CODE OF PRACTICE ON ASSESSMENT

APPENDIX C

University Framework for Modular Postgraduate Programmes

2007-08 to 2009-10

Applicable to the following cohorts
2007-08, 2008-09, 2009-10
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University Framework for Modular Postgraduate Programmes

1. Background

At its meeting on 7 June 2006, Senate agreed

(i) That all existing postgraduate taught programmes should fully comply with the University Framework for Modular Postgraduate Programmes before the beginning of the 2007-08 academic session.

(ii) That, as previously agreed at Senate on 3 December 1997, all new and existing postgraduate taught programmes be modular in format and that the process of modularisation should incorporate the provision of exit routes at both PG Dip and PG Cert levels.

(iii) That exemptions from the above requirements should only be granted where clear and demonstrable academic justification for non-conformity had been presented to and approved by the University Academic Quality and Standards Committee.

2. Framework Requirements

The essential features of the postgraduate framework are:-

(i) All provision should be modularised with each module being given a credit value and an associated level.

(ii) As with undergraduate modules, the credit values should be assigned on the basis that 10 hours of student commitment (divided into variable mixes of contact and private study hours) should be allocated 1 credit point.

(iii) Each programme of study shall consist of a number of “taught” modules which shall each have a value of 5 or 7.5 or 10 or 15 or 20 or 30 credit points.

(iv) For full-time programmes, taught modules should normally be divided equally between the 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 taught 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 University 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 Programme Leader/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 an extenuating factor in the case of failure in assessments and consequent failure to progress to the next year of study.

(v) The number of credit points attached to the dissertation shall normally be 60.

(vi) All provision will have the following minimum credit requirements:-

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<th>Programme</th>
<th>Minimum Credits</th>
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<td>Master’s award</td>
<td>180 credit points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Postgraduate Diploma</td>
<td>120 credit points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Postgraduate Certificate</td>
<td>60 credit points</td>
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The above states the minimum requirement and thus allows for the accommodation of programmes where, for example, there is a need to undertake preliminary studies for graduates in non-relevant subjects or a need to include substantial clinical work.

(vii) All provision will have clearly defined assessments for each module with a pass mark of 50%.

(viii) All provision will permit entry with credit attributed to previous certificated study up to a total of one third of the credits required to be awarded a degree, diploma or certificate.

(See also the attached Generic Ordinance).

3. Guidelines

The following form the basis for consideration of new proposals at Faculty and University level. Exemptions from these guidelines must be presented to and approved by the University Academic Quality and Standards Committee.

(i) It is expected that all programmes will be semesterised.

(ii) Programmes may be designed to begin at the start of any semester and may have intakes annually, at the beginning of every semester or less frequently than annually.

(iii) Programmes which include modules from more than one Department should ensure that module sizes are compatible so that student study patterns are realistically implementable.

(iv) Programme provision should be compatible with the following definitions:-

**Master's**
a vocational or non-vocational programme, involving both a substantial piece of independent work and a range of assessed modules, whose combined challenge reflects the level of further intellectual development appropriate to the equivalent of one year's advanced study beyond Honours degree level and is an appropriate foundation for research degree registration.

**PGDip**
a vocational or non-vocational programme taught and assessed in part at Master's level but not normally involving a substantial piece of independent work.

**PGCert**
a vocational or non-vocational programme taught and assessed in part at Master's level but not involving a substantial piece of independent work and covering a narrower range of material.

(NB "Postgraduate" does not imply all entrants or most entrants are graduates or that their initial qualification is in the same area as the postgraduate programme. It relates to the standard of work required of them at the point of assessment, both in pace and content.)

(v) All programmes should comply with the following framework for awards:-

**Master's**
- not more than 30 credits at FHEQ Level 6
- dissertation/research project credits to the value of not less than 60. (The normal number of credits for a dissertation in a taught Master's programme of 180 credits is 60)
• incorporate a PGDip and PG Cert exit point

PGDip
• not more than 30 credits at FHEQ Level 6
• dissertation credits, if included, normally to the value of 60 credits

PGCert
• not more than 15 credits at FHEQ level 6
• no dissertation credits

(vi) Where a programme includes FHEQ level 6 modules (as detailed above) that are also available to students on undergraduate degrees of the University, graduates of those undergraduate programmes will not be permitted to repeat in a postgraduate programme, an FHEQ level 6 module they have taken in their undergraduate degree. In such instances, the programme must make suitable alternatives available to the student. Similarly, where a student has taken an FHEQ level 7 module as part of an undergraduate degree they have taken at the University they will not be permitted to take the same FHEQ level 7 module(s) as part of a postgraduate programme of the University; the postgraduate programme must provide a suitable alternative for such students.

