

IMPORTANT NOTE

Text which appears in a box has been added by the Faculty of Humanities to clarify certain points or make them more specific. This document should be read in conjunction with the following University documents: the [Guide to the Taught Degree Regulations](#) and the [Glossary of Terms](#).

NOTE: This document is for administrative purposes only and should not be circulated to students.

All variations from the standard University agreed Regulations must be approved by the Faculty's Teaching and Learning Committee on the University [form](#).

Title of Taught Awards (Guide to the Taught Degree Regulations)

The authority to approve titles of degree awards lies with Senate. The title of a programme or an award will normally follow the following conventions:

The title "X" signifies that at least two thirds of the credits of the programme relate directly to the subject X.

The title "X and Y" signifies that the distinct subjects X and Y each comprise more than one third of the credits of the programme and of the credits in the final year.

The title "X with Y" signifies **either**

(i) that subject X is studied with subject Y, where Y comprises at least one quarter but no more than one third of the credits of the programme and of the credits in the final year; **or**

(ii) that subject X is combined with a substantial period of study Y (typically one academic year) away from the University.

The titles "X (with Y)" or "X (Y)" may be used to signify that subject X is studied with subject Y where Y is another subject or pathway that comprises less than one quarter but at least one sixth of the credits of the programme and of the credits in the final year.

Titles of awards will not normally include more than two subjects, to which "with Y" for a period of study Y as above may be added where applicable.

Duration of Postgraduate Taught Programmes (Guide to the Taught Degree Regulations)

A Degree of Master will normally be a one-year programme and the date for the end of the programme and submission of the dissertation (or equivalent) will be published in the programme handbook.

There is no set maximum Postgraduate Taught length of study specified in the Degree Regulations, although it is generally accepted that the period of time for part-time Degree of Masters students to complete their programmes would not exceed five academic years. The length of study for PGT students depends on whether a student has exhausted their resit opportunities, whether there are any mitigating circumstances or periods of interruption, or if there are any variances approved by the Faculty, as stated in programme handbooks. However, Schools will have to be mindful of visa requirements when taking action which may extend a student's duration of study and should also consider whether the content of the programme is still current when looking at agreeing to extend a student's length of study.

The duration of a programme is that which was approved during the programme approval process.

Any periods of interruption/breaks away from studies due to mitigating circumstances are over and above the expected duration of a programme.

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A. Credit and Award Framework

1. All awards of the University of Manchester will be given on the basis of the accumulation of credit as mapped out in table 1 (below). This table is based on the credit/awards and levels required by the national Framework of Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ):

Table 1: Credit and Postgraduate Award framework:

Name of Award	Minimum Credit for the Award	ECTS	Minimum credits at the level of qualification	ECTS	FHEQ level
Masters (2 Year)	360	180	240	120	7
Masters (1 Year)	180	90	150	75	7
Postgraduate Diploma	120	60	90	45	7
Postgraduate Certificate	60	30	40	20	7
Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE)	60	30	40	20	7

Note 1: the table refers to the levels as defined in the FHEQ. It may be of assistance to the reader to understand that Level 7 of the FHEQ relates to a Masters programme.

Note 2: One ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) is equivalent to two UK credits.

The fourth column in the box above denotes the minimum number of credits at level 7 which are required for the Award specified in column one.

The Degree Regulations do not specify the number of credits required for either the taught or dissertation element (just total credits) thereby permitting flexibility within programme design.

Table 1 is intended to be used for exit awards and not deciding progression.

2. All students who exit prior to completion of the programme on which they registered will receive an exit award if they have achieved the appropriate amount of credit in accordance with that award, as specified in table 1, within 5 years of their initial registration.

For a Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip) 120 credits are required.
For a Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert) 60 credits are required.

This Regulation specifies that the exit award will be given (if the student achieves the appropriate amount of credit) within 5 years of their initial registration for the programme. The time period of 5 years is specified in order to take into account any periods of interruption / extensions etc. the student may have.

The 5 year period specified does not denote that the student can elect to undertake flexible study (unless the programme has had this mode of delivery approved i.e. modular over an extended period of time).

3. A student must achieve the minimum amount of credit at the level of the qualification in accordance with table 1. However, (subject to the programme requirements) students can take credit at a higher or lower level in order to achieve the minimum credit for the award.

The remaining credits must follow the Faculty's [Policy on the use of level 6 units at level 7](#).

B. Title of Taught Awards

4. Titles of degrees can be found in the University's General Regulations: [Regulation XI Titles of Degrees and other Distinctions](#).

Authority to approve titles of degrees lies with Senate.

C. Accreditation of Prior Learning - AP(E)L / Rescinding Awards

5. A maximum time limit of 5 years should apply between award and consideration of AP(E)L.

The principle is that learning is relevant and current to the award.

Schools should have processes in place at the admissions stage to consider AP(E)L requests. The University's document [Principles and Guidance for the Application of the Accreditation of Prior Learning \(AP\(E\)L\)](#) provides guidance on the application of the Accreditation of Higher Learning in relation to the University's Taught Degree Regulations and Credit Framework.

6. Where the Postgraduate Certificate is a standalone programme, AP(E)L will be permitted up to a maximum of 15 credits. Where the Postgraduate Diploma is a standalone programme, AP(E)L will be permitted for up to a maximum of 45 credits. For a Masters award, the maximum amount of credits which can be permitted for AP(E)L is 60.

AP(E)L will not be permitted for the dissertation element of a programme.

Any unit exempted will not be awarded a mark but should be graded a pass and hence excluded from the calculation of the overall marks.

7. Students exiting with a Postgraduate Diploma (or Postgraduate Certificate) may be permitted to rescind this award and 'upgrade' to a Masters (or Postgraduate Diploma) by successfully completing the appropriate further component of the programme providing the following conditions are met:

- The rescinding occurs within five years of the award, subject to the programme still being available.
- An overall pass, at the appropriate standard to assure admission to a Masters programme, was obtained for the Postgraduate Diploma (or Postgraduate Certificate) including any capped or compensated grades.

