Specific Regulations

B6. Specific Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Taught Programmes

1. Introduction

1.1. These Regulations apply to all taught postgraduate awards offered by the University (except for the level 8 modules of the professional doctorate including the research element).

1.2. These Regulations should be read in conjunction with the University’s Core Academic Regulations. Unless specifically stated otherwise, if there is any disagreement between these Regulations and the University’s Core Academic Regulations, the University’s Core Academic Regulations take precedence.

1.3. These Regulations should also be read in conjunction with the specific Programme Regulations for individual programmes. Unless specifically stated otherwise, if there is any disagreement between these Regulations and the specific Programme Regulations, these Regulations take precedence.

1.4. A full list of postgraduate taught awards is available in the University's Core Academic Regulations.

1.5. In cases of doubt or uncertainty concerning these Regulations, the Academic Registrar will be consulted and may make an appropriate judgement on interpretation or may refer the matter to the Academic Enhancement and Standards Committee.

2. Structure of Postgraduate Programmes

2.1. Each programme shall be made up of modules, with a standard module rated at 20 credits, i.e. comprising one ninth of a Master’s degree programme (180 credits). Normally half modules rated at 10 credits and multiples of 10 credits are acceptable.

2.2. A Master’s degree programme may include a PGDip and a PGCert as exit points. Some programmes also offer these awards as free standing programmes to be applied for, studied and awarded.

2.3. It is permissible for undergraduate and postgraduate students to be taught in common. However, students on a postgraduate programme must be required to achieve learning outcomes at level 7 if the module is to be counted at level 7 and must accordingly be assessed at an appropriate level using a different module code from that used for undergraduate students. The modules involved will be treated as separate modules with different codes, with the undergraduate modules rated as agreed independently at validation. The credit rating of postgraduate modules must be considered and assessed separately to undergraduate modules.

2.4. All Master’s degree programmes shall contain an element of research methods training of at least the equivalent of 10 credits at level 7.

2.5. All Master’s degree programmes must include a compulsory major element of advanced independent work, i.e. substantial work such as a dissertation or
project, which shall normally comprise one module with a minimum of 50 credits at level 7.

2.6. All postgraduate programmes have an ECTS equivalent which is presented on award certificates and transcripts. The ECTS credit for postgraduate courses is to be designated level 2. One ECTS credit is equivalent to two CAT credits as detailed in the University's Core Academic Regulations. To comply with ECTS, credit equivalents will also be added to course and module information on the basis of equivalence with CAT credits.

3. **Mode of Study and Maximum Programme Length**

3.1. Postgraduate taught programmes may be taken on a full-time, part-time or open/distance learning basis.

3.2. To qualify for the award of a PGCert, a PGDip or a Master's degree a student shall have completed all the modules for the award within a maximum of five years of study after the initial registration date.

3.3. Subject to the approval of the Programme Leader, a student may be permitted to change from one mode of study to another mode of study at an appropriate point in the programme (subject to any relevant immigration restrictions).

4. **Conditions for Satisfactory Progression**

4.1. The Examination Committee will require any student to withdraw who fails to submit any work for assessment within a single semester without formal approval for suspension or valid mitigating circumstances.

4.2. Students must complete all compulsory, elective or alternative modules as indicated in the Specific Programme Regulations (in the course handbook).

4.3. The maximum number of modules/credits a student may take in order to achieve a postgraduate award for which they were initially enrolled will be set proportional to the total credit for the course. Where a PGCert or PGDip is awarded as an alternative exit award, the maximum number of credits attempted will be the same as the award for which the student was initially enrolled. The table below takes account of possible AP(E)L:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of credits to be completed for the award</th>
<th>Maximum number of credits to be attempted</th>
<th>Number of 20 credit modules or equivalent</th>
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<tr>
<td>240</td>
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5. **English language requirements**

5.1. Applicants whose home language is not English must demonstrate that their level of English is appropriate for study at postgraduate level. In addition to the academic entry qualifications of their chosen programme, applicants must have one of the qualifications acceptable to the University as set out in the list produced by Oxford Brookes International (OBI) or an equivalent acceptable qualification.

5.2. The English language requirements for a particular postgraduate programme may be set at a higher level than those specified. Candidates may also be required to have achieved minimum levels in specific English language skills, e.g. writing or reading.

6. **Intermission**

6.1. A student may be permitted to suspend registration for a determined period of up to one calendar year at a time. More than one period of intermission is permissible. The total period may not be so long as to require extension to the latest date for qualification for the award (see paragraph 3.2).

6.2. All periods of intermission or suspension must be formally approved by the Chair of the Examination Committee or nominee before the module deletion date (the latest date allowed by the University for the deletion of a module from a programme of study) unless mitigating circumstances are identified.

7. **Examination Committees and External Examiners**

7.1. Examination Committees and external examiners will be appointed for each postgraduate programme on behalf of the Academic Board by the Academic, Enhancement and Standards Committee (AESC).

8. **The Assessment of Students**

8.1. The pass mark for each module and for the whole award shall be 50%. The mark will be calculated by taking the rounded average of the module marks. Undergraduate modules included in a postgraduate programme will have a pass mark of 40%, but cannot be used in the calculation of postgraduate degree classifications. Where undergraduate modules are used to fulfil the requirements of an award the minimum credit and level requirements must still be achieved as required by section A2 of the Academic Regulations.

8.2. Distinctions and Merits shall be awarded for individual modules, postgraduate certificates, postgraduate diplomas and Master’s degrees.

8.3. For the purpose of agreeing a final classification for programmes, the mark will be calculated by taking the rounded average of the marks for all modules passed. Modules will be weighted by their credit value.

8.4. Students who have been admitted to a taught postgraduate programme through an AP(E)L route will only qualify for the award of a Merit or Distinction if they have completed 40 credits of the programme at Oxford Brookes.

8.5. A Merit shall be awarded when a mark of between 60% and 69% is achieved. For a Master’s degree this must include a mark of at least 60% in the dissertation or project.
8.6. A Distinction shall be awarded when a mark of 70% or above is achieved. For a Master's degree this must include a mark of at least 70% in the dissertation or project.

8.7. Students who fail in their first attempt to satisfy the Examination Committee in the assessment for an individual module may be re-assessed once only. If successful in a re-assessment, the student shall be awarded the pass mark of 50%.

8.8. Students who, on their first registration for a module, are awarded between 30% and 49% inclusive, are allowed a re-sit opportunity. Should the student not achieve a pass mark at the re-sit they will be allowed to re-take the module.

8.9. Students who, on their first registration for a module, are awarded less than 30% are not granted a re-sit but are allowed to re-take the module.

8.10. Students may only re-take a module once (i.e. any module may only be attempted twice). Students are allowed a re-sit within a module being re-taken, i.e. if a student obtains at their first attempt at an assessment within a module being re-taken a mark between 30% and 49% inclusive, then a re-sit will be granted.

8.11. A student who is not permitted by the Examination Committee to re-take a module or who otherwise reaches a position from which it is not possible to satisfy the conditions for an award under these Regulations shall be so informed and shall have to leave the programme. Such a student shall receive a transcript showing all the elements passed or for which credit has been accorded and shall be awarded any intermediate qualification the conditions for the award of which have, in the judgement of the Examination Committee, already been fulfilled.

8.12. Where a student fails a module, the Examination Committee will not be able to make any concessions concerning the outcome for the award. Where appropriate, independent study modules may be used as an alternative, provided module and programme learning outcomes are achieved.

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1 December 2010
Academic Enhancement and Standards Committee