

**UNIVERSITY OF ESSEX  
GRADUATE SCHOOL**

**RULES OF ASSESSMENT FOR TAUGHT MASTERS DEGREES 2009/10**

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**PARTNER INSTITUTION: TAVISTOCK AND PORTMAN NHS FOUNDATION TRUST**

**PROGRAMME TITLE(S): MA IN THE FOUNDATIONS OF PSYCHODYNAMIC  
PSYCHOTHERAPY  
(PART TIME: 30 MONTHS)**

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**1. PREAMBLE**

These rules should be read in conjunction with the Programme Specification and Module Handbook.

A taught unit is any assessed component excluding the dissertation. A core unit must be taken as part of the programme structure and passed, with no condonement of marks below a pass allowed. A compulsory unit must be taken but can be condoned.

All Masters degrees can be awarded with distinction and with merit.

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

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**2. PASS MARK**

The pass mark for all units is 50%, with the exception of the Clinical Work Supervisor's Report which is a zero-weighted pass/fail unit.

For the purposes of these rules unit marks, the overall weighted average for the taught units and the mark for the dissertation will be rounded to the nearest whole number – i.e. 49.5 will count as 50, 49.4 as 49.

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**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 (e), obtain 180 credits at Masters level (level 7);
- (b) Pass all the units that are core components of the Masters and the dissertation;
- (c) Pass both Clinical Work Supervisor's Reports;
- (d) Pass at least 60 taught unit credits at the first attempt unless there are substantiated extenuating circumstances accepted by the Board of Examiners;
- (e) Failure with a mark of 40% or more for up to 40 credits in non-core units will be condoned provided the overall weighted average for the taught units is at least 50%.

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

Results for a Pass with Merit or Distinction are calculated by two methods, known as 'Dominant Quality' and 'Arithmetic Average'. Students will receive the more favourable result of the two.

### **Pass with Merit**

#### ***Dominant Quality***

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, which must include the dissertation;
- (c) Have no unit mark below 50%;
- (d) Pass both Clinical Work Supervisor's Reports.

#### ***Arithmetic Average***

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 100 credits at 60% or above, which must include the dissertation;
- (c) Have an overall weighted average mark of 60% or more;
- (d) Have no unit mark below 50%;
- (e) Pass both Clinical Work Supervisor's reports.

### **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 unit mark below 50%;
- (d) Pass both Clinical Work Supervisor's Reports.

#### ***Arithmetic Average***

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 100 credits at 70% or above, which must include the dissertation;
- (c) Have an overall weighted average mark of 70% or more;
- (d) Have no unit mark below 50%.
- (e) Pass both Clinical Work Supervisor's Reports.

### **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.

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

- (a) Normally complete and have been assessed for all the taught Masters units
- (b) Subject to (f), obtain 120 credits at Masters level.
- (c) Pass at least 60 taught unit credits at the first attempt.
- (d) Pass all taught units that are core components of the Postgraduate Diploma.
- (e) Pass both Clinical Work Supervisor's Reports.
- (f) Failure with a mark of 40% or more for up to 30 credits in non-core units will be condoned provided that the overall weighted average for the 120 PG Diploma credits is 50%.

Dissertation credits cannot be used to obtain a Postgraduate Diploma.

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

Results for a Pass with Merit or Distinction are calculated by two methods, known as 'Dominant Quality' and 'Arithmetic Average'. Students will receive the more favourable result of the two.

#### **Pass with Merit**

##### ***Dominant Quality***

To obtain a merit a student should:

- (a) Obtain 120 credits at the first attempt except in the case of substantiated extenuating circumstances accepted by the Board of Examiners;
- (b) Obtain 80 credits at 60% or above;
- (c) Have no unit mark below 50%;
- (d) Pass both Clinical Work Supervisor's Reports

##### ***Arithmetic Average***

To obtain a merit a student should:

- (a) Obtain 120 credits at the first attempt except in the case of substantiated extenuating circumstances accepted by the Board of Examiners;
- (b) Obtain 60 credits at 60% or above;
- (c) Have an overall weighted average mark of 60% or more;
- (d) Have no unit mark below 50%;
- (e) Pass both Clinical Work Supervisor's Reports

#### **Pass with Distinction**

##### ***Dominant Quality***

To obtain a distinction a student should:

- (a) Obtain 120 credits at the first attempt except in the case of substantiated extenuating circumstances accepted by the Board of Examiners;

- (b) Obtain 80 credits at 70% or above;
- (c) Have no unit mark below 50%;
- (d) Pass both Clinical Work Supervisor's Reports

