

**1. Terminology**

Key Regulations for PAB Chairs & External Examiners (Postgraduate Courses)

**SONIC** – online, web browser based screens for online SABs and PABs

**Outcome** **report** *–* computer-generated list of each student’s assessment marks plus any credits from AP(E)L

**Component** *–* assessed part of a module – may be recorded as examination, coursework, test, etc.

**Deferral** – assessment attempt deferred from the date it should have been taken due to approved extenuating circumstances

**Resit** - a 2nd or 4th attempt at an assessment for a module that was failed at the previous attempt. Does not involve further tuition. Module marks capped at 40% (or original module mark if higher), but component marks not capped.

**Repeat** – a 3rd attempt: re-registration and re-attendance on a failed module, requiring reassessment in all components, with no marks being carried forward. Module marks capped at 40%, but component marks not capped.

**SAB –** Subject Assessment Board – this Board confirms module marks and reviews module standards.

**PAB** – Programme Assessment Board – this Board determines progression and awards, considering each student’s academic profile.

**2. Re-assessment**

**Resit**Reassessment which does not involve re-enrolling on the module. The resit may apply to one or more components. Students are AUTOMATICALLY entered for a resit should they fail a module at the first or third attempt.

N.B the right to reassessment by resit in a failed Masters Project module is at the discretion of the PAB. No repeat attempts at this module are allowed.

**Repeat**This term is used when the module is taken again in its entirety. The student re-enrols, attends the classes again, is re-assessed in all components, and pays the full module fee (where appropriate). One ’repeat’ of a failed module is allowed at the discretion of the PAB. A further resit opportunity is attached to the repeat opportunity.

**Deferred attempt or deferral**The agreed delayed attempt at one of more components due to extenuating circumstances. A deferral of a first attempt would normally involve the same assignment as the cohort. In the case of an unseen written examination, the deferred attempt will normally take place at the next scheduled examination period. The deferral of a resit attempt will be capped as per the resit regulations.

**Calculation of the module mark after reassessment**

1. The maximum module mark that can be obtained after a re-assessment by resit is 40% or the original module mark, whichever is higher.
2. The maximum module mark that can be obtained after a re-assessment by repeat is 40%.

The component marks entered for resit and repeat students should reflect the true value of the assessed work. The Regulations require that the higher component mark of the original and resit attempts be used when calculating the resit module mark.

**3. Overall PAB decisions**

**Continue:** for part-time students who are staying on the same stage of study

**Pass:** for students progressing to the next stage of the course or being awarded

**Referred:** for students who must resit one or more modules

**Deferred:** for students who have been deferred in one or more modules, even if they are carrying resits

**Fail:** for students who are not able to progress to the next stage of study, or who are being awarded a fall-back award. Also, for students who cannot continue on their course but who have not been terminated ie. they may return on a different course

**Fail Terminate:** for students are not permitted to continue on their course due to academic failure or lack of engagement. This decision results in the student being ineligible to apply to study on any further course at the University or its subsidiaries.

**Fail Transfer:** for students who are transferring to an alternative course.

**4. Degree classification requirements**

**Students must pass all modules for a Postgraduate degree.**

**Distinction**: 69.5% or above

**Merit**: 59.5% to 69.4%

**Pass**:39.5% to 59.4%

The method for calculating Merit & Distinction is as follows:

**Distinction**: The average of at least 70% in the 150 credits worth of level M modules with the highest marks.

**Merit**: The average of at least 60% but less than 70% in the 150 credits worth of level M modules with the highest marks.

The approved Programme Specification indicates whether the averages above are determined with reference to the whole of the Masters programme in question or only with reference to the modules taken in the final stage of the programme.

*NB: Some degrees require specific modules (e.g. the project or dissertation module) to be included in the classification calculation, regardless of the mark achieved. This is programmed into Sonic.*

**5. Scope of SAB discretion**

**Altering marks**

SABs have discretion to alter marks awarded to a group of students on a module assessment as part of their moderation of the process, to assure the standards of academic assessment e.g. a SAB may consider any exceptional circumstances that affected all students, such as disruption of an examination session for all candidates in a particular location, or any issues relating to the delivery or assessment of the module that affected all students.

However, marks for individual candidates cannot be changed by a SAB except to correct errors.

**Varying of assessment**

SABs may vary assessments for students when a student cannot, through disability, be fairly assessed by the methods prescribed for the module concerned.

**6. Scope of PAB discretion**

**Repeat**

PABs have discretion to allow a repeat (i.e. 3rd attempt) of a module. This is not a student’s automatic right.

**Resit of postgraduate project/dissertation module**

The right to reassessment by resit in a failed Masters project module is at the discretion of the PAB. No repeat attempts at this module are allowed. Normally, such a resit shall only be allowed when the PAB is satisfied that there is evidence that the student concerned is likely to complete the programme of study successfully.

**Progression**

PABs have discretion in reaching progression decisions for individual students taking into account the Academic Regulations and any course regulations.

**Classification upgrade**

PABs have discretion to award a Distinction to a student with an average of less than 70%, or award a Merit to a student with an average of less than 60%, subject to the following constraints:

1. on the basis of no more than 2 percent below the Merit or Distinction boundary (i.e. 58% or 68% respectively); the calculation cannot be rounded up to meet this criteria under any circumstances;
2. at least 40 credits-worth of modules at PG Cert, 80 credits-worth of modules at PG Dip and 120 credits-worth of modules at Master level, must have achieved a module mark above the Merit/Distinction boundary, as appropriate (module marks cannot be rounded up to meet these criteria under any circumstances;
3. the student must not have been reassessed in the dissertation/project module.

**Condonement**

PABs have discretion to condone modules with the following limitations:

a) the student shall have attained a minimum overall module mark of 35%. Marks between 34.5 and 35 inclusive shall be regarded as 35% for this purpose;

b) no more than one module may be condoned at level 3 or M, to a maximum of 20 credits;

c) condonement is not permitted to allow a student to achieve a Postgraduate Certificate or Postgraduate Diploma.

d) the following types of modules may not be condoned: modules required for professional accreditation of any type; modules with a value over 20 credits and any modules specified within the Programme Specification as ineligible for condonement;

e) a student who has received accredited prior learning for any module(s) shall not be eligible for condonement;

f) the research methods module is not eligible for condonement;

g) condoned modules may not be used as APL;

h) condoned modules may not be repeated or reassessed in any way;

i) modules for a top-up stage on any course, cannot be condoned;

j) any modules failed due to academic misconduct, cannot be condoned;

k) condoned modules may not be raised to a pass.

**NB:** Should a student have failed only one condonable module at the first attempt, the PAB may exceptionally condone that module without requiring the student to resit it.

**Note: it is important for the Board not to fetter its discretion by having a formula for**

**its decisions. The Board may define a procedure for considering cases, but not for deciding the outcome.**

***Programme Assessment Boards do not have the discretion to****:*

* vary prescribed maxima or minima or mandatory course requirements (e.g. to vary module counts or vary classification thresholds);
* consider extenuating circumstances, except where authorised to do so by the Assessments Review Group;
* downgrade any classification or award of Merit or Distinction. An individual student is entitled to any award they have achieved. In particular, a student cannot be awarded a lower classification except where an Academic Conduct Panel has proven a case of academic misconduct ;
* request a SAB to change marks.

Group Resolution Unit

October 2016