

Ordinances and Regulations: Degree of Master, Postgraduate Diploma and Postgraduate Certificate

**August 2006 - for students registered on programmes prior to
September 2007**

Teaching and Learning Support Office

For programmes which commenced before September 2007

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A. ORDINANCES

1. The University may award the following Masters degrees, postgraduate diplomas and postgraduate certificates in accordance with the regulations:
 - a. Master of Arts (MA)
 - b. Master of Business (MBus)
 - c. Master of Business Administration (MBA)
 - d. Master of Dental Science (MDS)
 - e. Master of Education (MEd)
 - f. Master of Laws (LLM)
 - g. Master of Music in Composition (MusM) (Comp)
 - h. Master of Music in Performance (MusM) (Perf)
 - i. Master of Planning (MPlan)
 - j. Master of Population Health Evidence (MPHe)
 - k. Master of Psychology (MPsy)
 - l. Master of Science (MSc)
 - m. Master of Theology (MTheol)
 - n. Master of Town Planning (MTPI)
 - o. Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip)
 - p. Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert)
 - q. Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE)
 - r. Advanced Diploma.
2. Regulations for the degrees of Master of Enterprise (MEnt), Master of Philosophy (MPhil), Master of Research (MRes), Master of Science (MSc) by Research and Master of Surgery (ChM) are published separately.
3. Students for the above degrees, postgraduate diplomas and postgraduate certificates will pursue satisfactorily an approved programme of advanced study, as either a full or part-time student.
4. These ordinances and regulations provide a general framework for all taught postgraduate degrees, diplomas and certificates listed above, and should be read in conjunction with detailed notes for guidance and programme specific regulations.

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5. Regulations for student complaints and appeals are provided in the University's General Regulations, XVII and XIX respectively.

B. REGULATIONS

1. Admission to the Programme

- a. Applicants for admission to the Degree of Master and Postgraduate Diploma will normally have:
- i. a first degree (equivalent to a UK Honours Bachelors degree) or equivalent qualification from a recognised institution;

or

ii. evidence of previous advanced study, research or professional experience, which the University accepts as qualifying the applicant for entry.

- b. Applicants for admission to the Postgraduate Certificate will normally have:

i. evidence of academic qualifications or work experience which meets the approval of the University and allows them to be registered onto a Certificate programme or individual postgraduate course units.

- c. All applicants must meet the minimum English language requirements of their chosen programme, as described by the University's Postgraduate Admissions Policy.

- d. Students may be registered initially for the Postgraduate Diploma or Postgraduate Certificate. After successfully completing the required assessment, they may be permitted to progress to the Degree of Master or Postgraduate Diploma respectively.

- e. Students awarded the Postgraduate Certificate may subsequently use the credits awarded to count towards a Postgraduate Diploma or a Masters degree, but only on condition that:

i. the student achieves a pass mark of 40% or above to proceed with the Postgraduate Diploma, or the student achieves a pass mark of 50% or above to proceed with the Masters degree;

ii. the student has not previously been examined for the dissertation element of the programme;

iii. the award of the Postgraduate Certificate is rescinded.

In these circumstances, for a Postgraduate Diploma, students will normally be required to complete the programme no more than three academic years after initial registration, or for a Masters degree, no more than five academic years after initial registration. Students awarded a compensated pass for the Postgraduate Certificate will also be entitled to use those credits to count towards a Postgraduate Diploma or a Masters degree as long as the conditions detailed above are still met.

- f. Students awarded the Postgraduate Diploma may subsequently use the credits awarded at 50% or above to count towards a Masters degree, provided that the student has not previously been examined for the dissertation element of the programme and that the award of the Postgraduate Diploma is rescinded.

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In these circumstances, students will normally be required to complete the Masters programme no more than five academic years after initial registration. Students awarded a compensated pass for the Postgraduate Diploma will also be entitled to use those credits to count towards a Masters degree as long as the conditions detailed above are still met.

2. Duration of Programme

- a. A Masters degree will normally be a one-year programme equating to 45 teaching weeks and the date for the end of the programme and submission of the dissertation will be published in the programme handbook.
- b. A part-time Masters student will complete the programme over a more extended period of time which will be published in the programme handbook, but will not exceed five academic years.
- c. A Postgraduate Diploma shall be a full-time or part-time programme that shall normally extend over not less than two academic semesters and will not exceed three academic years.
- d. A Postgraduate Certificate shall be a full-time or part-time programme that shall normally extend over not less than one academic semester and will not exceed two academic years.
- e. Programmes may be of longer full-time duration.

