

FRAMEWORK AND REGULATIONS FOR TAUGHT POSTGRADUATE AWARDS

Introduction

1. The following paragraphs provide the framework and regulations for taught postgraduate programmes¹ at the University of Suffolk that lead to the following awards:

- Postgraduate Certificate (PgC)
- Postgraduate Diploma (PgD)
- Master of Arts (MA)
- Master of Business Administration (MBA)
- Master of Engineering (MEng)
- Master of Laws (LLM)
- Master of Research (MRes)
- Master of Science (MSc)
- Master of Fine Arts (MFA).

Separate regulations are in place for Integrated Master's awards and for the Postgraduate Certificate in Education and the Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE).

2. Titles of named awards must be approved at the point of validation. Qualification titles should convey accurate information about the level, nature and subjects of study. The appropriate use of the prefix Master of Arts, Master of Engineering, Master of Laws, Master of Research, Master of Science or Master of Fine Arts will normally be determined at validation.

3. The academic standards of all University of Suffolk awards should be aligned with the Expectations for Standards outlined in the [UK Quality Code for Higher Education](#) and the level and qualification descriptors in the accompanying [Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree Awarding Bodies \(2021\)](#) (FHEQ). The [QAA Master's Degree Characteristics Statement \(2020\)](#), [QAA Characteristics Statement for Higher Education in Apprenticeships \(2022\)](#) and relevant QAA Master's degree subject benchmark statements should also be taken into consideration in the design and ongoing development of courses. Alignment with these external reference points will be considered as part of course validation and re-approval processes, and through quality monitoring mechanisms. At least one appropriately qualified and experienced external examiner will be appointed to each course, in accordance with the *External Examiners Policy* and with any additional appointment criteria as determined at the point of course validation.

¹ For apprenticeship programmes, these regulations should be read in conjunction with the separate *Higher and Degree Apprenticeship Framework*

4. These regulations apply to all taught postgraduate courses offered at the University of Suffolk, with the exception of the Postgraduate Certificate in Education, the Professional Graduate Certificate in Education and Integrated Master's courses for which separate regulations exist. Any exceptional exemptions or variations to these regulations for individual courses (for example to meet the requirements of national apprenticeship standards and/or Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) in relation to assessment) are subject to approval by the Quality Committee via the submission of a variation request form. For new courses, approval for the variation should be sought prior to the course validation event. A central record of all approved variation request forms is maintained by Registry Services and details of all approved variations are published as an annex to these regulations, with footnotes included in the relevant paragraphs to show where variations should be applied.

5. Enrolment on individual validated credit-bearing modules, for example for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) purposes, is permitted where assurance is obtained that students are ready for that level of study and meet any pre-requisites for the module. The assessment of the module will be undertaken in accordance with these regulations, unless any variations have been approved in accordance with the procedure outlined in paragraph 4 above. Upon successful completion of the module(s), students will receive a transcript/record of achievement identifying credit gained and the level of achievement in relation to the FHEQ. Credit-bearing CPD modules may subsequently contribute towards a University of Suffolk certificate, diploma or degree course, where the award of credit has been approved in accordance with the *Recognition of Prior Learning Policy*.

6. Courses are managed in accordance with the *Management of Academic Provision Framework* which also defines the role and responsibilities of Course Leaders and Module Leaders.

7. All decisions regarding the ratification of assessment marks, resubmission and retake opportunities, and eligibility for progression and the final award as set out in these regulations are made by the relevant assessment board, constituted in accordance with the *Assessment Board Policy*. Schedules for assessment boards will be published to students along with dates for results publication.

Structure and timing of course delivery

8. For most courses, the academic year will normally extend for one calendar year and be divided into either three periods of study (terms) or six blocks, in accordance with the *Course Design Blueprint*. Normally teaching and assessment will be carried out within these sessions.

The structure and timing of the delivery of teaching and assessment will be approved at the point of validation for individual programmes and laid out in the Student Handbook for the course.

Mode of study

9. As approved through validation, courses will normally provide opportunities for study by part-time, full-time or a combination of these modes. Students may be permitted to transfer from full-time to part-time registration and vice-versa with the approval of the Course Leader and the relevant Dean of School or Head of Higher Education. Any implications in terms of module transfer or withdrawal should be dealt with in accordance with paragraph 21.

Registration periods

10. The expectation is that a student will complete their award within the following maximum periods of registration, with the student being required by the relevant Assessment Board to withdraw from their course if this maximum period of registration is exceeded (noting that an exit award will automatically be awarded if they have met the requirements for such an award as outlined in paragraph 86 below). A student's period of registration may be extended beyond the maximum by the relevant Assessment Board, in liaison with the Academic Registrar, only in exceptional circumstances and where the currency of learning undertaken up until that point can be adequately assured. Registration periods on awards governed by the requirements of professional, statutory or regulatory bodies may be further circumscribed as defined in the relevant course validation document.

