

University of Essex

Partner Institution: Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust

Rules of Assessment for Postgraduate Diplomas 2025-2026

(where offered as a standalone award)

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 Programme.
- b) 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 Postgraduate Diplomas (where offered as a standalone award) can be awarded with Distinction and Merit.
- d) 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 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 and the overall weighted average for the taught modules 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

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, they must undertake the necessary reassessment prior to the next academic year in order to fulfil the requirement to progress. The reassessment must be undertaken in accordance with Section 5.

3.3 If, following reassessment, a student has failed a core module for the Postgraduate Diploma, but the module is not designated as core for the Postgraduate Certificate, then they 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 Certificate. Students can be considered for the award of a Distinction and Merit for an exit award.

3.4 If, following reassessment, a student has failed a core module for the Postgraduate Diploma, which is also designated as core for the Postgraduate Certificate, the student will not be permitted to proceed, as outlined in 7.1.2.

3.5 If following reassessment, a student has failed a non-core module, then they 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 Postgraduate Diploma. In this instance the student would then be considered for the exit award of either a Postgraduate Certificate. Students can be considered for the award of a Distinction and Merit for an exit award.

4. Observations

4.1 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.

4.2 The student will be required to complete the outstanding observation hours and the assessment for the module, during the next academic year.

4.3 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.

5. Reassessment

5.1 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 a previous attempt at a failed module if it is higher than the mark for the most recent 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.

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 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. Eligibility for an Award

6.1 The Postgraduate Diploma

6.1.1 Pass

To be awarded a pass in the Postgraduate Diploma a student should:

- a) Attempt 120 credits at Masters Level (Level 7) of which 80 must be passed, with the remaining credits condoned, subject to (c).
- b) Pass all the taught core modules.
- c) 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 the programme is 50.

6.1.2 A Pass with Merit or Distinction

6.1.3 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.

6.1.4 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.

6.2 The Postgraduate Certificate

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

6.2.1 Pass

To be awarded a pass in the 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 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.

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 any opportunities for reassessment for modules and any opportunities for condonement.
- c) Considering each student's marks' profile so that they can be advised on progression and the range of possible award outcomes.
- d) Considering extenuating circumstances as necessary and their implications for progression and results.
- e) Determining the appropriate award for each student.
- f) Requiring any student whose performance is below that required to progress or 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 the taught module assessment or at the end of a stage of study for a part-time programme.

7.1.2 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.

7.2 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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