



## ASSESSMENT REGULATIONS POSTGRADUATE (Manchester)

### **General**

1. All assessments are conducted under the auspices of a Board of Examiners comprising the College's internal examiners, University representatives and the appointed external examiners. The Board shall be chaired by the Academic Dean or the Principal. Recommendations of the Board of Examiners concerning awards and the classification of degrees are subject to confirmation of the University of Manchester.
2. External examiners are nominated by the College and appointed by the University.
3. The College's Special Cases Committee, consisting of the Academic Dean and two other members of the teaching staff, will consider any mitigating circumstances in advance of meetings of the Board of Examiners. It will take account of medical and/or other relevant evidence and agree recommendations to the Board of Examiners.
4. Students must complete the assignment requirements of each course unit by the date prescribed. The number of credits for each unit is listed in the course documents and student handbooks.
5. Any assessed coursework submitted after the deadline without good cause will incur a penalty determined by the lateness of its arrival:
  - Ten marks will be deducted for the first day after the deadline
  - Ten additional marks will be deducted for each day thereafter (including weekends)This penalty also applies to long essays and dissertations
6. Students who anticipate with good cause that they will not be able to present assessed work by the required date should make a written application to the Academic Dean as far in advance of the assessment date as possible. In cases where illness is the cause, a medical certificate will be required. Busyness of routine work in the placement will not be accepted as a ground for late submission of assessed work.
7. On taught and in-service pathways, students should attend at least 80% of the teaching sessions for each unit in order for the Board of Examiners to be obliged to consider their assessed work. Information concerning students' attendance is recorded in attendance books. This requirement does not apply to distance learning delivery modes of training.

### **A. Credit and award framework**

8. Awards will be given on the basis of the accumulation of credit as mapped out in the table which is based on the credit/awards and levels required by the national Framework of Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ):

Table 1: Credit and Postgraduate award framework:

Name of award	Minimum credit for the award	Minimum credits at the level of qualification	FHEQ level
Masters	180	150	7
Postgraduate Diploma	120	90	7
Postgraduate Certificate	60	40	7

9. Students who exit prior to completion of the programme on which they registered will receive an exit award if they have achieved the appropriate amount of credit in accordance with that award, as specified in table 1, within five years of their initial registration.
10. A student must achieve the minimum amount of credit at the level of the qualification in accordance with table 1. However (subject to programme requirements) students can take credit at a higher or lower level in order to achieve the minimum credit for the award.
11. Students can receive an exit award if they have AP(E)L credit in their profile, providing their performance at Spurgeon's College also satisfies the award requirements in the above table and at least half of the credits have been awarded by the University of Manchester.
12. Where a student has failed more than the required credits on the first attempt or fails to qualify for a final award after compensation, referrals or the consideration of mitigation, the Board of Examiners can award an exit award if criteria are met in accordance with table 1.

## B. Compensation

13. The pass mark and compensation zones are:

•	• Pass mark	• Compensation zone
• Master's degree	• 50%	• 40 - 49%
• PG Diploma and PG Certificate	• 40%	• 30 - 39%

14. Students can receive compensation for up to 30 credits for the PG Diploma and Masters, and 15 credits for a PG Certificate. Compensation can only be applied up to this maximum. Beyond it, the Board of Examiners will make a decision on which reassessment can be taken. The number of credits compensated and those referred cannot exceed half the taught credits in total.
15. Compensated credit retains the original failed mark and this is used in the weighted average for the calculation of the final classification/ award.
16. Referral marks are compensatable.

