

# CORE REGULATIONS FOR MODULAR TAUGHT MASTER'S DEGREES, POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMAS AND POSTGRADUATE CERTIFICATES IN THE COMMON AWARDS IN THEOLOGY, MINISTRY AND MISSION SCHEME

## DEFINITIONS

1. In these Regulations, the following definitions will apply:

### **Validated programmes of study**

A *validated programme of study* is an approved pathway of study in Theology, Ministry and Mission that has been developed in conjunction with the Archbishops' Council, and which leads to a particular named award of the University of Durham within a specified period of registration, yet resourced, delivered and supported by a Theological Education Institution (TEI). All such validated postgraduate programmes in Theology, Ministry and Mission are subject to these Core Regulations for Postgraduate Programmes in the Common Awards Scheme. Additional requirements may be set out in the programme regulations.

### **Programme Leader**

Reference to a 'Programme Leader' in these regulations should be read as referring to a member of TEI staff who manages and/or has academic oversight of the programme of study. Different terms may be used (for example "Director of Studies"). Similarly the role may be undertaken by a number of staff rather than a single individual (e.g. Level 4 Director, Level 5 Director, Level 6 Director). The student handbook or comparable information provided to students by the TEI will state which member of staff acts in the capacity of 'Programme Leader' used in these regulations.

### **Theological Education Institutions (TEIs)**

A *TEI* is an institution that has been designated in Schedule 1 of the Service Contract between Durham University and the Archbishops' Council, and with which Durham University has signed a Standard Validation Contract detailing the terms and conditions governing the validation agreement for each validated programme. Designated TEIs are deemed to have met the University's principles and policies for Collaborative Provision. TEIs are responsible for ensuring that students receive adequate information about their chosen validated programme. This information shall usually be contained in one or more student handbooks. For the purposes of these regulations, all such handbooks shall be referred to as *the appropriate handbook issued by the TEI*.

### **Quality and Standards Committee (QSC)**

The *Quality and Standards Committee* is the University Committee through which the University's validation activity, both undergraduate and postgraduate, is monitored. QSC reports to Senate through the University's Education Committee.

### **Management Board**

The *Management Board* is the joint Board established by the University and the Archbishops' Council, which has responsibility and oversight for the services provided pursuant to the Framework Validation Agreement and Standard Validation Contracts. The Management Board has equal representation from staff of the University and representatives of the Archbishops' Council and the TEIs, and reports to QSSC.

### **Board of Examiners**

The *Board of Examiners* has a membership appointed by the University's Senate. It consists of internal and external examiners recommended for membership by the Management Board. The Board of Examiners will include at least one member of the University. It is required to follow the policies and processes set by the University, and recommends to the Senate students who have satisfied the Board of Examiners that they have met all the requirements for the award of a qualification of the University.

### **University Liaison Officers (ULOs)**

*University Liaison Officers* are subject specialists appointed by the University to review the work of students and to advise the University on the comparability of the standards they achieve with those of other registered students of the University. However, ULOs are not expected to play a part in marking. It is their role to advise the Board of Examiners, and the University, on the comparability of standards reached by the students on the validated programme being examined, and the standards reached by students on equivalent or similar programmes offered by the University. In order to perform this role, ULOs need to have unrestricted access to students' work and to the marks awarded, both on the validated programme and on any relevant University programme.

### **Concessions**

A *concession* is any request which falls outside what is permitted within the regulations of the University. Concessions will be considered by the Chair of the Management Board or the Chair of the TEI Management Committee as specified by the University. The concession will set out the terms and conditions under which a student who has demonstrated good grounds might be granted permission to interrupt their studies or extend their period of registration or otherwise depart from these regulations. Other concessions may be permitted, as specified by the University.

### **Modules**

A *module* is a defined course of study which is self-contained and which receives a specified number of credits. A single module at Level 7 is worth 20 credits; larger modules are worth multiples of 20 credits. A dissertation module at Level 7 is normally worth between 60 and 120 credits, as specified in the relevant programme regulations. Modules at levels 4-6 are worth 10 credits or multiples of 10 credits. Modules cannot be sub-divided and must be taken and assessed as a whole. Credits are gained when a student has satisfied the Board of Examiners in respect of the assessment requirements for the module concerned.