For further guidance on rescinding awards, please see the University's *Principles on Rescinding* (see Appendix to the Guidance on Examination Boards).

Rescinding Awards (Guide to the Taught Degree Regulations)

It is not a right to rescind an award. All students attempting to gain admission to the University are subject to admission requirements regardless of previous enrolment status.

Students who have received an exit award as a result of academic failure may not rescind and be readmitted as they have exhausted all assessment opportunities previously.

The formal rescindment of an existing award will take place at the Examination Board, once the replacement award has been ratified.

The administrative rescindment of the award will take place after re-admittance has been accepted, using the [SSO guidance](#) on readmit and rescinded awards and the certificate should be placed on the student's file:

If due to failure, the subsequent award is not conferred, the original award will remain in place and the original certificate returned to the student.

The University is able to rescind an award when academic misconduct has been proven after graduation, in accordance with [Statute XX paragraph 7](#).

The TLSO have confirmed that students also permitted to request that an award gained following the successful completion of a programme of study be rescinded in order to be considered for an award at a lower level, as defined as the exit award in the programme specification for the programme on which the student is registered. Students whose request to downgrade an award has been accepted should be made aware that the higher award cannot be reinstated at a later date. The principles for rescinding awards, as defined in the Guidance on Examination Boards, apply.

8. Students can receive an exit award if they have AP(E)L credit in their profile, providing their performance in University of Manchester also satisfies the award requirements in table 1: Credit and Postgraduate Award framework (see section A, page 2) and at least half of the credits have been awarded by the University of Manchester.

AP(E)L Credits & Exit Awards

Award	AP(E)L credits permitted	Minimum M/C credits required	Total credits required for award
PGCert	15	30	60
PGDip	45	60	120

9. Schools may stipulate when AP(E)L is not allowed due to Professional Body requirements.

Schools to stipulate in relevant publications when AP(E)L is not permitted either on a programme or a course unit; Schools need to report this to the Faculty on the [University form](#).

D. Assessment and Credit Accumulation

10. Where students are required to progress to a research element including a 'dissertation' or similar, the programme handbook must state the minimum requirements for progression to this element of the programme.

Schools need to clearly articulate in the programme handbook the minimum requirements for progression to the dissertation (or equivalent) element of the programme.

It is assumed that normally students will have to successfully complete the taught element of the programme before they can progress to the dissertation (or equivalent) element. However in practice

consideration needs to be given to the course units failed, the timing of any resits and completion of the programme (i.e. if an extension to the submission date for the dissertation (or equivalent) is required, due to failure/resits), especially for international students.

If a student has failed, for example, a research ethics / research training or core course which prepares them for the dissertation (or equivalent) element then they should not be allowed to progress to this part of the programme until they have successfully completed the failed unit(s).

Where progression to the dissertation (or equivalent) element is permitted when the student hasn't yet satisfied the requirements for the taught element of the programme this is done at the student's own risk and the students should be counselled to this effect.

11. If an Examination Board has documented evidence that, (a) a student's work, attendance or engagement has been unsatisfactory, and (b) the student has been formally warned of the unsatisfactory work, attendance or engagement but has not shown significant improvement acceptable to the Board, then the Board has the right to refuse assessment. See Regulation XX – *Monitoring Attendance and Wellbeing of Students* and the *Policy on Recording and Monitoring Attendance* (<http://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/tlso/policy-guidance/student-support-development/recording-attendance/>).

12. Where a student has failed on the first attempt or fails to qualify for a final award after compensation, referrals or the consideration of mitigation, the Examination Board has the following option at its discretion:

- Award Exit Award if criteria are met in accordance with table 1 (see section A, page 2).

Award	Number credits permitted for referral	Number of credits permitted for compensation	Minimum Credits required
PGCert	30 / 60	20 / 60	60
PGDip	60 / 120	40 / 120	120
MA	60 / 120	40 / 120	

NB the number of referral & compensation credits allowed are not cumulative; i.e. the total number of credits of referral and compensation for an MA and a PGDip is 60; for a PGCert 30.

The Head of Academic Policy has confirmed that where a student has failed 120 credits of the taught element of a programme at the first attempt (with marks below the compensation zone) the student can be offered the opportunity to undertake 60 credits of resits / referrals which, if passed, would allow the student to be exited with a PGCert. It should be the decision of the Examination Board as to which of the failed units would be resat / referred. If the Examination Board makes this decision, it should be made clear to the student when they need to do the resits / referrals by and the consequence of failure (i.e. they will not receive an award). If the student chooses not to do the resits / referrals they should be administratively withdrawn.

13. Schools may have alternative assessment regulations where these are required by Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs).

Schools need to inform the Faculty if there are different PSRB requirements on the [University form](#).

E. Compensation

14. The compensation zone is defined by the standard unit marking scheme for postgraduate taught students, found in the [Guide to the Taught Degree Regulations](#).

Compensation of failed course units is a measure to reduce the need for referral assessment where the

student has demonstrated academic ability (Guide to the Taught Degree Regulations).

Award	Compensation zone %
PGCert	30 to 39
PGDip	30 to 39
MA	40 to 49

The mark can be compensated for credit only and the original mark will stand. The course unit mark which has been compensated has a suffix of C.

Course unit marks are recorded as whole numbers.

