

## University of Glasgow

## Academic Standards Committee - Thursday 9 April 2009

## Report from Academic Regulations Sub-Committee

Mr Tom Guthrie, Convener of Sub-Committee

**Compensation Regulations – Generic Masters Regulation**

As was reported to ASC in February, the matter of compensation arrangements in calculating the average of Grade C3 or higher for progression to Masters had revealed substantive differences of preferred approach. The Faculties of Science, and Computing Science in particular, had put forward the view that the current rules (which limit compensation to a grade E) were too stringent because of the wider range of grades awarded in Science subjects. It was noted that the current rule could lead to a student who had achieved the required C3 average being prevented from progressing because of a single F1 grade in 10 credits of the 120 taught credits. Conversely, the Department of Economics had expressed concern about the inclusion of Grade E in formulating the average as they had misgivings about Grade D being the grade which demonstrated a satisfactory level of achievement and suggested that Grade C would be better, particularly as external perception of D did not always recognise it as a signifier of a satisfactory performance.

Since the February meeting of ASC, Mr Guthrie had met with representatives from both Economics and Computing Science to discuss their concerns in more detail.

As previously indicated, the Sub-Committee was not sufficiently persuaded by the arguments presented by Economics, and members therefore agreed that Grade D should remain as the indicator of a satisfactory performance in individual course results. It was also agreed that some compensation below this should be permitted for the calculation of the average for progression to Masters, and also the PgC and PgD exit awards.

With respect to the issue raised by the Faculties of Science, there had been further consultation with departments over a proposed modification to current compensation arrangements to take account of the fact that otherwise good students might gain a Grade F for small amounts of credits. Departments were therefore consulted on the following proposal:

In order to progress to the dissertation/independent work a student must have:

- (a) at least 90 credits at D3 or better in the taught element of the course; and
- (b) an average for taught elements of the programme of C3 or better; and
- (c) no credits at G or below.

Eight responses were received in total and two of these did not favour the proposal (Civil Engineering and Economics). **The Sub-Committee therefore agreed to recommend to ASC modified compensation arrangements for the calculation of the progression threshold for Masters (average of Grade C3) as detailed in the box above.**

## Revised Regulations

At its previous meeting ASC approved recommendations for PGT provision relating to progress arrangements, criteria for merit and distinction and capping arrangements for reassessment and these had also been endorsed by EdPSC. To implement these recommendations, it is proposed that the Generic Masters Regulations, the Generic Postgraduate Certificate and Diploma Regulations, and the Code of Assessment are amended as detailed in Appendices 1, 2 and 3 respectively.

Further amendment to the Masters regulation 7.1 is proposed in the event of the recommendation for compensation arrangements, as detailed in the above section, being approved by ASC. This is provided in Appendix 1 in **shaded text**.

**Academic Standards Committee is invited to approve the revised regulations for recommendation to EdPSC.**

## Note on Consultation Process

In the course of the Sub-Committee's review of the Generic PGT regulations and compensation provision at all levels, there have been three consultations with Faculties and/or departments.

The Table below indicates the response rates for each:

Faculty	Consultation Document		
	Generic Regulations	PGT Compensation (at all levels)	Proposal re Compensation for calculation of average for Progression to Masters
Arts	2		3
Education	1 (F)		
Engineering	1 (F)		1
LBSS	2 (F)	3 (F)	3 (F)
Medicine	2 (F)	1	
Sciences	4 (F)	1 (F)	1
Vet Medicine			
GSA	1	1	
SAC	1		
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>

(F) indicates that at least one response was a Faculty-wide response.

Consultation responses did not provide a consistent or uniform view on the best structure or regulatory arrangements for PGT awards. In making its recommendations, ARSC carefully considered the different views and supporting arguments, and also took account of whether or not a majority view was being expressed.

## VIII GENERIC REGULATIONS FOR TAUGHT MASTERS DEGREES

### Resolution

The Masters degrees listed in §11 and §12 below are governed by Resolution No. 552 of the University Court which came into effect on 1 October 2005 with provision that:

1. The Masters Degrees listed in clauses 11 and 12 of the section entitled 'Regulations' below may be awarded by the University of Glasgow in the Faculties with which these Degrees are identified in these Regulations. Degrees listed in these clauses under the title 'Scottish Agricultural College' may be awarded by the University on the recommendation of that College.
2. The Senate may make Regulations, which are subject to the approval of the University Court, governing the award of these degrees - these are stated in clauses 1 to 10 of the section entitled 'Regulations'.
3. The awards of Postgraduate Diploma and Postgraduate Certificate are also included in the Regulations.

