



UNIVERSITY OF
LIVERPOOL

CODE OF PRACTICE ON ASSESSMENT

APPENDIX C

University Framework for Postgraduate Modular Provision

2015-24

Applicable to the following cohorts
2015-16 to 2023-24

This means candidates on programmes of study commencing in these academic sessions.

In the Code of Practice on Assessment and all Appendices the term “student” includes apprentices on degree apprenticeship programmes

University Framework for Postgraduate Modular Provision

1. Introduction

1.1 This framework is for full-time and part-time modular postgraduate¹ provision leading to one of the following awards (further defined in section 2 below):

- (a) Master of Research (MRes) (180 credits)
- (b) Other Master's degrees (180 credits)
- (c) Postgraduate Diploma (120 credits)
- (d) Postgraduate Certificate (60 credits)
- (e) Postgraduate Award (30 credits)

This framework also covers Continuing Professional/Personal Development (CPD) that leads to master's level credit (FHEQ level 7) or one of the above awards.

1.2 All provision leading to one of the above awards should fully comply with this framework for all new candidates registering on to such programmes of study from the 2016-17 academic session onwards.

1.3 Candidates may be required to register for an approved programme of study leading to one of the above awards. In such cases candidates will only be eligible for an award that is different from that for which they initially registered if it is to be an exit award, or the candidate changes their registration.

1.4 Candidates may also be permitted to register for modules on a standalone basis. In doing so candidates may accumulate credit towards an award where the modules selected meet the requirements of an approved programme of study leading to that award as detailed in the programme specification. In such cases candidates may be permitted to register for an approved programme of study to become eligible for an award at any point within the specified maximum registration period.

NB: This framework provides the opportunity for Faculties, Schools, Institutes and Departments to develop generic programmes that will allow students to accumulate credit for an award as set out in this framework.

1.5 In order to be admitted to an approved programme of study candidates may be required to meet particular entry requirements such as the obtainment of prior qualifications and/or suitable experience as defined in the programme specification.

1.6 The requirements for completion of each programme of study shall be consistent with this framework and shall be approved by the School Scrutiny Panel or University Approval Panel as appropriate and set out in the programme specification.

1.7 Exemptions from this framework should only be granted where clear and demonstrable academic justification for non-conformity has been presented to and approved by the University Academic Quality and Standards Committee.

¹ "Postgraduate" does not imply all entrants or most entrants are graduates or that any entry 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.

2. Entry Awards

2.1 Within this framework, all programmes of study leading to an award should be compatible with the following definitions:

- (a) **Master of Research:** programme of study focussed on the development of advanced knowledge and research skills where a majority of activity comprises independent research supported by structured assessed modules, and whose combined challenge reflects the level of further intellectual development appropriate to the equivalent of 12 months full-time advanced study beyond Honours degree level. A Master of Research degree will provide an appropriate foundation for research degree registration and/or the qualities and transferable skills required for employment in a research focussed environment.
- (b) **Other Master's degrees** (including Master of Science, Master of Arts and professionally focussed Master's awards as detailed in University Ordinances): a vocational or non-vocational programme of study, involving both a substantial piece or pieces of research or independent study and a range of assessed modules, whose combined challenge reflects the level of further intellectual development appropriate to the equivalent of 12 months full-time advanced study beyond Honour's degree level. A Master's degree will provide an appropriate foundation for research degree registration and/or the qualities and transferable skills to enable independent learning required for continuing professional development.
- (c) **Executive Master's degrees:** a professionally or practice-based focussed award, involving both a substantial piece or pieces of research or independent study and a range of assessed modules, whose combined challenge reflects the level of further intellectual development appropriate to the equivalent of 12 months full-time advanced study beyond Honour's degree level. Applicants for the Executive Master's award should normally have appropriate professional experience in addition to a relevant first degree. The programme should normally be part time. Delivery should be flexible and supported by online learning opportunities. The focus of the programme should be on students applying their learning to their professional development and/or business situation. It would be expected that work-based learning and active-learning should be dominant elements of the learning and detaching strategy.
- (d) **Postgraduate Diploma:** a vocational or non-vocational programme of study taught and assessed predominantly at Master's level but not involving a substantial piece of research or independent study.
- (e) **Postgraduate Certificate:** a vocational or non-vocational programme taught and assessed predominantly at Master's level but not involving a substantial piece of research or independent study and covering a narrower range of material.
- (f) **Postgraduate Award:** a vocational or non-vocational programme taught and assessed predominantly at Master's level but not involving a substantial piece of independent work and focussed on particular knowledge and skills.

3. Module and Credit Requirements

3.1 All provision developed under this framework should be modularised; each module must be assessed and given a credit value and an associated level which will be detailed in the module specification. The form of assessment shall be approved by the School Scrutiny Panel in accordance with the requirements of the programme and module approval processes in place.

3.2 Credit values should be assigned on the basis that 10 hours of candidate commitment (divided into variable mixes of contact and private study hours) should be allocated 1 credit point.