Each module is set at a given Level of study appropriate to its learning outcomes and is assessed against criteria appropriate to that Level. Certain modules may be defined in Programme Regulations as prerequisites for study of certain other modules at a higher Level. Not all the modules listed in the Programme Regulations for a given degree programme may be available in any one year.

Students are not permitted to register for the same module on more than one occasion.

### **Prerequisite modules**

A *prerequisite module* is one which must be satisfactorily completed (i.e. passed) prior to registration for a defined module. Certain modules may be defined in programme regulations as prerequisites for study of certain other modules at a higher Level.

### **Corequisite modules**

*Corequisite modules* must be studied together during the same year.

### **Excluded combinations**

*Excluded combinations* are modules both/all of which cannot be studied within the same programme.

### **Levels**

A *Level* refers to the stage of study within a programme and hence to the order in which particular modules would typically be studied. Levels, therefore, indicate the intellectual challenge of a module within a programme of study. The University's Level Descriptors provide a common framework for this. Postgraduate levels in these regulations adopt the level numbering and descriptors of the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (England, Wales and Northern Ireland):

<b>FHEQ Level</b>	<b>Full-Time Equivalent</b>	<b>Typical Qualification Equivalent</b>
Level 4	FT UG Year 1	Certificate
Level 5	FT UG Year 2	Diploma
Level 6	FT UG Year 3	Honours Degree
Level 7	PGT	Postgraduate Certificate / Diploma / Taught Master's Degree

### **Year**

A *year* is a 12-month period of study, normally beginning from the start of the academic year. The defined Level of study remains fixed irrespective of the actual year of study of a particular student. So, for example, a part-time student undertaking a Taught Master's Degree over the course of two years will progress from Year 1 to Year 2, while remaining at Level 7 throughout.

### **Assessment components**

The *assessment* of a module may be by examination alone or by other forms of summative assessment such as continuously assessed coursework, practicals, oral examinations and fieldwork. Each of these forms an *assessment component* of the module. The mode(s) of assessment approved by the University are specified in the Common Awards Assessment Patterns Guidance (Postgraduate). The assessment for a module must be attempted on the first occasion during or at the end of the academic year in which the module has been studied. The results of the assessment at the end of each module will be the basis for allowing students to progress from one Level to the next. The results of the assessment of all modules studied for Final Honours will be used in the classification of the degree to be awarded.

### **Assessment elements**

An *assessment element* is a defined piece of assessment which contributes a stated percentage of the mark for the module. This may be an examination paper, a coursework essay, a dissertation, a presentation etc. Several *assessment elements* may make up an *assessment component* (e.g. two exam papers may make up the examination *component* of the assessment; an essay and a presentation may make up the coursework *component* of the assessment).

### **Programme regulations**

*Programme regulations* specify the modules approved for delivery for a validated programme at a designated TEI.

### **Assessment Patterns Guidance (Postgraduate)**

The *Assessment Patterns Guidance (Postgraduate)* specifies the approved assessment components for modules approved for delivery within the Common Awards Framework.

### **Module Overview Table**

A *Module Overview Table* specifies the approved assessment components for each module delivered at the TEI, in line with the Assessment Patterns Guidance (Postgraduate)

## **PRE-CONDITIONS FOR THE AWARD OF A MASTER'S DEGREE, POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA OR POSTGRADUATE CERTIFICATE**

1. To qualify for the award of a Master's degree, Postgraduate Diploma or Postgraduate Certificate, a student must:
  - (a) be admitted to, and approved by, the TEI concerned as a candidate for the validated programme of study;
  - (b) study and be assessed in accordance with these Core Regulations and the Programme Regulations of the award for which he/she is registered for the period of time required;
  - (c) satisfy the examiners in the assessment requirements as prescribed in the Programme Regulations of the award for which he/she is registered within the period allowed.

## **ADMISSION**

2. Applicants must be graduates of this or another approved University or possess some other qualification approved by the University. Normally an upper second class Honours degree or equivalent in a subject relevant to the proposed course of study is required, unless otherwise specified in the Programme Specifications.
3. **Students shall not become matriculated members of the University**, neither shall they be members of a College or a Society of Durham University unless by special arrangement with a particular College or Society.
4. Students shall be subject to the regulations of the TEI except in the matter of an appeal against a decision of the University's Board of Examiners or of a committee of the University, on an academic matter affecting them. In such cases, students will be subject to the Regulations for Academic Appeals (regulation 53 below refers).
5. All validated programmes are delivered and assessed in English. Students whose first language is not English shall be required to present satisfactory evidence of their achievement in an approved English Language proficiency test.

