

**UNIVERSITY OF ESSEX
GRADUATE SCHOOL**

RULES OF ASSESSMENT FOR TAUGHT MASTERS DEGREES

HEALTH AND HUMAN SCIENCES

MSc in Health Service Management

MSc in Infection Control

Masters Public Health (part-time)

MSc in Medical and Clinical Education

Masters in Musculoskeletal Practice

MSc in Supervisory and Reflective Practice

MRes in Health Studies

1. PREAMBLE

These rules apply to the modular Masters courses named above. The rules should be read in conjunction with the relevant Programme Structure, Programme Specification and on-line Module Directory entries. The Module Directory will give detail of assessment arrangements. The Programme Structure will identify which modules are core for the Course.

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.

All Masters degrees can be awarded with distinction or merit.

The maximum period for completion of studies using credit accumulation is six years (normally five years to complete all taught elements and a further one year to complete the dissertation (or equivalent)). The maximum period of study is measured from the point at which a student first registered for a module that was being used towards the award

The credit lifetime for any module is six years.

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

2. PASS MARK

The pass mark for all components of the Masters degree is 50.

For the purposes of these rules taught module averages will be rounded to the nearest whole number – i.e. 49.5 will count as 50, 49.4 as 49.

Where a Course has placement/work-based assessments, they are assessed on a pass/fail basis. They are non-credit bearing but must be passed.

3. ELIGIBILITY FOR AN AWARD

3.1. THE MASTERS DEGREE

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 modules that are core components of the Masters and the dissertation;
- (c) Pass all placement/work-based assessments where a course has such assessments;
- (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.

Pass with Merit

To obtain a merit a student should:

- (a) Obtain 180 credits at the first attempt except in the case of substantiated extenuating circumstances accepted by the Board of Examiners;
- (b) Obtain 120 credits at 60 or above, including the dissertation;
- (c) Have no module mark below 50.

Pass with Distinction

To obtain a distinction a student should:

- (a) Obtain 180 credits at the first attempt, except in the case of substantiated extenuating circumstances accepted by the Board of Examiners;
- (b) Obtain 120 credits at 70 or above, including the dissertation;
- (c) Have no module mark below 50.

3.2. 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.

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.

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

- (a) Subject to (d), obtain 120 credits at Masters level (level 7);
- (b) Pass all taught modules that are core components of the Postgraduate Diploma;
- (c) Pass all placement/work-based assessments where a scheme has such assessments;
- (d) Failure with a mark of 40 or more for up to 30 credits in non-core modules will be condoned provided that the overall weighted average for the 120 PG Diploma credits is 50.

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 modules that are core components for the Postgraduate Certificate;
 - (c) Pass all placement/work-based assessments where a course has such assessments;
 - (d) Failure with a mark of 40 or more for up to 20 credits, in non-core modules, will be condoned.
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4. SECOND ATTEMPTS

4.1 Second attempts at the assessment for taught modules

- (a) Students who have failed any taught module may have a second attempt at the assessment for the module(s) concerned.
- (b) The maximum mark that may 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.
- (c) The mark for the second attempt will count even where it is lower than the original mark.

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.

When a student is required to resubmit work as a result of an academic offence, this should count as a second attempt. This meaning that the student would not be eligible for a merit or distinction. If the student fails the module after having had this reassessment opportunity s/he should not be permitted further reassessment.

4.2 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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5. ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES

5.1 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 resubmission of the dissertation.
- (d) Considering extenuating circumstances as necessary and their implications for results.
- (e) Determining the appropriate award for each student.
- (f) Determining that the credit being presented for the award is current
- (g) Requiring any student whose performance is below that required to achieve an award to withdraw.

5.2 EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES

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

5.3 DISCRETION

Except in the case of extenuating circumstances (see 5.2 above), the Board of Examiners should restrict its use of discretion to exceptional circumstances. Where the Board of Examiners agrees to exercise its discretion the reasons must be documented as part of the Examination Board report, setting out the reason for exercising discretion and the reason for the decision taken, and a copy sent to the Graduate School.

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