- 3.3 Each programme of study will include a number of ‘taught’ modules, where this refers to the delivery of advanced subject-specific content, research and transferable skills, fieldwork, work-based or placement learning or other forms of defined learning. Each module shall be assigned a value of 2.5 or 5 or 7.5 or 10 or 15 or 20 or 30 or 40 or 45 credits. Programmes of study may consist of modules with different credit values which when taken together provide sufficient overall credit for an award.
- 3.4 Programmes of study may include research or independent study modules where this refers to project work involving a high level of self-directed learning and independence in negotiation with, and supervised by, a member of academic staff resulting in the production of a project report, dissertation, or other independently developed output. Such modules may be assigned values of 60, 90 or 120 credits or any of the credit values permitted for ‘taught’ modules in accordance with the requirements of an award detailed below.
- 3.5 All provision should comply with the following credit requirements:
- (a) A programme of study leading to a **Master of Research** award shall:
- (i) require successful completion of at least 180 credits all at FHEQ level 7;
 - (ii) include at least 120 credits of research consisting of a single project module or two or more project modules totalling at least 120 credits where at least one of the project modules must provide a minimum of 30 credits; where a programme of study is designed to require completion of more than 180 credits the research project modules must account for more than half of the total credit required, subject to a minimum of 120 credits;
 - (iii) include an exit point whereby a candidate shall be awarded a named/unnamed Postgraduate Diploma upon successfully completing 60 credits of ‘taught’ modules and 60 credits of research or independent study;
 - (iv) include an exit point whereby a candidate shall be awarded a named/unnamed Postgraduate Certificate upon successfully completing 60 credits of ‘taught’ modules;
 - (v) include an exit point whereby a candidate shall be awarded a named/unnamed Postgraduate Award upon successfully completing 30 credits of ‘taught’ modules.

A Master of Research programme may:

- (v) include an oral examination of the research activity; in exceptional circumstances such *viva voce* examinations may be conducted remotely in accordance with the principles and protocols defined in Appendix 9 of the Postgraduate Research Code of Practice;
- (b) A programme of study leading to **other Master’s degree** awards shall:
- (i) require successful completion of at least 180 credits; either all at FHEQ level 7, or a combination of FHEQ level 7 and up to 30 credits of modules at FHEQ level 6 or up to 30 credits of the Open Languages² modules at FHEQ levels 4, 5 or 6;
 - (ii) include at least 60 credits of research or independent study consisting of a single module or two modules totalling at least 60;
 - (iii) include an exit point whereby a candidate shall be awarded a named/unnamed Postgraduate Diploma upon successfully completing 120 credits; either all at FHEQ

² The Open Languages Framework can be accessed at <https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/languages/>

- level 7, or a combination of FHEQ level 7 and up to 30 credits of modules at FHEQ level 6 or up to 30 credits of the Open Languages³ modules at FHEQ levels 4, 5 or 6; the 120 credits may include research or independent study modules;
- (iv) include an exit point whereby a candidate shall be awarded a named/unnamed Postgraduate Certificate upon successfully completing 60 credits; either all at FHEQ level 7, or a combination of FHEQ level 7 and up to 20 credits of modules at FHEQ level 6 or up to 30 credits of the Open Languages⁴ modules at FHEQ levels 4, 5 or 6; the 60 credits may not include research or independent study modules;
- (v) include an exit point whereby a candidate shall be awarded a named/unnamed Postgraduate Award upon successfully completing 30 credits; either all at FHEQ level 7, or a combination of FHEQ level 7 and up to 10 credits of modules at FHEQ level 6.
- (c) A programme of study leading to a **Postgraduate Diploma** shall:
- (i) require successful completion of at least 120 credits; either all at FHEQ level 7, or a combination of FHEQ level 7 and up to 30 credits of modules at FHEQ level 6 or up to 30 credits of the Open Languages⁵ modules at FHEQ levels 4, 5 or 6.
- (ii) be comprised of either all ‘taught’ modules or may include a maximum of 30 credits of research or independent study; credit achieved on a single 60 credit research or independent study module, or two research or independent study modules totalling 60 credits, may only contribute to the award of a Postgraduate Diploma when it is an exit award (see 3.5 (b) (iii) above).
- (iii) include an exit point whereby a candidate shall be awarded a named/unnamed Postgraduate Certificate upon successfully completing 60 credits; either all at FHEQ level 7, or a combination of FHEQ level 7 and up to 20 credits of modules at FHEQ level 6 or up to 30 credits of the Open Languages⁶ modules at FHEQ levels 4, 5 or 6;
- (iv) include an exit point whereby a candidate shall be awarded a named/unnamed Postgraduate Award upon successfully completing 30 credits; either all at FHEQ level 7, or a combination of FHEQ level 7 and up to 10 credits of modules at FHEQ level 6.
- (d) A programme of study leading to a **Postgraduate Certificate** shall:
- (i) require successful completion of at least 60 credits; either all at FHEQ level 7, or a combination of FHEQ level 7 and up to 20 credits of modules at FHEQ level 6 or up to 30 credits of the Open Languages⁷ modules at FHEQ levels 4, 5 or 6;
- (ii) be comprised of either all ‘taught’ modules or may include a maximum of 30 credits of research or independent study;
- (iii) include an exit point whereby a candidate shall be awarded a named/unnamed Postgraduate Award upon successfully completing 30 credits; either all at FHEQ level 7 or a combination of FHEQ level 7 and up to 10 credits of modules at FHEQ level 6.