NB: The Taught Degree Regulations [Glossary of Terms](#) identifies compulsory course units as those which *'cannot be substituted and must be taken by students in order to meet the intended learning outcomes of the programme. Compulsory units are not compensatable but may be resat. Schools can, however, specify if compulsory units need to be passed at the first attempt, and this must be clearly stated in the unit specification.'*

The Glossary states that *'Core units must be taken by students in order to achieve all the required intended learning outcomes of the programme. They differ from 'compulsory units' as they can be resat and compensated.(Aside from 'compulsory' and 'core' units, other units can be optional, free choice or elective units - see 'Optional course units'.)*

Schools need to ensure that the correct terminology is used (i.e. compulsory or core).

15. PGT programmes can be compensated up to 40 credits for PG Diploma/ Masters and 20 credits for a PG Certificate. Please note that the total number of credits allowable for referral for a PG Diploma/Masters is 60, of which 40 can be compensated. For a PG Certificate, the total number of credits allowable for referral is 30 credits, of which 20 can be compensated.

Award	Number of credits permitted for compensation
PGCert	20
PGDip	40
MA 1yr	40

The number of referral & compensation credits allowed is NOT cumulative; i.e. the total number of credits of referral and compensation for an MA and a PGDip is 60; for a PGCert 30.

Postgraduate dissertations are not normally compensatable because of their high credit weighting, but a failed dissertation can be resubmitted (see paragraphs F24 - F26).

Some professional bodies may not allow compensation on programmes they have accredited; such cases must be agreed by the Faculty and clearly articulated in programme handbooks. Such exemptions should be applied for on the University [form](#).

The total number of credits allowable for referral for a PG Diploma / Masters has been increased from 30 to 40 credits as Senate approved, from September 2018, the use of multiples of 20 credit units for PGT programmes being delivered via distance learning and supported by the University Manchester Worldwide. The Regulations have been changed to permit this and also to future-proof any future decision by Senate to expand the use of 20 credits for campus-based PGT programmes.

16. Compensation can only be applied up to the maximum amount specified in E15. Beyond this maximum threshold, the Examination Board will make a decision on which reassessment can be taken.

Unless the unit has been defined as non-compensatable, compensation is automatic; however under paragraph E16 the decision on how to apply compensation is at the discretion of the Examination Board (Guide to the Taught Degree Regulations).

Award	Maximum Compensation (credits)	Maximum Referral (credits) permitted	Total of compensation & / or referral permitted
PGCert	15	30	30
PGDip	30	60	60
MA 1yr	30	60 (taught) + 60 (dissertation)	60

The total 'failure' permitted on an MA / PGDip programme is 60 credits; 40 of these 60 credits could be compensated. See F20 - F24

It must be the Examination Board which chooses which units to compensate and which to refer when there are more than the permitted credits in the compensation zone.

Compensation of failed course units is a measure to reduce the need for referred assessment where the student has demonstrated academic ability. Unless the unit has been defined as non-compensatable, compensation is normally automatic; however, under Paragraph E16 of the Postgraduate Taught Regulations, the decision on how to apply compensation is at the discretion of the Examination Board (Guide to the Taught Degree Regulations).

17. Schools can specify when a unit is not compensatable or when PSRB rules take precedence.

Schools to specify, in relevant publications, when a unit is not compensatable e.g. core units / subject to PSRB requirements – **these must be approved by the Faculty**. Schools to submit the information on the [University form](#).

18. Compensated credit retains the original failed mark and this is used in the weighted average for the calculation of the final classification/ award.

19. Referral marks are compensatable.

Referral marks are compensatable, provided the number of compensated credits permitted has not been exceeded (PGCert 20 credits & PGDip/MA 40 credits).

Extract from the [SSO Bulletin 56](#) – 4 February 2013

Referral marks are compensatable. This means that if a referral (or resit) mark falls in the compensation zone, then this can potentially be compensated [see above statement].

A compensated referral mark is still treated as a pass-by-resit. Hence, under the new taught degree regulations, the final mark is recorded on Campus Solutions with a suffix R. However, after further consultation with Schools in preparation for the recent Degree Regulations Briefing Sessions, it has been decided that compensated referral marks will in fact be capped at the compensation level.

If a referral mark is compensated, it is capped at the compensation level and recorded as a pass-by-resit with a suffix R. See worked examples below.

Career	First Sit	Resit Mark	Final Mark
Masters	25	48	40R
Certificate / Diploma	25	38	30R

In these examples, a student has failed the module with an overall mark of 25%. As a result, the student is asked to resit the unit. While the student's performance has improved after resit, they have still not passed the course unit: The overall mark after resit is in the compensation zone.

Referral marks are compensatable. After reviewing the student's overall record, the Exam Board decides to allow the course unit mark to be compensated.

The resit mark is capped at the compensation level, and so the final course unit mark is MA 40% & PGCert/PGDip 30%. Nevertheless, in spite of this use of compensation, the final mark is recorded on Campus Solutions with a suffix of R. If a referral mark is compensated, it is still treated as a pass by resit.

The following tables have been produced to aid staff members in recording students' marks, in cases of compensation, to accompany information contained within the Postgraduate Taught Degree Regulations, and the Guide to the Taught Degree Regulations.

PGT Masters

Applying Compensation (compensation range – 40-49%)

1 st Mark	Resit	Recorded Mark	Note
48	No	48C	
32	48	40R	Failed first attempt and resit in compensation zone. Cap of 40 used with R suffix as it is a pass at resit

PGT Certificate / Diploma

Applying Compensation (compensation range – 40-49%)

1 st Mark	Resit	Recorded Mark	Note
38	No	38C	
22	38	30R	Failed first attempt and resit in compensation zone. Cap of 30 used with R suffix as it's a pass at resit.

When considering students having compensated resits, it should be noted that this is only permitted when a student has not exceeded their compensation allowance.

If a student is registered on a PGT Masters programme and fails, but passes at Diploma level, they could be eligible to be transferred to a Diploma.