### Regulations

A student admitted onto a programme leading to an award must follow the instructions issued by the relevant Department or equivalent and be aware of the content of the Programme Document (often referred to as the Programme or 'Course' Handbook) issued by that Department or equivalent which will contain further details on the Programme including, in some cases, further requirements associated with the award.

#### 1. Application of Regulations

- 1.1 These regulations apply without modification to the degrees listed in §11 below.
- 1.2 These regulations apply also to the degrees listed in §12 below subject to alternative requirements described in the relevant Programme Document. The requirements for these degrees may vary only in respect of duration of study (§3) or progress (§7) to reflect the requirements of professional or statutory bodies.

#### 2. Admission

Before being considered for admission to study for an award to which these Regulations apply, a candidate must normally have obtained a degree or equivalent.

#### 3. Duration of Study

The minimum period of study for the award of a Masters degree is 12 calendar months. The maximum period for full-time study is 24 calendar months of registered study. The maximum period within which all students must complete the programme is five years from the date of initial registration.

#### 4. Programme Components

- 4.1 In order to qualify for an award in respect of the programmes specified in §11 and §12, a candidate must complete minimum credits<sup>4</sup> as follows:
  - (i) For the award of a Masters degree: 180 credits, which includes both taught courses and a 60 credit (or more) dissertation or other substantial independent work.
  - (ii) For the award of a Postgraduate Diploma: 120 credits of taught courses.
  - (iii) For the award of a Postgraduate Certificate: 60 credits of taught courses.
- 4.2 The taught courses will normally be undertaken during the academic session (September – June) and are specified in the relevant Programme Document. The length and nature of the dissertation or other substantial independent work is as specified in the relevant Programme Document.

#### 5. Minimum Requirement for the Award of Credits

Credits for courses contributing to a candidate's curriculum shall be awarded subject to the fulfilment of required conditions. The minimum requirements for the award of credits are set out in the Code of Assessment at §16.36 – §16.40 of the chapter *University Fees and General Information for Students* in the University Calendar.

#### 6. Assessment

Regulations for assessment are, insofar as not modified by these regulations, governed by the Code of Assessment which is contained in the *University Fees and General Information for Students* chapter of the *Calendar*.

#### 7. Candidates for a Masters Degree: Progress

- 7.1 A candidate will be permitted to progress to preparation of the dissertation, or other substantial independent work required by the degree, only if he or she has obtained an average of Grade C in the taught courses described in

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<sup>4</sup> In compliance with the Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework a minimum component of the total credit must be gained from **Masters level** courses (Level M/SCQF Level 11) as follows: 150 credits for a Masters Degree, 90 credits for a Postgraduate Diploma, 40 credits for a Postgraduate Certificate.

Regulation 4, with at least 90 credits at Grade D3 or better, and no credits at Grade G or below. The Programme Document may specify a course or courses in respect of which a specific grade is a minimum requirement of progression. Exceptionally, a candidate may be permitted to progress to the dissertation where the department judges that the candidate's performance offers a reasonable prospect of that candidate's reaching the standard required for the award of the Masters degree following reassessment.

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7.2 A candidate who has commenced study midway through an academic session will be permitted to progress to preparation of the dissertation, or other substantial independent work, only if he or she has obtained an average of Grade C in the taught courses assessed by the end of the session in which study was commenced with no more than 25% of the credits for these courses at grade E and none below grade E. The Programme Document may specify a course or courses in respect of which grade D is a minimum requirement of progression.

## 8. Reassessment of the Dissertation

Reassessment of the dissertation or other substantial independent work will be permitted on one occasion only, under such conditions as the Examiners may prescribe in each particular case. Normally, resubmission should be no later than 3 months after the date of the meeting of the Board of Examiners. There is no automatic entitlement to repeat any previous practical work associated with the dissertation or substantial independent work or to undertake further practical work.