## REGISTRATION

6. **Students enrolled on the Theology, Ministry and Mission programmes will be students of the TEI. They will be registered for an award of the University but will not be members of the University.**
7. The TEI is responsible for informing the University of all students who are registered for a Common Awards validated programme of study. and by the date specified by the University.

## RESIDENCE

8. Students registered for the validated Theology, Ministry and Mission programmes are not subject to the University's residence requirements but shall be subject to any residence requirements of the TEI.

## ACCREDITATION OF PRIOR LEARNING (APL)

9. **A Postgraduate Certificate, Postgraduate Diploma or Taught Master's Degree will normally be awarded only if the student has undertaken study within the Durham University programme of at least two-thirds of the credits for the award.** Thus standard APL requests will total:

Postgraduate Certificate:	20 credits
Postgraduate Diploma:	40 credits
Masters:	60 credits

## PROGRESS AND ATTENDANCE

10. All students registered for validated programmes of study are required to:
  - (a) fulfil the attendance requirements of the TEI as specified in the programme regulations or the appropriate handbook issued by the TEI;
  - (b) fulfil all academic engagements (including registration, examinations, tests, written work, tutorials, seminars, practical classes, professional placements, field courses, including those which may be held during vacations, interviews and lectures) to a standard satisfactory to the Programme Leader.
11. **Not all modules will be available in any one year. Details of availability will be included in the appropriate handbook issued by the TEI, and listed on the programme regulations.**
12. During any period of study, students shall maintain such contact with the Programme Leader or his/her nominee, and provide the Programme Leader or his/her nominee with such evidence of progress, as he/she may require.
13. The Chair of the Management Committee or Management Board as stated in the Standard Validation Contract may permit an interruption to, or the extension of, a student's registration for a period to be specified by concession.
14. **Students who fail to achieve satisfactory marks in approved assessments, and who are not allowed or qualified to proceed to the next year of a programme of study, will be required to leave the validated programme of study.**
15. If it should appear during the first term of his/her programme that a student's attainment in the English language is not fully adequate for his/her study, the student may be required to undertake, at his/her own expense, an approved course of instruction in the English language.

## PROGRAMME REQUIREMENTS

16. **Requirements for each validated programme shall be as specified in the relevant programme regulations.**
17. **Credits may be counted towards one award and on one occasion only.**
18. A student's choice of modules shall be subject to the approval of the Programme Leader responsible for the programme.

19. In order to qualify for the award of the University, a student must:
- be admitted to an approved validated programme of study and included in the record of registered students returned to the University by the TEI.
  - study in accordance with the Core Regulations for Postgraduate Programmes in the Common Awards in Theology, Ministry and Mission Scheme, and the programme regulations for the validated programme for which they are registered;
  - pass, in the period of time permitted, the assessment requirements prescribed in the Module Overview Table of the named validated programme for which they are registered.
20. A student must gain credits as follows subject to the requirements of the relevant programme regulations:
- for the award of a Master's degree: a total of **180 credits** including at least 150 credits at Level 7.
  - for the award of a Postgraduate Diploma: a total of **120 credits** including at least 90 credits at Level 7.
  - for the award of a Postgraduate Certificate: a total of **60 credits** including at least 40 credits at Level 7.
21. A student may be awarded a named award at a lower level than the award for which he/she is registered provided that the student has gained the necessary credits for the lower level of award as per regulation 19 above.
22. Unless otherwise stated in the programme regulations, all named Master's degrees may be awarded at Postgraduate Certificate or Postgraduate Diploma level and all named Postgraduate Diploma awards may be awarded at Postgraduate Certificate level.
23. Students taking a taught Master's programme in part-time mode must normally take the dissertation in the final year, any research methods module before the final year, and as equal a division of credits between the years of study as possible.
24. Students' choice of modules may be subject to timetable constraints and other constraints, and shall be subject to approval by the Programme Leader or nominee in the relevant TEI. Students of one TEI may study modules from another TEI, with the permission of each party, and as long as the modules taken are to the value of no more than 60 credits at each Level of study and to the value of no more than 50% of the registered programme.