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- (e) A programme of study leading to a **Postgraduate Award** shall require successful completion of at least 30 credits of 'taught' modules; either all at FHEQ level 7 or a combination of FHEQ level 7 and up to 10 credits of modules at FHEQ level 6.
- 3.6 Where there is a clear rationale to do so programmes of study may be designed to require successful completion of credit which exceeds the minimum specified for each of the awards described above. As a guide where a programme of study is designed to be completed over a period of more than the equivalent to 12 months of full-time study the additional commitment required should be recognised in additional credit. The maximum amount of credits which may be required for each award will be as follows:
- (a) Master of Research: 240 credits
 - (b) Other Master's degrees: 240 credits
 - (c) Postgraduate Diploma: less than 180 credits
 - (d) Postgraduate Certificate: less than 120 credits
 - (e) Postgraduate Award: less than 60 credits
- 3.7 Where a candidate meets the minimum credit requirements for an award but achieves insufficient credits for the named award on which they are registered they may be eligible to exit with either an unnamed award or an award with a differentiated title. In the case of such programmes of study the specific credit requirements for the named award and any exit points will be clearly articulated in the programme specification.
- 3.8 Where a programme includes FHEQ level 6 modules or Open Languages⁸ modules at FHEQ levels 4, 5 or 6 (as detailed above) that are also available to candidates on undergraduate degrees of the University, graduates of those undergraduate programmes of study will not be permitted to repeat in a postgraduate programme of study, a FHEQ level 6 module or Open Languages⁹ modules at FHEQ levels 4, 5 or 6 they have taken in their undergraduate degree. In such instances, suitable alternatives must be made available to the candidate. Similarly, where a candidate 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 study of the University and a suitable alternative must be provided for such candidates.
- 3.9 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 candidate to take both modules. If a candidate of the University takes one such module in their undergraduate degree, if s/he goes on to take a postgraduate programme of study, 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 of study that uses such modules must provide suitable alternatives for candidates to ensure they do not have to repeat the learning and teaching they had in their undergraduate degree.

4. Awards and Programme Titles

- 4.1 The awards described in this framework may be named or unnamed. A named award carries the title of an approved programme of study that the candidate has successfully completed (e.g. Postgraduate Certificate in ... [title of programme]); an unnamed award simply states the level of qualification achieved.
- 4.2 Named awards will normally be given if:
- (i) the candidate was registered for an approved programme of study leading to an award and has successfully completed the required modules as detailed in the programme specification; or

⁸ The Open Languages Framework can be accessed at <https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/languages/>

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- (ii) the candidate was registered for an approved programme of study leading to an award and exits having successfully completed the required modules for a named exit award. Where appropriate, exit awards may be given titles which are differentiated from that of the entry award for which the candidate was registered. Requirements for a named exit award including the successful completion of specific modules will be detailed in the programme specification.
- 4.3 In order to become eligible for a named award, candidates who have completed standalone modules which are appropriate for an approved programme of study must register for the relevant award prior to the end of the maximum registration period; the start of the registration period will be the point at which the candidate registered for the first module which contributes credit towards the award.
- 4.4 Unnamed awards will normally be given if:
- (i) the programme of study has been designed to provide only unnamed exit awards, and this is made clear in the programme specification; or
 - (ii) the programme of study has been designed with named exit awards that are only given upon successful completion of a specific combination of modules; where a candidate has failed to successfully complete the specific modules required for a named award but has met the minimum credit requirements for an exit award they will be eligible for an unnamed award.
- 4.5 Where a candidate has previously accepted a named or unnamed award but subsequently chooses to continue their studies and successfully completes modules required for a higher award within the maximum registration period they will be required to return the lower award in order to become eligible for the higher award; this is necessary in order to avoid credit being counted twice for two different awards.

5. Pass Mark and Classification

- 5.1 All FHEQ level 7 provision will have clearly defined assessments for each module with a module pass mark of 50%. If a programme of study includes FHEQ level 6 modules or Open Languages¹⁰ modules at FHEQ levels 4, 5 or 6 (as detailed in section 3 above) which have a pass mark of 40%, candidates must achieve 50% or more for the credit to be recognised for a postgraduate level award. Candidates who take an FHEQ level 6 module on a standalone basis must achieve at least 50% or more for the credit to contribute to an award.
- 5.2 Each Department will have its own set of qualitative marking descriptors which describe what each mark range represents in terms of student achievement in that particular subject. These descriptors will relate to the appropriate **subject benchmark statement(s)** where these exist at master's level.
- 5.3 In addition to this, each Department will be required to demonstrate how English language proficiency has been checked in all submissions with a written element in the context of the subject area.
- 5.4 Where marking criteria already includes a graded element for spelling and grammar or equivalent, there is no need to include any further check. Where assessment criteria, which has written components, does not include an element for checking English language, this should be added. This does not have to be graded but must indicate that a check for English language has been made.