F. Reassessment

20. Where the overall unit mark is below the compensation zone or the number of compensatable fails has been exceeded, reassessment may be taken, within the credit limitations set out in F24. Reassessment as a result of a fail is known as a 'Referral'. Subsequent attempts as a result of approved and verified mitigating circumstances are known as 'Deferrals'.

Award	Compensation Zone	Maximum Number Compensation (credits)	Max no. credits referred	Total of compensation & / or referral permitted
PGCert	30 – 39%	20	30 / 60	30
PGDip	30 – 39%	40	60 / 120	60
MA	40 – 49%	40	60 / 120 + 60 (dissertation)	60 + 60 (dissertation)

Course unit mark subject to referral is denoted by a suffix of (R).

Reassessment is available for course units with marks below the compensation zone (i.e. 29% or below for PGCert / PGDip; 39% or below for MA) or where more than the allowable number of course units are in the compensation zone (up to the maximum amount permitted). Reassessment is not available for improving marks.

The number of referral & compensation credits allowed are NOT cumulative; i.e. the total number of credits of referral and compensation for an MA and a PGDip is 60; for a PGCert 30.

For all referred assessment, the original pass mark will stay the same; therefore for Postgraduate Taught referred assessment, a student will have to achieve a mark of 50% (40% for PGDip/Cert) to pass, but this mark will be capped at the lowest compensatable mark, 40% (30% for PGDip/Cert), unless the original mark was within the compensation zone, in which case the original mark will stand. This ruling also applies to dissertations (Guide to the Taught Degree Regulations).

21. The reassessment must be designed to assess the achievement of the same intended learning outcomes but need not be of the same form as that originally used. The reassessment will normally take place in the same academic year as the original assessment to enable the students to progress as originally intended.

It is expected that reassessment will take place in same academic year as the original assessment i.e. no later than the August resit period. The word 'normally' is used to allow for mitigating circumstances.

Schools are to decide when it is best to do resit / referral by essay, however it needs to be in time for consideration by the Examination Board after the August resit period.

If any changes have been made to the unit, the resit paper should cover the syllabus taught when the student was undertaking it.

Schools in Humanities normally wait until the full diet of marks are available for part-time students, and as such the reassessment may not take place in the same academic year as the original assessment. The Head of Academic Policy has stated that it is not good for the student experience to have a large gap between the lectures/tutorials and the referred assessment, with no support or academic contact in the subject. It is also an unfair advantage to give students a longer timeframe in which to do further revision.

Other areas of the University don't wait for the full diet of marks to be known to make decisions on compensation and referral, they compensate and refer until a student runs out of compensation and referral options.

22. If an Examination Board has documented evidence that, (a) a student's work, attendance or engagement has been unsatisfactory, and (b) the student has been formally warned of the unsatisfactory work, attendance or engagement but has not shown significant improvement acceptable to the Board, then the Board has the right to refuse the student reassessment /referred assessment. See Regulation XX - *Monitoring Attendance and Wellbeing of Students* and the *Policy on Recording and Monitoring Attendance* (<http://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/tlso/policy-guidance/student-support-development/recording-attendance/>).

23. An Examination Board may allow a student one attempt, per unit, at reassessment (two attempts in total). This principle does not apply to attempts with approved and verified mitigating circumstances.

Where a student has approved and verified mitigating circumstances the student can be allowed to take the unit again as a first sit, this is known as a 'deferral' see F20.

The Regulations permit two attempts at meeting the intended learning outcomes (ILOs) of the unit *as a whole*. So, if a student took a unit of 30 credits which has three assessments and they failed two of these, they could resit both assessments if they needed to. It depends what the unit specifications say.

If a unit requires students to pass everything then they will need to resit both failed elements. If the unit specification requires a pass average across all assessments to pass a unit, then the student could only resit one of the failed elements to enable them to meet the average pass mark for the unit and meet the ILO of the unit.

However the students only get two attempts at the whole unit, but can resit as many of the component assessments as required to meet the ILO of the unit. Which elements to take is an Examination Board decision.

24. Postgraduate programmes can be referred in up to half of the taught credits; this includes credits on a PG Certificate or PG Diploma award. Students may also resubmit the dissertation (or equivalent, see F 25) on one occasion, subject to the mark restrictions set out in F26. The number of credits referred and those compensated cannot exceed half the taught credits in total.

Referral – 2nd attempt at summative assessment, with penalty (capped at lowest compensatable mark), as a result of failing at the first attempt.

Award	Max no. credits referred	Cap - Lowest compensatable mark
PGCert	30 / 60	30%
PGDip	60 / 120	30%
MA 1yr	60 / 120 + 60 (dissertation)	40%

25. When the referred assessment for a postgraduate student includes independent work such as a dissertation or project resubmission, they should be permitted a reasonable amount of time within a maximum of 6 calendar months from the date of the Examination Board. This reassessment of a research/ dissertation element does not contribute to the credit limitations set out in F24.

Reassessment of the dissertation is in addition to the number of referral credits permitted on the taught element. Dissertations are not compensatable.

It was agreed that the Faculty time limit for resubmission of a failed dissertation would be 6 months (students can submit earlier than this if so wish). Schools should notify the Faculty, if they specify resubmission within less than 6 months, on the [University form](#).

If a Masters' student fails the dissertation element and is allowed a resubmission (see F26), they must pass the resubmission at the pass mark (i.e. 50%). The mark recorded for the resubmission will be the lowest compensatable fail mark (i.e. 40%) unless the first mark achieved was in the compensation zone in which case this mark will be recorded. e.g. a student achieved a mark of 42% at the first attempt, was permitted a resubmission and achieved a mark for the resubmission of 52%. The actual mark recorded is 42R, as the first mark was in the compensation zone. See F26 below.

If a Masters' student fails the dissertation element and is allowed to resubmit it, but then fails the resubmission and is awarded a PGDiploma the result (i.e. mark) for the failed dissertation would not appear on their transcript.