## 9. Requirements for the award of a Masters degree and rules for award of distinction and merit

9.1 A candidate will be eligible for the award of the degree on obtaining an average of Grade C or better (with no more than 25% of credit at Grade E and none below grade E) in all the taught courses within the programme, as specified in Regulation 4, and obtaining a grade D or better in the dissertation or other substantial independent work.

9.2 A candidate who has achieved at the first attempt a mean overall aggregation score of 15 (equivalent to B3) or above for the taught component and Grade B3 or above for the dissertation or other substantial independent work will be eligible for the award with Merit. Where the mean overall aggregation score for the taught component falls within the range 14.1 and 14.9 the Board of Examiners shall have discretion to make the award with Merit. No discretion can be applied in relation to the grade required for the dissertation or other substantial independent work.

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9.3 A candidate who has achieved at the first attempt a mean overall aggregation score of 18 (equivalent to A5) or above for the taught component and Grade A5 or above for the dissertation or other substantial independent work will be eligible for the award with Distinction. Where the mean overall aggregation score for the taught component falls within the range 17.1 to 17.9 the Board of Examiners shall have the discretion to make the award with Distinction. No discretion can be applied in relation to the grade required for the dissertation or other substantial independent work.

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## 10. Requirements for the award of a Postgraduate Diploma or Postgraduate Certificate and rules for award of distinction and merit

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10.1 The requirement for the award of a Postgraduate Diploma is an average of Grade D in 120 credits, with not less than 80 of these credits at Grade D or above.

10.2 The requirement for the award of a Postgraduate Certificate is an average of Grade D in 60 credits, with not less than 40 of these credits at Grade D or above.

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10.3 These awards may be granted with Merit or Distinction according to the criteria specified in §9.2 and §9.3 above.

## 11. Degrees<sup>5</sup> to which these regulations apply

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The following degrees are governed by the above regulations:

<sup>5</sup> Each of these degree programmes also offer awards of Postgraduate Diploma and Postgraduate Certificate with the same title (see Regulation 10 above).

## V GENERIC REGULATIONS FOR POSTGRADUATE CERTIFICATES AND DIPLOMAS

A student admitted onto a programme leading to an award must follow the instructions issued by the relevant Department or equivalent and be aware of the content of the Programme Document (often referred to as the Programme or 'Course' Handbook) issued by that Department or equivalent which will contain further details on the Programme including, in some cases, further requirements associated with the award.

### 1. Application of Regulations

- 1.1 These regulations apply without modification to the awards listed in §9 below.
- 1.2 These regulations apply also to the awards listed in §10 below subject to alternative requirements described in the relevant Programme Document. The requirements for these awards may vary only in respect of duration of study (§3), requirements for the award (§7) to reflect the requirements of professional or statutory bodies, or progress to a Masters degree (§8).

### 2. Admission

Before being considered for admission to study for an award to which these Regulations apply, a candidate must normally have obtained a degree or equivalent.

### 3. Duration of Study

The minimum period of study for the award of a Certificate or Diploma is one semester and one academic session respectively. The maximum period for full-time study is 12 calendar months of registered study. The maximum period within which all students must complete the programme is four years from the date of initial registration.

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### 4. Programme Components

- 4.1 In order to qualify for an award in respect of the programmes specified in §9 - §10 below, a candidate must complete minimum credits<sup>1</sup> as follows:
- (a) For the award of a Postgraduate Diploma: 120 credits of taught courses.
- (b) For the award of a Postgraduate Certificate: 60 credits of taught courses.
- 4.2 The taught courses will normally be undertaken during the academic session (September - June) and are specified in the relevant Programme Document.

### 5. Minimum Requirement for the Award of Credits

Credits for courses contributing to a candidate's curriculum shall be awarded subject to the fulfilment of required conditions. The minimum requirements for the award of credits are set out in the Code of Assessment at §16.36 - §16.40 of the chapter *University Fees and General Information for Students* in the University Calendar.

<sup>1</sup> In compliance with the Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework a minimum component of the total credit must be gained from **Masters level** courses (Level M/SCQF Level 11) as follows: 90 credits for a Postgraduate Diploma, 40 credits for a Postgraduate Certificate.

## 6. Assessment

Regulations for assessment are, insofar as not modified by these regulations, governed by the Code of Assessment which is contained in the *University Fees and General Information for Students* chapter of the *Calendar*.

