

# Marking and Assessment Boycott: Progression and Award Contingencies for Postgraduate Programmes

Academic Year 2022/23

**Updated and approved 16th August 2023:**

Changes:

- Provisions relating to undergraduate programmes only have been removed
- Update of key principles and scope
- Addition of provisions on reassessment (Part C, including some provisions previously in Part B - Progression)
- Addition of provisions on award and compensation (Parts C to F)

## **Summary**

This document sets out adjustments to the [Guide to Assessment](#) and the Progression and Award rules within it, that have been approved by the [University's Institutional Exam Board](#), 16th August 2023.

Sections of the Guide to Assessment referenced and impacted upon in each section are set out in greyed textboxes.

## **Key Principles**

1. We expect that all assessments not marked during the MAB will be marked in due course unless there are exceptional reasons why this cannot be the case. Similarly, we expect that feedback will be provided to students that will support progression through their programme of study.
2. For some programmes, there may be a need to continue to adhere to standard policies to ensure that Programme Learning Outcomes and PSRB requirements of programmes are met.
3. Wherever possible we will work within our existing guidance and policy, for example when considering marking practices and provision of feedback.
4. References to 'credits' for the purposes of award and progression contingency rules below refer to credits for fully completed modules rather than to the credit weighting for individual assessment components. Insofar as a student has completed some but not all assessments in a module (and missing assessments have not been waived under Part A below) those assessment credits will not be used for calculating progression and award. Only when all assessment components have been marked (or waived) and a final decision has been made about whether a student has completed the module, will the credits for that module be used in calculating progression and award.
5. Students should be assessed on activities they have undertaken.

## **Scope of these adjustments**

1. The provisions set out below apply to postgraduate taught programmes during the academic year 2022 to 2023.

2. Where a student has a full set of assessments marked, their outcome will be determined in the normal way using the standard rules under the Guide to Assessment.
3. Where any module credits are missing due to the marking and assessment boycott ('MAB'), the following rules will be applied as set out below.

### ***Summary of key adjustments***

The full proposed amendments to existing Award and Progression Rules and other aspects of the Guide to Assessment so far as they relate to postgraduate taught students are set out in more detail below but, in summary, the key adjustments are:

- Waiver of assessment components - up to and including 50% of a module's assessment components can be permanently or provisionally waived so long as relevant PLOs and PSRB requirements have been or can still be met for the programme
- Students impacted upon by the MAB automatically progress onto the ISM component of their programme. (Some students may have automatically progressed without a MAB impact due to an earlier error in communications - such students are to be treated in the same way as other students who have progressed automatically)
- Where marks are missing due to MAB, a provisional award can be made based on a lower number of credits in line with the compensation level for that programme (40 credit shortfall for Masters and PG Diploma, 20 credit shortfall for PG Cert). Where there are insufficient credits (due to MAB) to achieve that provisional award, a provisional award at a lower level (PG Diploma or PG Cert) can be made.
- Lower exit awards can be made from credits for all modules (i.e. ISM and taught module credits)
- Students will have an opportunity to resit up to 40 credits so long as they have not failed more than 60 credits of marked modules.

### ***A: Waiver of assessment components (all programmes)***

Exceptional Circumstances affecting Assessment Policy, EC5.1 ('Outcomes available in response to Exceptional Circumstances')

1. Where a single module mark compromises multiple assessment marks, assessments consisting of up to and including 50% of the module mark may be waived where the marks are, or are likely to be unavailable due to the MAB. The module mark will be composed of, and full credit for the module will be awarded on the basis of the remaining assessed elements.
2. Waiver of assessments may be:
  - a. Permanent (i.e. the waived component will not be reassessed and the remaining marks will form the full and final grade for the module);
  - b. Provisional (i.e. it is intended that the waived component will be marked at some later point; or
  - c. Partial through replacing (permanently or provisionally) graded assessment of the component with pass/fail assessment of it.

3. Waiver of module marks should only be approved if programme learning outcomes and PSRB requirements have already been, or can still be, met for all students through other assessments, and if waiving those assessments is not likely to substantially disadvantage students' learning and development.
4. Any such decision must be approved by the Chair of the Board of Examiners and agreed by the relevant Associate Dean and the Chair of the Standing Committee on Assessment.

## ***B: Progression***

P2.1 ('Progression point'); P 2.2 ('Progression Boards')

1. There will no longer be a progression point at the end of the taught section of each masters programme for students who are missing credits due to the MAB. All such students will automatically progress to the independent study module.

## ***C: Reassessment***

P2.6 ('Reassessment')

1. Students who have been progressed due to credits missing due to MAB and who have either failed modules at the point of a progression board or who subsequently fail modules shall be given resit opportunities for any modules that they have failed. Such resit opportunities should take place during the programme if at all possible. Resit entitlements for such students are subject to the following rules
2. Where a student has failed one or more non-ISM modules and also has missing module credits due to the MAB, the student will be entitled to resit up to 40 credits of failed non-ISM modules so long as there are no more than 60 credits of failed modules and not more than 40 credits of modules have been failed with module marks of less than 40.
3. Where a student has 60 failed credits of non-ISM modules but also has some modules unmarked due to the MAB, they will still be entitled to resit up to 40 credits of failed non-ISM modules.
4. Where a student has module marks missing due to the MAB, they will be able (and should be encouraged) to resit failed modules even if they might, once marked, be eligible for compensation.
5. Due consideration should be given to the demands of resitting assessments while attempting to complete an Independent Study Module and therefore to any adjustment of reassessment to reflect what it is realistic and fair for a student to do to meet relevant module and programme learning outcomes to a sufficient standard.
6. Due consideration should also be given to ensuring that students subject to visa requirements both have realistic and proportionate opportunities to complete assessments within the scope of their existing visa and are enabled, so far as reasonably possible, to meet any requirements for renewal or extension of their visa through completion of their studies.'
7. Adjustments to reassessments as specified on the module catalogue should be approved by the Standing Committee on Assessment.