26. Students achieving a mark of less than 30 for their dissertation or project submission are not permitted to resubmit and will be given an exit award in accordance with table 1 (see section A, page 2).

Regulation F26 applies to all new PGT students registered from September 2016 onwards. Continuing PGT students will remain on the set of Degree Regulations on which they registered, as this new paragraph is less beneficial to them.

27. Referral pass marks will be capped at the lowest compensatable mark for Postgraduate Taught students, unless the previous mark was within the compensation zone, in which case the original mark will stand. This mark is used in the weighted average mark for the final award. The capped mark is applied to the unit level mark, not the failed element.

Referral Capped Marks

Award	Referral Capped Mark
PGCert	30%
PGDip	30%
MA	40%

Reassessment is not available to improve marks. The referred assessment must be passed at the pass mark (i.e. PGCert / PGDip 40%; MA 50%) in order for the mark to be capped.

The referral capped mark is applied to the unit level mark, not the failed element. e.g. If there is an assessment which is worth 20% of the total assessment for the unit and this is failed the unit mark is capped.

The capped mark just stands and doesn't need compensating (referrals are in addition to compensation) students can still progress with a number of marks in the 40-49% range.

(Guide to the Taught Degree Regulations) Some of the principles behind the way referrals are handled are as follows:

- If a student passes a course unit by resit, then they should not end up with a lower mark than they obtained at the first sit. So if a PGT student gets 45% in the first sit (which is a fail), and then they get 60% in the resit, then their final mark should be 45R and not 40R.
- A student who got a low mark in the first sit of an exam should not gain an advantage compared to a student who got a relatively good mark in the first sit. So, for example, if a PGT student got 23% in the first sit and then 60% in the resit, their final mark will be 40R. That is, their resit mark is capped at the compensation level. This final mark is lower than that of the student in the first example, above, as intended.

So the basic rule is that if the student passes the resit, then the resit mark is capped at the compensation level. However, if the original first-sit mark was in the compensation range, then this original mark is retained. However, if a student fails, then the first-sit mark stands and would be recorded without a suffix of 'R'.

Where students are permitted a resubmission following the application of a penalty due to academic malpractice, the resubmission is capped at the lowest compensatable fail (i.e. MA 40%; PGCert / PGDip 30%). Whilst capping the referred mark is the norm (which means that the unit mark is also capped) the Head of Academic Policy has confirmed that Academic Malpractice Panels can make other recommendations which could over rule the degree regulations if appropriate. If a resubmission is allowed it can be stipulated that it is just the mark for the resubmitted element which is capped; this is to ensure that the penalty isn't disproportionate e.g. when the assessment is only a small proportion of the total assessment for the unit.

Extract from the [SSO Bulletin 56](#) – 4 February 2013

The table below shows the mark that the student got when they were first assessed (First Sit) and the mark

they achieved in the resit (Resit Mark). The last column shows the final mark that is recorded on the student's record in Campus Solutions (Final Mark).

In the examples below, the student passes the resit with a mark of 60% and gains the credit for the completed course unit:

First Sit	Resit Mark	Final Mark
0	60	40R
5	60	40R
15	60	40R
25	60	40R
35	60	40R
45	60	45R
49	60	49R

In the examples below, the student fails the resit with a mark of 20%. In these examples the student has failed the unit and so does not gain any credit:

First Sit	Resit Mark	Final Mark
0	20	0
5	20	5
15	20	15
25	20	25
35	20	35
45	20	45
49	20	49

Some of the principles behind the way referrals are handled are as follows:

- If a student passes a course unit by resit, then they should not end up with a lower mark than they obtained at the first sit. So if a PGT student gets 45% in the first sit (which is a fail), and then they get 60% in the resit, then their final mark should be 45R and not 40R.
- A student who got a low mark in the first sit of an exam should not gain an advantage compared to a student who got a relatively good mark in the first sit. So, for example, if a PGT student got 23% in the first sit and then 60% in the resit, their final mark will be 40R. That is, their resit mark is capped at the compensation level. This final mark is lower than that of the student in the first example, above, as intended.

So the basic rule is that if the student **passes** the resit, then the resit mark is capped at the compensation level. However, if the original first-sit mark was in the compensation range, then this original mark is retained. On the other hand, if a student **fails**, then the first-sit mark stands and would be recorded without a suffix of 'R'.

28. When a student is referred and fails a unit, the first mark stands.

See examples in F27 above.

For all referred assessment the original pass mark will stay the same; therefore for Postgraduate Taught referred assessment, a student will have to achieve a mark of 50% to pass, but this mark will be capped at the lowest compensatable mark (40%). This includes dissertations.

The following tables have been produced to aid staff members in recording students' marks in cases of resits (referrals/deferrals), to accompany information contained within the Postgraduate Taught Degree Regulations, and the Guide to the Taught Degree Regulations.

Marks at resit table – Postgraduate Taught – Masters Level

PGT Masters Pass Mark: 50%

1 st Mark	Resit Mark	Recorded Mark	Note
30	55 (pass)	40R	Pass on resit, cap at lowest compensatable mark.
42	55 (pass)	42R	Pass on resit but as original mark was in the compensation zone this mark stands.
30	46 (fail)	30 (no suffix, failed)	Fails resit and has no compensation allowance. Failed with no credit, original mark stands.
44	48 (fail)	44 (no suffix, failed)	Fails resit and has no compensation allowance. Failed with no credit, original mark stands.
26	27 (fail)	26 (no suffix, failed)	Fails resit and has no compensation allowance. Failed with no credit, original mark stands.

