

Taught Postgraduate Academic Framework

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1. Types of Award and Duration

- 1.1 The credits and level for all University College awards are set out in the University College **Higher Education Qualification Credit Framework** (HEQCF).
- 1.2 The following awards are available at Level 7:
 - 1.2.1 Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert) – comprising 60 credits of which at least 45 credits must be at Level 7; a maximum of 15 credits may be taken from Level 6. The duration of a PGCert is one semester full-time;
 - 1.2.2 Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip) – comprising 120 credits of which at least 90 credits must be at Level 7; a maximum of 30 credits may be taken from Level 6. The duration of a PGDip is two semesters full-time; and
 - 1.2.3 Masters (MA/MSc) – comprising at least 180 credits of which at least 150 must be at Level 7 including the dissertation or equivalent. A maximum of 30 credits may be taken from Level 6. The duration of a Masters degree is one year full-time.
- 1.3 Permitted duration of study
 - 1.3.1 The maximum period of student registration is specified in the **Higher Education Qualification Credit Framework**.
 - 1.3.2 The normal maximum period of student registration for part-time students is 6 years, including any period of interruption.
 - 1.3.3 The maximum period of study is set from the date when the student was first admitted to the course.
 - 1.3.4 Students who fail to complete the award in this time may be permitted to re-register with each case being considered on its merits. A re-registration fee may be charged. Where course structures have changed, so that modules previously achieved cannot automatically be carried forward, credits previously attained may be considered for the accreditation of prior learning (APL).
- 1.4 Student registered on a Masters award must successfully achieve at least 90 credits on taught modules at Level 7 to be eligible to register for the Masters dissertation.

2. Modular Structure

- 2.1 The taught postgraduate academic year is typically delivered over two taught semesters, with the dissertation (or equivalent) completed over the final trimester.
- 2.2 Typically, modules are 15, 30 or 60 credits in size (the latter being appropriate for the dissertation or equivalent); and a module may be delivered within one semester or across two semesters as appropriate.
- 2.3 Modules may be **compulsory** (must be taken as part of the course); **core** (must be taken and passed) or **optional**. Some modules may require that the student has successfully completed a prerequisite module in advance. Prerequisite modules are indicated in the module and/or course specification documents.

3. Taught Module Assessment and Reassessment

- 3.1 The pass mark for all modules is 50%. All summative elements of assessment within a module must achieve an aggregated minimum mark of 50% for the module to be passed.

Some modules may require all elements of assessment to achieve a minimum 50% pass mark, where this is the case it will be specified in the module specification document.

- 3.2 Only one reassessment attempt is allowed following an original failed attempt.
- 3.3 Reassessment of failed module(s) is allowed only up to a maximum of 60 taught module credits.
- 3.4 No reassessment attempt is permitted prior to the Board of Examiners where marks are confirmed except see para 6 below.
- 3.5 Where an assessment has been failed, whether that be 100% weighted single assessment or a percentage weighted element of assessment, the overall module mark following successful achievement of a pass mark for the reassessment attempt will be capped at 50%.
- 3.6 Where reassessment results in a lower mark than that achieved at the first attempt the Board of Examiners will reinstate the original mark.
- 3.7 If extenuating circumstances have been accepted for an assessment, the attempt is voided and full marks can be awarded, unless the extenuating circumstances apply to a reassessment attempt.

4. Resubmission of the Dissertation (or equivalent)

- 4.1 Re-submission of dissertations is only permitted in the following circumstances:
 - 4.1.1 Either when a claim for extenuating circumstances has been accepted; or
 - 4.1.2 Where the original mark awarded is at least 40% and the Board of Examiners judges that the work required does not include any additional experimental or practical work.
- 4.2 Re-submission is subject to the following conditions:
 - 4.2.1 A dissertation must normally be re-submitted within two months of the formal notification of permission to re-submit; where extenuating circumstances have been accepted this may be extended to a maximum of 12 months.
 - 4.2.2 A dissertation which has been re-submitted under circumstances described at para 4.1.2 shall be awarded no more than the minimum pass mark; where extenuating circumstances have been accepted the attempt is voided and full marks can be awarded, unless the extenuating circumstances apply to a reassessment attempt.

5. Failure Following Reassessment

- 5.1 Students who fail following reassessment of taught modules; or an allowable resubmission for the dissertation or equivalent, will not be permitted to retake the module. They may be entitled to an appropriate exit award subject to the regulations.