¹⁰ The Open Languages Framework can be accessed at <https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/languages/>

- 5.5 All provision leading to an award governed by this framework shall include a requirement to achieve a mark of 50% or more in all modules. However, where the overall average mark in all 'taught' modules contributing to an award of Master of Research, other Master's degree, Postgraduate Diploma or Postgraduate Certificate is 50% or above, a mark of 40-49% shall be deemed compensatable in **'taught' modules only**; this may be in a single 20-credit module or a combination of modules totalling up to 20 credits. It should also be noted that the range of compensatable marks for FHEQ level 6 modules which contribute credit towards a postgraduate award shall also be 40-49%.
- 5.6 Compensation shall not be applied:
- (i) where more than 20 credits of 'taught' modules contributing to an award of Master of Research, other Master's degree, Postgraduate Diploma or Postgraduate Certificate are failed; or
 - (ii) to any credit contributing to a Postgraduate Award; or
 - (iii) where the overall average mark in all 'taught' modules contributing to a postgraduate award is less than 50%; or
 - (iv) where a candidate takes an individual module on a standalone basis without an award; or
 - (v) in the case of research or independent study modules which contribute to an award: or
 - (vi) where a non-modular non-semesterised programme has a duration in excess of one year.
- 5.7 For part-time programmes leading to an award of Master of Research, Master's degree, Postgraduate Diploma, or Postgraduate Certificate, compensation shall be applied as follows:
- (i) Where a student achieves a mark of 40-49% in a module worth no more than 20 credits, they shall be provided with a choice of accepting the mark as a compensated pass, or elect to resit the failed assessment or assessments at the next reassessment opportunity.
 - (ii) Where a student has a mark of 40-49% in more than one module for which the collective credit totals no more than 20 credits (e.g. two modules worth 10 credits each), they may elect to accept all the marks as compensated passes, or to resit all the failed assessments, or they may elect which marks they wish to accept as a compensated pass, and which assessments they wish to resit at the next reassessment opportunity.
 - (iii) Where a student elects to resit a failed module worth no more than 20 credits which they pass on the resit attempt, if they later achieve a mark of 40-49% in another module they will receive a further opportunity to either accept a compensated pass, or to resit the failed assessment as set out in 5.4(i) and (ii) above.
 - (iv) Where a student elects to accept a mark of 40-49% in a module worth less than 20 credits and they later achieve a mark in the compensation range in another module, they can elect to accept the mark as a compensated pass, or choose to resit the failed assessment at the next reassessment opportunity, provided the total credit of module marks accepted as compensated passes does not exceed 20 credits. Two examples are given below:
 - e.g. (1) – if a student accepts a compensated pass in a module worth 15 credits and then later achieves a mark of 40-49% in a module worth 10 credits, compensation cannot be applied, the total amount of credit is 25 credits and exceeds the upper limit of 20 credits;
 - e.g. (2) – if a student accepts a compensated pass in a module worth 10 credits and then later achieves a mark of 40-49% in a module that is also worth 10 credits, they will have the choice of accepting the mark in the second module as a compensated pass, or to resit the failed assessment at the next reassessment opportunity

- (v) If a student achieves a mark in the compensation range of 40-49% in the reassessment of a failed assessment component, the mark will automatically be deemed a compensated pass, provided this will not exceed the maximum of 20 credits that may be compensated. This applies irrespective of whether the student failed the original assessment with a mark of 39% or less (i.e. non-compensatable), or failed the original assessment with a mark in the compensation range of 40-49% and elected to resit the assessment.
- (vi) Once the total amount of credit that a student has accepted or been awarded as a compensated pass or passes has reached 20 credits, any mark of 49% or under that is achieved by the student thereafter will be a fail mark

5.8 A Merit or Distinction grade will be awarded in accordance with the following criteria:

- (a) For **Master of Research** awards:
 - (i) To be awarded a **Merit** grade, candidates must achieve:
 - an overall average mark of at least 60% in research modules; and
 - an overall average mark of at least 60%.
 - (ii) To be awarded a **Distinction** grade, candidates must achieve:
 - an overall average mark of at least 70% in research modules; and
 - an overall average mark of at least 70%.
- (b) For **other Master's degree** awards:
 - (i) To be awarded a **Merit** grade, candidates must achieve:
 - an overall average mark of at least 60% across the research or independent study 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%.
 - (ii) To be awarded a **Distinction** grade, candidates must achieve:
 - an overall average mark of at least 70% across the research or independent study 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%.
- (c) For **Postgraduate Diploma** awards:
 - (i) To be awarded a **Merit** grade, candidates 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%.
 - (ii) To be awarded a **Distinction** grade, candidates 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%.
- (d) For **Postgraduate Certificate** awards:
 - (i) To be awarded a **Merit** grade, candidates 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%.