### 7. Requirements for the award of a Postgraduate Diploma or Postgraduate Certificate and Rules for Award of Distinction and Merit

- 7.1 The requirement for the award of a Postgraduate Diploma is an average of Grade D in 120 credits, with not less than 80 of these credits at Grade D or above.
- 7.2 The requirement for the award of a Postgraduate Certificate is an average of Grade D in 60 credits, with not less than 40 of these credits at Grade D or above.
- 7.3 A candidate who has achieved a mean overall aggregation score of 15 (equivalent to B3) at the first sitting will be eligible for the award with Merit. Where the mean overall aggregation score falls within the range 14.1 and 14.9 the Board of Examiners shall have discretion to make the award with Merit.
- 7.4 A candidate who has achieved a mean overall aggregation score of 18 (equivalent to A5) at the first sitting will be eligible for the award with Distinction. Where the mean overall aggregation score falls within the range 17.1 to 17.9 the Board of Examiners shall have the discretion to make the award with Distinction.

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### 8. Progress to a Masters Degree

A candidate may be permitted to progress to study for a masters degree if a masters programme in the same subject is available and only if the candidate has obtained an average of Grade C in the taught courses described in §4 with no more than 25% of the credits for these courses at grade E and none below grade E. The Programme Document may specify a course or courses in respect of which grade D is a minimum requirement of progression.

### 9. Awards to which these Regulations Apply

The following awards are governed by the above regulations:

## EXTRACT FROM CODE OF ASSESSMENT

## Provision for Reassessment

16.6 In §16.7 - §16.8 below, the 'threshold grade' shall, unless otherwise specified in the regulations for a particular programme, be:

- (a) for undergraduate programmes, grade D;
- (b) for programmes governed by the generic regulations for taught masters degrees, grade C.

16.7 A candidate who, by the end of the course, has failed to attain the threshold grade shall normally be afforded the opportunity described in §16.8 below to improve that assessment result. There shall be no such opportunity in respect of courses which contribute to the candidate's honours classification except where permitted under the regulations governing a particular award; in such cases the original grade only shall contribute to the honours classification.

16.8 A candidate who has failed to attain the threshold grade shall, subject to the provision of §16.9 below, normally be permitted not more than one further attempt at each component of the assessment in which a grade lower than the threshold grade has been awarded. A second further attempt shall not be available as a matter of right but may be permitted at the discretion of the Faculty responsible for the programme in accordance with its policies and procedures which shall be published in the relevant course documentation.

16.9 A candidate's right under §16.8 to a second opportunity to submit coursework for assessment may be constrained by the nature of the coursework, the context in which it may be generated, the feasibility of its being regenerated, and the integrity of the assessment as a whole. Any such constraint shall be published in the relevant course documentation.

16.10 Where, under §16.41 - §16.48 below, a Board of Examiners is satisfied that a candidate has been prevented by good cause from completing an assessment, that assessment shall not be counted as an attempt made by, or available to, the candidate.

16.11 Where a second or permitted subsequent attempt at an assessment is not available to the candidate until a subsequent academic session, the candidate shall not be entitled to assume that the content of the course will be unchanged, and it shall be the responsibility of the candidate, in conjunction with the Department responsible for the course, to make appropriate preparation for that assessment.

16.12 Unless otherwise specified in the regulations for a particular programme, the final grade awarded for a course following reassessment shall be subject to the following provisions:

- (a) for undergraduate programmes, the number of grade points derived from a reassessment shall be not more than 10 and not less than the number of points determined by the grade originally achieved;
- (b) for programmes governed by the generic regulations for taught masters degrees, reassessment results for taught courses shall be capped so that the aggregation score\* contributing to the final award shall not be greater than 12; there shall be no capping in relation to reassessment of the dissertation or other substantial independent work.

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16.13 Further to §16.7 above, and notwithstanding §16.12 above, a candidate who, by the end of the course, requires an improved assessment result in order to complete a graduating curriculum in that academic session, shall normally be afforded the opportunity described in §16.8 above irrespective of the result obtained on completion of the course. This entitlement shall be limited to courses totalling no more than 60 credit points. On completion of the reassessment, the candidate shall be awarded the number of grade points corresponding to the grade achieved in the reassessment or, if higher, that corresponding to the grade achieved in the original assessment.

\* Aggregation scores are aligned with grades and bands in Schedule A, and an aggregation score of 12 corresponds with the grade/banc C3.

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