Marks at resit table – Postgraduate Taught – PG Certificate/Diploma Level

PG Certificate/Diploma Pass Mark: 40%

1 st Mark	Resit Mark	Recorded Mark	Note
20	45 (pass)	30R	Pass on resit, cap at lowest compensatable mark.
32	45 (pass)	32R	Assumes marks in the compensation zone are resat because the student has exceeded their compensation limit. Pass on resit but original mark was in compensation zone, so that stands
25	38 (fail)	25 (no suffix, failed)	Fails resit and has no compensation allowance. Failed with no credit, original mark stands.
25	26 (fail)	25 (no suffix, failed)	Fails resit and mark not in compensation zone so failed with no credit & original mark stands
28	51 (pass at Masters level)	30R	Pass on resit, cap at lowest compensatable mark
34	38 (fail)	34 (no suffix, failed)	Assumes marks in the compensation zone are resat because the student has exceeded their compensation limit. Fails resit and has no compensation allowance. Failed with no credit, original mark stands.

If a mark is in the compensation zone but a student has exceeded their number of permitted credits of compensation, or the unit is non-compensatable, then the mark would be a fail, with no credit awarded, and the assessment must be resat/referred. If the assessment is passed at resit/referral, the student would be awarded the original mark with an R suffix to denote a pass at resit.

When considering students having compensated resits, it should be noted that this is only permitted when a student has not exceeded their compensation allowance.

If a student is registered on a PGT Masters programme and fails, but passes at Diploma level, they could be eligible to be transferred to a Diploma. Staff should then refer to the PG Certificate/Diploma table above regarding how the mark should be recorded.

If a student passes at Masters level (i.e. over 50%) when they are registered on a PG Cert or Diploma, it is advisable to record the actual resit mark locally, in case the student wishes to progress to the Masters programme at a later date.

29. Students may, in exceptional circumstances, at the discretion of the Examination Board, be allowed to repeat whole units or the entire programme, subject to teaching capacity not being exceeded.

This is a decision of the Examination Board and not a right of the student on PGT programmes.

If a student has failed the level/year, the Examination Board can make the decision to permit the student to repeat the year (or part thereof). Fees are payable for the repeated period of study, charged at the full tuition fees at the rate applicable for the academic year concerned. If there are proven mitigating circumstances and the School feels that they are serious enough, they can decide that a student shouldn't be charged fees to repeat the period of study, but the final decision would be a School one (Guide to the Taught Degree Regulations).

'subject to teaching capacity not being exceeded' means taking into account the number of students on a specific programme at one time.

G. Exit Awards

30. Once a student has exhausted all the opportunities to retrieve referred assessment they will be given an exit award in accordance with table 1 (see section A, page 2) and as defined in the Programme Specification.

31. If a student decides to withdraw, they will automatically be awarded the relevant exit award in accordance with table 1 (section A, page 2) and as defined in the Programme Specification.

Where a student enrolled on a Masters programme uses up all the compensation / referral credits permitted and it is suggested they change to the PGDip it is appropriate to reconsider their profile at this point. e.g. a student receives mark of 43% on a unit on Masters programme (which is a fail), this unit is compensated and (because of the diet of marks) the student changes to the PGDip. The 43% is now a pass at PGDip level, so the student could potentially go on to fail more modules at a lower level.

It is acceptable to reconsider the use of compensation. This is because the compensated units at Masters level would become clear passes at PG Dip level, leaving further opportunities to compensate within the limitations of the Regulations on compensation of PG Diplomas.

H. Classification in postgraduate taught programmes

Note: H35 should be agreed and applied consistently across a School. Approval should be sought at School and Faculty level and carefully articulated to the students within that School. For joint programmes, the 'Lead School's' model will apply.

32. For the award of pass a student must satisfy the minimum credit requirements specified in Table1 ("Credit and Postgraduate Award framework", found within paragraph 1 of Section A, Credit and Award Framework, of these Postgraduate Taught Regulations – page 2).

Pass Classification

Award	Minimum credits
PGCert	60
PGDip	120
MA 1yr	180
MA 2 yr	360

Weighted degree average for classification is calculated to one decimal place.

In theory a student could pass all course units e.g. with marks of 50% (for MA) with some units at the lowest compensatable mark and this would produce an overall average below 50%. For this reason the classification of pass degree at masters in table A1 (in the PGT Degree Regulations) is set at 59.9% or less providing the credit requirement from table 1 (in the PGT Degree Regulations) is satisfied i.e. passing 180 credits for the MA irrespective of the average programme weighting. It is key to remember that the award is based on the achievement of required amount of credit rather than the average mark (Guide to the Degree Regulations).

Example:

Assessment	A	B	C	D	E
Credits	30	30	30	30	60
Mark %	50	50	42C (compensated)	40R (fail)	50
Weighting	X2	X2	X2	X2	X4
total	100	100	84	80	200

For weighted average of programme add columns A-E / 12 (564/12) = 47% = PASS

The student has passed the required number of credits for the award of MA and as the weighted average of the programme is below 59.9% the classification is PASS.

33. Classifications for merit and distinction will be calculated on the basis of an average mark, based on the weighted programme as a whole (See Appendix 1, Table A1 – page 7).

Merit / Distinction Classification - based on weighted average across 180 credits

Award	Classification	Total Weighted Programme average %
MA 1yr	Merit	60%
MA 1yr	Distinction	70%

Weighted degree average for classification purposes are calculated to one decimal point.

Pass / merit / distinction classification only available in MA.

Students can be awarded a pass / merit classification if they have a compensated pass in their profile and / or have been referred (not distinction see regulation 35).

For the award of distinction all course units must have been passed at first attempt without any compensation.

PGCert & PGDip award is based on credit accumulation for which there is no classification other than pass/fail.

34. In order to achieve the award of pass, merit or distinction, a student must have passed the requisite minimum credits listed in Table 1(see section A, page 2) in accordance with the unit marking scheme and mark descriptors.

