

**UNIVERSITY OF ESSEX**

**PARTNER INSTITUTION: TAVISTOCK AND PORTMAN NHS FOUNDATION TRUST**

**RULES OF ASSESSMENT FOR TAUGHT MASTERS DEGREES 2016-17**

DATE OF ISSUE: JULY 2016

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APPLICABLE TO:                   TAUGHT MASTERS DEGREES  
  - POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMAS (EXIT AWARD)  
  - POSTGRADUATE CERTIFICATES (EXIT AWARD)

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**1. PREAMBLE**

- a) These rules apply to full-time and part-time study and should be read in conjunction with the relevant Programme Structure, Programme Specification and module outlines. The module outlines will give details of assessment arrangements. The Programme Structure will identify which modules are core for the Course.
  - b) A taught module is any assessed component excluding the dissertation. A core module must be taken as part of the programme structure and passed, with no condonement of marks below a pass allowed. A compulsory module must be taken but can be condoned.
  - c) All Masters degrees can be awarded with distinction or merit.
  - d) No classification can be given to Postgraduate Diplomas or Postgraduate Certificates that are exit awards from the taught Master degree course.
  - e) It is for the Board of Examiners to determine whether the criteria for an award have been satisfied.
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**2. PASS MARK**

- a) The pass mark for all modules is 50. Credits are only awarded if the module is passed. In cases where failure with a mark of 40 is condoned, the credits are not awarded.
  - b) For modules which contain a clinical component with a Pass/Fail outcome, the module can only be passed if the clinical component is completed and passed. If the clinical component is not passed the mark for any coursework component(s) within the module will be recorded, but the module aggregate mark will be zero and any credits for the module will not be awarded.
  - c) For the purposes of these rules taught module averages, the overall weighted average for the taught modules and the mark for the dissertation will be rounded to the nearest whole number – i.e. 49.5 will count as 50, 49.4 as 49.
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### **3. PROGRESSION FROM YEAR ONE**

- 3.1** In order to progress **from Year One to Year Two**, a student must normally successfully complete all Year One modules, including passing all taught core modules.
  - 3.2** If a student does not meet the requirements to progress, he/she must undertake the necessary reassessment prior to the next academic Stage in order to fulfil the requirement to progress. The reassessment must be undertaken in accordance with Section 6.
  - 3.3** If, following reassessment, a student has failed a core module for the Masters degree, but the module is not designated as core for the Postgraduate Diploma and/or the Postgraduate Certificate, then he/she may be permitted to proceed to the next academic year; however, the student must be informed that they can only be considered for an exit award of a Postgraduate Diploma or a Postgraduate Certificate.
  - 3.4** If, following reassessment, a student has failed a core module for the Masters degree, which is also designated as core for the Postgraduate Diploma or Postgraduate Certificate, the student will not be permitted to proceed, as outlined in 8.1.2.
  - 3.5** If following reassessment, a student has failed a non-core module, then he/she may be permitted to proceed to the next academic year. The student must be informed that failure to pass all Year One modules may mean that the student will not be able to achieve the award of a Masters degree. In this instance the student would then be considered for the exit award of either a Postgraduate Diploma or Postgraduate Certificate.
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### **4. PROGRESSION FROM YEAR TWO**

- 4.1** In order to progress **from Year Two to Year Three**, a student must normally successfully complete all Year Two modules, including passing all taught core modules.
- 4.2** If a student does not meet the requirements to progress, he/she must undertake the necessary reassessment prior to the next academic Stage in order to fulfil the requirement to progress. The reassessment must be undertaken in accordance with Section 6.
- 4.3** If, following reassessment, a student has failed a core module for the Masters degree, but the module is not designated as core for the Postgraduate Diploma and/or the Postgraduate Certificate, then he/she may be permitted to proceed to the next academic year; however, the student must be informed that they can only be considered for an exit award of a Postgraduate Diploma or a Postgraduate Certificate.
- 4.4** If, following reassessment, a student has failed a core module for the Masters degree, which is also designated as core for the Postgraduate Diploma or Postgraduate Certificate, the student will not be permitted to proceed, as outlined in 8.1.2.
- 4.5** If following reassessment, a student has failed a non-core module, then he/she may be permitted to proceed to the next academic year. The student must be informed that failure to pass all Year Two modules may mean that the student will not be able to achieve the award of a Masters degree. In this instance the student would then be

considered for the exit award of either a Postgraduate Diploma or Postgraduate Certificate.