## D: Compensation

### P2.5 ('Compensation')

1. Where a student has a full set of assessments marked, including some failed modules, the standard rules relating to compensation will apply as outlined in the Guide to Assessment..
2. Where a student has a combination of failed non-ISM modules and module credits missing due to the MAB, the compensation rules for postgraduate programmes will continue to be determined under P2.5 of the Guide to Assessment subject to the modifications set out below.
3. A student may be eligible for compensation based on the number of fully marked but failed non-ISM modules even if there are marks missing due to the MAB. In such a case, MAB affected modules should not be treated as failed modules when calculating eligibility for compensation and nor should MAB affected modules themselves be subject to compensation. In this situation, compensation applies as set out in P2.5.1 to P2.5.3 but subject to the following adjustments:
  - a. The number of 'failed' credits will solely be based on fully marked modules (i.e. not those wholly or partly missing marks due to the MAB);
  - b. Modules that have been subject to the MAB (whether wholly or partially) will not be considered when determining whether a student has any marks lower than 40.
  - c. The rounded credit weighted mean for the purposes of compensation calculations will be calculated using only those modules that have been fully marked. Where the assessment of a module has been impacted by the MAB (whether wholly or partially), that module's marks will not be included for determining the mean mark for these purposes.
4. Any modules compensated under these provisions to enable a student to gain a provisional PG Cert or PG Diploma will also be used for the purposes of determining eligibility for any higher award and will count towards the total number of compensated modules for the purposes of determining compensation for that higher award.<sup>1</sup>
5. Students relying on compensation under these provisions should be warned of the risk that other, as yet unmarked, modules might have been failed and as such should be encouraged (and given adequate opportunity) to be reassessed in all failed modules, even if they can be compensated.
6. Any compensation of a module under these rules will remain valid if the subsequent marking of MAB-affected assessments would otherwise make the student ineligible for compensation (e.g. by lowering the student's credit-weighted mean mark or increasing the number of failed credits).

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<sup>1</sup> e.g. where a student has compensation of 20 credits for the purposes of obtaining a provisional Postgraduate Certificate under these rules, those 20 compensated credits will also count towards the 40 credits that can be compensated for the purpose of obtaining a Postgraduate Diploma or Masters award. The student will not be entitled to compensation of a *further* 40 credits of failure to obtain a Diploma or Masters but only a further 20 credits in addition to the 20 initially compensated credits

## ***E: Award Rules for Masters Programmes***

24 ('University Award Requirements')

P2.5 ('Compensation')

P4 ('Merits and Distinctions')

1. For the purposes of determining award rules, if a student is missing any module credits due to the MAB or if the progression board for the student's programme was waived due to the MAB, all credits for award purposes will be calculated from a combination of ISM and non-ISM modules.
2. Where a student has 140 or more, but fewer than 180, module credits, and no credits are missing due to failure (i.e. all missing credits are due to the MAB), they may secure a 'Provisional Award' of a Masters.
3. Where a student has secured 80 or more, but fewer than 140, module credits, and no credits are missing due to failure (i.e. all missing credits are due to the MAB), they may secure a Provisional Award of a Postgraduate Diploma, or Provisional Award of any lower-exit Postgraduate Diploma that may be awarded on their programme of study.
4. Where a student has secured 40 or more, but fewer than 80, module credits, and no credits are missing due to failure (i.e. all missing credits are due to the MAB), they may secure a Provisional Award of a Postgraduate Certificate, or Provisional Award of any lower-exit Postgraduate Certificate that may be awarded on their programme of study.
5. Where the award of a particular named Postgraduate Certificate or Postgraduate Diploma is subject to the passing of particular modules or other criteria, those requirements or criteria will continue to apply for the purposes of determining eligibility of a provisional award as specified above.
6. The calculation of eligibility for an award of a merit or distinction under P4.3 to P4.6 will be based on the credit weighted mean of all modules for which marks are available (i.e. a student must achieve a credit weighted average of 60 for all modules for which marks are available for a Merit and a credit weighted average of at least 70 for which marks are available for a Distinction). Where marks are obtained subsequent to ratification of a Merit or Distinction Award, the credit weighted average and the resulting award will be recalculated but can only increase upwards.

## ***F: Award Rules for students enrolled on Postgraduate Diploma or Postgraduate Certificate programmes***

24 ('University Award Requirements')

P2.5 ('Compensation')

1. The rules set out in Part E above will apply to students enrolled on a Postgraduate Diploma programme with the following adjustments:
  - a. Where a student has secured 80 or more, but fewer than 120, module credits, and no credits are missing due to failure (i.e. all missing credits are due to the MAB), they may secure a Provisional Award of a Postgraduate Diploma.

- b. Where a student has secured 40 or more, but fewer than 80, module credits, and no credits are missing due to failure (i.e. all missing credits are due to the MAB), they may secure a Provisional Award of a Postgraduate Certificate, or Provisional Award of any lower-exit Postgraduate Certificate that may be awarded on their programme of study.
- 2. The rules set out in Part E above will apply to students enrolled on a Postgraduate Certificate programme with the following adjustment:
  - a. Where a student has secured 40 or more, but fewer than 60, module credits, and no credits are missing due to failure (i.e. all missing credits are due to the MAB), they may secure a Provisional Award of a Postgraduate Certificate.