Award	Full-time study (maximum period of registration in years)	Part-time study (maximum period of registration in years)
Postgraduate Certificate	2	3
Postgraduate Diploma	2.5	4
Master's Degree (MA, MEng, LLM, MSc, MRes)	3	5
• progression routes and entry through articulation agreements	2	3
• two-year full-time routes	5	-
Master of Fine Arts (MFA)	4	6
• progression routes and entry through articulation agreements	3	4

11. Where a student intercalates in accordance with the *Additional Time due to Extenuating Circumstances Policy* (normally for a maximum duration of one academic year), the period of intercalation counts as part of the maximum period of registration.

Programme structure and credit requirements

12. Students shall be registered on an approved programme of study on a named course and leading to a named award. Taught postgraduate modules are offered at *Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) Level 7*.

13. Academic and professional study will be organised into modules, with modules valued in terms of credits. Credit is a means of quantifying and recognising learning: one credit represents 10 notional hours of learning (including formal classes, preparation time, independent study, revision and the completion of assessment), and credit is awarded when the specified learning outcomes for the module have been successfully demonstrated.

14. Modules should be assigned credit in multiples of 30. A standard module is valued at 30 credits, except:

- a. in the case of a Dissertation or Research Project module, which is 60 credits;
- b. where the coherence of the curriculum necessitates the incorporation of one or more 60 credit modules (for example in relation to practice or work-related learning modules);
- c. where, in exceptional circumstances, the coherence of the curriculum necessitates the incorporation of one pair of 15 credit modules;
- d. in the case of a Final Project module on a Master of Fine Arts programme, which is normally 90 credits;
- e. where the requirements of a PSRB or apprenticeship standard necessitate the incorporation of one or more 20 or 40 credit modules, which must then be paired with one or more 10 credit modules. In such cases, the credit requirement and associated variations to the regulations will be specified in the annex to these regulations;
- f. in the case of standalone modules validated for the purposes of short courses or CPD, where a standard credit-bearing module may be 15 or 30 credits.

15. One calendar year of full-time postgraduate taught study is equivalent to 180 FHEQ Level 7 credits, normally achieved through the satisfactory completion of 4 x 30 credit modules (with

each module representing 300 notional hours of learning²) and one 60 credit Dissertation or Research Project module.

16. For full-time Master's courses with an extended placement period, the course should be delivered over two academic years, normally with taught modules to the value to 120 credits being undertaken in the first year and the placement period followed by the remaining 60 credits being undertaken in the second year.

Module types

17. Definitive course records and associated course documentation shall specify the modules, including mandatory, requisite and optional modules where appropriate, which must be taken and, where relevant, passed by the student in order to achieve the named award.

- a. Mandatory modules are those modules which are central to the programme of study, and therefore students must take **and pass** them in order to meet the requirements of the award (i.e. if they fail the module, they cannot take an alternative module to make up the credit deficit, and they therefore are unable to successfully complete their studies on that course).
- b. Requisite modules are those modules that students must take as part of their programme of study (for example because there is no optionality built into the programme), but it is not compulsory that they pass the module (i.e. if they fail the module, they may be able to take an alternative module within the validated programme to make up the credit deficit).
- c. Optional modules are those modules which students can select to complete as part of their overall programme of study. Where optional modules are an integral part of a course, students will be required to select a specified number of optional modules from a prescribed list. Choice will be subject to availability and academic guidance from the Course Leader(s) concerned. It is not compulsory that students pass the module (i.e. if they fail the module, they may be able to take an alternative module within the validated programme to make up the credit deficit).

Requirements for taught postgraduate awards

18. All Masters programmes will contain taught content on research methods specific to the subject area. How and where research methods are included will be defined in the course validation documentation. All Masters programmes will contain a mandatory dissertation or research project module of 60 credits. All Master of Fine Arts programmes will also contain a mandatory Final Project module, normally of 90 credits. All Masters programmes must contain at

² For apprenticeships, the notional hours of learning may vary in order to meet the relevant rules for off-the-job learning and practice hours.

least 90 credits of taught modules (i.e. original research modules may not exceed 90 credits in total).

19. Care should be taken to ensure that the coherence of courses with multiple pathways is secured and maintained, and that there is clarity regarding how pathways relate to, and are differentiated from, each other. In particular, each award should comprise a unique combination of modules such that students receiving different awards will never have the same module profile.

20. Students are ultimately responsible for ensuring that they select modules that fulfil the requirements of their award and, where appropriate, the requirements of any relevant PSRB.

21. Normally, a student who is registered for a module and wishes to transfer to another module may do so at any time up to the end of the first week of the commencement of delivery of the module (for block delivery) or the end of the second week of the commencement of delivery of the module (for double-block and term delivery), subject to the agreement of the module leaders concerned and provided that the alternative module forms part of the validated course structure. A student who is registered for a module and completes a module withdrawal form, with appropriate approval, within the specified timescale will be deemed not to have attempted the module for the purposes of this regulatory framework. Students who fail to complete a module withdrawal form within the specified timescale will remain registered on the module. In this case, failure to submit coursework assessments or to sit examinations will normally constitute failure in the module, unless extenuating circumstances are approved in accordance with the *Additional Time due to Extenuating Circumstances Policy*.

Pre- and co-requisite modules and excluded combinations

22. Modules may be linked in such a way that a student is required to take one concurrently with another, in which case these modules shall be designated as co-requisites of each other within the module specifications.

