

GSM /University of Plymouth

Regulatory Framework for Taught Postgraduate Awards (changes since 2015/16 in bold and underlined)

1 Introduction

- 1.1 These regulations apply to the following GSM programmes validated by the University of Plymouth:
Postgraduate Certificate
Postgraduate Diploma
Master of Business Administration
Master of Science
Executive Master of Business Administration
- 1.2 These Regulations apply to the above awards and interim awards made where students are exiting or have had their programme of study terminated.

2 Programme/scheme structure: Definitions

2.1 Module

A module, as defined by GSM London/Plymouth University is a separately assessed unit of learning normally studied and assessed within a semester, consisting of a teaching period, a revision period and an assessment period.

Candidates taking a module at the same time will normally be assessed by the same method(s). Candidates shall undertake modules for each stage in accordance with the programme structure.

2.2 Credit

A credit value is assigned to each module indicating the total learning time, including assessment, which a candidate might expect to spend in achieving the learning outcomes associated with the module. The credit value for each module is specified in the Module Descriptor.

- 2.2.1 Academic study will be organised into modules, specified in terms of credits.

The credit weighting of postgraduate awards will be:

Postgraduate Certificate a minimum of 60 credits
Postgraduate Diploma a minimum of 120 credits
Masters Degree a minimum of 180 credits

Masters programmes will include a major project or dissertation module worth at least 40 credits. Such a module will involve sustained, independent and individual study, normally having some research basis.

- 2.3 Modules contributing to a postgraduate award must normally be Level 7. The

Level of the module will be approved at the time of validation and in accordance with University guidelines.

- 2.4 Students may exceptionally be permitted to vary their programme of study at any stage (or level) in up to 20 core or elective credits, subject to:
- Approval by the student's programme manager, who would be expected to confirm that in her/his academic judgement the student would, nevertheless, fulfil the programme learning outcomes;
 - Approval by the relevant module leader who would be requested to confirm that in her/his academic judgement the student had sufficient subject pre-requisite knowledge to successfully complete the new module.

Any proposal would need to take into account timetabling and resource implications and would not normally be available to students on professional body accredited programmes.

3 Admissions

- 3.1 Students seeking admission to a Masters degree programme should normally hold an Honours degree or postgraduate diploma of a UK University or of the CNAAC; or appropriate professional or academic qualifications¹ deemed by the University to be equivalent to an Honours degree or postgraduate diploma.
- 3.2 Students who do not possess appropriate HE qualifications may be admitted to a postgraduate programme on the basis of prior experience, if the programme leader/admissions tutor considers that the candidate has thereby demonstrated the potential to complete the programme successfully.

4 Credit for prior learning (see also University Regulations on APL)

- 4.1 Credit for prior learning, whether certificated or experiential, may count towards the requirements for a named award up to the following maxima:

Postgraduate Certificate 30 credits

Postgraduate Diploma 60 credits

Masters degree 120 credits

To qualify for the award of a Masters degree of Plymouth University, a student must have completed the dissertation/major project at GSM London.

- 4.2 In all cases the modules for which credit is awarded must constitute a coherent programme of study when considered together with the credits gained for study within the University. Accreditation of prior learning is based on the concept of specific credit, (that is that the learning outcomes of the prior learning are directly equivalent to those of modules from which the student will be exempt as a result).

¹ UK, EU or international

4.3 Where it is agreed that certificated prior learning to which marks are attached may contribute towards an award, a decision² must be made at the same time as to whether the marks, in their original or an amended form, will be included on the student record.

5 Assessment

5.1 The purposes of assessment are:

- to objectively to measure a student's achievements against the learning outcomes of the module
- to assist student learning by providing appropriate feedback on performance
- to provide a reliable and consistent basis for the recommendation of an appropriate award

5.2 The assessment for each module will be detailed in the Module Record and in the Programme Handbook for the award(s). This will specify whether assessment is formative and/or summative; and the elements contributing to the summative module assessment. . Where assessment is by a combination of elements, the weightings of each element must be stated. A full list, and definitions of, the various elements of assessment are provided elsewhere within the University Academic Regulations.

5.3 A student studying on a module will be assessed according to the specified module assessment irrespective of the programme of study on which s/he is registered.

6 Successful completion of a module

6.1 The pass mark for a module at Level 7 (including the dissertation/major project module) is 50%.

6.2 Where module assessment at Level 7 involves more than one element, a student is also required to achieve a minimum of 40% in each element.

6.3 Modules which have been successfully completed cannot be reassessed.

7 Procedure in the event of failure

7.1 Where a student fails to achieve a pass in one or more taught modules, the Award Board may at its discretion, based on a judgement of the student's overall performance and potential:

² The decision must involve the admissions tutor, programme leader and Chair of the Award Board. The University commends the establishment of APL committees, based around this core membership, to consider applications for accreditation of prior learning, develop appropriate procedures and case law.