3. Credits

- a. A Masters degree of one year full-time (or equivalent part time) duration will consist of 180 level 4 (M level) credits, of which no more than 30 (H level) credits may be based on material partly shared with level 3 units, suitably enhanced to level 4.
- b. A Postgraduate Diploma will normally consist of a minimum of 120 level 4 (M level) credits, of which no more than 30 (H level) credits may be based on material partly shared with level 3 units, suitably enhanced to level 4.
- c. A Postgraduate Certificate will normally consist of a minimum of 60 level 4 (M level) credits, of which no more than 30 (H level) credits may be based on material partly shared with level 3 units, suitably enhanced to level.
- d. For longer programmes, the total credit requirements for each award are increased *pro rata* to the length of the programme.
- e. All course units will normally be of 15 credits, or multiples thereof. A Masters degree will normally include a dissertation or equivalent of at least 60 credits and a Postgraduate Diploma may include a project or extended essay of no more than 30 credits. The Postgraduate Certificate will not normally include a dissertation or project element.

4. Accreditation of Prior (Experiential) Learning (AP(E)L)

- a. A student may be permitted to receive an award of credits on the basis of demonstrated learning that has occurred at some point in the past. The award

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of credits can be based upon learning for which certification has been awarded by an educational institution or another education/training provider (APL) or uncertificated learning gained from experience (AP(E)L).

- b. All APL applications will be approved in line with the University's overall policy on the award of AP(E)L, as follows:
 - i. A Masters degree will normally allow a maximum of 60 AP(E)L credits. AP(E)L credits will not count towards the dissertation or project components.
 - ii. A Postgraduate Diploma will normally allow a maximum of 30 AP(E)L credits. AP(E)L credits will not count towards the dissertation or project components.
 - iii. A Postgraduate Certificate will normally not allow any AP(E)L credit.

5. Progression and Assessment

- a. Regulations for work and attendance are outlined in the University's General Regulations, XX.
- b. Students for the degree of Master, Postgraduate Diploma or Postgraduate Certificate will present themselves for assessment of their progress as required in the programme handbook.
- c. Students will normally successfully complete the taught component of the Masters degree before they can progress to the dissertation, and must successfully complete the taught component before submission of the dissertation).
- d. A student who fails to satisfy the Examiners in any assessment of taught units may be permitted to resubmit the assessment or retake the examination on one further occasion, up to a maximum of 45 credits. The student will take this opportunity during the next available University examination period or within a period as published in the programme handbook.
- e. The maximum mark to be awarded for resubmitted coursework or retaken examination will normally be 50% for the Masters degree and 40% for the Postgraduate Diploma.
- f. All Masters degrees will have exit points for the award of a Postgraduate Certificate and a Postgraduate Diploma. These will be clearly defined in terms of level of achievement and will correspond to 60 and 120 credits respectively. Students who do not achieve the required pass mark in the taught element for a Masters degree, but who do achieve the required pass mark for a Postgraduate Diploma or Certificate, may be awarded a Postgraduate Diploma or Certificate, as appropriate, provided they have successfully completed the requisite number of credits.
- g. Any student who submits a piece of assessed coursework (including the dissertation) after the submission deadline, without being granted an extension, will receive a mark of zero.

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- h.** Students may, in exceptional mitigating circumstances, and with prior permission of the Faculty, be allowed to re-take the entire programme subject to all outstanding fees being paid.
- i.** Students may be awarded a compensated pass for a Masters degree when they fail no more than 30 credits and receive a mark between 40 and 49% for those failed credits. The student must also have gained an overall average for all taught credits of 50% or more in order to be granted the compensated pass.
- j.** Students may be awarded a compensated pass for a Postgraduate Diploma programme when they fail no more than 30 credits and receive a mark between 30 and 39% for those failed credits. The student must also have gained an overall average for all taught units of 40% or more in order to be granted the compensated pass.
- k.** Students may be awarded a compensated pass for a Postgraduate Certificate programme when they fail no more than 15 credits and receive a mark between 30 and 39% for those failed credits. The student must also have gained an overall average for all taught credits of 40% or more in order to be granted the compensated pass.
- l.** Programmes may employ stricter compensation rules, as approved by the Faculty, for example where professional bodies require it.
- m.** The maximum allowable cumulative failure of course units in a Masters programme at the first attempt is 45 credits of the taught component of the programme. A student whose failures at the first attempt exceed 45 credits will be deemed to have failed the programme.
- n.** Students who more than 45 credits at Masters level will be judged against the requirements for a pass on the Postgraduate Diploma programme. If this results in their failing less than or equal to 45 credits at Postgraduate Diploma level, the student may resit those units failed at Postgraduate Diploma level to obtain the award of a Postgraduate Diploma.