23. Modules may be linked such that a student is required to have passed one module or equivalent study/experience prior to studying another, in which case the former module or equivalent study/experience shall be designated as a pre-requisite for the latter within the module specifications.

24. The requirements to take/pass one or more pre- or co-requisites may, with the approval of the Assessment Board, be satisfied by Recognised Prior Learning, except in those circumstances defined by PSRBs.

25. Modules may contain material which substantially overlaps with material from another module within the same course, in which case students will be excluded from taking both modules as part of their programme of study as indicated through the inclusion of excluded combinations within module specifications.

Dissertation or Research Project module

26. A dissertation or research project may not incorporate work previously submitted for a degree except where the dissertation or research project is a continuation of that work. Any elements that have been previously submitted for assessment (as part of the same course or for another award) should be acknowledged (the student may be required to produce the work previously submitted). In accordance with the *Academic Misconduct Policy*, reproducing without acknowledgement of one's own previously submitted work is considered as plagiarism. A student must state generally in the preface to the dissertation or research project and specifically in references the sources from the which the material is derived and the extent to which the student has used the work of others including collaborators.

27. Apart from quotations, the dissertation or research project must be presented in English.

28. Where a student fails to submit work for the Dissertation or Research Project module or submits work but fails to achieve an overall pass mark for the module, the module outcome will be recorded as a referral and the student will have the opportunity to be reassessed once only in those components of assessment with a mark below 50% (in accordance with paragraphs 55, 56 and 60 below). If, after the reassessment attempt, the overall module mark is still not of pass standard, there is no opportunity to retake the module or to be given a third attempt unless there are substantiated extenuating circumstances accepted by the Assessment Board.

MFA Final Project module

29. A final project may not incorporate work previously submitted for a degree except where the final project is a continuation of that work. Any elements that have been previously submitted for assessment (as part of the same course or for another award) should be acknowledged (the student may be required to produce the work previously submitted). In accordance with the *Academic Misconduct Policy*, reproducing without acknowledgement of one's own previously submitted work is considered as plagiarism. A student must state generally in the preface to the submission and specifically in references the sources from which the material is derived and the extent to which the student has used their own work and/or the work of others including collaborators.

30. Apart from quotations, the final project must be presented in English.

31. Where a student fails to submit work for the final project module or submits work but fails to achieve an overall pass mark for the module, the module outcome will be recorded as a referral and the student will have the opportunity to be reassessed once only in those components of assessment with a mark below 50% (in accordance with paragraphs 55, 56 and 60 below). If, after the reassessment attempt, the overall module mark is still not of pass standard, there is no opportunity to retake the module or to be given a third attempt unless there are substantiated extenuating circumstances accepted by the Assessment Board.

Credit requirements for achievement of awards

32. The amount and level of credit that must be successfully achieved for an award to be granted is outlined below, based on the FHEQ. The table also outlines the maximum credits that can normally be obtained via recognition of prior certificated or experiential learning (RPL), in accordance with the requirements of the *Recognition of Prior Learning Policy*. The maximum credits via RPL may differ for some courses to meet PSRB requirements, and will be defined in the course validation documents. RPL cannot be granted in relation to the dissertation or research project module or the MFA final project module.

Award	Credit requirement	Maximum credits via RPL
Postgraduate Certificate (PgC)	60 credits at Level 7	30 credits
Postgraduate Diploma (PgD)	120 credits at Level 7	60 credits
Master's Degree (MA / MBA / MEng / LLM / MRes / MSc)	180 credits at Level 7	90 credits (or 120 credits for a validated progression route or entry through an articulation agreement)
Master of Fine Arts (MFA)	300 credits at Level 7	120 credits (or 180 credits for a validated progression route or entry through an articulation agreement)

33. In addition to meeting these credit requirements, students are required to successfully pass all mandatory modules set out for an award in order to be eligible for the award.

34. For degree apprenticeships, students will also be expected to successfully complete an End Point Assessment (EPA) in accordance with the requirements of the relevant apprenticeship standard. This may either be integrated into the programme of study or it may represent an additional stage beyond meeting the requirements for the relevant University award. The approach to the EPA (i.e. whether it is integrated into the programme or a separate assessment) will be outlined in the assessment plan for the relevant apprenticeship standard and confirmed at the point of course validation. Where the EPA is integrated into the programme, there will be a progression point (gateway) to determine whether the student can progress to the EPA. If the student does not meet the gateway requirements (which includes successful completion of the necessary academic credit along with achievement of Level 2 functional skills in English and Mathematics), they will not be permitted to take the EPA until those requirements are met. In circumstances where the student cannot meet the gateway requirements (for example because they have exhausted all assessment opportunities), the student will be withdrawn from the programme and awarded the appropriate exit award. Where the EPA is not integrated into the programme, students who fail to successfully complete the EPA may still receive the relevant University award where the requirements for that award have been met, but will not receive the apprenticeship certificate.

