

University of Essex

Rules of Assessment for Part-Time (over 24 months) Taught Masters Degrees 2025-26

Kensington College of Business (KCB), United Kingdom (UK) / KCB Global, UK

- MSc Governance (24 months - part time) - blended delivery by KCB Global within the UK and internationally

1. Preamble

- a) These rules apply to part-time (24 months) Masters programmes named above. The rules should be read in conjunction with the relevant Programme Structure, Programme Specification and Module Outlines. The Module Outlines will give detail of assessment arrangements. The Programme Structure will identify which modules are core for the programme (see c) below).
- b) A taught module is any assessed component excluding the dissertation, or equivalent, which for:
 - the MSc Governance programme is the Focused Dissertation (30 credits);
- c) A core module must be taken as part of the programme structure and passed, with no condonement of marks below a pass allowed. All modules within the MSc Governance are core and so must be passed. All individual module assessment components must be passed to achieve a pass in the module.
- d) All Masters degrees and exit awards can be awarded with Distinction or Merit.
- e) Successful completion of the MSc Governance course also leads to Graduate Membership (GradCG) of the Chartered Governance Institute UK and Ireland (CGI) and permission to use the GradCG post-nominals, under the Dual Award

arrangement. Students who do not pass all modules with a pass in all individual module assessment components (see d) above) will be considered for an unaccredited award, the MSc Governance Studies, and will not be eligible for Graduate Membership of the CGI.

- f) 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. Students must pass all modules, and all individual module assessment components, with a pass mark of 50 in order to successfully pass the module. Credits are only awarded if all individual module assessment components are passed, meaning that the module is passed.
- b) Where a student has attempted all modules but has not passed all modules and / or has not passed all individual assessment components for each module, they will be considered for the unaccredited award, the MSc Governance Studies. For the purposes of the MSc Governance Studies course all taught modules are compulsory and there might be scope for condonement. 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.
- c) 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

Students will still be permitted to progress to Year Two if they have failed modules following a reassessment attempt in Year One. However, they will no longer be on track for a Masters degree if they cannot be offered further reassessment attempts because they do not have extenuating circumstances accepted by the Board of Examiners.

In cases where students can be offered further reassessment attempts, due to substantiated extenuating circumstances, they will be permitted to progress to Year Two while trailing a maximum of 20 credits. "Trailing" means carrying forward the reassessment in up to 20 credits and undertaking it at the earliest opportunity offered by the College, during the next year of study.

The scenarios in which students will only be permitted to proceed if, depending on their results, they are still eligible for an exit award of a Postgraduate Diploma or a Postgraduate Certificate are as follows:

- i. Having failed a core module;
- ii. Having received a mark below 40 in a module;
- iii. Having failed more than 40 credits' worth of non-core modules with marks in the 40-49 range;
- iv. Students will only be permitted to proceed to Year Two if they still have sufficient taught credits left to study towards an award higher than the one for which they are already eligible at the end of Year One.

4. Eligibility for the Award of the Accredited Masters Degree: Masters in Governance

4.1 Pass

4.1.1 To be awarded a pass in the accredited **Masters in Governance** a student should:

- a) Obtain 180 credits at Masters Level (Level 7);
- b) Pass all taught modules, including achieving a pass in all individual assessment components, and pass the dissertation or equivalent;

4.1.2 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 Non-accredited Masters Exit Award: Masters in Governance Studies

Students who do not meet the pass requirements for an accredited Masters award can be considered for a non-accredited Masters award by the Board of Examiners if they meet the following criteria:

- a) Attempt 180 credits at Masters Level (Level 7) of which 140 must be passed, with the remaining credits condoned, subject to (c);
- b) Pass all taught core modules and the dissertation or equivalent;
- c) Failure with a mark of 40 or more for up to 40 credits in non-core taught modules, may be condoned provided the overall weighted average for all the taught modules is 50.
- d) This award can be passed with a Merit or Distinction as set out in paragraph 4.1.2 above.

Students who receive a Non-accredited Masters award will not be eligible for Graduate Membership of the CGI.

The Board of Examiners will determine if a student is eligible to proceed on or be awarded a non-accredited Master's degree. Where students have been transferred to the non-accredited Masters course but do not meet the requirements for the Masters award, the Board will consider them for a non-accredited exit award on their new course title as set out in paragraph 4.3 below.

4.3 The Non-accredited 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 non-accredited exit award of either a Postgraduate Diploma in Governance Studies or a Postgraduate Certificate in Governance Studies will be considered. Students can be considered for the award of a Distinction and Merit for a non-accredited exit award.

KCB Global will identify on the published programme structure which taught modules have to be passed in order to obtain a non-accredited 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.

Students who receive a non-accredited exit award will not be eligible for Graduate Membership of the CGI.

4.3.1 To be awarded a **Postgraduate Diploma (PG Diploma) in Governance 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.

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.

4.3.2 To be awarded a Postgraduate Certificate in Governance 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.

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 module(s) 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) Where a provisional mark for the first attempt at assessment indicates that a student has failed the module, the student will be permitted to undertake the second attempt at the failed module assessment component(s) in-year, prior to the next meeting of the Board of Examiners.
- d) The marks for the first and second attempts at reassessment will be presented to the Board of Examiners to ratify the fail of the first attempt and confirm the outcome of the second attempt.
- e) 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.
- f) 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.
- g) When a reassessment opportunity 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 (i.e. for the non-accredited MSc Governance Studies award or Exit

Awards), 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 (i.e. for the accredited MSc Governance award), 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 of 50 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.
- iii) 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 higher mark from the previous attempt.

5.1.2 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 (see Section 5.1.6).

5.1.3 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.

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

5.1.5 Students who have still failed modules after taking in-year reassessment during Year One will only be permitted to proceed with their studies if they meet the following criteria:

- (ii) have passed all core modules taken so far;
- (ii) still have enough new credits to study in Year 2 to be able to aim for an exit award without further reassessment in the failed modules, unless there are extenuating circumstances accepted by the Board of Examiners which permit another assessment attempt.

5.1.6 Following a failed in-year reassessment attempt during Year One, where further reassessment is permitted in some or all failed core modules, due to extenuating circumstances which have been accepted by the Board, the options offered by the Board of Examiners will be as follows:

- a) to delay proceeding to Year Two and to undertake reassessment without attendance; **OR**,
- b) to proceed to Year Two and carry forward a maximum of 20 failed core credits into Year Two and undertake reassessment at the earliest opportunity during Year Two. Carrying forward the reassessment in failed credits is called “trailing”; **OR**,
- c) to proceed to Year Two and study for an exit award only rather than undertaking some or all of the reassessment.

5.1.7 Where students have failed Year One modules, and no further reassessment can be offered, they will only be permitted to proceed to Year Two if they still have sufficient taught credits left to study towards an award higher than the one for which they are already eligible at the end of Year One. Where this is

not the case, they will be required to withdraw but will be considered for an exit award based only on the credits achieved up to that point.

5.1.8 Students from Year One who are permitted by the Board to trail reassessment in core modules into Year Two due to extenuating circumstances, will have their reassessment marks in the trailed modules considered alongside their Year Two marks at an Interim Board, which will make a progression decision. Where the trailed modules are failed again, students will not be given another attempt at the assessment unless there are extenuating circumstances accepted by the Board of Examiners which permit another assessment attempt.

5.2 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

6.1.1 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.

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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