Masters course unit marking scheme

Mark (class) descriptor	Mark range (whole numbers)
Distinction	70 to 100
Merit	60 to 69
Pass	50 to 59
Compensatable fail	40 to 49

Non-compensatable fail	39 or less
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PGCert / PGDip course unit marking scheme

Mark (class) descriptor	Mark range (whole numbers)
Pass	40 or more
Compensatable fail	30 to 39
Non-compensatable fail	29 or less

35. In addition, Schools may decide to add a further requirement to gain the award of Distinction. Students must achieve an average, of 70% or above in both the taught element and the dissertation.

It was agreed at the Faculty's Teaching & Learning Committee (July 2012) that the award of distinction is based on the overall average of the programme (typically 180 credits).

The Faculty is NOT using Regulation H35

36. Students with credit awarded as a result of a referral or compensated mark will not be eligible for the award of distinction, only a merit or a pass.

37. Decisions with regards to 'borderline' classifications for individual students should be resolved using the mechanisms outlined in appendix A.

PG degree classification – MA based on 180 credits	Classification thresholds: average mark (mark range 0-100)	Boundary zone average
Distinction	70.0	68.0 to 69.9
Merit	60.0	58.0 to 59.9
Pass	59.9 or less providing the credit reqm'ts of table 1 in the credit & award framework have been met	NA

After allowances have been made for mitigating circumstances, a student whose total mark at the first assessment is within the boundary zone specified above must be awarded the higher degree classification as long as both the following criteria are satisfied (see also notes on AP(E)L):

- For the award of distinction all course units must have been passed at first attempt without any compensation.
- 120 out of 180 credits are equal to / or higher than the final award.

Students who lie within the pass/merit boundary zone can be considered for the higher award if they have some compensation or resits within their profile, as long as they have achieved at least 120 out of 180 credits.

Students who lie within the merit/distinction boundary can only be considered for the award of distinction if they have no compensation or resits within their profile.

If a student is in the boundary zone and does not satisfy the additional criteria (specified in the bullet points above), Schools may apply a further stage of 'classification review'.

The use of a viva voce to determine postgraduate taught degree classification is not permitted.

I. Posthumous and Aegrotat Degrees

38. A Postgraduate Taught degree may be awarded in the event of the death of a candidate prior to the completion of their degree (posthumous degree). For more information about posthumous degrees and the options open to Examination Boards, please see: <http://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/tlso/policy-guidance/teaching-and-learning/teaching/posthumous-awards/>.

39. A Postgraduate Taught degree may be awarded should the candidate be prevented from completing their degree due to the diagnosis of a terminal or debilitating illness (aegrotat degree). The Examination Board may determine from evidence available to it that a candidate for a Postgraduate Taught degree who has been prevented by good cause from completing the final examination or assessment will be awarded a class of degree the Board judges to be suitable, as long as the candidate has gained over half the credits required for the award

J. Examination Board Arrangements

40. There are normally three available assessment opportunities; January, May/ June and Aug/ September within each academic year. It is expected that all reassessment will take place in the academic year in which the assessment was first attempted, exceptions can be made for programmes with 'non standard' admissions cycles.

It is expected that reassessment will take place in the same academic year in which the assessment was first attempted i.e. by the August resit period. Schools can decide when best to do resit by essay; this needs to be in time for consideration by the Examination Board following the August resit period.

41. There must be an opportunity at the end of every unit of assessment, for a chaired forum to make decisions regarding student's attainment on completed units.

The January / February forum doesn't have to be full Examination Board as it is usually used for moderation of marks only and not progression; the External Examiner does not have to be present. If however decisions are made over student progression then this must be conducted by an Examination Board (Guide to the Taught Degree Regulations).

The Head of Academic Policy has confirmed that following review of semester one results at the February forum, where students are advised of the recommendations of this Forum they must be informed that the marks and decisions are provisional and may be subject to change at the Examination Board later in the year.

42. Examination Boards, to agree student minimum requirement for the achievement of an award, will take place at appropriate points in each academic year, overseen by an External Examiner. Exceptions can be made for programmes with 'non standard' assessment cycles.

When decisions are made regarding student progression, this must be conducted by an Examination Board. Often review of semester 1 results, e.g. in February, are for moderation and do not require decisions on progression. The role of the External Examiner is governed by the 'Guidance on External Examiner Procedures'. This will clarify Year 1 and Year 2 progression decisions and the review of referral results (Guide to the Taught Degree Regulations).

Decisions about progression or exiting must be taken in consultation with the External Examiner.

Appendix A Postgraduate Degree Classification Scheme

This scheme should be used in conjunction with 'Table 1 of the Postgraduate Taught Degree Regulations' (see section A, page 2). This table has been extracted from the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications, and students must meet the credit requirements of Table 1, prior to the classification being calculated, using the thresholds and boundaries below:

Weightings

Postgraduate degree classification for the award of merit and distinction are based on the weighted average mark across the programme calculated to one decimal place, where marks for individual course units are recorded as whole numbers (see section H).

Stage 1: Classification Thresholds and Boundaries

The following boundaries inform classification when the total points falls below a classification threshold.

Table A1 Postgraduate Masters degree classification and boundary zone using total points 0-100 mark range:

PG Degree classification - Masters based on 180 credits	Classification thresholds: average mark (mark range 0 to 100)	Boundary zone average	Boundary Zone H33 (separating the average for taught and research elements)
Distinction	70.0	68.0 to 69.9	Either taught or research is 70.0 or above, while the other is between 68.0 to 69.9
Merit	60.0	58.0 to 59.9	NA
Pass	59.9 or less providing the credit requirements of Table 1 in the 'Credit and Award Framework' have been met.	NA	NA

Consideration of postgraduate masters students within the boundary zone by mark distribution

The following process applies to reach decisions on borderline cases:

After allowances have been made for mitigating circumstances, a student whose total mark at the first assessment is within the boundary zone specified above, must be awarded the higher degree classification as long as both the following criteria are satisfied (see also notes on AP(E)L):

- For the award of distinction, all course units must have been passed at the first attempt without any compensation.
- 120 out of 180 credits are equal to/ or higher than the final award.