## MARKING AND CLASSIFICATION CONVENTIONS

25. Student achievement may be assessed using a variety of methods including written examination papers, continuously assessed coursework, practicals, oral examinations and fieldwork. The mode(s) of assessment for each programme shall be specified in the Module Overview Table proposed by the TEI, and approved by the University. The mode(s) of assessment must comply with the Assessment Patterns Guidance (Postgraduate) (and Undergraduate, where applicable) issued by the University.
26. All validated programmes of study comply with Durham University's scale for the relationship of marks to awards and with the University's classification conventions as applicable to the award concerned unless otherwise stated in the Programme regulations.
27. All validated programmes of study comply with Durham University's Qualification Descriptors.
28. Each component of assessment for a module shall be marked according to the table below:

MARKING LEVELS FOR EACH UNIT OF ASSESSMENT	
MASTER'S DEGREES, PG CERTIFICATES AND PG DIPLOMAS	
% Mark	
70 - 100	Distinction
60 - 69	Merit
50 - 59	Pass
0 - 49	Fail

29. **The pass mark for Master's programmes, Postgraduate Diplomas and Postgraduate Certificates**

is 50%. This must be achieved overall in each of the taught modules and in the dissertation.

30. **Any module taken from Levels 4-6 is marked according to the undergraduate mark scale but Master's students are required to obtain a mark of at least 50% to pass.** The mark is included in the usual way within the run of marks contributing to the average for the Master's programme pro rata to the credit value of the module concerned.
31. Each module should be marked as a percentage. An overall weighted average mark is used to determine eligibility for a Merit or Distinction grade as in 36-43 below, and compensation as in 46 below. The overall average is calculated by multiplying the mark achieved for each module by the number of credits, summing the resultant marks and dividing the summed total by the number of credits required for the award (e.g. for a Masters degree the overall average mark is (sum: X multiplied by Y)/ 180) where X is the mark achieved for the module and Y the credit value of the module.
32. All work submitted for assessment must be in a form suitable for assessment by the external examiners and comply with any format requirements detailed in the appropriate handbook issued by the TEI. All assessed work shall be available to external examiners and the University Liaison Officers on request. The usual language of assessment is English.
33. Candidates in the final year of their programme must submit their dissertation by a date specified by the TEI.. The deadline will be specified in a Handbook issued by the TEI.
34. Summative assessed coursework submitted after the due deadline will be penalised in the following ways:
  - a. **Summative assessed work submitted late but within five working days of the deadline shall be penalised by having the mark for that work capped at the module pass mark.** The work will be marked and feedback supplied. The mark that would have been awarded to the student had the penalty not been applied should be indicated to the student. A working day in this context refers to Monday to Friday, and excludes bank holidays and days which the TEI is officially closed.
  - b. **Summative assessed work submitted more than five working days after the deadline will not be marked and a mark of zero will be recorded.**
35. A student who, due to illness or other good cause, is unable to submit coursework other than the dissertation for assessment by the required date may apply to the Chair of the Board of Examiners or his/her nominee for an extension of that date. A student who is unable to present a dissertation may similarly apply for an extension of that date; if the extension is for no more than two weeks after the original submission deadline, this request should be considered by the Chair of the Board of Examiners or his/her nominee. Any extension beyond two weeks after the original submission deadline requires the approval of the Chair of the Management Board.
36. A Board of Examiners appointed by the University has the power to exercise discretion to take account of particular circumstances if it considers it right to do so in the proper discharge of its duties. Such circumstances shall include, but not be restricted to, personal mitigating circumstances. Boards of Examiners may also take into account academic factors such as the overall pattern of marks gained by a student and the relative significance of various modules for the learning outcomes of the programme. The views of an External Examiner must be particularly influential in the case of disagreement within the Board of Examiners on the mark to be awarded for a particular unit of assessment, or on the final level of award to be derived from the array of marks of a particular student.
37. **Where a student's arithmetic means falls no more than 2% below a classification boundary, the University-level board of examiners must consider whether to award the higher classification by exercise of discretion. In order to be considered for the award of distinction by discretion a student must have obtained either a mark of 70% in their dissertation or an arithmetic mean of 70%, and a mark of at least 68% and less than 70% in relation to the other criteria for the award of a distinction. In order to be considered for the award of a merit by discretion, a student must have obtained either a mark of 60% in their dissertation or an arithmetic mean of 60%, and a mark of at least 58% and less than 60% in relation to the other criteria for the award of a merit. Boards of Examiners may only consider exercising discretion to raise a classification for a student whose arithmetic mean falls outside this 2% range where there are personal mitigating circumstances, or a combination of personal mitigating circumstances and academic factors, that warrant such consideration.**