Periods of study outside the University of Suffolk

35. The course documentation presented for validation or re-approval should specify where a period of study outside the University of Suffolk (for example a work-based or placement learning element or a period of study abroad) is a mandatory or optional element of the programme of study, and how (where appropriate) this will be formally assessed. Where the requirement for satisfactory completion of a period of study outside the University is in addition to the assessment regulations outlined in this document, any additional requirements should be subject to approval through the variation request process outlined in paragraph 4 above.

36. For study abroad arrangements with European institutions, credit recognition is facilitated by the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). In all cases of study abroad arrangements with approved institutions, students will be awarded the appropriate credit, but no mark will be attached to the module.

37. Where work-based or placement learning is an integral part of a course, and unless otherwise stated in the course documentation, the University of Suffolk shall not be responsible for securing a work placement or work-related experience for students. Such arrangements should operate in accordance with the *Work-Based and Placement Learning Framework*. Any support provided to students in identifying and securing an appropriate work placement or work-related

experience, as well as procedures for approval of the work placement or work-related experience as suitable, should be outlined in the Course Handbook.

Assessment of individual modules

38. Assessment shall be undertaken in accordance with the *Learning, Teaching and Assessment Framework* and related policies and procedures (including *Academic Appeals, Academic Misconduct, Recognition of Prior Learning, Assessment Board, Assessment Moderation, Extenuating Circumstances, and Preparation and Conduct of Invigilated Examinations*) which shall be amended from time to time.

39. The methods of assessment will be in accordance with demonstrating the achievement of all intended learning outcomes for a module and will be approved initially at validation. Each module shall be assessed by one of the following methods:

- (a) by coursework
- (b) by examination (written, practical or viva voce)
- (c) by project or by dissertation or by research activity
- (d) by combinations of the above
- (e) exceptionally, by synoptic assessment (i.e. a single assessment that measures some or all of the learning outcomes of two or more distinct modules rather than one individual module).

40. Where appropriate, and subject to approval at validation or through the normal approval processes, a module may include more than one option for the method of assessment to allow students a choice of assessment method. The options must ensure that whichever option is chosen, successful completion demonstrates achievement of the same learning outcomes.

41. In addition to the specified module assessment, exceptionally, viva voce examinations may be undertaken to determine the module outcome.

Marking of modules

42. Each component of summative assessment (i.e. assessment used to indicate the extent of a student's success in achieving the intended learning outcomes of the module) will be marked on a percentage scale. Where there is more than one component of assessment within a module, each will contribute a pre-determined percentage to the overall module mark. Where a synoptic assessment is being used, the contribution of that assessment to the overall module mark for each module covered by the synoptic assessment will be determined at validation. This may include individual components or a whole module being assessed on a pass/fail basis (see also paragraph 45).

43. An overall module mark of 50% or above is required to pass a module and be awarded the relevant credit.³ Unless core components have been identified in accordance with paragraph 44 below, the module can be passed with a mark of at least 45% for all individual components of assessment providing the overall module mark is 50% or above. This is known as in-module compensation. However, in accordance with the *Academic Misconduct Policy*, should a student receive a penalty resulting in the recording of a component mark as refer infringement or fail infringement at any attempt, in-module compensation no longer applies for that module and therefore a mark of at least 50% for all individual components will be required in order to pass the module.

44. Exceptionally, individual components of assessment may be designated as core components, indicating that students must achieve at least 50% for the component in order to pass the module (for example to meet PSRB requirements). Exceptional circumstances that warrant having core components are (i) where it is necessary to meet PSRB requirements or (ii) where the component of assessment is crucial to the achievement of programme level learning outcomes (i.e. the relevant programme learning outcome is not adequately assessed elsewhere). Where there is only one component of assessment within a module, the component will automatically be designated as core. Dissertations or final research projects are also expected to be core. Core components should be identified at validation, and any changes to the designation of components are subject to approval through the changes to existing courses process.

45. Where approved at validation, individual components of assessment or whole modules may be marked on a pass / fail basis, with no percentage mark awarded. All such components of assessment will be deemed core and do not contribute to overall module marks. Any whole modules marked on a pass/fail basis do not contribute to the degree classification calculations. The number of whole modules marked on a pass/fail basis should not exceed a total of 30 credits within any validated programme of study.

46. Where students have passed a module, they cannot re-take it or any of the individual components of assessment in an attempt to achieve a higher mark. A further attempt may only be granted in exceptional circumstances following a successful appeal in accordance with the *Academic Appeals Procedure*. In such cases, the original pass mark will be disregarded and the mark for the resubmitted attempt will be the mark awarded. This mark may be higher, lower or the same as the original mark. The overall module result will be calculated in the normal way.

³ The pass mark for modules (or components thereof) which are approved by a PSRB for recordable purposes will be determined by the PSRB and will be detailed in the module specification.

47. The overall module mark displayed in the student's module results will be rounded to the nearest integer. The overall module mark before rounding will be used in the final award classification calculations.

Late submission

48. Students should submit all work for summative assessment by the notified deadline.

49. Work submitted up to three days after the deadline will be accepted and marked, but the mark will be capped at the pass mark (50%) unless there is a valid reason for the late submission (i.e. having been granted an extension to the deadline or a deferral under the terms of the *Additional Time due to Extenuating Circumstances Policy*).