### **C. Reassessment**

17. Where the overall unit mark is below the compensation zone or the number of compensatable fails has been exceeded, reassessment may be taken, within the credit limitations set out in 18 below. Reassessment as a result of a fail is known as a 'referral'. Subsequent attempts as a result of approved and verified mitigating circumstances are known as 'deferrals'.
18. The reassessment must be designed to assess the achievement of the same intended learning outcomes but need not be of the same form as that originally used. Reassessment will normally take place in the same academic year as the original assessment to enable the students to progress as originally intended.
19. If the Board of Examiners has documented evidence that (a) a student's work or attendance or both have been unsatisfactory, and (b) the student has been formally warned of the unsatisfactory work or attendance but has not shown significant improvement acceptable to the Board, the Board has the right to refuse the student reassessment.
20. A Board of Examiners may allow a student one attempt, per unit, at reassessment (two attempts in total). This principle does not apply to attempts with approved and verified mitigating circumstances.
21. Students can be referred in up to half of the credits; this includes credits on a PG Certificate or PG Diploma award.<sup>1</sup> They may also resubmit the dissertation on one occasion.
22. When the referred assessment for a postgraduate student includes independent work such as a dissertation or project resubmission, they should be permitted a reasonable amount of time within a maximum of six calendar months from the date of the meeting of the Board of Examiners. The reassessment of a research/dissertation element does not contribute to the credit limitations set out in 20.
23. Referral pass marks will be capped at the lowest compensatable mark of 40 for postgraduate students, unless the original mark was in the compensation zone, in which case the original mark will stand. This mark is used in the weighted average mark for the final award. The capped mark is applied to the unit level mark, not just the failed element.
24. When a student is referred and fails a unit that was previously in the compensated zone, the first mark stands.
25. Students may, in exceptional circumstances, at the discretion of the Examination Board, be allowed to repeat whole units or the entire programme, subject to teaching capacity not being exceeded.

### **D. Exit awards**

26. Once a student has exhausted all the opportunities to retrieve referred assessment they will be given an exit award in accordance with table 1 and as defined in the Programme Specification.

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<sup>1</sup> The numbers of referral and compensation credits allowed are not cumulative, i.e. the total number of credits of referral and compensation for a Master's and a PG Diploma is 60; it is 30 for a PG Certificate.

27. If a student decides to withdraw, they will automatically be awarded the relevant exit award in accordance with table 1 and as defined in the Programme Specification.

### **E. Classification**

28. For the award of pass a student must satisfy the minimum credit requirements specified in table1.
29. Classifications for merit and distinction will be calculated on the basis of an average mark, based on the weighted programme as a whole; see table 2 below.
30. In order to achieve the award of pass, merit or distinction, a student must have passed the requisite minimum credits listed in table 1 in accordance with the unit marking scheme and mark descriptors.
31. Students with credit awarded as a result of a referral or compensated mark will not be eligible for the award of distinction, only a merit or a pass.
32. Decisions with regards to 'borderline' classifications for individual students should be resolved using the mechanisms outlined below, in the Classification thresholds and boundaries section.

### **F. Board of Examiners arrangements**

33. It is expected that all reassessment will take place in the academic year in which the assessment was first attempted.
34. At the end of each semester, a meeting of the Board of Examiners will make decisions regarding student's attainment on completed units, overseen by an External Examiner.

### **G. Classification scheme**

35. The scheme below should be used in conjunction with table 1: students must meet the credit requirements of table1, prior to the classification being calculated, using the thresholds and boundaries below:

#### **Weightings**

36. Classification for the award of merit and distinction are based on the weighted average mark across the programme calculated to one decimal place, where marks for individual course units are recorded as whole numbers.

#### **Stage 1: Classification thresholds and boundaries**

37. The following boundaries inform classification when the total points falls below a classification threshold.

Table 2: Masters degree classification and boundary zone

<b>Classification based on 180 credits</b>	<b>Classification thresholds: average mark</b>	<b>Boundary zone average</b>
Distinction	70.0	68.0 to 69.9
Merit	60.0	58.0 to 59.9
Pass	59.9 or less providing the credit requirements of table 1 have been met.	NA

### **Consideration of students within the boundary zone by mark distribution**

38. The following process applies to reach decisions on borderline cases:  
After allowances have been made for mitigating circumstances, a students whose total mark at the first assessment is within the boundary zone specified above, must be considered for the higher award as long as the following are satisfied:
- For the award of distinction, all course units must have been passed at the first attempt without any compensation.
  - 120 out of 180 credits are equal to/ or higher than the final award.

### **Stage 2: Mark review**

39. If a student is in the boundary zone and does not satisfy the additional criteria, the examiners may apply a further stage of 'Mark review' by asking an external examiner to oversee a review of the marks of submitted work.
40. Award of Postgraduate Diploma and Postgraduate Certificate is based upon credit accumulation using a pass mark of 40% (see table 1 for credit requirements). There is no classification other than pass/fail.

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