(vii) Where two modules, one at FHEQ level 6 and the other at FHEQ level 7, share substantially the same learning and teaching provision but have different assessments, it should not be possible for a student to take both modules. If a student of the University takes one such module in their undergraduate degree, if s/he goes on to take a postgraduate programme, s/he will not be permitted to take the FHEQ level 7 module that shares substantially the learning and teaching with the FHEQ level 6 module they have already taken. The postgraduate programme that uses such modules must provide suitable alternatives for students to ensure they do not have to repeat the learning and teaching they had in their undergraduate degree.

(viii) All provision should have requirements for qualifying for the award of a Master's, PGCert or PGDip which include

• The achievement of a mark of 50% or more in every "taught" module and in any dissertation except that where the average of the total marks in all taught modules is 50% or above, a mark of 40-49% shall be deemed compensatable in taught modules only totalling up to 15 credits. Compensation shall not be applied where more than 15 taught credits are failed. It should also be noted that the range of compensatable marks for FHEQ level 6 modules shall also be 40-49%.

• A mark of Distinction should be awarded as detailed below, but only where the requirements were achieved at the first attempt (a distinction cannot be awarded if a candidate has failed any credit during the period of study at the University):
  • Masters: for candidates who achieve marks of at least 70% in modules accounting for at least half the credit of the overall award, including the Dissertation, and an overall average score of at least 65%.
  • PGDip: for candidates who achieve marks of at least 70% in modules accounting for at least half the credit of the overall award and an overall average score of at least 65%.
  • PGCert: for candidates who achieve an overall average of at least 70%
Re-assessment should normally take place within the registration period and module marks for the taught period of study should be considered at the end of Semester Two at the Module Review Boards; extenuating circumstances should also be considered at this point. External Examiners should attend the Extenuating Circumstances Committee if possible, but if not, they should have access to the full minutes of the Committee. Students will normally be granted at least one opportunity to retrieve a failure in any module or in a dissertation either by re-sit, re-examination or by retaking the module (see clause 6 of the Ordinance). Whenever an examination/assessment is reassessed, the mark achieved in the re-assessment always supersedes any earlier mark, even when the earlier mark is higher. Marks achieved in re-assessment shall be recorded as the actual mark achieved but shall be flagged in the transcript to indicate that they were achieved at second or subsequent attempt.

4. Late registration on modules or programmes

(i) The decision to accept a student onto a module once teaching has started on it must be based on the academic judgement of the module convenor to ensure that the student registering late on the module will not be disadvantaged in respect of opportunity to achieve the learning outcomes, in-session coursework deadlines and learning contexts such as group work. Normally transfer into a module will not be allowed after two weeks from the commencement of teaching. Transfers will also only be allowed if the timetable can accommodate the revised module combination. If such a transfer would result in a credit imbalance across semesters 1 and 2, the approval of the Director of Studies must be secured and the student must be made aware of the fact that the uneven workload will not be regarded as an extenuating factor in the case of failure in assessments.

(ii) The decision to accept a student onto a programme once teaching has started on it must be based on the academic judgement of the Director of Studies, in consultation with the relevant module convenors, to ensure that the student registering late on the programme will not be disadvantaged in respect of opportunity to achieve the learning outcomes, in-session coursework deadlines and learning contexts such as group work. Normally late registration onto a programme will not be allowed after two weeks from the commencement of teaching on the programme.

(iii) A student will be deemed to be “restarting” a module or programme if they have previously registered for the module or programme, withdrawn and then opted to start that module or programme again within the period allowed for late registration as indicated in paragraphs 4(i) and 4(ii) above. Any work that the student had submitted for assessment during their previous registration on the module or programme would be disregarded and therefore all assessment tasks would be submitted as if for the first time. Students should be aware that resubmission of assessment tasks by a student restarting a module or programme does not guarantee that the same provisional mark will be awarded for the task(s).

General Ordinance for Modular Master’s Degrees, Postgraduate Diplomas And Postgraduate Certificates

1. The General Ordinance shall apply to all Master’s degrees, Postgraduate Diplomas and Postgraduate Certificates available within a modular framework for taught postgraduate awards.

2. In order to be admitted to a modular programme of postgraduate study, each candidate must have obtained such prior qualifications and/or experience as shall be determined under the regulations governing the appropriate programme of study. Candidates 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 degree, diploma or certificate.

3. The programme of study shall consist of a number of modules which shall each have a value of 5, 7.5, 10, 15, 20 or 30 credit points. The number of credit points attached to a dissertation, shall normally be 60.

4. For full-time programmes, taught modules should normally be divided equally between the 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 University 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 an extenuating factor in the case of failure in assessments and consequent failure to progress to the next year of study.