50. Work submitted more than three days after the deadline without valid reason will not be accepted and will be recorded as 0% RN (refer, no work submitted) in accordance with paragraph 54.

51. Where an extension has been agreed under the terms of the *Additional Time due to Extenuating Circumstances Policy*, no late submission will be permitted beyond the agreed extension period.

52. Late submission is not possible for some types of assessment, including pass/fail assessments, presentations, examinations and practical assessments. This will be indicated in the course handbook.

53. Late submission is not permitted for work that is already subject to capping at the pass mark (for example reassessments in accordance with paragraphs 55, 56 and 59)

Non-completion of assessment (leading to referral and reassessment)

54. Failure to submit work by the deadline (or within three days of the deadline where late submission is permissible) or to attend a scheduled examination without valid reason (that is, without having requested and been granted an extension or deferral under the terms of the *Additional Time due to Extenuating Circumstances Policy*) will result in a mark of 0% RN (refer, no work submitted) being recorded in respect of the relevant assessment component and will result in referral in the module overall.

Failure to pass a module (leading to referral and reassessment)

55. In cases of non-completion of coursework or non-attendance at examinations, the student will have the opportunity to be reassessed once only in the components not completed. The maximum mark attainable for the components upon reassessment will be 50%. The overall module outcome will be determined in the normal way (see 'marking of modules' above).

56. Where a student submits work but fails to achieve an overall pass mark for the module (50% or above, with at least 45% for all non-core components and at least 50% for all core components), the module outcome will be recorded as a referral and the student will have the opportunity to be reassessed once only in those components of assessment with a mark below 50%. In such cases of reassessment, the maximum mark attainable for the reassessed component will be 50%. The overall module outcome will be determined in the normal way (see marking of modules). Where students have passed a component of assessment, they cannot re-take it in an attempt to achieve a higher mark.

57. Where there is more than one option for the method of assessment, students may choose whether to be reassessed using the same method of assessment or (one of) the other option(s). Whichever option is chosen for the reassessment, the maximum mark attainable for the reassessed component will be 50%. The overall module outcome will be determined in the normal way (see marking of modules).

58. For courses including an assessed practice placement where the intended award leads to professional registration with a PSRB, students must achieve all elements of the practice placement assessment, and if any one element is not achieved at the first attempt, this will be deemed a referral in practice. If, in consideration of their professional responsibilities, it is the opinion of the Assessment Board that it is not appropriate for a student to be reassessed, the Assessment Board will initiate action under the Fitness to Practise Procedure.

Failure in a module (after reassessment opportunity)

59. If, after the reassessment attempt, the overall module mark is still not of pass standard (i.e. 50% or above) and/or individual component marks remain below 45% (for non-core components) or below 50% (for core components), with consideration of the student's academic profile, the relevant Assessment Board may either:

- a) permit the student a third attempt at the component(s) of assessment not already passed, where the component mark is 40% or above;

or

- b) permit the student to retake the module with attendance, subject to the student having demonstrated sufficient engagement with their studies.

In either case, the student will be permitted **one attempt only** at the component(s) of assessment that they have not already successfully completed (i.e. those components with a mark below 50%), subject to the restrictions noted in paragraph 63 below. Marks from successfully completed components will carry forward except in the circumstances highlighted in paragraph 63 below, and these components cannot be re-taken in an attempt to achieve a higher mark. The maximum mark attainable for the module overall will be 50%.

60. In accordance with paragraphs 28 and 31 above, it is not possible for students to retake the Dissertation or Research Project or MFA Final Project modules or be given a third attempt unless a previous attempt has been disregarded as the result of an appeal under the Academic Appeals Procedure.

61. For courses including an assessed practice placement where the intended award leads to professional registration with a PSRB, it is not possible for students to retake the practice placement module(s) or be given a third attempt unless a previous attempt has been disregarded as the result of an appeal under the Academic Appeals Procedure (see also paragraph 58 above),

Retake of a module and third attempts

62. Where there is more than one option for the method of assessment, students may choose whether to be reassessed for the third attempt or retake using the same method of assessment or (one of) the other option(s). Whichever option is chosen for the third attempt or retake, the maximum mark attainable for the module overall will be 50%. The overall module outcome will be determined in the normal way (see marking of modules).

63. Where the assessment methods for the module being retaken have changed since the student first took the module, or where components of assessment build upon each other in some way, Assessment Boards may require students retaking the module to complete all components of assessment, regardless of previous results. The maximum mark attainable for the module overall will be 50%.

64. Where students undertake a replacement module (for example through choice; because the module being retaken is no longer offered; or because their timetable does not allow them to retake the original module), they will be required to complete all components of assessment. The maximum mark attainable for the module overall will be 50%. If the first submission is not of pass standard, the student may be granted one final reassessment opportunity (third attempts and/or

retakes are not permitted). The maximum mark attainable for the reassessed component(s) and the module overall will be 50%.

65. In the case of failure in a retaken module or at third attempt, a student may be advised to take an alternative module, to transfer to an alternative course, or to terminate their studies. If the module is a mandatory module, failure will result in termination of the student's studies on that course.

