

University of Essex

Rules of Assessment for Full-Time Taught Masters Degrees 2025/2026

Department of Psychosocial and Psychoanalytic Studies

MA Psychodynamic Counselling and Psychotherapy (24 Months)

1 Preamble

a) In addition to the standard Rules of Assessment for students on Taught Masters Degrees, the following rules are applicable in relation to the MA Psychodynamic Counselling and Psychotherapy (24 months). These rules should be read in conjunction with the relevant Programme Structure, Programme Specification and Module Directory entries. The Module Directory will give detail of assessment arrangements. The Programme Structure will identify which modules are core for the programmes.

b) A taught module is any assessed component excluding the dissertation or equivalent. A core module must be taken as part of the programme structure and passed, with no condonement of marks below a pass allowed.

c) It is for the Board of Examiners to determine whether the criteria for an award have been satisfied.

2 Pass Mark

a) The pass mark for all modules of the Masters degree 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 the purposes of these rules taught module averages, the overall weighted average for the taught modules and the mark for the dissertation or equivalent will be rounded to the nearest whole number - i.e. 49.5 will count as 50, 49.4 as 49.

3 Progression from Year One to Year Two

3.1 To progress from Year One to Year Two, students should:

- a) Pass all-core modules;
- b) Complete a minimum of 40 clinical hours;
- c) Be in weekly personal therapy sessions (for a minimum of 40 weeks) throughout this academic year;
- d) Receive a pass in their supervisor's report(s).
- e) Be in weekly supervision while seeing clients, throughout this Academic Year unless an alternative arrangement has been formally agreed with their personal tutor and supervisor.

Where the Board accepts a student's extenuating circumstances, the requirements to pass Year One must be satisfied before progressing to Year Two.

If a student has not completed the required clinical hours and/or received a pass in their supervisor's report by the time modules have been completed, they will not be eligible to progress.

4 Eligibility for an Award

4.1 The Masters Degree

4.1.1 Pass

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

- a) Attempt 180 credits, of which 140 must be passed, with remaining credits condoned subject to (g);
- b) Pass all the taught core modules and the dissertation or equivalent;
- c) Complete 150 clinical hours over the course of the degree;

- d) Be in weekly personal therapy (for a minimum of 40 weeks) in each year of the degree;
- e) Receive a pass in their supervisor's report(s).
- f) Be in weekly supervision while seeing clients, throughout Year One and Year Two of the degree unless an alternative arrangement has been formally agreed with their personal tutor and supervisor.
- g) 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.

4.1.2 Pass with Merit

To obtain a Merit, in addition to achieving the requirements for a pass, a student should:

Have an overall weighted average mark of 60 or more.

4.1.3 Pass with Distinction

To obtain a Distinction, in addition to achieving the requirements for a pass, a student should:

Have an overall weighted average mark of 70 or more.

5. Exit Awards

5.1 Where a student is either unable to complete their studies or does not achieve the required credits to be awarded a Masters, then the award of a Postgraduate Diploma or a Postgraduate Certificate will be considered. Students can be considered for the award of a Distinction and Merit for an exit award.

Departments will identify on the published programme structure which taught modules have to be passed in order to obtain these exit awards. In some cases it will be possible to obtain the necessary credits for a PG Diploma by using dissertation or equivalent credits as well as taught module credits.

Dissertation or equivalent credits cannot be used to obtain a Postgraduate Certificate.

5.1.1 These awards do not lead to eligibility to apply for registration with the British Association for Psychotherapy and Counselling.

5.2 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 (d), obtain 120 credits at Masters Level (Level 7).
- c) Pass all taught core modules.
- d) Failure with a mark of 40 or more for up to 30 credits in non-core modules may be condoned provided that the overall weighted average for the 120 PG Diploma credits is 50.

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

A Pass with Merit or Distinction

Where a student has more than 120 credits, the best credits compatible with the structure for a Postgraduate Diploma giving at least 120 credits will be used to calculate the overall weighted average mark.

Pass with Merit

To obtain a Merit, in addition to achieving the requirements for a Postgraduate Diploma, a student should:

Have an overall weighted average mark for the 120 PG Diploma credits of 60 or more.