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## 5. OBSERVATIONS

- 5.1 Where applicable, if a student has been unable to achieve the required number of hours of observation for a module, which in certain circumstances may have prevented the student from completing the assessment, then the Board of Examiners may defer the decision and permit the student to proceed to the next year of study.
  - 5.2 The student will be required to complete the outstanding observation hours and the assessment for the module, during the next academic year.
  - 5.3 Any outstanding hours of observation and assessment must be completed and passed within two academic years of the student starting the module or the module will be failed.
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## 6. REASSESSMENT

### 6.1 Second attempts at the assessment for taught modules

- a) Students may have a second attempt for module(s) that have been failed, **up to a maximum of 60 taught credits across the course.**
  - b) No second attempt at the assessment for a module is permitted prior to the Board of Examiners meeting where marks are confirmed.
  - c) The maximum mark that will be recorded for a module as a result of a second attempt is 50, unless there are substantiated extenuating circumstances accepted by the Board of Examiners.
  - d) The mark for the second attempt will count even where it is lower than the original mark.
- 6.1.2 If a student fails a module on the second attempt at the assessment no further attempt is allowed unless there are substantiated extenuating circumstances accepted by the Board of Examiners.
- 6.1.3 Where the Board of Examiners permits a student to have a second attempt at the assessment for a module this only applies to an individual assignment/examination for the module that has been failed. A student cannot be permitted to retake a module unless permitted by the Board of Examiners because of substantiated extenuating circumstances.

### 6.2 Re-submission of Dissertations

- a) Re-submission of dissertations is only permitted in the following circumstances:
  - i) Either substantiated extenuating circumstances accepted at the discretion of the Board of Examiners; or
  - ii) Where the original mark awarded is at least 40 and the Board of Examiners judges that the work required does not include any additional experimental or practical work.

- b) Re-submission is subject to the following conditions:
- i) A dissertation must normally be re-submitted within two months of the formal notification of permission to resubmit; in cases of extenuating circumstances, this may be extended to a maximum of twelve months;
  - ii) A dissertation which has been re-submitted because of a marginal fail shall be awarded no more than the minimum pass mark; in the case of re-submissions because of extenuating circumstances, the full range of marks shall be available to examiners.
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## **7. ELIGIBILITY FOR AN AWARD**

### **7.1 THE MASTERS DEGREE**

#### **7.1.1 Pass**

To be awarded a pass in the Masters a student should:

- a) Subject to (d), obtain 180 credits at Masters level (level 7).
- b) Pass all the taught core modules and the dissertation.
- c) Pass at least 60 taught module credits at the first attempt unless there are substantiated extenuating circumstances accepted by the Board of Examiners.
- d) Failure with a mark of 40 or more for up to 40 credits in non-core taught modules, will be condoned provided the overall weighted average for all the taught modules is 50.

#### **7.1.2 A Pass with Merit or Distinction**

Results for a Pass with Merit or Distinction are calculated by two methods, known as 'Dominant Quality' and 'Arithmetic Average'. Students will receive the more favourable result of the two.

#### **7.1.3 Pass with Merit**

##### **a) *Dominant Quality***

To obtain a merit a student should:

- i) Obtain 180 credits at the first attempt, except in the case of substantiated extenuating circumstances accepted by the Board of Examiners.
- ii) Obtain 120 credits at 60 or above, which must include the dissertation.
- iii) Have no module mark below 50.

