

**ORDINANCE 52(B): General Ordinance for Modular Master's Degrees, Postgraduate Diplomas and Postgraduate Certificates (applicable to students who commenced their studies prior to 2014-15)**

1. The General Ordinance shall apply to full-time and part-time Master's Degrees, Postgraduate Diplomas and Postgraduate Certificates available within the University frameworks for taught postgraduate awards.
2. In order to be admitted to a modular programme of postgraduate study, each student must have obtained such prior qualifications and/or experience as shall be determined under the appropriate PGT Regulations. Students who accumulate relevant certificated credits arising from previous study, may be permitted to transfer such credits upon entry to the programme, provided that such credits shall not normally amount to a total of more than one third of the credits required for the award of a Master's Degree, Postgraduate Diploma or Postgraduate Certificate.
3. The programme of study shall consist of a number of modules which each have a value of 5, 7.5, 10, 15, 20, 30, 40 or 45 credit points. The number of credit points attached to a dissertation or project shall normally be 60 or there shall be two modules of independent research totalling 60 credits.
4. In order to be eligible for an award the maximum period of registration for completing a part-time Master's Degree shall be 6 years; for a Postgraduate Diploma it shall be 5 years; and for a Postgraduate Certificate it shall be 3 years. Subject to these limits, the period of registrations for completing a part-time Master's Degree, Postgraduate Diploma and Postgraduate Certificate shall be for a fixed period as approved for each programme of study leading to such an award. The maximum fixed period programme that may be approved for a Master's Degree shall be 3 years, for a Postgraduate Diploma it shall be 2 years; and for a Postgraduate Certificate it shall be 1 year. This requirement for a maximum fixed period of 3 years, 2 years and 1 year for the Master's Degree, Postgraduate Diploma and Postgraduate Certificate shall not apply to Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programmes leading to these awards. CPD programmes shall be subject to the following minimum registration periods: 12 months for a Master's Degree, 30 weeks for a Postgraduate Diploma and 15 weeks for a Postgraduate Certificate.
5. For full-time Master's Degrees and Postgraduate Diplomas, taught modules should normally be divided equally between two semesters; i.e. they should normally take taught modules totalling 60 credits in each semester. However, programmes may be designed with imbalances of up to 15 credits between semesters, e.g. 52.5 credits in semester one and 67.5 credits in semester two. Any proposal for a programme to be designed with a greater imbalance of workload (up to 30 taught credits difference between the two semesters) will require specific permission from the Academic Quality and Standards Committee. Such permission will only be given in exceptional circumstances on submission and acceptance of a satisfactory rationale. In exceptional circumstances, individual students may be allowed to choose options in their

programme of studies which would result in an imbalance of up to 30 taught credits, e.g. 45 credits in semester one and 75 credits in semester two. Such choices require the specific permission of the Director of Studies for the programme and a student choosing such a pattern of study must be made aware that the fact of the uneven workload will not be regarded as a mitigating factor in the case of failure in assessments. The requirements of this clause 5 do not apply to CPD programmes leading to postgraduate taught awards.

6. Students who attend for a minimum period of 12 months full-time study, or an approved period of part-time study, and who achieve the required amount of credit, as specified in the programme regulations (normally 180 credits), will be eligible for the award of a Master's Degree. Students who attend for a minimum period of 30 weeks of full-time study, or for an approved period of part-time study, and who achieve a minimum of 120 credit points, will be eligible for the award of a Postgraduate Diploma. Students who attend for a minimum period of 15 weeks of full-time study or for an approved period of part-time study, and who achieve a minimum of 60 credit points will be eligible for the award of a Postgraduate Certificate. To qualify for an award, the student shall obtain all credits within the requirements of an approved programme of study except as provided for in clause 2 above.
7. Students shall be assessed in each module or combination of modules as shall be determined by the PGT Regulations and the requirements of the appropriate approved programme, as stated in the programme specification. Students who fail taught modules may re-sit those modules on one further occasion only. A failed dissertation or project or independent research modules may also be re-submitted on one further occasion only. For full-time and part-time students the dissertation or project or the independent research assessments must be re-submitted within one year of the original date of first submission. Students who are registered on to individual CPD modules that are part of an approved CPD programme leading to a taught postgraduate award and fail those modules may: re-sit the failed assessment and only the first re-sit attempt can count toward the final award; re-take the whole module; or take another module in its place.
8. Students planning to undertake laboratory/field based research for their dissertation, project or independent research modules who have failed key taught components and as a result are deemed, by the Board of Examiners, at risk to themselves and others, may be prevented from progressing to the dissertation, project or independent research modules, following University approval of a recommendation from the Board of Examiners, until the relevant taught components are re-taken and passed. In these cases the submission date of the dissertation, project or independent research modules shall be extended to 15<sup>th</sup> December.
9. The Master's Degree, Postgraduate Diploma and Postgraduate Certificate may be awarded with a mark of Merit or Distinction to candidates as follows, except to students who achieve an award through a CPD programme. A Merit or Distinction cannot be awarded if a candidate has failed and then passed on re-sit any credit that counts towards the final award during the relevant period of study at the University; however marks achieved in modules which are passed

under the compensation rule may be counted toward a Merit or Distinction. It should be noted that students who register on a Master's Degree or Postgraduate Diploma but who exit with a lower award, will be eligible for a Merit or Distinction for the lower award, provided the student meets the criteria outlined below:

- a) For a Master's Degree with **Merit** a student must achieve:
  - a mark of at least 60% for the dissertation or project or independent research modules; and
  - marks of at least 60% in modules accounting for at least half of the credit of the overall award; and
  - an overall average mark of at least 60%.
- b) For a Postgraduate Diploma with **Merit** a student must achieve:
  - marks of at least 60% in modules accounting for at least half of the credit of the overall award; and
  - an overall average mark of at least 60%.
- c) For a Postgraduate Certificate with **Merit** a student must achieve:
  - marks of at least 60% in modules accounting for at least half of the credit of the overall award; and
  - an overall average mark of at least 60%.
- d) For a Master's Degree with **Distinction** a student must achieve:
  - a mark of at least 70% for the dissertation or project or independent research modules; and
  - marks of at least 70% in modules accounting for at least half of the credit of the overall award; and
  - an overall average mark of at least 70%.
- e) For a Postgraduate Diploma with **Distinction** a student must achieve:
  - marks of at least 70% in modules accounting for at least half of the credit of the overall award; and
  - an overall average mark of at least 70%.
- f) For a Postgraduate Certificate with **Distinction** a student must achieve:
  - marks of at least 70% in modules accounting for at least half of the credit of the overall award; and
  - an overall average mark of at least 70%.