Capping of marks

66. For ease of reference, the following table sets out the capping applied to each submission opportunity:

Attempt number	Description	Component mark capped?	Module mark capped?
1	First submission	No	No
2	Resubmission / reassessment opportunity	Yes	No
3	Third attempt / retake / replacement module first submission	No	Yes
4	Replacement module final reassessment opportunity	Yes	Yes

Deferral in a module

67. Consideration of deferral cases is undertaken in accordance with the *Additional Time due to Extenuating Circumstances Policy*. If the Extenuating Circumstances Panel deems that a student has presented acceptable evidence of extenuating circumstances in relation to one or more components of assessment, those components of assessment will be deemed 'deferred'. The student will be given the opportunity to submit (or resubmit) the components of assessment. The relevant Assessment Board will determine the timescales for submission / re-submission of the component(s) in question.

68. If deferral relates to a first attempt at component(s) of assessment, the full range of marks will be available. If deferral relates to a previously referred piece of work, the student will be given a further opportunity to re-submit the assessment under the terms of the original referral (i.e. with marks capped at the 50% pass mark at either component or module level in accordance with paragraphs 55, 56, 59 and 64 above, and as summarised in the table in paragraph 66).

69. Continuation or repetition of deferral status will be considered only if the Assessment Board is advised by the Extenuating Circumstances Panel that it has received what it deems to be further

acceptable evidence of extenuating circumstances. If a student has been granted three consecutive deferrals for the same module, the relevant Assessment Board will normally require the student to repeat the module in accordance with paragraph 70.

70. If a deferral has been granted and the relevant Assessment Board believes that it is in the student's best interests to repeat the module with attendance (for example if they have not had adequate opportunity to engage fully with the learning activities associated with the module), marks for components successfully completed at an earlier stage will normally be carried forward where the assessment methods for the module remain unchanged, components of assessment are not co-dependent, and the module continues to be offered, unless the Assessment Board determined that there are exceptional circumstances that warrant the student completing all components of assessment for the module as if for the first time. Those components for which the student has previously been referred will be marked in accordance with the terms of the original referral (i.e. with marks capped at the 50% pass mark at either component and/or module level in accordance with paragraphs 55, 56, 59 and 64 above, and as summarised in the table in paragraph 66). For the avoidance of doubt, repeating a module is not the same as retaking a module: a repeat is as a result of extenuating circumstances, whereas a retake is the result of academic failure.

71. Where assessment methods for a module have changed since the deferral; where components of assessment build upon each other in some way; or where the module is no longer offered, students repeating the module (or replacement module) will be expected to complete all components of assessment regardless of previous results. In such cases, students will be eligible for the full range of marks, unless they have previously failed the module after a reassessment opportunity and are subject to capping of the component and/or module mark at the pass mark (in accordance with paragraphs 59 and 64 above).

Intercalation

72. Consideration of intercalation cases is undertaken in accordance with the *Additional Time due to Extenuating Circumstances Policy*.

73. Where an application to intercalate is approved, any work submitted prior to the date of intercalation will be presented to the Assessment Board for the result to be ratified. If no work was submitted for a component by the notified deadline where that deadline was prior to the date of intercalation, or where the student failed to attend an examination scheduled prior to the date of the intercalation, the result will be recorded as a referral (in accordance with paragraph 55 above).

If an application for extenuating circumstances has been approved, the result will be recorded as a deferral (in accordance with paragraph 67 above).

74. On the student's return to the module following a period of intercalation, previous marks for components (including deferrals and referrals for academic failure or non-submission) will normally be carried forward provided the assessment methods for the module remain unchanged, components of assessment are not co-dependent, and the module continues to be offered, unless the Assessment Board determines that there are exceptional circumstances that warrant the student completing all components of assessment for the module as if for the first time.

75. When a student returns from a period of intercalation, the following should be implemented for those component(s) of assessment not yet successfully completed:

- a. Where there are no previous referrals or deferrals for the outstanding component(s) of assessment, the student will have the opportunity to take the component(s) with the full range of marks available. The overall module outcome will be determined in the normal way (see 'marking of modules' above).
- b. Where there are previous deferrals for the outstanding component(s) of assessment, if the deferral relates to a first attempt at the component(s), the student will have the opportunity to be re-assessed in the component(s) with the full range of marks available. The overall module outcome will be determined in the normal way (see 'marking of modules' above). If the deferral relates to a previously referred piece of work, the student will be given a further opportunity to re-submit the assessment under the terms of the original referral (i.e. with marks capped at the pass mark at either component and/or module level in accordance with paragraphs 55, 56, 59 and 64 above).
- c. Where there are previous referrals for the outstanding component(s) of assessment, the student will have the opportunity to re-submit work under the terms of the original referral (i.e. with marks capped at the pass mark at either component and/or module level in accordance with paragraphs 55, 56, 59 and 64 above).

76. Where the assessment methods for the module have changed since the student took the module, or where components of assessment build upon each other in some way, Assessment Boards may require students to complete all components of assessment, regardless of previous results. In such cases, students will be eligible for the full range of marks, unless they have previously failed the module after a reassessment opportunity and are subject to capping of the component and/or module mark at the pass mark (in accordance with paragraphs 59 and 64 above).