### *Arithmetic Average*

To obtain a distinction a student should:

- (a) Obtain 120 credits at the first attempt except in the case of substantiated extenuating circumstances accepted by the Board of Examiners;
- (b) Obtain 60 credits at 70% or above;
- (c) Have an overall weighted average mark of 70% or more;
- (d) Have no unit mark below 50%;
- (e) Pass both Clinical Work Supervisor's Reports

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

- (a) Subject to (e), obtain 60 taught unit credits at Masters level.
- (b) Pass all taught units that are core components for the Postgraduate Certificate.
- (c) Pass 20 credits at the first attempt.
- (d) Pass the Clinical Work Supervisor's Report (Report 1).
- (e) Failure with a mark of 40% or more for up to 20 credits, in non-core units will be condoned.

Dissertation credits cannot be used to obtain a Postgraduate Certificate.

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## **4. SECOND ATTEMPTS**

### **4.1 Second attempts at the assessment for taught units**

- (a) Students may have a second attempt for unit(s) that have been failed, up to a maximum of 40 taught unit credits (20 credits in year one), with the exception of the Clinical Work Supervisor's Reports.
- (b) No second attempt at the assessment for a unit is permitted prior to the Board of Examiners meeting where marks are confirmed and is subject to departmental arrangements (see below).
- (c) Undertaking a second attempt will not be a barrier to progression from one year of study to the next, and the second attempt will be undertaken alongside the student's normal programme of study.
- (d) The maximum mark that may be recorded for a unit as a result of a second attempt is 50%, unless there are substantiated extenuating circumstances accepted by the Board of Examiners.
- (e) The mark for the second attempt will count even where it is lower than the original mark.

If a student fails a unit on the second attempt at the assessment no further attempt is allowed unless there are substantiated extenuating circumstances accepted by the Board of Examiners.

Where the Board of Examiners permits a student to have a second attempt at the assessment for a unit this only applies to any individual assignment/examination for the unit that has been failed. A student cannot be permitted to retake a unit unless permitted by the Board of Examiners because of substantiated extenuating circumstances.

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 unit 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 meet at the end of each year and shall have the following powers:

- (a) Confirming the taught unit marks achieved, including any resit marks presented to the Board, and awarding credit.
- (b) Confirming the outcome of the Clinical Work Supervisor's Report
- (c) Confirming dissertation marks.
- (d) Confirming any opportunities for second attempts at the assessment for units, including resubmission of the dissertation.
- (e) Considering each student's marks' profile so that they can be advised on progression (see criteria for progression below) and the range of possible award outcomes.
- (e) Considering extenuating circumstances as necessary and their implications for progression and results.
- (f) Determining the appropriate award for each student.
- (g) Requiring any student whose performance is below that required to progress or achieve an award to withdraw.

An interim Board of Examiners meeting will be held at the end of each year.

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.

## **5.2 CRITERIA FOR PROGRESSION**

### **5.2.1 First Year to Second Year**

To progress from the first year to the second year a student should:

- (a) Pass the Clinical Work Supervisor's Report (Report 1)
- (b) Subject to (d) and (e) obtain 60 taught credits
- (c) Pass at least 40 taught credits at the first attempt unless there are substantiated extenuating circumstances accepted by the Board of Examiners
- (d) Failure with a mark of 40% or more for up to 20 credits in non-core units will be condoned\*
- (e) Failure with a mark below 40% for up to 20 credits will be subject to a second attempt which may be taken during the second year.

\* Note that the requirements for award of the masters degree state that where marks are condoned the overall weighted average for the taught units must be at least 50% at the end of the programme

### **5.2.2 Progression to the Dissertation**

To progress from the second year to the dissertation a student should:

- (a) Pass the Clinical Work Supervisor's Reports (Reports 1 and 2)
- (b) Subject to (d) and (e), obtain 120 credits at Masters level
- (c) Pass at least 60 taught credits at the first attempt unless there are substantiated extenuating circumstances accepted by the Board of Examiners
- (d) Failure with a mark of 40% or more for up to 40 credits in non-core units (over the two years) will be condoned provided the overall weighted average for the taught units is at least 50%.
- (e) Failure with a mark below 40% for up to 40 credits (over the two years) will be subject to a second attempt. Where this second attempt is for a second-year unit(s), the second attempt may be taken during the third year.

## **5.3 EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES**

Extenuating circumstances can only be considered by the Examination Board if the student has completed an extenuating circumstances report 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.

## **5.4 DISCRETION**

Except in the case of extenuating circumstances (see 5.3 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.