#### Award of Distinction

38. The requirement for the award of the Master's degree with Distinction shall be as follows:
- (a) the achievement of an overall average mark of at least 70% across all the modules taken, to the value of 180 credits, including:
  - (b) the achievement of a mark of 70% or more in the dissertation.
39. The requirement for the award of the Postgraduate Diploma with Distinction shall be as follows:
- (a) the achievement of an overall average mark of at least 70% across all the modules taken, to the value of 120 credits.
40. The requirement for the award of the Postgraduate Certificate with Distinction shall be as follows: the achievement of an overall average mark of at least 70% across all the modules taken.
41. Any supplementary requirements for achieving an award with Distinction shall be as defined in the Programme Regulations for the programme.

#### Award of Merit

42. The requirement for the award of the Master's degree with Merit where the candidate did not meet the criteria for the award of a distinction shall be:
- (a) the achievement of an overall average mark of at least 60%, including:
  - (b) the achievement of a mark of 60% or more in the dissertation.
43. The requirement for the award of the Postgraduate Diploma with Merit shall be the achievement of an overall average mark of at least 60%, including the achievement of a mark of 60% or more in the dissertation, but where the candidate did not meet the criteria for the award of a distinction.
44. The requirement for the award of the Postgraduate Certificate with Merit shall be the achievement of an overall average mark of at least 60%, but where the candidate did not meet the criteria for the award of a distinction.
45. Any supplementary requirements for achieving an award with Merit shall be as defined in the Programme Regulations for the programme.

#### Re-examination

46. **Students who achieve an average mark of less than 50% in any module (including the dissertation) at the first attempt are allowed one further attempt to pass the module. The total number of taught modules which a student may resit must total no more than half the total credit value of their programme's taught modules, excluding the dissertation.** The resit (without repeating the module itself) shall normally be at the time of the next normal assessment of the module component(s) concerned. Any alternative arrangements for re-examination shall be as specified in the Programme Regulations of the programme. **Students who achieve a mark of less than 50% in the dissertation at first attempt are allowed one further opportunity to resubmit the dissertation.** The resubmission (without further supervision) shall normally be at the next dissertation submission time, unless otherwise specified in the Programme Regulations of the programme.
47. **The mark for any module following a resit shall be capped at 50%.**

#### **COMPENSATION**

48. Notwithstanding the requirements in paragraph 20 (above), up to 40 credits for a Master's degree, up to 30 credits for a Postgraduate Diploma, and up to 20 credits for a Postgraduate Certificate may be gained by compensation provided that:
- (a) a mark of not less than 40% has been obtained in each of the modules to be compensated;
  - (b) the overall average for all modules taken including the module(s) to be compensated is at least 50%;
  - (c) the achievement of the learning outcomes of the programme is not compromised by failure in the module(s) concerned. The programme regulations indicate which module(s) may not be passed by compensation because failure in that module(s) would compromise the achievement of the learning outcomes of the programme.

49. The actual mark received for modules passed by compensation will be taken forward to the averaging process for the classification of the degree and will be entered on the student's transcript.

### **PASS LISTS**

50. Progression Lists shall be approved by the Chair of the Board of Examiners, External Examiners and the University Liaison Officers and shall state the name of the TEI delivering the validated programme. Pass lists shall be signed by an appropriate University authority.
51. Pass Lists shall be issued by the University and shall state the name of the TEI delivering the validated programme.
52. The transcript issued to students by the University following the award shall state the name of the TEI delivering the validated programme.

### **RIGHT OF APPEAL**

53. Students may appeal against a decision of the Board of Examiners or of a Committee of either the TEI or the University on an academic matter affecting them and shall be subject to the University's General Regulation VII: Academic Appeals.

### **ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT**

54. The validated programmes of study shall have published regulations and processes approved by the University for Academic Misconduct. Students will be subject to these regulations.