- (ii) To be awarded a **Distinction** grade, candidates 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%.
 - (e) For **Postgraduate Awards**:
 - (i) To be awarded a **Merit** grade, candidates must achieve:
 - an overall average mark of at least 60%.
 - (ii) To be awarded a **Distinction** grade, candidates must achieve:
 - an overall average mark of at least 70%.
- 5.9 Pass marks and average marks shall be rounded to the nearest whole number. Decimal places below five are rounded down and decimal places of five or more are rounded up.
- 5.10 For the purposes of calculating the **overall** average mark for the programme, which is one of the requirements for determining classification, the marks for any module which includes one or more re-sit/re-take examinations/assessments will be capped at 50%. Marks for modules passed by virtue of the compensation rule will be recorded as a pass mark of 50%.
- 5.11 For research or independent study modules, the actual mark achieved at reassessment will be used to calculate the overall average mark required for the research or independent study criteria for classification; if there is a single research or independent study module, the actual mark achieved at reassessment will be applied in respect of the classification requirement for such modules.
- 5.12 Candidates who register for an award but exit with a lower award will be eligible for Merit or Distinction for the lower award provided they meet the criteria described above. For the purposes of calculating the overall average mark for an exit award, the mark profile of any candidate who has successfully completed more than the required credits for that award (but less than the requirement for the higher award) should be considered to be the highest marks that account for the required credits. For the purposes of identifying modules accounting for at least half of the credit of the overall award for a Postgraduate Diploma or Postgraduate Certificate, modules accounting for half of the credit for the specific award should be considered, rather than half of the credit of all modules passed.
- 5.13 Candidates who take modules on a standalone basis will become eligible for an award with Merit or Distinction where they:
- (i) subsequently register for a programme of study which leads to an award and successfully complete the required credit through the study of appropriate modules as defined in the programme specification. Where a candidate has successfully completed modules available within the programme of study but which exceed the required credit for the award the calculation of the overall average mark and determination of classification will be based on the modules with the higher marks; or
 - (ii) accumulate sufficient credit for an unnamed award in accordance with an approved programme of study. Where a candidate has successfully completed modules which exceed the required credit for the award the calculation of the overall average mark and determination of classification will be based on the modules with the higher marks.
- 6. Periods of Registration**
- 6.1 There are minimum and maximum periods of registration which are considered appropriate to achieve the credit required for an award whilst maintaining the currency of learning.

6.2 The minimum period that a student must be registered for a **full-time** programme to be eligible for the award is the stated duration of the programme as set out in the programme specification. (See also below section 7 Programme Structure.)

6.3 The maximum periods (including any periods of interruption of studies, suspension or re-assessment) that a student on a **full-time** programme may be registered and remain eligible for the award for which they are registered are:

MRes and other Master's degrees:	3 years
PG Dip	2 years
PG Cert	18 months
PG Award	1 year

6.4 **Part-time** programmes need not be designed to be of a fixed duration (See also below section 7 Programme Structure.) but must be undertaken within the following minimum and maximum periods which also represent the minimum and maximum registration periods for students undertaking such programmes:

	Minimum	Maximum
MRes and other Master's degrees:	2 years	6 years
PG Dip	1 year	4 years
PG Cert	30 weeks	3 years
PG Award	15 weeks	2 years

6.5 Where a student registers sequentially for a different award within the same programme (e.g. for a PG Dip and then a Master's) the period of registration for the lower award will be counted towards the period of registration for the higher award in calculating the minimum and maximum registration periods.

6.6 The minimum and maximum registration periods set out in 6.3 and 6.4 above relate to the entry award for which a student registers; they will not apply when a Board of Examiners agrees to make an exit award owing to a student's failure to meet the requirements for the entry award for which they registered.

6.7 The registration period will commence from the date of registration for the first module that carries credit that is to be recognised for the award. Where candidates register for modules on a standalone basis, any credit contributing to an award must be successfully achieved within the maximum registration period for that award.

6.8 The maximum registration periods stipulated above will be inclusive of any periods where a candidate has formally interrupted their studies due to extenuating circumstances.

7. Programme Structure

7.1 A **full-time** programme of study will normally be designed to be delivered over a specified period of time, with the duration of the programme being related to the number of credits attached to the programme. (See also Section 3 Module and Credit Requirements above.) The minimum and maximum periods for **full-time** programmes are:

	Minimum	Maximum
MRes and other Master's degrees:	1 year	24 months
PG Dip	30 weeks	1 year
PG Cert	15 weeks	9 months
PG Award	8 weeks	16 weeks

- 7.2 **Part-time** programmes need not be designed to be of a fixed duration but may be so designed. Whether of a set duration or not, **part-time** programmes are subject to the minimum and maximum periods of registration set out in 6.4 above.
- 7.3 Where a programme of study is designed with credit which exceeds the minimum required for the award, the period of time over which it is intended to be studied should be extended as appropriate.
- 7.4 Where a programme is designed to be studied over a fixed period of time, this must be clearly stated in the programme specification. Where a **part-time** programme is **not** designed to be studied over fixed period of time, the minimum and maximum periods over which the programme may be studied must be stated in the programme specification and these must be within the minimum and maximum registration periods for part-time programmes set out in 6.4 above.
- 7.5 A programme of study may be offered as both full-time and part-time routes. Where this is the case the programme specification will detail the requirements of the different modes of study.
- 7.6 Specific pre-requisites for individual modules will be detailed in the module specification.
- 7.7 In order to facilitate flexible learning, candidates may be permitted to initially register for modules on a standalone basis before registering for a programme of study at a later date in order to become eligible for a named award. Where this is the case candidates may be permitted to complete the required modules over a longer period and/or in a different sequence to that described in the programme specification provided this is with the approval of the Director of Studies and within the maximum registration period.
- 7.8 A programme of study may be designed with entry points which allow candidates to register for a lower award initially before, either exiting with that award or, transferring their registration to a higher award upon successful completion of the credit required for the lower award. In this way candidates may accumulate credit towards a higher award provided that this is successfully completed within the maximum period of registration for that award. Where this is the case the specific requirements of each entry award will be clearly articulated in the programme specification.
- 7.9 A programme of study may be designed to enable candidates to choose from a wide range of optional modules offered by a department, school, faculty or the wider institution in order to accumulate credit towards an award within the requirements of this framework. Such a programme of study may allow for candidates to graduate with an unnamed award or differentiated award titles determined on the basis of the discipline area in which the majority of modules were studied. In such cases the requirements for completion of an award and the methodology for agreeing the final award title will be clearly articulated in the programme specification.
- 7.10 A programme of study may be designed to allow up to 25% of the total credit required for a named award to include modules that are from outside the subject or discipline area of the programme as detailed in the programme specification.
- 7.11 All full-time programmes of study should be designed to ensure that the spread of credit is distributed evenly across the specified period of study. Where programmes of study are semesterised it will be expected that they will be designed to have an imbalance of no more than 15 credits of 'taught' modules between semesters, e.g. 52.5 credits in semester one and 67.5 credits in semester two. Programmes of study which are designed with a greater imbalance in workload (up to 30 credits difference between the semesters) will require specific approval from Academic Quality and Standards Committee which will be subject to the presentation of a satisfactory rationale.
- 7.12 Where individual candidates select optional modules that will lead to an imbalance in workload, the selection must be approved by the Director of Studies and the candidate 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.

