not pass all modules in AS1 and AS2 will not complete the General Foundation Programme in one academic year.

Students who fail modules will have to repeat the modules in the following semester before taking new modules.

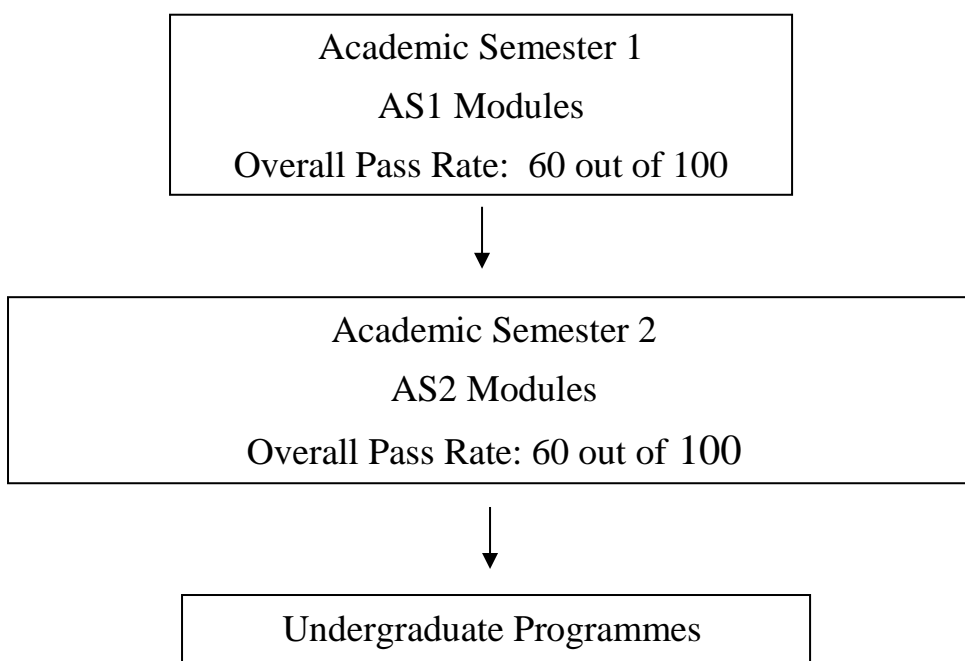
Students who failed modules will be allowed to take a maximum of three modules in the subsequent semester.

To complete the General Foundation Programme exit requirements, the student has to successfully pass all the assigned modules.

If a student fails in a module twice then he or she will have to pay the respective fees of the module to study the twice-failed module a third time.



11.1. Progression Chart



11.2. Programme Exit

At the end of the General Foundation Programme, students will undertake General Foundation Programme Assessment Equivalency (FPAE) exams to ascertain that they have reached an Upper Intermediate (B2) level of English.

These exams will establish students' English language abilities on a single scale, in line with the Common European Framework of Reference for languages (CEFR).

Below is a table showing the CEFR and General Language Levels.

Global CEFR Scale		General Level
Proficient User	C2	Advanced
	C1	Upper-Intermediate
Independent User	B2	Intermediate/Upper Intermediate
	B1	Pre-Intermediate
Basic User	A2	Elementary
	A1	Beginner

A Progress Report will be issued to students who successfully complete the General Foundation Programme.