

**University of Essex**

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

**School of Sport, Rehabilitation and Exercise Sciences**

MSc Physiotherapy (Pre-registration) (24 months – full-time)

**1. Preamble**

a) These rules apply to the full-time (24 months) Masters programme named above. The rules should be read in conjunction with the relevant Programme Structure, Programme Specification and online Module Directory entries. The Module Directory will give detail of assessment arrangements. The Programme Structure will identify which modules are core for the programme.

b) A taught module is any assessed component excluding the dissertation or equivalent, which for this programme is SE760: Research Project. A core module must be taken as part of the programme structure and passed, with no condonement of marks below a pass allowed.

c) All Masters degrees can be awarded with Distinction or Merit

d) Successful completion of the MSc also leads to eligibility to apply for registration with the Health and Care Professions Council. There are two exit awards of Postgraduate Diploma – the Postgraduate Diploma in Physiotherapy (Pre-registration) and the Postgraduate Diploma in Health Studies. Only the Postgraduate Diploma in Physiotherapy (Pre-registration) leads to eligibility to apply for registration with the Health and Care Professions Council.

e) 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 however the module mark will still be used to calculate the overall weighted average for the taught modules and the overall weighted average.

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.

c) Clinical placements are marked on a pass/fail basis.

## **3. Progression**

Students are permitted to progress to Year Two while trailing a maximum of 30 credits.

## **4. Eligibility for the Award of the Masters Degree**

### **Pass**

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

a) Obtain 180 credits at Masters Level (Level 7);

b) Pass all assessment components in core modules.

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

### **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.

### **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.

## **4.2 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, then the award of either 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 a PG Certificate or PG Diploma. In many 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.

#### **4.2.1 To be awarded a Postgraduate Diploma in Physiotherapy (Preregistration)**

a student should:

- a) Obtain 150 credits at Masters Level (Level 7);
- b) Pass all assessment components in all modules with the exception of SE760.

This award leads to eligibility to apply for registration with the Health and Care Professions Council.

#### **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 150 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 150 PG Diploma credits of 70 or more.

#### **4.2.2 To be awarded a Postgraduate Diploma in Health Studies** a student should:

- a) Attempt 120 credits at Masters Level (Level 7) of which 90 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 30 credits in non-core modules may be

condoned provided that the overall weighted average for the 120 PG Diploma credits is 50 or above.

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.

For purposes of this exit award, all modules are considered to be compulsory.

This award **does not** lead to eligibility to apply for registration with the Health and Care Professions Council.

### **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.

**4.2.3** To be awarded a **Postgraduate Certificate in Health Studies** a student should:

a) Attempt 60 taught module credits at Masters Level (Level 7) of which 40 must be passed, with the remaining credits condoned, subject to (b);

b) Failure with a mark of 40 or more for up to 20 credits in non-core modules will be condoned.

This award **does not** lead to eligibility to apply for registration with the Health and Care Professions Council.

For the purposes of this exit award, all modules are considered to be compulsory.

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

Where a student has more than 60 credits, the best credits compatible with the structure for a 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.

## **5. Reassessment**

### **5.1 Reassessment for taught modules**

a) Students who have failed any taught modules may have a second attempt at the assessment for the module(s);

b) Where all individual components of assessment must be passed in order to pass the module only one opportunity to resubmit the failed component will be offered;

c) The Board of Examiners will reinstate the module mark for a previous attempt at a failed module if it is higher than the mark for the most recent attempt;

d) When a reassessment opportunity in a component leading to a numerical mark is offered the module aggregate will be calculated as follows:

i) Where students are not required to pass all the individual components of a module, the maximum mark that will be recorded for a module as a result of a second attempt is 50;

ii) Where students are required to pass all individual components of assessment, a pre-resubmission module aggregate will be calculated using the failed mark(s):

- If the pre-resubmission module aggregate was below the pass mark then the resubmission can improve the module aggregate mark up to the pass mark only.

- If the pre-resubmission module aggregate was above the pass mark then the resubmission cannot improve the module aggregate mark. The module aggregate is capped at the pre-resubmission aggregate.

- Where the mark for the second attempt is lower than the mark for the first attempt, the final module aggregate will be that which is calculated using the mark of the most recent attempt.

**5.5.1** If a student fails a module on the second attempt at the assessment no further attempt is allowed and the student will be required to withdraw unless there are substantiated extenuating circumstances accepted by the Board of Examiners.

**5.1.2** A student cannot be permitted to repeat a module unless there are extenuating circumstances accepted as valid by the Board of Examiners.

## **5.2 Reassessment for a clinical placement**

a) If a student fails a placement, they will be required to undertake and pass a full retrieval placement in the same speciality (as all placements are pass/fail).

b) Only two failed clinical placements are permitted to be retaken as a second attempt.

c) If a student who has already had two second attempts fails a third clinical placement, they will be required to withdraw, unless there are substantiated extenuating circumstances accepted by the Board of Examiners.

d) If a student fails a clinical placement on the second attempt at the assessment no further attempt is allowed and the student will be required to withdraw, unless there are substantiated extenuating circumstances accepted by the Board of Examiners.

### **5.3 Resubmission of Dissertation or equivalent**

a) Resubmission 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) Resubmission 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 resubmitted because of a marginal fail shall be awarded no more than a maximum mark of 50; in the case of resubmission because of extenuating circumstances, the full range of marks shall be available to examiners.

## **6. Assessment Procedures**

### **6.1 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 the mark for the dissertation or equivalent, including any mark for resubmission;

- c) Confirming any opportunities for reassessment for modules, including resubmission of the dissertation or equivalent, and any opportunities for condonement;
- d) 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;
- e) Considering extenuating circumstances as necessary and their implications for results;
- f) Determining the appropriate award for each student;
- g) Determining whether a student can progress to Year Two;
- h) Requiring any student whose performance is below that required to achieve an award to withdraw from the University.

**6.1.2** 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.

## **6.2 In-Year Board of Examiners meetings**

An in-year Board of Examiners meeting may be convened where a student has failed an assignment on second submission or failed a second placement on first submission.

The Board of Examiners will either withdraw the student or, if they 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](#).

## 7. 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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