This relates to students who fall within the boundary zones between pass/merit and merit/distinction (Guide to the Taught Degree Regulations).

Students who lie within the pass/merit boundary zone can be considered for the higher award if they have some compensation or resits within their profile, as long as they have achieved 120 credits out of 180 credits [equal to or higher than the final award] (Guide to the Taught Degree Regulations).

Students who lie within the merit/distinction boundary can only be considered for the award of distinction if they have no compensation or resits within their profile (Guide to the Taught Degree Regulations).

Where Schools have decided to implement H35, after allowances have been made for mitigating circumstances, decisions at the boundary of a 'Distinction', should be made as long as all the following criteria are satisfied (see also notes on AP(E)L):

- For consideration of a student in the boundary zone for the award of distinction, the student should have passed either the 'taught' **or** 'research' element at the level of a 'distinction' and the other element must be in the boundary zone, as defined in table A1 (see Stage 1: Classification Thresholds and Boundaries).
- All course units must have been passed at the first attempt without any compensation.
- Either the overall average is equal to or above 70.0; or 120 out of 180 credits are equal to or above 70.0.

It was agreed at the Faculty's Teaching & Learning Committee (July 2012) that the award of distinction is based on the overall average of the programme (typically 180 credits).

The Faculty is NOT using Regulation H35

Stage 2: Classification Review

If a student is in the boundary zone, or higher* and does not satisfy the additional criteria, Schools may apply a further stage of 'Classification Review', with decisions supported by an External Examiner. The process of 'Classification Review' should not change unit marks and can only influence the classification awarded.

* Examination Boards may use Classification Review to consider a programme average which is higher than the boundary average, but where the student has not met the requirements for classification outlined in section H of the Regulations.

This paragraph has been included to confirm that students who achieve an overall average of higher than the boundary zone, but don't satisfy the requirements under section H can also be considered under classification review (previously only those in the boundary zone could) and the Board can determine that they be awarded the classification indicated by their average even if they haven't satisfied these requirements. e.g. a student gets an overall average of 75%, but has a referral in their profile. In accordance with the Degree Regulations they wouldn't be eligible for the award of distinction, however now the student could be considered under classification review and the Examination Board could determine that the award of 'distinction' be given even though the student doesn't satisfy the requirements as specified under section H. Using Classification Review in this way allows Examination Boards scope for academic judgement in exceptional circumstances.

Further guidance on Classification Review can be found in the Guide to the Taught Degree Regulations.

(Guide to the Taught Degree Regulations) Classification Review Guidance

Classification Review (formerly referred to as Mark Review) is very difficult to prescribe as its purpose is to allow some flexibility to apply academic judgement to borderline cases, when a mechanistic approach is inappropriate, in exceptional cases.

Classification Review applies to students in the boundary zone and after the mark distribution rule has been applied. It provides a final opportunity for an Examination Board to use its academic judgement on degree classification for those who remain in the boundary zone.

It is NOT the intention that every student who is in the boundary zone and does not meet the criteria for a higher classification is subject to Classification Review. It allows the Examination Board to consider those cases which it believes as a group, merits further consideration.

It is difficult to be prescriptive on what circumstances might merit a subsequent review, as this falls within the realms of academic judgement. Therefore, the judgement of which cases should be subject to Classification Review is at the discretion of the Examination Board and must have the support of External Examiner(s).

To guide this judgement, Classification Review should be used in exceptional circumstances with the expectation that the majority of students in the boundary who do not satisfy the rule for mark distribution should not be raised to a higher degree classification.

It is not the case when a final year set of marks show a lack of progression which is disappointing but reflects the achievement of the student. In many programmes there will be no need for Classification Review to be applied.

Students who fall into the boundary zone, who have credits awarded via Special Compensation may also be considered for Classification Review as follows:

- An Undergraduate student who had failed 40 credits at Level 6 with an overall mark of less than 40 would not be eligible for a referral, but may be considered for Classification Review, with academic discretion being used to determine whether the student should receive, for example, a Third Class Honours Degree or an Ordinary Degree if their numerical classification merits that.
- Undergraduate students who have more than 40 and up to 60 credits of Special Compensation should not be considered under Classification Review, as this would be counterintuitive to paragraph 48 of the Undergraduate Degree Regulations, which requires a penalty of a reduction of one classification to be applied due to failing more than 40 and up to 60 credits.

Below are a few principles to assist Schools in the operation of Classification Review:

1. Classification Review does not remark or change marks.
2. Classification Review can only result in an increase in class to those cases which are in the borderlines and/or do not meet the criteria for the higher class for PGT programmes.
3. Classification Review does not result in a lower classification.
4. Not every student in the boundary zone is eligible to receive a Classification Review.
5. The Examination Board can exercise its collective academic judgement in deciding which cases can be subject to Classification Review.
6. Classification Review allows an Examination Board to reflect on the near misses, which do not meet the criteria for a higher class and confirm the decision was correct.
7. During Classification Review, External Examiners approve the rationale to increase a class; they do not look at individual assessments or remark.
8. Classification Review allows Boards scope for academic judgement in exceptional circumstances.

Applications for mitigating circumstances to be taken into account are subject to a different process and Examination Boards should ensure there is no duplication of consideration of mitigation during Classification Review.

Taught Masters Postgraduate Diploma and Postgraduate Certificate degree classification scheme using 0-100 mark range

Award of Postgraduate Diploma and Postgraduate certificate degree is based upon credit accumulation using a pass mark of 40% (see table 1 for credit requirements, Section A, page 2) for which there is no classification other than pass/fail.

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