6. Dissertation

- a.** Dissertations should be submitted in accordance with the information set out in the University's Guidance Notes for the Presentation of Dissertations.
- b.** Dissertation or project submission dates will normally be 51 weeks after the start of the programme and will be published in programme handbooks. Submission dates for part-time students will reflect the length of the programme (pro-rata compared to a full-time programme).
- c.** The dissertation will be submitted before the end of the programme in order for a student to be eligible for the award of distinction or merit. Students are either required to submit the dissertation by the end of the normal programme period, unless an extension for extenuating circumstances has been granted or register for attendance beyond prescribed programme (ABPP), which means that the maximum period for an extension to submit a dissertation will normally be four months for a full-time programme and eight months for a part-time programme. Where permitted, all students must register for ABPP and pay the relevant registration fee.

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- d. At the recommendation of the Board of Examiners, students will normally be allowed one resubmission of a failed dissertation or project and this will normally be within four months of the date of the publication of the result. The Board of Examiners, in agreement with the External Examiner may, exceptionally, decide not to allow resubmission and the Faculty will agree that the grounds for not allowing a resubmission are justified.
- e. Students who achieve a dissertation mark of between 40-49% may accept the award of Postgraduate Diploma with no further work required or resubmit the dissertation on one occasion, at the discretion of the Board of Examiners. A student achieving a mark below 50% for a resubmitted dissertation will be awarded a Postgraduate Diploma.
- f. The maximum mark to be awarded for resubmitted dissertations or projects will normally be 50% for the Masters degree and 40% for the Postgraduate Diploma.
- g. A student may exceptionally be required to attend an examination, orally or otherwise, in the subject of their dissertation or project report, or a related matter.

7. Board of Examiners and External Examiners

- a. There will normally be a minimum of two Board of Examiners meetings for each programme each year, one at which the marks for the taught components are confirmed, and one where the marks for the dissertation/project are confirmed and the final awards recommended. Normally, all staff who have been involved in the assessment of the course units shall be present at the Board of Examiners meetings. The External Examiner will be present for at least one meeting per year, will confirm all the marks agreed at Board of Examiners meetings and be consulted when decisions on awards and classifications are made.

8. Recommendation for Award

a. Pass Marks

- i. To obtain a pass for a Masters degree, the student is required to obtain both an average of 50% on the taught element, and 50% on the project/dissertation element.
- ii. To obtain a pass for a Postgraduate Diploma or Certificate, the student is required to obtain an average of 40%. If there is a project element of more than 30 credits, a mark of 40% or more on the project element is also required to pass. A pass mark of 50% may be required for some professionally accredited diploma programmes
- iii. Students admitted to the Postgraduate Diploma or Certificate programme who achieve average marks of 50% or more, after completing a predetermined number of course units (normally 60 credits), may progress to the Masters programme.
- iv. The Faculty shall, on report from the Examiners, recommend to Senate the award of the degree of Masters or Postgraduate Diploma or Postgraduate Certificate for those students who have completed all requirements of the

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regulations and satisfied the Examiners. The awarding certificate will include the title of the programme.

b. Distinction

i. A distinction may be awarded to a student who has consistently achieved excellence in the assessments of a Masters or Postgraduate Diploma programme.

ii. The student will have satisfied the following criteria in order to be awarded a distinction:

A. An average at first assessment of 70% or more in the taught component of the programme with no mark below 50% in any course unit.

B. A mark of 70% or more for the dissertation.

C. A Pass at first assessment in components of the programme where only a Pass/Fail is recorded.

D. Submission of the dissertation by the end of the period of programme.

iii. Students who have had to resit any unit(s), or have been granted a compensated pass will not be eligible for the award of distinction.

c. Merit

i. Merit may be awarded to a student who are consistently achieved good marks in the assessments of a Masters or Postgraduate Diploma programme.

ii. The student will have satisfied the following criteria in order to be awarded a merit:

A. An average at first assessment of 60% or more in the taught component of the programme with no mark below 50% in any course units.

B. A mark of 60% or more on the dissertation.

C. A Pass at first assessment in components of the programme where a Pass/Fail is recorded.

iii. Students who have had to resit any unit(s), or have been granted a compensated pass, will not be eligible for the award of merit

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Lead contact:	Miriam Graham, Teaching and Learning Adviser (Policies and Procedures)