6. Observed Structured Clinical/Practical Examinations

- 6.1 Observed Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs) or Observed Structured Practical Examinations (OSPEs) are referred to as 'OSCEs' for convenience throughout this section.
- 6.2 OSCEs are not credit bearing, however, they are Core (ref) for some awards.
- 6.3 OSCEs are deemed as pass or fail.
- 6.4 A maximum of three attempts only are allowed at an OSCE.
- 6.5 Unlike academic based assessment (3.4), OSCE reassessment does not require Board of Examiner approval.
- 6.6 If a student has failed an OSCE, their Course Scheme Manager will schedule a reassessment attempt at next available opportunity, up to the maximum three attempts allowed.
- 6.7 An exit award may be available if, following failure of the third and final attempt at an OSCE, the student has met the requirements for a lesser award. The Course Specification details available exit awards.

7. Determination of Final Award Classification Masters

- 7.1 Each module and the Weighted Average will be rounded to the nearest whole number, with half (0.5) marks or above being rounded up. All marks will be displayed to the nearest whole number.
- 7.2 Masters degrees are classified as Pass, pass with Merit or pass with Distinction.
- 7.3 Results with a pass with Merit or Distinction are calculated by two methods known as 'Dominant Quality' and 'Weighted Average'. The Weighted Average is an average of module marks weighted according to credit value. Students will receive the more favourable result.

Masters (MA/MSc)

- 7.4 **Pass** – to be awarded a pass in the Masters a student should:
 - 7.4.1 Achieve 180 credits at Level 7 or 150 credits at Level 7 and 30 credits at Level 6 where the Level 6 credits are an intrinsic part of the course of study;
 - 7.4.2 Pass all the taught core modules and the dissertation;
 - 7.4.3 Pass at least 60 taught module credits at the first attempt.
- 7.5 **Pass with Merit** – to be awarded a pass with Merit a student should:
 - 7.5.1 Satisfy all requirements to pass (7.4); *and*
 - 7.5.2 *Either* obtain 180 credits at the first attempt; 120 credits must be at 60 or above which must include the dissertation (Dominant Quality); *or*
 - 7.5.3 Obtain 180 credits, 90 credits must be at 60 or above; and have an overall weighted average of 60 or more (Weighted Average).
- 7.6 **Pass with Distinction** – to be awarded a pass with Distinction a student should:
 - 7.6.1 Satisfy all requirements to pass (7.4); *and*

- 7.6.2 *Either* obtain 180 credits at the first attempt, 120 credits must be at 70 or above which must include the dissertation (Dominant Quality); *or*
- 7.6.3 Obtain 180 credits, 90 credits must be at 70 or above; and have an overall weighted average of 70 or more (Weighted Average).
- 7.7 **Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip) exit award** – is pass/fail only with no further classification. To be awarded a PGDip a student should:
 - 7.7.1 Normally have completed and have been assessed for all taught modules;
 - 7.7.2 Achieve 120 credits at Level 7 or 90 credits at Level 7 and 30 credits at Level 6 where Level 6 credits are an intrinsic part of the course of study;
 - 7.7.3 Pass at least 60 taught module credits at the first attempt;
 - 7.7.4 Pass all taught core modules.
 - 7.7.5 Credits obtained for the dissertation (or equivalent) can be used when considering whether PGDip can be awarded; provided that the above criteria have been met.
- 7.8 **Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert) exit award** – is pass/fail only, with no further classification. To be awarded a PGCert a student should:
 - 7.8.1 Achieve 60 taught module credits at Level 7, or 45 credits at Level 7 and 15 credits at Level 6 where the Level 6 credits are an intrinsic part of the course of study;
 - 7.8.2 Pass 15 credits at the first attempt;
 - 7.8.3 Pass all taught core modules.
 - 7.8.4 Dissertation credits cannot be used to obtain a PGCert.

8. Determination of Final Award Classification for Stand-Alone PGDip and PGCert

- 8.1 Each module and the Weighted Average will be rounded to the nearest whole number, with half (0.5) marks or above being rounded up. All marks will be displayed to the nearest whole number.
- 8.2 Postgraduate Diploma or Postgraduate Certificate awards are classified as Pass, pass with Merit or pass with Distinction.
- 8.3 Results with a pass with Merit or Distinction are calculated by two methods known as 'Dominant Quality' and 'Weighted Average'. The Weighted Average is an average of module marks weighted according to credit value. Students will receive the more favourable result.

Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip)

- 8.4 **Pass** – to be awarded a pass in the PGDip a student should:
 - 8.4.1 Achieve 120 credits at Level 7 or 90 credits at Level 7 and 30 credits at Level 6 where the Level 6 credits are an intrinsic part of the course of study;
 - 8.4.2 Pass all the taught core modules;
 - 8.4.3 Pass at least 60 credits at the first attempt.
- 8.5 **Pass with Merit** – to be awarded a pass with merit a student should:

- 8.5.1 Satisfy all requirements to pass (8.3); *and*
 - 8.5.2 *Either* obtain 120 credits at the first attempt, of which 80 credits must be at 60 or above (Dominant Quality); *or*
 - 8.5.3 Obtain 120 credits at the first attempt, of which 60 credits must be at 60 or above; and have an overall weighted average mark of 60 or more (Weighted Average).
- 8.6 **Pass with Distinction** – to be awarded a pass with distinction a student should:
- 8.6.1 Satisfy all requirements to pass (8.3); *and*
 - 8.6.2 *Either* obtain 120 credits at the first attempt, of which 80 credits must be at 70 or above (Dominant Quality); *or*
 - 8.6.3 Obtain 120 credits at the first attempt, of which 60 credits must be at 70 or above; and have an overall weighted average mark of 70 or more (Weighted Average).

Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert)

- 8.7 **Pass** – to be awarded a pass in the PGCert a student should:
- 8.7.1 Achieve 60 credits at Level 7 or 45 credits at Level 7 and 15 credits at Level 6 where the Level 6 credits are an intrinsic part of the course of study;
 - 8.7.2 Pass all the taught core modules;
 - 8.7.3 Pass at least 15 credits at the first attempt.
- 8.8 **Pass with Merit** - to be awarded a pass with merit a student should:
- 8.8.1 Satisfy all the requirements to pass (8.6); *and*
 - 8.8.2 *Either* obtain 60 credits at the first attempt, of which 40 credits must be at 60 or above (Dominant Quality); *or*
 - 8.8.3 Obtain 60 credits at the first attempt, of which 30 credits must be at 60 or above; and have an overall weighted average mark of 60 or more (Weighted Average).
- 8.9 **Pass with Distinction** - to be awarded a pass with distinction a student should:
- 8.9.1 Satisfy all the requirements to pass (8.6); *and*
 - 8.9.2 *Either* obtain 60 credits at the first attempt, of which 40 credits must be at 70 or above (Dominant Quality); *or*
 - 8.9.3 Obtain 60 credits at the first attempt, of which 30 credits must be at 70 or above; and have an overall weighted average mark of 70 or more (Weighted Average).

9. Transfer

- 9.1 Because of the specialist nature of taught postgraduate awards transfer between different awards may not be possible once a student has commenced a course of study.

10. Aegrotat

- 10.1 An Aegrotat award is an award without classification that may be conferred upon a student on the presumption that the student, who is unable to continue their studies, would have satisfied the standard required for the award had they been able to continue.

- 10.2 Such an award is contingent on there being sufficient evidence that had the study not been interrupted, the student would have completed the level in question. In the absence of such evidence, the Aegrotat award will be the relevant exit award for the body of study completed.
- 10.3 The Awards Board may approve the award of an Aegrotat degree, based on the conditions set out (see para 10.2). Aegrotat awards are unclassified, but the word 'Aegrotat' is not included on the degree certificate. Before the Awards Board decision is confirmed, the student must confirm in writing that they are willing to accept the Aegrotat award.
- 10.4 Students pursuing course that may lead to a professional registration who are subsequently awarded an Aegrotat degree, diploma or certificate may not be eligible for such a registration.
- 10.5 The request for the award of an Aegrotat award may be made by the student or, where a student is unable to prepare or submit a request, by the relevant Head of School/Department. All requests shall be submitted to the Secretary of the Awards Board prior to the board meeting.
- 10.6 The Awards Board must be satisfied that:
- 10.6.1 the student is unlikely to be able to return to complete their study at a later date; and
 - 10.6.2 that the student's prior performance demonstrates that they would have passed but for the illness/event which occurred.
- 10.7 In reaching a conclusion to the points in para 10.6 above the Awards Board should have the opportunity to consider:
- 10.7.1 details of the academic standing of the candidate
 - 10.7.2 details on the causes which prevented the candidate from attempting the whole or part of the assessment(s)
 - 10.7.3 details of medical evidence or other appropriate documentation
 - 10.7.4 evidence on the prospects of the candidate completing the assessment(s) in a subsequent year within the time-limit
 - 10.7.5 a signed statement from the candidate indicating that they are willing to accept an Aegrotat degree
- 10.8 The Awards Board shall approve or not approve the award. The decision shall be conveyed to the candidate and confirmed to the appropriate Head of School/Department.

11. Posthumous Awards

- 11.1 A posthumous qualification may be awarded to a deceased student who has completed sufficient study for the award. An Award Board can approve the conferment of a posthumous postgraduate taught award where there is sufficient evidence of the student's performance to demonstrate that the candidate would have reached the standard required for the award in question.
- 11.2 A posthumous award shall normally be a named award, as appropriate, except in those cases where professional body requirements dictate otherwise.
- 11.3 A request for consideration for a posthumous award must be made by the student's Head of School/Department to the Award Board.

- 11.4 The Award Board has the authority to approve, or not approve, the award. If the Award Board approves the award, the student's family or next of kin must be allowed to decide whether they would like the award to be made.