5. Candidates who attend for a minimum period of 12 months of full-time study, or an equivalent 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. Candidates who attend for a minimum period of 30 weeks of full-time study, or for an equivalent period of part-time study, and who achieve a minimum of 120 credit points, will be eligible for the award of a Postgraduate Diploma. Candidates who attend for a minimum period of 15 weeks of full-time study or for an equivalent 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 candidate shall obtain all credits within the requirements of an approved programme of study except as provided for in clause 2 above.

6. Candidates shall be assessed in each module or combination of modules as shall be determined by regulations governing the appropriate programme of study. Candidates who fail taught modules may be re-assessed in those modules on one further occasion only. A failed dissertation may also be resubmitted on one further occasion only. For full-time students the dissertation must be resubmitted within two years of the date of first registration.

7. Students planning to undertake laboratory / field based research for their dissertation 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 dissertation, following University approval of a recommendation from the Board of Examiners, until the relevant taught components are re-assessed and passed. In these cases the submission date of the dissertation shall be extended to 15th December (or the next working day if this date falls on a weekend).

8. No candidate shall be eligible for an award later than six years following the date of initial registration. Full time students should normally complete within one year.

9. The Master's degree, Postgraduate Diploma or Postgraduate Certificate may be awarded with a mark of distinction to candidates of special merit as follows (a distinction cannot be awarded if a candidate has failed any credit during the period of study at the University):

- Masters:- for candidates who pass all the required credit at the first attempt and achieve at least 70% in modules accounting for at least half the credit of the overall award, including the dissertation, and an overall average mark of at least 65%.
• PGDip:- for candidates who pass all the required credit at the first attempt and achieve at least 70% in modules accounting for at least half the credit of the overall award and an overall average mark of at least 65%

• PGCert:- for candidates who pass all the required credit at the first attempt and achieve an overall average mark of at least 70%

PGT REGULATIONS: 2007/08, 2008-09, 2009-10

1. In order to be admitted to a modular programme of postgraduate study, each candidate must have obtained such prior qualifications and/or experience as shall be determined by the relevant Board of Faculty. Candidates shall be admitted to a modular programme of postgraduate study only with the approval of the relevant Board of Faculty.

2. The requirements for completion of each programme of study shall be approved by Academic Quality and Standards Committee and set out in the programme handbook. A Master’s Degree shall be made up of at least 180 credit points, a Postgraduate Diploma shall be made up of at least 120 credit points and a Postgraduate Certificate shall have at least 60 credit points. Programmes leading to the award of a Master’s degree shall not include more than 30 credit points at FHEQ Level 6 and shall include dissertation credit points normally to the value of 60. Programmes leading to the award of a Postgraduate Diploma shall not include more than 30 credit points at FHEQ Level 6 and dissertation credit points, if included, shall normally be to the value of 60. Programmes leading to the award of a Postgraduate Certificate shall not include more than 15 credits at FHEQ level 6 and no dissertation credit points.

3. The pass mark for all modules is 50%. In order to qualify for an award, candidates must achieve a mark of 50% or more in every taught module and in any dissertation, provided that, where the average of total marks in all modules is 50% or above, a mark of 40-49% shall be deemed compensatable in taught modules totalling up to 15 credits*.

4. A mark of Distinction should be awarded as follows, but only where the requirements were achieved at the first attempt as a distinction cannot be awarded if a candidate has failed any credit during the period of study at the University.

Masters: For candidates who achieve marks of at least 70% in modules accounting for at least half the credit of the overall award, including the Dissertation, and an overall average score of at least 65%.

PGDip: For candidates who achieve marks of at least 70% in modules accounting for at least half the credit of the overall award and an overall average score of at least 65%.

PGCert: For candidates who achieve an overall average of at least 70%.

5. Candidates shall be assessed in all modules leading to the award. The form of assessment shall be determined by the relevant Board of Studies and approved by the Board of Faculty.

6. Dissertations shall be submitted by 15th September (or the next working day if this date falls on a weekend) following the final semester of attendance in respect of taught modules. Where students are being re-assessed in modules to the value of 30 credits and above the relevant Board of Studies shall extend the deadline for the submission of the dissertation until 15th December (or the next working day if this date falls on a weekend) following the final semester of attendance in respect of taught modules.
7. Candidates who fail in one or more modules at the first attempt (including the dissertation, where applicable) shall be permitted to present themselves for re-examination in the failed module(s) on one more occasion during the registration period. Marks achieved in re-assessment shall be recorded as the actual mark achieved but shall be flagged in the diploma supplement to indicate they were achieved at a second attempt.

* or 20 credits where the smallest module on a Modular Postgraduate Programme is 20 credits