- 7.13 Programmes of study may be designed to begin at the start of any semester or where practicable at other designated points in the academic year. The frequency of intakes to a programme of study may be annually, biannually, at multiple points in the academic year or less frequently than annually. The timing and frequency of intakes will be detailed in the programme specification.
- 7.14 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, as a risk to themselves and/or to others, may be prevented from progressing to the dissertation, project or independent research modules, following approval by the PVC (Education) or the Chair of the University Academic Quality and Standards Committee of a recommendation from the Board of Examiners, until the relevant taught components are re-taken and passed.
- 7.15 The deadline for submission of assessed project work for research and independent study modules contributing to an award of Master of Research and other Master's degrees will be clearly articulated to all candidates. The deadline set should normally be within the following parameters:
- (i) For programmes of study which are designed to be studied on a **full-time** basis, the deadline should normally be 12 months from the formal start date of the programme, or where a **full-time** programme of study has been designed to be studied over a longer period, at the end of the specified normal period of study;
 - (ii) For programmes of study which are designed to be studied on a part-time basis, the deadline should normally be set for the end of the specified normal period of study e.g. for a programme of study designed to be studied over a two year period the deadline should be set at the end of two years from the formal start date of the programme; where a **part-time** programme of study is not designed to be studied over a fixed period, the deadline for submission of assessed project work for research and independent study modules shall be specified in the programme specification;
 - (iii) Where a candidate is required to be reassessed in failed 'taught' modules, the Board of Examiners shall grant an automatic extension for the submission of assessed work for research or independent study modules if:
 - the Board of Examiners (or the Chair of a Board of Examiners acting on behalf of the Board, with the approval of the External Examiner) has accepted extenuating circumstances in relation to the failed 'taught' module(s); or
 - the failure relates to 'taught' modules totalling 30 credits or more, without extenuating circumstances.

In such cases the extension given will normally be 3 months from the original deadline for full-time candidates and 6 months from the original deadline for part-time candidates.

- (iv) Where the research or independent study module includes a requirement for the conduct of an oral examination, the deadline for submission of assessed work will take account of this such that the examination can be conducted within the specified normal period of study.
- (v) Where a candidate fails a research or independent study module and is required to be re-assessed, the Board of Examiners will agree and notify the candidate of the new submission deadline which will normally be within 12 months of the publication of results, subject to this being within the maximum allowed period of registration for the relevant award.

8. Late registration on modules or programmes

- 8.1 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 or out of 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 as detailed in paragraph 7.12 above 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.
- 8.2 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.
- 8.3 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 8.1 and 8.2 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).

9. Re-assessment

- 9.1 Candidates who are registered onto a programme of study leading to an award and fail one or more modules at the first attempt shall be permitted to present themselves for re-assessment in the failed assessment component(s) for each failed module on one further occasion during the maximum registration period. Re-assessment in ‘taught’ modules should normally take place at the next re-assessment opportunity and within 12 months of the failed assessment. If a student is permitted to replace a discontinued or unavailable module with a new module to substitute a module not previously attempted for a failed module, the mark for the new module would be capped, except where the mark for the original was deemed to have been affected by extenuating circumstances. Re-assessment in research and independent study modules will normally take place within 12 months of the publication of results (see 7.15 (v)).
- 9.2 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. Following re-sit/re-take examinations/assessments the mark recorded for a module will be the weighted average of the final marks achieved for each component of the assessment of the module. (The marks of any assessment components of a module which have been passed at the first attempt will be carried forward and used with the actual marks gained in the re-sits/re-takes of the failed components to calculate the overall module mark.) This actual mark will be recorded but will be flagged in the student record system as having been obtained following a second or subsequent sitting of an examination or assessment, **except**:
- (i) where marks in the range 40-49% meet the criteria for compensation. In these circumstances, the marks will be raised to 50% in the student record system but will be flagged as having been achieved at a second attempt; or
 - (ii) where the Board of Examiners (or, where appropriate, the Faculty Progress Committee in determining a student’s appeal) has determined, as a result of a student’s ill-health or

other extenuating circumstances, that the re-sit/re-take should be treated as a first examination/assessment. In these circumstances the mark achieved in the re-sit/re-take examination/assessment will not be flagged. Examiners must clearly identify to the Student Administration and Support Division when this is the case.