Pass with Distinction

To obtain a Distinction, in addition to achieving the requirements for a Postgraduate Diploma, a student should:

Have an overall weighted average mark for the 120 PG Diploma credits of 70 or more.

5.3 To be awarded a Postgraduate Certificate a student should:

- a) Attempt 60 credits at Masters Level (Level 7) of which 40 must be passed, with the remaining credits condoned, subject to (c).
- b) Pass all taught core modules.
- c) Failure with a mark of 40 or more for up to 20 Level 7 credits, in non-core modules, may be condoned.

A Pass with Merit or Distinction

Where a student has more than 60 credits, the best credits compatible with the structure for the Postgraduate Certificate giving at least 60 credits will be used to calculate the overall weighted average mark.

Pass with Merit

To obtain a Merit, in addition to achieving the requirements for a Postgraduate Certificate, a student should:

Have an overall weighted average mark for the 60 PG Certificate credits of 60 or more.

Pass with Distinction

To obtain a Distinction, in addition to achieving the requirements for a Postgraduate Certificate, a student should:

Have an overall weighted average mark for the 60 PG Certificate credits of 70 or more.

6 Reassessment

6.1 Reassessment for Taught Modules

- a) Students who have failed any taught module will have one opportunity to undertake reassessment in that module.
- 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 Board of Examiners will reinstate the module mark for the previous attempt at a failed module if it is higher than the mark for the most recent attempt.

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 any individual assignment/examination for the module that has been failed.

6.1.4 A student cannot be permitted to repeat a module unless permitted by the Board of Examiners because of substantiated extenuating circumstances.

6.1.5 Where a student has not met the requirements to pass and is eligible to undertake reassessment and/or have failed marks condoned, the Board of Examiners will give the student the opportunity to undertake reassessment at the next available opportunity.

6.2 Re-submission of Dissertations or Equivalent

a) Re-submission of dissertations or equivalent 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 current Dissertation Module Aggregate Mark is at least 40 and the Board of Examiners judges that the work required to achieve a pass does not include any additional experimental or practical work.

b) Re-submission is subject to the following conditions:

i) A dissertation or equivalent 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 or equivalent which has been re-submitted because of a marginal fail shall be awarded no more than a maximum mark of 50; in the case of re-submissions because of extenuating circumstances, the full range of marks shall be

available to examiners.

6.3 Personal Therapy, Clinical Hours, Clinical Supervision and Supervisor's Report Requirements

In order to progress to the next year or to be eligible for the Masters students must:

- a) Complete the required clinical hours for the year, and 150 clinical hours across the course of the degree for the Masters;
- b) Have been in weekly personal therapy;
- c) Be in weekly supervision while seeing clients throughout Year One and Year Two of the degree unless an alternative arrangement has been formally agreed with their personal tutor and supervisor.
- d) Receive a pass in their supervisor's report(s).

If a student has not completed the required clinical hours, not been in weekly personal therapy for a minimum of 40 weeks, not been in weekly supervision while seeing clients and/or received a pass in their supervisor's report by the time the taught modules have been completed in the relevant years(s) of study, they will not be eligible to progress to the next year or be eligible for the Masters' award.

6.3.1 Reassessment Opportunities for the Supervisor's Report(s)

A score of 3 is required in order to obtain a pass in the Supervisor's Report(s). A score of 1 is a fail, and a 2 is a borderline fail.

- a) Where a student is given a '1' at either the end of Year One or the end of Year Two report the fail has professional competency implications so this fail would stand with no reassessment possible. The student would only be considered for an appropriate exit award.
- a) Where a student is given a '2' at the end of Year One then they would be given a reassessment opportunity over the summer and a new supervisor's report would be

submitted and considered at the September Resit Board of Examiners' meeting. If the grade of '2' still remained, the student would not be permitted to progress to the next year of study, but would be permitted to repeat the clinical aspects of their current year (PA968-7-FY) on a part-time basis before proceeding to the next year of the course.

- b) Where a student is given a '2' at the end of Year Two then they would be given a reassessment opportunity over the summer and a new supervisor's report would be submitted and considered at the September Resit Board of Examiner's Meeting. If the grade of '2' remained, the student would not be eligible for the Masters award. The Board of Examiners would allow students to repeat the clinical aspects of their current year (PA969-7-FY) on a part-time basis.