77. Where students undertake a replacement module (for example through choice; because a module is no longer offered; or because their timetable does not allow them to take the original module), they will be required to complete all components of assessment. In such cases, students will be eligible for the full range of marks, unless the replacement is for a module previously failed after a reassessment opportunity which would be subject to capping of the component and/or module mark at the pass mark (in accordance with paragraphs 59 and 64 above).

Notification of results

78. In line with the good practice of providing timely feedback to students, the outcomes of marked and moderated assessment may be given to students before the Assessment Board has formally approved results. Such feedback must be clearly identified as subject to final ratification by the Assessment Board, and therefore subject to potential amendment by the Board.

79. The early release of unratified marks is to facilitate an early opportunity for students to begin to address referred work that will need to be redeemed after the Assessment Board has ratified the result. It is not an opportunity for students to resubmit referred work as a first attempt before the Board ratifies the mark.

Progression

80. For full-time two-year Master's courses, in order to progress from one year to the next students must either:

a. successfully complete all year one modules, including all mandatory modules and any compulsory practice placement or work-based learning elements as specified in the course validation documentation (this may include credit recognised and approved under the Recognition of Prior Learning Policy);

or

b. normally following a reassessment opportunity (in accordance with paragraphs 55 to 58), be permitted by the Assessment Board to progress on the basis that they make good any referred or deferred assessment for one module (to the maximum value of 30 credits) by means of reassessment or deferred assessment (unless the referred, deferred, repeat, retake or replacement module is a pre-requisite for a module in the second year of study).

Achievement of awards

81. In order to achieve the intended award, a student must meet the credit requirements outlined in paragraph 32 above and successfully pass all mandatory modules set out for the award.

Classification of awards

82. For the Master's degree, the Assessment Board may recommend the award of the degree with Merit or with Distinction, where at least 120 credits, or two-thirds of the credit undertaken for the award, have been passed at first attempt without any infringements or referrals and there are at least 60 credits with marks attached on which the calculation can be based. To be so recommended for a degree with Merit, the student must have achieved an average pass mark (when rounded to the nearest integer) of 60% with all modules (excluding pass/fail modules with no marks awarded and modules for which credit has been granted as a result of RPL) being counted, including at least 60% in the dissertation. To be so recommended for a degree with Distinction, the student must have achieved an average pass mark (when rounded to the nearest integer) of 70% with all modules (excluding pass/fail modules with no marks awarded and modules for which credit has been granted as a result of RPL) being counted, including at least 70% in the dissertation. The overall module results before rounding will be used in the classification calculations.

83. For the Master of Fine Arts, in addition to the requirements set out in paragraph 82 above, the student must also achieve at least 60% in the final project module to be recommended for a degree with Merit, and at least 70% in the final project module to be recommended for a degree with Distinction.

84. Where the Postgraduate Diploma is the intended award, the Assessment Board may recommend the award of the postgraduate diploma with Merit or with Distinction where at least 90 credits, or two-thirds of the credit undertaken for the award, have been passed at first attempt without any infringements or referrals and there are at least 60 credits with marks attached on which the calculation can be based. To be so recommended for a postgraduate diploma with Merit, the student must have achieved an average pass mark (when rounded to the nearest integer) of 60% with all modules (excluding pass/fail modules with no marks awarded and modules for which credit has been granted as a result of RPL) being counted. To be so recommended for a postgraduate diploma with Distinction, the student must have achieved an average pass mark (when rounded to the nearest integer) of 70% with all modules (excluding pass/fail modules with no marks awarded and modules for which credit has been granted as a result of RPL) being counted. The overall module results before rounding will be used in the classification calculations.

85. Postgraduate Certificates do not carry any classification and will be defined only in terms of Pass or Fail. However, student transcripts for these awards will indicate the level of a student's performance in the individual modules completed.

Exit awards

86. Where a student is deemed to have withdrawn from the course or where a student has failed to accrue the number of credits for the award on which they are registered within the requisite time-scale, the Assessment Board may consider the student's eligibility for an exit award of a Postgraduate Diploma or Postgraduate Certificate. A student shall be awarded the highest qualification to which they are entitled by their accumulated credit (see paragraph 32) and their achievement of any mandatory modules. Such awards may be named (that is include a subject title) if this has been approved in the validation documentation and the student has met the validated requirements; otherwise such awards will be unnamed.

87. Exit awards of Postgraduate Diploma or Postgraduate Certificate do not carry any classification and will be defined only in terms of Pass or Fail. Student transcripts for these awards will indicate the level of a student's performance in the individual modules completed.

88. Students on a Master of Fine Arts programme may also be awarded an exit award of Master of Arts, subject to the successful completion of at least 180 credits at level 7 including any mandatory modules, where a named Master of Arts exit award has been approved in the validation documentation and the student has met the validated requirements for the award. The Assessment Board may recommend the exit award of the Master of Arts with Merit or with Distinction in accordance with the requirements set out in paragraph 82 above.

89. Where a student has been requested, in writing, to confirm their status as a current student but no reply has been received by the date specified in that correspondence, they will be 'deemed to have withdrawn' and will be considered for an exit award as outlined above.