##### **b) *Arithmetic Average***

To obtain a merit a student should:

- i) Obtain 180 credits at the first attempt except in the case of substantiated extenuating circumstances accepted by the Board of Examiners.
- ii) Obtain 100 credits at 60 or above, which must include the dissertation.
- iii) Have an overall weighted average mark of 60 or more.
- iv) Have no module mark below 50.

#### 7.1.4 Pass with Distinction

##### a) *Dominant Quality*

To obtain a distinction a student should:

- i) Obtain 180 credits at the first attempt, except in the case of substantiated extenuating circumstances accepted by the Board of Examiners.
- ii) Obtain 120 credits at 70 or above, which must include the dissertation.
- iii) Have no module mark below 50.

##### b) *Arithmetic Average*

To obtain a distinction a student should:

- i) Obtain 180 credits at the first attempt except in the case of substantiated extenuating circumstances accepted by the Board of Examiners.
- ii) Obtain 100 credits at 70 or above, which must include the dissertation.
- iii) Have an overall weighted average mark of 70 or more.
- iv) Have no module mark below 50.

### 7.2 THE POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA and CERTIFICATE

Where a student is either unable to complete their studies or does not achieve the required credits to be awarded a Masters degree, then the award of either a Postgraduate Diploma or a Postgraduate Certificate will be considered.

The published programme structure will identify which taught modules have to be passed in order to obtain a Postgraduate Certificate or Postgraduate Diploma. In many cases it will be possible to obtain the necessary credits for a Postgraduate Diploma by using dissertation credits as well as taught module credits.

#### 7.2.1 To be awarded a **POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA** a student should:

- a) Normally complete and have been assessed for all the taught Masters modules.
- b) Subject to (e), obtain 120 credits at Masters level (level 7).
- c) Pass all taught core modules.
- d) Pass at least 60 taught module credits at the first attempt.
- e) Failure with a mark of 40 or more for up to 40 credits in non-core modules will be condoned provided that the overall weighted average for the course is 50.

Credits obtained for the dissertation can be used when considering whether a Postgraduate Diploma can be awarded, provided that the above criteria have been met.

#### 7.2.2 To be awarded a **POSTGRADUATE CERTIFICATE** a student should:

- a) Subject to (d), obtain 60 taught module credits at Masters level (level 7).
- b) Pass all taught core modules.
- c) Pass 20 credits at the first attempt.
- d) Failure with a mark of 40 or more for up to 20 credits, in non-core units will be condoned.

Dissertation credits cannot be used to obtain a Postgraduate Certificate.

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## **8. ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES**

### **8.1 POWERS OF THE BOARD OF EXAMINERS**

The Board of Examiners shall have the following powers:

- a) Confirming the taught module marks achieved, including any resit marks presented to the Board, and awarding credit.
- b) Confirming dissertation/project marks.
- c) Confirming any opportunities for second attempts at the assessment for modules, including resubmission of the dissertation.
- d) Considering each student's marks' profile so that they can be advised on progression and the range of possible award outcomes, including whether it is possible for them to make use of dissertation credits.
- e) Considering extenuating circumstances as necessary and their implications for progression and results.
- f) Determining the appropriate award for each student.
- g) Requiring any student whose performance is below that required to progress or achieve an award to withdraw from the University.

**8.1.1** An interim Board of Examiners meeting shall normally be held at the end of the taught module assessment or at the end of a stage of study for a part-time course.

**8.1.2** Students will be required to withdraw where the accumulation of further credit would not result in the achievement of any postgraduate award according to the Rules of Assessment.

### **8.2 EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES**

Extenuating circumstances can only be considered by the Board of Examiners if the student has completed an extenuating circumstances report by the agreed deadline. When substantiated extenuating circumstances are accepted by the Board of Examiners it may use its discretion to depart from the Rules of Assessment where this is necessary to achieve a fair result.

### **8.3 EXAMINATION BOARD DISCRETION**

Except in the case of extenuating circumstances (see 8.2 above), the Board of Examiners does not have powers of discretion in relation to the application of the Rules of Assessment.

Approved Senate July 2016