- compensate for the failure (provided that the module mark(s) is/are within 5% of the pass mark). The maximum compensation permitted within each postgraduate award is:

Postgraduate Certificate 0 credits

Postgraduate Diploma 20 credits

Masters Degree 30 credits³

- permit the student to be reassessed in the module(s), in whole or in part of each element of assessment, at the next available opportunity (the Board will determine whether the assessment will take the same form as the original); a student may be referred in up to 60 credits in a postgraduate dissertation module; in up to 60 credits in taught modules for PgDip and Masters programmes; and in up to 20 Credits for a PgCert; or
- permit the student to retake the module(s), with or without attendance, by a date to be determined by the Board; or
- require the student to withdraw from the programme⁴.
- require a student whose extenuating circumstances will prevent the completion of the award during the normal period of registration, or have prevented her/him from making academic progress in the previous session, to interrupt studies or withdraw from the programme.
- require a student who has developed a health or other problem which prevents her/him from meeting the learning outcomes of her/his programme to transfer to an alternative programme or withdraw from the programme and be granted the appropriate exit or aegrotat award.⁵

7.2 A student who is being reassessed in an element of assessment must achieve a pass mark in that element. The student will fail the reassessment if s/he does not pass the reassessed elements even if s/he achieves a module mark of 50%. The original rule for passing the module will apply for a student being reassessed in or retaking more than one element of assessment. Where a failed module is successfully retaken or repeated, the mark for the retaken/repeated element(s) will be capped at 50% and the capped mark(s) will be used when calculating the overall module mark.

7.3 Where a student fails to achieve a pass in the dissertation/major project module, the Award Board may at its discretion, based on a judgement of the student's overall performance and potential:

³ Compensation will not normally be applied to a project/dissertation planning module. In such cases it may be necessary for a student to resubmit the plan and for assessment to be confirmed by the external examiner in advance of the formal Subject Assessment Panel/Award Assessment Board.

⁴ An Award Board will not normally require a student to withdraw unless s/he has failed and cannot under 7.4 have a further attempt.

- permit the student to resubmit the work under its original title, by a date to be determined by the Board. The deadline for submission should be no more than 16 weeks from the date of publication of results; or
- require the student to submit a new dissertation/project, by a date to be determined by the Board; or
- require the student to withdraw from the programme
- require a student whose extenuating circumstances will prevent the completion of the award during the normal period of registration, or have prevented her/him from making academic progress in the previous session, to suspend or withdraw from the programme⁵

7.4 A student may be assessed in the module (taught module or dissertation/major project module) contributing to a postgraduate award on no more than two occasions. Alternatively, in the case of failure in a non-core module, a programme may allow a student to substitute an alternative module provided this was specified as a possibility within the programme specification and student handbook.

7.5 The maximum mark for any module which has been failed and is being reassessed/ retaken will be 50%.

8 Awards

The following awards may be made under these regulations:

- Master of Science
- Master of Business Administration
- Postgraduate Diploma
- Postgraduate Certificate
- Executive Master of Business Administration

8.1 To qualify for an award a student must have achieved the required number of credits within these Regulations and have satisfied any programme-specific requirements.

8.2 A student will be awarded a Postgraduate Certificate or Diploma with Distinction provided that s/he has achieved a credit-weighted average mark of 70% or above across all the modules.

8.3 A student will be awarded a Masters degree with Merit provided that s/he has achieved a credit-weighted average mark of 60% or above across all modules (including the dissertation/major project) and the mark for the dissertation/major project module is not less than 60%.

8.4 A student will be awarded a Masters degree with Distinction provided that s/he has achieved a credit-weighted average mark of 70% or above across all

⁵ This regulation is subject to a case conference being held in line with the Fitness to Study Policy

modules (including the dissertation/major project) and the mark for the dissertation/major project module is not less than 70%.

- 8.5 Where a student withdraws or is required to withdraw from the programme on which s/he is registered, the Award Board will confer the highest award to which s/he is entitled.

9 Extenuating circumstances (see also Regulations on Extenuating Circumstances)

- 9.1 If a student has failed to sit/submit all or part of an assessment due to valid extenuating circumstances, the student has a right to sit/submit the assessment as if for the first time⁶, in a form and by a date to be determined by the Board.
- 9.2 The circumstances may be such that the student is known to be unable to complete work which has been failed, or which s/he has failed to sit/submit. If the Award Assessment Board is nonetheless satisfied that the student would have qualified for the award had the circumstances not existed, the Board may offer an Aegrotat award⁷.

10 Maximum Period of registration

- 10.1 The normal period of registration for a full-time or part-time programme of study is:-
- GSM programmes longer than one year's duration - maximum three years longer than the planned duration of the programme of study for full and part-time students with an absolute maximum of ten years for part-time students.
 - Programmes of one year's duration - maximum registration of three years for full-time students and five years for part-time students.

An application for an extension to the agreed period of registration must be submitted in writing to the Academic Partnerships Head of Partnerships Operations or nominee.

- 10.2 A student may not be registered (concurrently) on more than one full-time programme of study.

The following are governed by separate GSM London/Plymouth University

⁶ The use of the phrase 'as if for the first time' throughout Section 9 should be read as meaning that the student will be offered another attempt without penalty, hence if the assessment affected by the circumstances was a first attempt, the student will be offered to sit/submit as if for the first time, and similarly for second attempts.

⁷ Formally the student must confirm in writing his/her acceptance of the award, but it is understood that there may be circumstances in which this is not possible (e.g. in the case of posthumous awards, or those made to students whose medical circumstances make it impossible for them to give informed consent). In such cases, the written authorisation of the chair of the Award Assessment Board, confirming the circumstances in which the award is made, will be sufficient for the award to be conferred.

Regulations: Subject Assessment Panel/ Award Assessment Board:
composition, role and responsibilities; Student Appeals

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