90. Where a student is required by the Assessment Board to withdraw from the course, the Board will automatically recommend the highest award for which they are eligible. The exit award of Postgraduate Certificate or Postgraduate Diploma can be awarded by the Assessment Board without reference to the student if all opportunities for progression/continuation have been exhausted.

91. Where students are eligible for an exit award in any of the circumstances noted above, this will automatically be awarded unless the student notifies the Chair of the Assessment Board in writing that they do not wish to receive the award. If a student initially declines an exit award but subsequently changes their mind, the request for an exit award must be made within one calendar year of the date of withdrawal.

92. A student who has withdrawn from a course with an exit award may re-apply to the same course for admission at the appropriate point in order to complete the full award, provided that they were not originally required by the Assessment Board to withdraw from the course for academic reasons including academic failure and misconduct or where the maximum period of registration is exceeded. A period of at least one calendar year must have elapsed since the exit award was conferred before re-commencing the course, and students must complete a minimum of 60 credits in order to be eligible for an award. Only the credit achieved on re-joining the course, or joining an alternative course with academic credit, will be used to determine the final award classification. Re-entry will be determined in accordance with current admissions requirements and the *Recognition of Prior Learning Policy*.

93. Exit awards from courses where the intended award leads to professional registration with a PSRB are considered to be final awards. Students accepting exit awards from such courses may not re-apply to the same course.

94. Exit awards from courses where the intended award leads to professional registration with a PSRB do not confer eligibility for registration with that PSRB, unless the named exit award has been specified as leading to professional registration in the validation documentation.

Posthumous and Aegrotat awards

95. In the event of a student's death, the relevant Assessment Board may award a Master's degree, postgraduate diploma or postgraduate certificate posthumously. The normal requirements for the award and any classification (as specified in paragraphs 81 to 86) must be met. Where the student has not met the normal requirements for the award, consideration may be given to an Aegrotat award.

96. In exceptional circumstances where a student is unable to complete their programme of study through illness or other valid cause, an Aegrotat award may be recommended where, based on the student's academic profile, the Assessment Board has enough evidence of the student's performance to recommend the award and is satisfied that the student would have reached the standard required for that award. Aegrotat awards will normally reflect the FHEQ level of study at which the student had achieved credit when their studies ceased. As all credit for postgraduate awards is at Level 7, to be awarded an Aegrotat Postgraduate Certificate, Postgraduate Diploma or Master's degree, students must have achieved at least two-thirds of the credit required for that award. Where an Aegrotat award is made posthumously, the relevant Assessment Board may recommend that the student be awarded the intended award for the programme on which they

were enrolled where the two-thirds requirement has not been met. Aegrotat awards do not carry any classification or distinction.

97. In all cases, the recommendation for an Aegrotat award must be approved by the Academic Registrar prior to the award being agreed by the relevant Assessment Board.

98. An Aegrotat award is considered to be the final award. Students accepting an Aegrotat award may not re-apply to the same course.

99. Aegrotat awards from courses where the intended award leads to professional registration (including recordable qualifications) with a PSRB do not confer eligibility for registration with that PSRB.

100. Aegrotat awards from courses where the intended award contributes to the completion of a degree apprenticeship do not confer eligibility for receipt of the apprenticeship certificate.

101. Where an Aegrotat award is going to be offered to a student, the student must confirm, in writing, that they are willing to accept the award and understand the implications (as set out in paragraphs 98 to 100) before it can be agreed by the relevant Assessment Board. If the student is severely incapacitated, consent may be provided by an appropriate third party authorised to act on the student's behalf. The requirement to obtain consent does not apply for Aegrotat awards awarded posthumously.

Recognition of credit without an award

102. Where a student achieves credit by passing modules but is not eligible for an award within the Framework and Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Awards (for example when a module is taken as Continuing Professional Development), a student transcript/record of achievement will be issued identifying credit gained and the level of achievement in the module(s) completed.

Academic appeals

103. Students have a right to appeal against decisions of the Assessment Board in accordance with the *Academic Appeals Procedure* which is available, together with appeal forms, on the University's website and the Student Hub/Partner Student Hub.

104. Any appeal should be made within fifteen working days of the date of written publication of results by the relevant Assessment Board.

Academic or professional misconduct

105. Allegations of academic misconduct, including cheating and plagiarism, will be dealt with as outlined in the *Academic Misconduct Policy*. In cases where investigations into allegations of academic misconduct are ongoing, Assessment Boards will record a deferred decision (DD) mark in respect of any component marks implicated in the allegations, and in respect of the modules which the component(s) form part.

106. For courses involving professional practice, allegations of professional misconduct or professional unsuitability will be dealt with as outlined in the *Fitness to Practise Procedure*.

Conferment of award

107. Conferral of awards occurs at set points in the academic year and a student may not receive an award parchment or official transcript or use their award title until formal conferral has taken place. If proof of the award is required at an earlier date (for example to enable a student to gain employment), students can securely share their Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR) issued by the University of Suffolk via Gradintelligence.

ANNEXES – APPROVED VARIATIONS

There are currently no approved variations to the Framework and Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Awards.