Module marks achieved through re-assessment will be capped at 50% for the purposes of calculating the overall average mark and determining classification for an award; the actual mark achieved through re-assessment will be the mark recorded on the transcript.

- 9.3 For candidates who are permitted to present themselves for re-assessment in research and independent study modules, the Board of Examiners shall determine whether they should do so either:
- (a) As re-taking the module with attendance with full supervision. The Board of Examiners shall ensure that the student is given clear guidance on whether or not the retake should be on a new topic; or
 - (b) As re-sitting the module without attendance. The Board of Examiners shall ensure that the student is given clear guidance as to the level of supervision which they can expect; it is anticipated that this requires no attendance on campus and no face-to-face meetings with supervisors or no registration on an online module and that the student is not required to make a submission on a new topic. The student shall be provided with formative written feedback on their first attempt submission; or
 - (c) As re-sitting the module with partial supervision. The Board of Examiners shall ensure that the student is given clear guidance as to the level of supervision which they can expect; it is anticipated that this requires no attendance on campus and no face-to-face meetings with supervisors or no registration on an online module and that the student shall not normally be required to make a submission on a substantially new topic. The Board of Examiners shall ensure that the student is provided with formative written feedback on their first attempt submission and given clear guidance as to the level of supervision which they can expect.
- 9.4 For candidates who register for individual modules on a standalone basis there shall be no compensation for any modules that are narrowly failed (see 5.2 above); if such candidates fail one or more modules they can either:
- (i) present themselves for re-assessment in the failed assessment component(s) at the next re-assessment opportunity. Candidates may be re-assessed in any failed assessment components, and normally will not be limited as to the number of opportunities for re-assessment while the module continues to be delivered by the University. However, only credit from failed modules that are passed at the first re-assessment attempt may be counted towards an award. Marks achieved through re-assessment will be capped at 50% for the purposes of calculating the overall average mark and determining classification for an award; the actual and latest mark achieved through re-assessment will be the mark recorded on the transcript; or
 - (ii) re-register for and re-take the whole module; all marks achieved will replace all previously achieved marks but shall be flagged on the transcript to indicate that the module has been taken previously. Should the candidate subsequently wish to use the credit from such a module towards an award they must pass the re-taken module at the first attempt and the marks will be capped at 50% for the purposes of calculating the overall average mark and determining classification; or
 - (iii) take another module in its place; the mark for this module will be recorded as the actual mark and will not be capped.

9.5 In the absence of any extenuating circumstances¹¹, candidates will not normally be permitted a re-assessment opportunity to improve the mark for any module they have passed.

10. Recognised Prior Learning

10.1 Credit attributed to previous certificated or experiential learning may contribute up to one third of the total credit required for a postgraduate award. Applications for recognised prior learning to contribute to a University of Liverpool award will be considered in accordance with the relevant University policy.

¹¹ Please see the Policy on Extenuating Circumstances in Relation to Performance in Assessments and Examinations, Appendix M to the Code of Practice on Assessment for further information about extenuating circumstances.

Glossary of Terms

Carried forward marks

Marks gained at a second or subsequent attempt at assessment are normally capped and carried forward as 50%. (See also flagged mark.)

Co-requisite

Module A is a co-requisite for module B if it must be taken along with module B.

Credit

A quantitative measure of learning achievement. Credit is normally awarded for the achievement of a set of specified learning outcomes and is related to the amount of learning needed to achieve the learning outcomes.

Flagged mark

A mark is flagged when it is achieved at a second or subsequent attempt at assessment (unless a Board of Examiners (or a Chair of a Board of Examiners acting on behalf of the Board) has determined that on the grounds of ill-health or other special circumstances, the assessment should be regarded as a first attempt). When a mark is flagged, the actual mark achieved may appear on the student's transcript of studies but is shown as having been achieved at a second or subsequent attempt. For the purpose of determining a student's final degree classification, however, a flagged mark is capped at 50%.

Mandatory

A module is mandatory because competence is a pre-requisite for everything else, hence a pass in the module is essential. This status should be used sparingly.

Module

A discrete component of a programme of study, having stated learning outcomes, teaching and learning opportunities to achieve those outcomes and assessment tasks to enable students to demonstrate achievement of the outcomes. Modules which are not designated 'mandatory', 'required', 'co-requisite or 'pre-requisite' (see definitions in this glossary) are *de facto* 'optional'. In some programmes, however, it may be a requirement that specified modules which are taken on an optional basis must be passed for a student to progress or be awarded a degree. In these circumstances, this should be made clear in the programme specification and in the information provided to students both at the time of module selection and at the commencement of teaching on the module.

Optional non-compensatable

A module is optional non-compensatable when it can be selected on an optional basis in some programmes but once selected must be passed in order for a student to achieve the award.

Pre-requisite

Module A is a prerequisite for Module B if A must have been taken before B can be taken.

Programme

Structured teaching and learning provision leading to one or more awards.

Required

A module which must be taken.

Semester

A twelve week teaching period.