6.3.2 Reassessment opportunities for Clinical Hours

When determining whether a student may progress from Year One to Year Two, the Board of Examiners would allow students to make up the clinical hours shortfall over the summer. If the student fails to make up the shortfall by the September Resit Board, they would not be permitted to progress to the next year of study. Where a student has not passed PA968-7-FY due to the clinical hours shortfall only, a part-time repeat in this module would not count as an additional attempt. The Board of Examiners would allow students to complete the required clinical hours with part-time attendance on PA968-7-FY within a specified period of months before proceeding to the next year of the course. This would normally be no longer than six months.

When determining eligibility for an award, the Board of Examiners would allow students to complete the required clinical hours whilst attending PA969-7-FY on a part-time basis within a specified period of months in order to complete the degree. This would normally be no longer than six months.

6.3.3 Reassessment opportunities for the Personal Therapy requirement

If a student has not been in weekly personal therapy (for a minimum of 40 weeks) at the end of Year One, they cannot proceed to the next year of the course. If they have not met this requirement, the Board of Examiners will require the student to intermit for

a year to be in weekly personal therapy (for a minimum of 40 weeks). The student will be asked to provide proof from a therapist before being allowed to progress to the next year of their course.

If a student has not been in weekly personal therapy (for a minimum of 40 weeks in both years) at the end of Year Two, they will not be eligible for the Master's award. The Board of Examiners would allow students to undertake reassessment in weekly personal therapy without other attendance on the course. The student will be asked to provide proof from a therapist before eligible to graduate.

6.3.4 Reassessment opportunities for weekly supervision

If a student has not been in weekly supervision while seeing clients at the end of Year One and did not agree an alternative schedule with their personal tutor and supervisor, they cannot proceed to the next year of the course. The Board of Examiners would allow them to repeat the clinical aspects of their current year (PA968-7-FY) on a part-time basis before proceeding to the year of the course.

If a student has not been in weekly supervision while seeing clients at the end of Year Two and did not agree an alternative schedule with their personal tutor and supervisor, they will not be eligible for the Master's award. The Board of Examiners would allow them to repeat the clinical aspects of their current year (PA969-7-FY) on a part-time basis.

7 Assessment Procedures

7.1 Powers of the Board of Examiners

The Board of Examiners shall have the following powers:

- a) Confirming the taught module marks achieved, including any marks for reassessment presented to the Board, and awarding credit.
- b) Confirming that the requirements for clinical hours, clinical supervision, the Supervisor's Report(s), and therapy sessions have been met, including any reassessment opportunities.

- c) Confirming the mark for the dissertation or equivalent, including any mark for resubmission.
- d) Confirming any opportunities for reassessment for modules, including resubmission of the dissertation or equivalent; and any opportunities for condonement.
- e) Considering each student's marks' profile so that they can be advised on the range of possible award outcomes, including whether it is possible for them to make use of dissertation or equivalent credits.
- f) Considering extenuating circumstances as necessary and their implications for results.
- g) Determining the appropriate award for each student.
- h) Determining whether a student can progress to the second year.
- i) Requiring any student whose performance is below that required to achieve an award to withdraw from the University.

7.1.1 An Interim Board of Examiners Meeting shall normally be held at the end of a year of study and at the end of the taught module assessment.

7.1.2 Where a student has not met the requirements to pass and is eligible to undertake reassessment and/or have failed marks condoned, the Board of Examiners will give the student the opportunity to undertake reassessment at the next available opportunity.

7.1.3 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.

7.2 Extenuating Circumstances

If you submit Extenuating Circumstances and they are accepted as valid, the Board of Examiners may be able to offer additional assessment opportunities, such as reassessment for uncapped module marks or voluntary reassessment, in line with the Extenuating Circumstances [Policy](#) and [guidelines](#). When extenuating circumstances are accepted, the Board of Examiners will use its discretion to determine what if any action should be taken in accordance with the powers set out in the Policy. Except in the case of accepted extenuating circumstances, Boards of Examiners do not have powers of discretion in relation to the application of the rules of assessment.

End

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