CODE OF PRACTICE ON ASSESSMENT – APPENDIX C
University Framework Postgraduate Modular Provision
2015-16 to 2023-24

University Framework for postgraduate modular provision

Key principles at a glance

Entry Point	Master of Research	Other Master's degrees	Postgraduate Diploma	Postgraduate Certificate	Postgraduate Award	Standalone modules
Exit Awards	PG Diploma PG Cert PG Award	PG Diploma PG Cert PG Award	PG Cert PG Award	Postgraduate Award	None	May accumulate credit towards an award within maximum registration period
Credit required	Minimum of 180/ Maximum of 240	Minimum of 180/ Maximum of 240	Minimum of 120 but less than 180	Minimum of 60 but less than 120	Minimum of 30 but less than 60	As stated in module specifications
'Taught' module credit values	2.5 or 5 or 7.5 or 10 or 15 or 15 or 20 or 30 or 40 or 45					
Research or independent study modules	One or more research project modules totalling at least 120 credits where at least one module provides a minimum of 30 credits	One or two research or independent study modules totalling at least 60 credits where at least one module provides a minimum of 30 credits	May include a maximum of 30 credits of research or independent study modules	May include a maximum of 30 credits of research or independent study modules	None	As selected by candidate but must comply with stated requirements where seeking an award
Level of study	All FHEQ Level 7	Either all FHEQ level 7 or up to 30 credits at FHEQ level 6 (or up to 30 credits of the Open Languages ¹² modules at levels 4, 5 or 6)		Either all at FHEQ level 7 or up to 20 credits at FHEQ level 6 (or up to 30 credits of the Open Languages ¹³ modules at levels 4, 5 or 6)	Either all at FHEQ level 7 or up to 10 credits at FHEQ level 6	As stated in module specification but must comply with stated requirements where seeking an award

¹² The Open Languages Framework can be accessed at <https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/languages/>

¹³ The Open Languages Framework can be accessed at <https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/languages/>

CODE OF PRACTICE ON ASSESSMENT – APPENDIX C
University Framework Postgraduate Modular Provision
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Entry Point	Master of Research	Other Master's degrees	Postgraduate Diploma	Postgraduate Certificate	Postgraduate Award	Standalone modules
Pass mark	50%	50% including any FHEQ level 6 modules to be recognised for postgraduate award				50% for FHEQ level 7 modules; 40% for undergraduate modules but must achieve at least 50% in FHEQ level 6 modules which are to contribute credit towards a postgraduate award

CODE OF PRACTICE ON ASSESSMENT – APPENDIX C
University Framework Postgraduate Modular Provision
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Entry Point	Master of Research	Other Master's degrees	Postgraduate Diploma	Postgraduate Certificate	Postgraduate Award	Standalone modules
Classification criteria	<p>Merit: an overall average mark of at least 60% in research module(s); and an overall average mark of at least 60%.</p> <p>Distinction: an overall average mark of at least 70% in research module(s); and an overall average mark of at least 70%.</p>	<p>Merit: an overall average mark of at least 60% in research or independent study module(s); 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%.</p> <p>Distinction: an overall average mark of at least 70% in research or independent study module(s); 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%.</p>	<p>Merit: 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%.</p> <p>Distinction: 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%.</p>		<p>Merit: achieve an overall average mark of at least 60%.</p> <p>Distinction: achieve an overall average mark of at least 70%.</p>	<p>As stated for each award. Modules must be passed at the first or second attempt. Where modules taken exceed the credit required for an award only the successfully completed the modules for which the candidate first registered will be included in the calculation of the overall mark and determination of classification.</p>
Periods of Registration	<p>Minimum of 12 months/ Maximum of six years</p>	<p>Minimum of 12 months/ Maximum of six years</p>	<p>Minimum of 30 weeks/ Maximum of four years</p>	<p>Minimum of 15 weeks/ Maximum of three years</p>	<p>Minimum of 8 weeks/ Maximum of two years</p>	<p>Indefinite but must complete the credit required for an award within the stated maximum registration period</p>

CODE OF PRACTICE ON ASSESSMENT – APPENDIX C
University Framework Postgraduate Modular Provision
2015-16 to 2023-24

Entry Point	Master of Research	Other Master's degrees	Postgraduate Diploma	Postgraduate Certificate	Postgraduate Award	Standalone modules
'Normal' periods of Study	FT: 12 months PT: up to three years	FT: 12 months PT: up to three years	FT: 30 weeks PT: two years	FT: 15 weeks PT: one year	FT: 8 weeks PT: 6 months	Indefinite but must complete the credit required for an award within the stated maximum registration period
Re-assessment	One re-assessment opportunity in each failed assessment component per module to be taken at the next available opportunity, normally no later than 12 months after the date of the failed assessment and within the maximum registration period. Marks achieved at re-assessment capped at 50% for the purposes of calculating the overall average mark and degree classification.					Unlimited attempts but only modules passed at the first or second attempt can contribute credit towards an award.
Compensation	'Taught' modules totalling up to 20 credits with marks in the range 40-49% deemed compensatable where the overall average mark is 50% (not applicable to online programmes delivered in partnership with Laureate Online Education and non-modular non-semesterised programmes with > one year duration)				None	None
RPL	Recognised Prior Learning may contribute up to one third of the credit required for the award					N/A